

PODCAST 87: “NOT PARTICULAR BUT UNIVERSAL”

Om Sri Sai Ram

Prashanti Sandesh, 87th episode.

The topic for this day is, “Not Particular but Universal”. I repeat, “Not Particular but Universal.” Let us discuss this topic.

It's necessary to think about the normal functioning of our mind. It's very clear that our mind is narrow, and this narrow mind thinks, seeks and searches in a concentrated way. The mind gets focused in full concentration. That is the approach of our mind.

And we also know that this kind of search for material objects or for any knowledge has become more or less habitual. The mind seeks somewhere something. It is almost a habit. So, on examination we'll come to know that this kind of particularity is because of our mind, and it acts because of its nature.

And let us think in this way also. What is that we are searching for in this world? Of course, we are also part of the world. We are not separate from the world anyway. What is it that we are searching for in this world? We search for power, prestige and money.

In a similar way, being theist or people of religious faith, we want to search for God, search for bliss, search for heaven because, as has been agreed, the mind always seeks and searches, that being its nature. Therefore, in the field of religion if any one says that I am in search of God, it is no surprise because search is the nature of the mind. If anyone says that I seek heaven, well, it is quite understandable because seeking is the nature of the mind.

So, particularity is the nature of the mind, which is rather naturally a narrow outlook and way of functioning. But the truth is never particular. Truth is general. God is not particular, He is Universal. To think in this direction of particularity, it means we are deluded, we are in the illusion of the mind, illusion, yes! Because it is the mind that has the problem.

So I would like to humbly submit to you all that God is infinite and He is universal, cosmic. So, with this narrow mind it is rather difficult to enjoy or experience Him. That is the reason why *Upanishads* say that God is beyond our mind and can't be put in the form of words. He is beyond words and the mind.

So, we can conclude that our search for God or bliss or heaven is meaningless. For worldly things, for worldly objects, seeking and searching are meaningful; but not in the field of religion, and never in the field of spirituality, because God is infinite and you cannot exist without Him. God is verily your life. He is your **being**. Then what is the fun of searching for Him? Is there any meaning in seeking for Him? Just let us think deeply enough in this direction.

And Swami also said at one time: Fish is in search of water though it is in water. We find that fish are found in the ocean. But if that fish say they are in search of water, how does it look? It lives in water! Then what is the fun of searching for water?

Therefore, it is not a question of any search or seeking. It is only question of **recognition**. We have to recognize the fact that God is our life, that God is our very being. But the problem of the mind is that it is always concentrated. It is willing to search and seek. So, the solution would be to live in Him. Live in God right now, Enjoy Him, celebrate life in Him. Then life turns into a festival, a festival.

That is why Swami repeatedly says, "God is in you, below you, above you, around you." Yes! He repeated this any number of times in His discourses. So, our understanding should be rather in the correct way.

Then what is the solution? We need freedom. When we are free, we'll be able to experience God and enjoy Him. Then, what do I mean by freedom? We should be free from desire. And there is nothing like searching or seeking with this narrow mind. No! And so ultimately, we should relax, and in this state of relaxation we have an all dimensional perspective of the Divine Master.

But on the other hand, if I am not relaxed, if my mind always seeks, it's uni-dimensional or uni-directional. When God is multi-dimensional, well, how is it possible to approach with a uni-dimensional mind? And also, when I say, "I seek God," it means I remain as an ego. Whereas if I relax and don't seek or don't search, I feel that I am part of this whole and part of this universe.

Swami gives an example: If we just bring a big piece of jaggery, any part of it, any bit of it is as sweet as the whole jaggery. The whole brick-size jaggery you bring, that sweetness is as much the same as a small bit of jaggery out of that piece. So jaggery taste is the same all over. That is what I mean by feeling part of the whole.

And so, that kind of existential feeling that God is necessary. In that is-ness, we see God and experience Him. And this sort of freedom from desiring Him, or seeking Him, searching for Him as an ego is what is called liberation or *moksha*. There is no bondage at all in this state.

As already been stated, this needs only recognition, that's all. Recognition that God is infinite, that God is universal, that God is multi-dimensional. And all that we need to do is just relax, that's all. And you will see that God is here now.

We find two categories of people. One category are those who never experience God because they are seekers, so they go on seeking and seeking. They want to find, find and find eternally and in this process, they miss God completely. This is proceeding in a linear way, moving in a line.

Now the second type of people is those who don't seek God because they know that He is everywhere. In that very recognition of this fact, they enjoy life. They sing and dance and celebrate. Therefore, it is very clear that the seeking mind never reaches the reality. Impossible!

And I would also bring to your attention another point. Some people think that I can afford to wait to know God later, to experience God in the future. This is ridiculous! God is not in the future. He is in the present, He is the present. Well, you may ask how? Remember when you enjoy, that very enjoyment is divine. When you are in festivity, that is divine.

