

OM SAI RAM

WELCOME TO PRASANTHI SANDESH

PODCAST 266, "WHAT IS WRONG KNOWLEDGE?"

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*The following text contains excerpts from Prof. Anil Kumar's book
"Sai Vedam," pg.127-132.*

BEWARE OF ACQUIRING WRONG KNOWLEDGE

The mind is capable of acquiring wrong knowledge. Bhagawan said once, "Even if I tell you openly, you are not prepared to hear Me. All rumours, gossip and falsities get into your ears, which are the welcome gates or welcome arches!" (Telugu poem) We don't want to hear good things. Therefore, the mind is anxious to receive wrong knowledge. One has to be cautious about this.

What is wrong knowledge? Wrong knowledge is that which is not real, that which does not correspond to the thing in question. For example, if I say that this building is like an elephant... Is it like an elephant? This is wrong knowledge! So, wrong knowledge means something that does not correspond to or agree with the thing being considered. Wrong knowledge includes certain concepts, notions, prejudices and biases. This is all wrong knowledge.

One person asked me: "Is Baba God?" I simply said, "Why do you ask that question? Why?" He asked again, "Can a man be God?" "OK, why not? Why not?" Then he said, "God cannot be a human being." I said, "I see. We'll meet tomorrow." Why? His mind is already prejudiced that God cannot come in a human form, that God cannot be a man. He has his own concept of God, which he does not want to lose. He is not open-minded. He is biased and prejudiced. We cannot help such people. A prejudiced mind has wrong knowledge. A biased mind has misinformation or wrong knowledge. Then, what does a man with wrong knowledge do? Suppose I say, "Baba is God." That man already has some knowledge. "God is Truth. So, why do you say that Baba is God?" That is his question. It only means that he has not understood the mind. He has some preconceived idea about it and that idea in his mind is projected onto this situation. He'll project that preconceived notion onto whatever you say.

This only means that we project all that is there in the mind. We don't receive (hear) things. We want to project on to the current topic what already exists there in our own mind. Of course, this is vanity. It may be ego or show. It may be exhibitionism. Whatever you may call it, this kind of projecting of preconceived ideas (those that are already there in the subconscious mind) is wrong knowledge.

Here is a simple example: When I say, "rose flower", immediately someone will say, "So beautiful!" Why do you say that? Did you see the rose flower? No, no! But the rose

flower is supposed to be beautiful. Therefore, 'beautiful' is wrong knowledge. You have read and heard about roses and therefore you say that the rose is beautiful. But you have not really verified its beauty. You have not experienced that beauty. You have not enjoyed that beauty all by yourself. Because of hearing some preconceived notion, because of an earlier experience, you say it is beautiful. But it is not necessarily so! This is wrong knowledge. Wrong knowledge is prejudiced. Wrong knowledge is biased. Wrong knowledge immediately projects from the subconscious mind, declaring what it has already known.

DIE EVERY MOMENT IN ORDER TO BE REBORN EVERY MOMENT

Swami comes forward with a beautiful solution on how to come out of this wrong knowledge. Some people say, "I'll tell you. Swami appeared like this. Swami showed this. Swami said this." This is all wrong knowledge.

Suppose I say, "I sat for meditation and a blue colour appeared." Why not orange colour? Why not? Somebody may say, "When I sat in meditation, I saw some beautiful pictures!" Or, "When I closed my eyes, my body started shivering." It's not possible. How can I accept it?

Yoga comes forward with a beautiful solution on how to avoid this wrong knowledge. Yoga tells us, "Die every moment in order to be reborn every moment." See that! This means to let every experience of the past die. The past is death. Let the past be past, so that you may be reborn. When you are reborn, you are all fresh, utterly innocent and childlike.

If I give a shining stone to a child, it is so beautiful! The child goes on playing with that precious stone. If I give it to a grown-up, "Oh, it's not a diamond. Maybe it is a marble. Throw it out!" He already has some prejudice about it!

So, one has to die to the past, in order to be reborn to live in the present. This is yogic or a Yoga Sastra (yoga scriptures) injunction, a Yoga Sastra prescription: Die every moment, so that you may be reborn every moment with all the freshness and all open-mindedness. That's what Baba says.

SADHANA IS A NECESSARY DAILY CLEANING PROCESS

Also, to be free from wrong knowledge, there is something else you should do: Clean yourself every moment, because somebody may come and pollute your mind. Somebody may talk to you and try to make you lose your faith. There are some who are experts at it. Let's be very careful. Let us clean ourselves every moment. That is what is called sadhana. To clean ourselves is sadhana. Sadhana is not anything to be attained. Sadhana is not an achievement. Sadhana is a cleansing or cleaning process.

Here is a simple example. You must have heard of Zen Masters. One disciple came to his Master, "Master, I want to learn many things at your Lotus Feet." The master said, "O.K." This disciple stayed with his Master for three years and learned some spirituality. After three years, he said, "Master, I have learned many things from you. What should I

do now?" The master said, "Now, I will send you to a higher man, a greater man, a man superior to me, from whom you can learn more." "Oh, is that so, Master? Is there a man greater than you?" "Yes, I'll give you his address. You go to him."

He (the master) gave the address of a person whom he wanted the disciple to meet. The disciple took this address and left. It was the address of a servant, working in a restaurant in the Holiday Inn Hotel. This fellow (the disciple) went there. "My master sent me to you." That servant responded, "A letter is not required. You can stay here. Don't worry!" So, this fellow stayed there and went on staring at the servant. "What is it that I have to learn from this fellow? He is only a sweeper and he washes utensils every day. He gets up every day in the morning, takes a broomstick, cleans, then washes the utensils in the mornings, afternoons and evenings."

This had been going on for six days. He became fed up and very angry. 'Is this what I'm to learn?' He was very angry and came back to his teacher, the Zen Master. "Master, what the hell have you done? You have betrayed me! You have underestimated me! Sir! Why? I have spent three years at your Lotus Feet. I learned many spiritual things. Now you send me to that servant! What is this?" Then the Master asked him this question: "What did you see there?" "I saw the servant cleaning the vessels, mornings, afternoons, nights, mornings, afternoons, nights. Every day he was only washing and cleaning." The Master said, "That is the teaching that you have to learn from him."

What is the teaching? Clean yourself every moment. Be ever vigilant. See that the dust of the past does not collect. See that the hopes of the future (or the clouds of the hopes of the future) do not gather. Hopes of the future and dust of the past should not be gathered and collected in order to live in the present. Therefore, the teaching of that man was all about cleaning up continuously.

Spirituality wants to ensure that we do not have wrong knowledge. Let us take a look with a clean mind, at whatever is still within us. In addition, let us see clearly what is possible and what more could be possible.

Prof. Anil Kumar brings us more spiritual insights in the next session.

Thank you for your time.

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