

Podcast 149: WHY IT'S NOT HAPPENING?

Om Sri Sai Ram

Welcome to Prasanthi Sandesh, 149th episode.

We hear so many spiritual discourses. We attend many of the ceremonies. We perform many rituals. We go through the scriptures. And some of us may have our own guru of our choice. In spite of all these things, though we hear in rapt attention, read, do whatever it is, still it is not happening. Not happening! What is not happening? That may be the next question.

What is not happening is the reality has not come to our experience. It's not happening. We just go on doing our routine; we just follow it mechanically. But I am sure in most of our cases the realization, the experience of reality, is not happening. The scriptures say clearly, "Cease dreaming and enter the world of reality." It is very good to hear that, but how to cease dreaming? How to enter the world of reality? When is it going to happen?

Let us examine our own selves. Why is it not happening? As mentioned earlier, we have been listening to all the discourses. So the question is, is our listening total? Or do we just remain outside and listen. It appears as if it is the mechanical part of our ears that hear the messages or the mechanical part of our mind that thinks about it.

But the fact is that the heart remains untouched. It is rather funny to note that we protect our heart from this teaching. We don't want the message to go into our heart, to reach our heart. No, because if it goes deeply, you will not be the same. It has to bring about a total transformation. Therefore, we have got that fear that we may be thrown into insecurity, or that we may be thrown into the unknown realms of the world. We are all afraid of the unknown. We'll be vulnerable. Sometimes even danger may be there. Therefore, in spite of listening, in spite of all the teachings, it is not happening. I repeat, the experience of reality is not happening.

The same scripture says, "Unless you are ready to take a jump into the unknown, you cannot experience reality." Of course, it's quite natural that we are all afraid of the unknown. Also I brought to your attention that some of us have our own gurus or spiritual leaders whom we follow, and we also listen to the discourses of our gurus.

But what is the way that a true disciple listens to a discourse or a teaching from his Master? How does he do it? A disciple hears through his heart. A disciple listens through his total being. In other words, he is one with the teaching delivered. And we also notice that the teacher and the taught must feel a deep communion. It's quite evident that the teacher has gone deeply into the disciple's heart through his teachings. Then on his side, the disciple was ready and receptive and never doubted his guru.

Now, by these standards, can we call ourselves disciples? Well, I don't think so. Once the disciple listens to the teachings through his heart, when guru enters deeply into the disciple's heart, then the disciple will start seeing from a new stand point.

Instead of looking outwards, from now on the disciple will be looking from a deeper center that is his being. So the world of becoming disappears like a dream.

In other words, when you are centered in yourself, the world completely disappears. Yes, because we currently look through our peripheral vision, not from our center, the very being. When we start looking from our center, from our being, there will be a sudden explosion pushing us into the realm of the divine. Maybe it may be an initial shock with the result that the world disappears. The curtain falls. The barriers fall. This is what had happened in the case of Vivekananda by the touch of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. There are many, many disciples like that who are influenced by their gurus completely.

Now the question arises, when the world disappears, what will happen? You cannot face the world in the same way as before. There is a world there. But in the ordinary sense, the world disappears and you cannot face it in the same way because you will be aware of the other world. Your eyes need a new atonement and your consciousness will need a new way of looking. A new dimension altogether, a new existence has come up and has appeared.

Therefore, the impact of the teaching, the effect of our careful listening to our guru, to our Divine Master, should prepare us or should make us be transformed into a new existence, a new consciousness. We'll have a new way of looking, from a new dimension altogether. In that state the disciple will say, "I don't see anything. I don't hear anything. I don't even know anything." That's what he'll confess. Till then, until he was totally and completely influenced by his Divine Master, he might have been knowledgeable. He might have had many visions. He may claim to have known many things or he may say that he had heard many of the discourses.

But, once the teachings of the guru or Divine Master get into the heart deeply enough, there will be a total change. Then the disciple will say, "I don't see anything, I don't hear anything, I don't even know anything. Everything old is forgotten. Everything is gone." And with this we'll come to know that old knowledge has become futile. The old ways are futile. All the senses are futile. Why? Why should I say that? It is because only when the world is there are knowledge and the different ways and all the senses meaningful. When once the world disappears, what is your knowledge for? What are these ways for? What are the senses for?

So, whatever you know is concerned with the world. If the world disappears, there is no difference between the learned and an ignorant person. But the disciple knows very well. He will say, "I am the ever blissful self that is unique. I cannot be compared to anything else. I can only be compared to myself. I am like myself." In other words, a disciple stands unique. He doesn't compare himself with anybody. He stands for himself.

For example, let's take great people like Mahavira, Buddha, Jesus, and Krishna. They don't speak anything of the world. They don't know anything about the world. They know only about their own selves, own selves - I mean the *Atma*, the spirit or consciousness. Mahavira even said, "If you know everything except yourself, you know nothing. Please understand. And when you know your own self, you will know

everything else.” So, Mahavira always said, “I am the ever blissful self, ever blissful self.