So, the Divinity is like your heartbeat. Heartbeat is not for the future; it's right now. Right now! And with this awareness, what happens? What is the use, what comes out of this awareness? may be our question. The answer is simple. The whole life becomes spiritual. Our day-to-day activity turns religious where we have got prayers in all our activities.

There are some people that chant while having their shower. When they take bath, they feel that they are giving bath to God Himself. And we also know we have some prayers while eating, "*Brahmarpanam brahma havir brahmagnau brahmana hutam, brahmaiva tena gantavyam brahma-karma-samadhina.*" It only means 'I am eating but the food is God'. And while singing you feel that God in me is singing, and God in audience is listening. Everything is divine with this awareness, recognition and understanding.

Life becomes luminous with His presence. Really that's what life is. But what is necessary is to keep in tune with Him. When once we are in tune with Him, there will be total unity or harmony. This is the real religious life.

Some people think that religious life is different from their normal life. That is wrong. Life and religion are not separate. They should be in harmony with each other. They are not separate from each other. Life should be offered to God, and then this offering means unconditional total surrender. There in that he enjoys bliss. And everyone will have a feeling that I am alive today because God wants me to live. When I am aware of the fact that God wants me to live, I live happily without any complaint, without any grudge, without any dissatisfaction.

I am also sure that God has chosen me as His instrument so that I can become a flute on His lips, and then life would be tremendously beautiful. Baba said a flute, say something made up of bamboo, where it is hollow inside with 9 holes on the top and the air is blown from the first hole of the flute, so you listen to melodious music. The flute being hollow within indicates that you should be free from all ego. The flute just allows itself to be on the lips, that's all. It has no preference of any particular song or any tune. It is choice-less. So in a similar way, let everyone of us be effective instruments in His hands. Let everyone aspire to be a flute, a flute on His lips.

My friends, then the whole life becomes tremendously beautiful and the whole life will be a flood of gratitude. And this gratitude is a natural feeling and an expression, and this gratefulness is a consequence. Therefore, whenever I start feeling God's presence around me, we'll be filled with gratitude and this energy itself becomes gratitude. The whole life turns into thanksgiving and this, in spirit, is what prayer is. Prayer is thanksgiving. Prayer is gratitude. And in schools and the community we are

taught that we have to express our gratitude to parents, to elders, to our mentors and so on and so forth.

But this gratitude that was taught is only a concept, a mechanical ritual. But true gratitude should upsurge in our being and when it upsurges like a fountain, what will happen? We'll know what love is! We'll know what prayer is! What a true prayer is! In that state, we feel a glow. We feel benediction and we are happy that we are blessed.

And all this seems to be quite new to those who never had any experience of the Divine. Since there is no experience, they have nothing to lose. But those who have little experience or a glimpse of experience need to be very cautious. Because in this state of being cautious, we have to allow things to happen. We should not put any obstacles, and we should be strongly rooted in our very being. And it is in this way of life, we'll certainly understand that God is not a thing.

God is an attitude, an attitude of celebration, an attitude of festivity. We have to be joyful, rejoice, keep smiling, and keep smiling all the way because you are very close to Him. God is very close to you. We should forget all our meaningless miseries and worries. Let us allow ourselves to be in the Divine hands, because God is waiting for us for a long time. We think that you are waiting, No! He is waiting. The moment I make myself free from all these miseries and worries, yes! I feel that He is holding my hand. Holding my hand, I am quite safe and secure in His hands.

Therefore, let me not be so narrow as to limit God to a thing, to a place, to a name, to a form. No sir! God is infinite. He is everywhere. Instead of saying that God is in this form, we can say, as Baba said, that all are His forms. Instead of saying that this is His name, as Baba said, we can even say that all names are His, all forms are His.

On the other hand, if you are particular, if you are specific, you have to limit Him to a particular form and a particular name. So, it is not particularity, it is universality. It is expansion. "Expansion is life, contraction is death," as Baba said.

Therefore, let us not condition God to the finite because He is infinite. And therefore, we have to change our understanding, our approach to the Divine, because we have been used over many lives to focused attention, to particularity, limiting God to a certain object, to a place or a thing, to a name or a form.

But hereafter, we should take it in a special way that He is universal. All names are His, all forms are His, and He is everywhere. When He is everywhere, where do you seek Him? When He is in all directions, which indication can you think to let you know how to reach God. There are no indications, because He is everywhere. There is no special place because He is everywhere.

Therefore, this kind of generality, this sort of expansion, this sort of complete awareness is absolutely necessary, which will help us to recognize that Divine here and now.

Therefore, I would take leave from you by repeating once again: God is not particular, but universal. It is not through seeking and searching, but only in recognition that we experience the reality.

Thank you.

Sai Ram.