

OM SAI RAM!

Welcome to Prasanthi Sandesh,

PODCAST 247, “THE NATURE OF THOUGHTS AND WILL POWER”

June 27, 2024

*The following text contains excerpts from Prof. Anil Kumar’s book
“Sai-Chology,” pg. 358-364.*

ADVERSITY CREATES DOUBTS

One notable feature of life is the fact that our thoughts are not constant. If a thought is ours, it should be constant and not changeable. But, in reality, it is quite different. We observe that when circumstances are favourable and positive and when all things are answered, we have strong devotion.

But, when things get worse, when our business incurs losses and children fail in the examination, then we start doubting Baba’s Divinity.

So, our thoughts are fickle and inconsistent and ever-changing. Why do we have strong devotion in the morning and by night we are seized by doubts? Like the unpredictable weather, our thoughts also waver. Sometimes we feel like visiting Puttaparthi immediately and at other times we want to defer it. Hence, we should remember that some decisions call for immediate action; some decisions will postpone action. Thought is never constant. Also, some thoughts are selfish, while others are selfless.

PRAYER PURIFIES THOUGHT

Prayer to God can make our thoughts chaste. Thoughts that created disbelief will disappear. Once we pray to God, all frustration, depression and discouragement will vanish.

We now come to what is known as a thought-free state. This is difficult to achieve for ordinary people, unless one has reached the level of someone like Sri Ramana Maharishi. Having accepted that thoughts will be there, the goal is that our thoughts should remain pure, sacred, strong and powerful so that they can be transformed into will power. For that, we need the grace of God.

Maha Durga symbolises will power. That Godhead helps us to make our thoughts pure and strong – what is called *ichha sakti* or Durga. *Maha* Durga: *Maha* means mighty and Durga means will power. We think Durga is a lady with a silk saree, a crown and jewels; but those are all symbols that form an object of worship. Beyond that object of worship, however, there is some spiritual depth. The concept of *Maha* Durga has great spiritual profundity – *Maha* Durga means will power. We pray to *Maha* Durga so that our thoughts are uncontaminated, selfless and sacred. Not selfish but Self-centred i.e. centred on God, so that our thoughts are divine.

WHEN THOUGHT IS BLESSED, IT IS TRANSLATED THROUGH WILL INTO DHARMIC ACTION

The moment thought becomes powerful, that is *ichha sakti*. It will never allow us to rest or sleep and this is everybody's experience.

In a family, when the wife decides to come to Puttaparthi, the husband cannot help but give permission. When the husband decides to go to Puttaparthi, even a stubborn wife cannot stop him, because that thought is Divine. Swami promotes that thought! Bhagawan blesses that thought! None can stop that. That thought which is promoted, blessed, graced and encouraged by Bhagawan will certainly be translated into action.

Not all thoughts lead us to action, for the simple reason that not all thoughts are pure. Because of our *samskaras* (mental impressions, recollections, or physiological imprints), we have all kinds of thoughts – the good, the bad and the ugly. In fact, our mental pollution is worse than air and water pollution. Therefore, if the thought is powerful and coupled with prayer, that graced thought becomes will power. It will not stop there but will take us into action.

If we want to participate in a service activity in our centre or want to sing *bhajan* or meditate, no one can stop us. If we want to read Sai literature, no one can stop us. This is because our decision and will power are strong. But what if that thought is diluted? In that case, a diluted thought is not powerful and we cannot expect any fulfilment or any fruition. Such thoughts can never lead to action. Only thoughts that are strong, pure and blessed by God will be translated into action. Such action is called *kriya*. The action should be as powerful as the thought.

OUR ACTIONS SHOULD MATCH OUR THOUGHTS

If we have a particular thought and an objective in mind but no corresponding action, then the result is zero. E.g. If we want a gold medal in studies, but read just one hour per week, then even though our thought is good, our action is poor. If we want to earn a hefty profit but do not go to the office regularly, how can the business succeed? If we want to be good devotees but spend the time in gossip, nothing can be achieved.

So, the action has to be in line with the thought. When action and thought are not in harmony, then life will be full of contradictions. We are not able to live up to our good thoughts. We are not able to act purely on our good thoughts and this leads to frustration. Even in meditation, we are unable to have deep concentration because even though we have the thought (of meditation), but in action we are not able to match our thought.

Therefore, one of the reasons for our spiritual depression and religious frustration is due to our thoughts and actions being at variance with each other. They do not match. They are not uniform and not in harmony. Just as when we wear a uniform, the garments should match. Yes, it is a uniform. If it does not match, then it will not be appealing to

the eye. So, depression or frustration is due to our thoughts and actions being quite different or divergent. Thought and action should converge; they should never diverge.

Action should also be as powerful as thought. That action is *kriya*, which means action and it has to be powerful. *Kriya sakti*. The power of action. *Sakti*; How can we be powerful in action? We have to pray to God again.

“Oh God! Help me to see to it that my action is also powerful. You have helped me to have a thought, which is steady and strong, pure and sacred. Thank you! Now, I pray to you to make my action steady, strong, fruitful, purposeful, objective, goal-oriented, and to the standards of my thought.”

So, that Godhead who blesses our action is called Mahalakshmi. Mahalakshmi is the aspect of Godhead that strengthens the power of action, whereas Durga strengthens the power of our thought.

If the thought is pure and the action is impure, there will be a total mess. Both aspects should be directly proportionate. Thought precedes action and thought is succeeded by action and hence both should be equally powerful. This is the message of Sathya Sai.

START YOUR ACTION WITH PRAYER

How do we make our action powerful? How can we be powerful in action? How do we make our thoughts powerful? We need to make our actions meaningful, purposeful, goal-oriented and spiritual. Baba advises whatever action we undertake; first offer a prayer and then start.

In any business, medical practice and teaching or, for that matter in any work that we may do, once we pray and then start our action, it becomes worship. Work is transformed into worship, according to Baba. So, the first stipulation to be powerful in our activity is to begin our work with an offering of prayer. We can see this in everyday life – truck drivers pray and do *namaskaram* and then only start the vehicle. Similarly, dancers on the stage bow down to the ground before starting their performance. Musicians also do likewise. All this is because the action to be undertaken will be blessed and successful – the action will never be left half-finished.

So, in order to ensure that our actions match our thoughts and we carry on until the end successfully and reach our goal, we seek God's blessings and bow down to our actions.

Tasmai Namah Karmani

“I bow down to my actions. I bow down to my duty. I consider this duty holy. I consider this duty a ritual. I consider this duty as an offering unto you, Oh Lord.”

That is what is meant by:

Let all actions be dedicated unto God to make them successful. They are thus offered in a spirit of surrender to render them selfless. For this, we need God's blessings.

That aspect of Divinity which blesses our actions and to whom we pray is Mahalakshmi. We also pray to Mahadurga, the Godhead that blesses our thoughts.

There will be more precious spiritual insights in the next session.

Thank you for your time!

OM SAI RAM!