

PODCAST EPISODE 94

Om Sri Sai Ram.

Prasanthi Sandesh. We welcome you all and thank you very much for listening to our talks based on Sai literature. Well, the topic for this morning is "Both and Beyond". "Both and Beyond" is the topic of the day.

Usually we think there are two sides of life: one, the outer life, and another, the inner life. These two are different. We consider that outer life is materialistic, ephemeral, transient, momentary, physical, and worldly; whereas we consider inner world as consciousness, our nature, our spirit and spiritual. Like this, we divide the life into two phases. One, the outer life, and another, the inner life.

But when we consider these two, after coming to the Divine Master like Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, we'll understand the outer world and inner world are not contradictory. They are not opposed to each other. No! After all, it is the way how we look at it. After all, man is a miniature in existence. Man is almost a cosmos.

What happens is our Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba brings a harmony between the inner and the outer world. They both are synchronous. They are not opposed to each other. We cannot condemn the outer world, no, and renounce it all in the name of religion. It's wrong. And we cannot consider the inner world totally religious and traditional. No! Both are true in their own way. After all, one cannot be free from the other. One protects the other. The outer world protects the inner world. Because of the outer world only, the inner world draws its nourishment.

Take for example, the husk and the grain, as in the case of paddy. Paddy grains will have two - the paddy outer husk and the inner grain. The inner grain is protected by the outer husk. If there is no husk, the grain will not have any protection, and the grain cannot grow all by itself without the outer husk. Therefore, the outer will help for the nourishment and it gives protection to the inner. So, we cannot consider outer totally irreligious, non-spiritual, nor we have got to renounce it. It's not correct.

Here I should bring to your attention a small anecdote related to the life of Adi Shankara. This is also recorded and recited by all the followers of Advaita philosophy: One day Adi Shankara had his bath in the Ganges and was returning to his ashram. While he was returning, it so happened that an untouchable touched him. This irritated Shankaracharya. Immediately he said, "Why did you touch me? I just had my bath and am returning. You are an untouchable. Since you have touched me, I may have to go back and have a bath once again."

Then this untouchable man started laughing and asked him, "Oh Swami! In what way are your skin and my skin, your blood and my blood, your breath and my breath different from each other? In what way? The body, its composition, everything is one and the same between you and me. There is no difference at all. And then if you think that it is the spirit or consciousness, it is neither touchable nor untouchable. These things do not apply to the spirit at all. So, what do you mean by 'untouchable'? Why do you say that you want to have bath once again?"

Then Adi Shankara realized the man who had come like that in the form of the untouchable is no ordinary person. He appeared there to convey some message. At that moment, he could see Lord Shiva in that person. In other words, Lord Shiva came in the form of an untouchable to teach him the lesson that there's nothing like untouchables.

Everyone is same - same body, same chemistry, same anatomy, same physiology. So, there's no difference between outer personality and the outer part of another person. Outwardly, all are same. And inwardly, if you mean really the conscience or the spirit or *atma*, all are same. So outwardly and inwardly, we are all one and the same.

And then take individually. The body and the soul are together. The soul is inside the body. Outer to the soul is the body. The body protects the inner soul. Something like jewelry kept in an almira. And there's no fight between the soul and the body. They don't fight. They exist together. The body is to protect the soul. And so, there's no conflict between the soul and the body. This has got to be understood carefully. So, let us not renounce the outer world, all in the name of religion. It is wrong. We have got to accept both.

Take for example, the orange fruit. Orange fruit has got outer rind or cover or outer skin. This rind or outer cover protects the inner fruit, the inner juice. This inner sweet juicy material is protected by outer cover.

Now I think we can understand that both are important. Nothing is to be condemned. Nothing needs to be renounced. Therefore, we have to understand clearly that both are complimentary and not contradictory. If we take a negative attitude and condemn it completely, it is our mistake. It is only our conditioning that made us think that way.

We are leading a programmed life like a robot. We have to destroy all this nonsensical approach. And this nonsensical approach or meaningless approach is preventing us from being whole. We are not holistic, why? Because we are leading a programmed life. Therefore, the positive part, the soul inside, is a flame burning, and this we would certainly come to experience in our meditation, in the depth of silence and in our love, joy and peace. Therefore, in the togetherness, in this holistic view point, we can certainly enjoy life in its totality.

And on the other hand, some people also would say, "The body would be here, the soul would go to heaven." It's also wrong. Where is heaven? No scientists, no astronaut, no cosmonaut ever saw any heaven, though you are successful in reaching the moon. In fact, there's no heaven as such. The real heaven lies when you go to your (inner) self. When you go to yourself - meaning 'I'm considering only the outer personality as total', no! This outer personality should lead us to go in, to dive in and to experience the spirit within. Then that is the very heaven of our life.