The other extreme is when you are in the world, of the world, and totally worldly. There we know many anxieties, much anguish, many tensions and much misery. It is also our experience that the more you know, the more miserable we are. It's also very clear in the modern world that, on the one hand knowledge grows, while on the other hand our misery grows equally. So as knowledge grows deeper and deeper, misery equally goes deeper and deeper. That is the situation today. Just observe this.

Therefore, the *Upanishads* speak of the knowledge of the inner self, not the knowledge of the material world, no. This is the knowledge of the inner self by which only blissfulness grows, because you are growing in inner knowledge, which is more important. Let's understand this point. While growing in outer knowledge, it only means that we are more miserable than before.

So, knowledge can grow in two ways: first, the knowledge of things, and second, the knowledge of the self. The knowledge of the things of the world is like the tree of knowledge in the Garden of Eden, which tempted Adam and Eve. And the paradise lost is the outcome. So knowledge of the self, for example, is described in our *Upanishadic* literature.

Therefore, mere knowledge, like the tree of knowledge in the Holy Bible, when that fruit is partaken, paradise is lost; whereas in contrast, as stated in the *Upanishads*, unless the knowledge of the self is acquired, we cannot be redeemed. We cannot expect to be liberated.

So, in that state of having known and experienced, the disciple would say, “I am absolutely alone without a body. I cannot be indicated. No symbol can represent me. Here I stand for the self, the consciousness.” These are the declarations of the disciple who has the experience of reality or consciousness. “I am the supreme God, Hari.” That's what he would declare. “I am immeasurable, and I am immensely silent.” That's the way a realized soul expresses. “I am the infinite, absolute and most ancient. I am not the doer. I am not the one who indulges. No. I am without growth and I am imperishable. I am already pure and the knowledge itself. I am Sadashiva, the eternally good.” (Sadashiva means ‘the eternally good’.)

All these experiences and declarations are those of a true disciple in the strict sense of the term. It is not a conversion in any way, nor is it intellectual. It is a transformation. This is the teaching of *nirvana*. Therefore, the knowledge of the absolute is eternal. It's never new and never old. It's never new, meaning it is not the first time you are being given these teachings about the atma, no. And you cannot judge or condemn these, saying, ‘It's all ancient,’ no. It's never new and never old.

One important difference is this: science grows, whereas religion does not grow in that sense because religion is eternal. Science goes on growing, increasing, but science is never absolute. Science, after all, is relative. And science changes as per

the times. What Einstein said at one time may be revised now. What Newton said was also revised. What Dalton said was revised too.

So, science is limited by time, but religion never changes at any time. The religious experience is attained only when you enter that timeless moment. While science is within a time frame, the timeless moment will give you a religious experience. So, we can take it this way: when you enter the self, time stops. You cannot say how long you meditated. You cannot say how long you were one with the Divine. Time stops - no past, no present, and no future. Only this moment remains, and this moment is eternal! So, while science is time-bound, in stark contrast religion is timeless.

And then here we also find the modern trend that 'we are original', 'we are originators', and 'we started this'. This is all nonsense in the field of religion. Everyone tries to be original these days. Originality is possible in science, but in religion, originality is impossible. Why? It is because everything in religion is eternal so the experience of religion can never be different. I repeat, religion speaks the eternal message. So, if anyone says, "I am original in the spiritual field," it is only from an egoistic standpoint. It is only the ego that tries to be original because only then the ego feels strengthened. So all those things that are claimed by certain people, "I am original," and so and so forth, are ego teachings. They are ego-oriented. But the truth is the teachings should be egoless only. When the ego gets in, the whole thing is polluted, dead and gone.

Therefore my friends, here in this brief talk I wanted to bring to your attention two points: First point: our listening is not proper. Our listening is only partial and not total. Therefore, the experience of reality is not happening. The second thing is our role of a disciple is also not proper because we don't listen through our heart, with our total being, no. So we don't have complete communion with our teacher, and therefore the teacher has not gone deeply into our heart, no.

Therefore, we may also have to agree that as a disciple, we have failed. If we are very successful as a disciple, having been influenced by the Divine Master, what should happen? The world as we see it in the ordinary way should disappear. The curtain should fall, as I mentioned earlier. Well, that's not happening. Why?

And then there should be an altogether new perspective, a new vision – yes, consciousness will express itself as a new way of looking, a new dimension; something new in existence has come up. At that stage the disciple says that he sees nothing, that he knows nothing, and that he has nothing because all that is futile. All that is heard, all that is gathered, are all futile. A new awakening, a new enlightenment has come upon him now. A new world appears. Therefore, the disciple at that stage has got the guts to say, "I am the blissful self."

These are the two points which I wanted to emphatically declare and draw to your attention. Only then the disciple realizes the self as the Supreme, unparalleled, most ancient and absolute, that is eternally Sadashiva.

Sai Ram. Meet again.