And also, another thing is this. From the outer aspect, we have got to do many other things - professional, social, political, personal, what not. So, as far as the inner

being is concerned, there's no other alternative other than meditation. And in fact, by and large, as we listen to the discourses and read spiritual literature, we certainly conclude that if we are able to spend a single moment of love, it is more than the whole of Oxford library or Cambridge library or Canberra library, or any other library for that matter. This love is more than thousands of books in a library.

And then, when once we try to make an attempt to go in and experience the spirit or our consciousness, that is more than all the knowledge contained in all scriptures of all religions. Therefore, love and an insight, say, meditation, are more than all the books and scriptures. And actually speaking, when once we experience even for a moment that consciousness, we'll understand that we are in the very shrine of life. We are in a holy temple. So that experience of the temple, that experience of the holy shrine, is nothing but a glimpse of the experience of our own consciousness in meditation. And then, when once we experience the inner by this process of meditation, the whole scenario changes.

In meditation, from outer we have gone into the inner. Having gone into the interior, experiencing the consciousness, as I indicated, there will be a total change in our seeing, in our talking, in our gestures because that reflects the inner experience. Our talk is meaningful. All that we see is Divine. All that we talk stands as evidence. It represents the very authority, sometimes even beyond the words or behind the words. Our touch, after experiencing the inner, is the very presence of the Divine.

The silence also conveys a message. Be that as it may, from outer we get into the inner. From the inner, we find the whole of our transaction, the whole of our view, the entire scenario, and all our activity will be totally different. It is totally spiritual. In other words, from the physical we have gone into the inner experience or the consciousness. From the inner experience of the consciousness, as we come to the outer, we find a total change in our approach, in our vision and in our experience.

In fact, the outer and the inner are part of one reality. For instance, a coin has two faces, the obverse and the reverse, but only one coin. Like that, both are one and the same reality. Once you experience that inner reality, love overflows. There's nothing like judging anybody. Like the Lord Jesus Christ, who is totally divine, and who will not judge anybody. On other hand, He pardons. Why? Because Jesus is love, love is Jesus.

And then what is required for this? We need to be aware. We need to be alert. And we have got to be discriminating. With this sense of discrimination, awareness and alertness, we'll be able to go from the outer to the inner and from the inner to the outer. In other words, it is just a change towards my self. I am not reaching out. No. I'm reaching in. I move towards my self. When once I move towards my self, after that experience, the change is towards existence by and large. This is very important.

And then we'll also finally come to the conclusion that outer and inner are not different, and that we are, in fact, beyond. We are both here and beyond. We cannot limit ourselves with one only. We are beyond. We have to transcend both inner and outer. It's only possible through love. And this love will take us beyond.

Not only this, but also beyond good and evil: Jesus will never discriminate against anybody. Buddha has not considered anybody a sinner. Bhagavan Baba has not driven out anybody, branding him a sinner, no. Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, Bhagavan Buddha, Bhagavan Christ, have all grown beyond good and evil. Why? Because they established harmony between outer and inner facets of life and have come to conclusion that both are one reality and so could transcend both of them. Therefore, this is the awareness; this is the proper understanding that we are supposed to have.

In fact, we want to be enlightened. Enlightenment seems to be our goal. And true enlightenment is beyond good and evil, beyond the outer and inner. But if we just think deeply enough, it is just an intellectual exercise only. Mere intellectuality has no roots, has no roots. It is just a kind of intellectual game, the play of the intellect. At that stage, what happens when we understand that love is taking us beyond good and evil, beyond both outer and inner, and the same love is the fragrance of meditation?

A true meditator is full of fragrance because of love, and in his view, there's nothing like good or bad. Because love is the highest value. Yes! And we'll also come to that conclusion after repeated visits to Prashanti Nilayam and association with Bhagavan Baba. What is happening? There'll be a change in our attitude. We become life affirmative, affirmative. We say, "Yes." We'll never be negative. No, nothing like "No! No! No, No! No!" We are affirmative. Yes attitude! We'll be more receptive, open and vulnerable, and that is the greatest advantage of being with the Divine Master.

But those who are living a conditioned life can never understand this. Only an unconditional life, unconditional approach, and the realization of the absolute can only afford to be affirmative. This is very interesting. In the process we should be like a watchman who will be watching who passes, who gets in, who goes out. Likewise, we should be a watcher, a witness. And we'll also know that we go to the guru to have this experience of the unity of both good or bad, or outer and inner and beyond. And with that experience, we return.

In other words, it is like going to a river for a bath and returning later. Therefore, we should watch outside from within. The witness from within will be watching what all is happening outside. In other words, this is a change in the direction and the dimension as well.

In this spiritual journey, my friends, let us not discriminate. Let us not have this dual approach. Let us not have any disharmony or disunity. Let there not be any contradiction, and all in the name of religion, let's not be mistaken so as to divide the outer world from the inner world.

Outer takes you to the inner world and from that experience, from the inner, you come out to the outer world, and you find a paradigm shift, a total change in every activity of our life.

Thank you very much.