

OM SAI RAM

WELCOME TO THIS QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

Q 354, "SPIRITUAL PROGRESSION"

April 10, 2025

The following text contains excerpts taken from Prof. Anil Kumar's book "Seeking Within," pg. 142-147.

Prof. Anil Kumar Kamaraju was chosen by Bhagawan to spread His Message and Mission. He has travelled extensively in India and abroad and has answered countless questions and cleared doubts based on Swami's Divine discourses and his personal interactions with Bhagawan. Most importantly, Prof. Anil Kumar guides us effectively on how to connect to the Inner Sai.

Q. Is surrendering possible only by the Grace of God?

A. Pror. Anil Kumar: Surrender is always total. It can never be partial, it is always complete. God's Grace is always there; our job is to be aware of His Grace. Knock on the door and it shall be opened, ask and help shall be given. When the light is all over, my job is to open my window to let it in.

Surrendering is the simple but profound wisdom of yielding to, rather than opposing the flow of life. To surrender is to accept the present moment unconditionally and without reservation. It doesn't mean to possibly put up with whatever situation you find yourself in and do nothing about it. Nor does it mean to cease making plans or taking positive action.

When there is water and good land, the flowers bloom automatically. You do not have to work for it. Therefore, when there is the water of Love and the land of faith and devotion, the flowers of surrendering happen automatically. We have to take it as a process that happens, not as a process that is done by us. The garden will not announce when it is going to flower, it will simply flower when the time and circumstances are right. Devotion and faith being present and the heart being the land, the flowering of surrender will happen on its own as a consequence.

Q. Do we have to accept our own shadow in order to be able to transcend it?

A. Prof. Anil Kumar: If you have lived long enough, you will know that things "go wrong" quite often. It is at these times that surrender needs to be practised if you want to eliminate pain and sorrow from your life.

Whether you accept it or not, there is duality. Day and night exist without our acceptance. Inner shadows can be transcended if we accept everything that is happening as the will of God, and if we accept that everything in our life is happening for

our own good, for our own enlightenment and for our own advancement. The good and bad in life are only sequences, leading to our own good. Suffering may bring people to this place. Suffering looks as if it is bad but it ends up with the result that you land here, at the feet of Baba, which is good. So, in the end, the suffering that you experienced is for your own good. If we accept with awareness and use wisdom in all situations in life, we will understand that all is God's will and happens for our own good.

Through surrendering, spiritual energy comes into the world. It creates no suffering for you or for others.

Q. In an interview, the guru giving the interview said that spiritual evolution is 75% of the time used in self-observation, looking at where we put our awareness - to the darkness or to the light, etc. But people say, "Oh no! I just want to focus on the Light; I don't want to know all that other side!" Could you comment on that, please?

A. Prof. Anil Kumar: Oh, oh, oh! My friends, all of you could follow the question, I am sure. It is a question of transition. It is a question of evolution. It is a question of a long journey. On the spiritual journey, I am thrilled by the experience at one stage. When I go further along in my spiritual journey, I am in a state of wonder, watching the mystery of Nature. I go further and further. Now I am very excited when I experience the Self, which is the reflection of the cosmic mind.

When I grow still further, I understand that I don't need to go anywhere because I am where I am. There is nothing to reach, nothing to gain, nothing to maintain. I am what I am. I am here already.

However, some people say, "I don't want to be on that sort of journey. I love Him. That is enough for me." Very good. You may not want it, but you are That, whether you want it or not. You are That, and the spiritual journey will take you there.

Here is a simple example: You sit in a train. It is running fast. "I don't want this!" "No, no. If the train stops, you have to get down there." It is not a question of "I don't want." It is a question of spiritual evolution, facing higher and higher levels of awareness.

For instance, when we first come to Baba, what is it that thrills us? It is the system, order and discipline of the ashram that excites us, because this is what we miss everywhere else. Life is undisciplined and disorderly on the outside, so it thrills us when there is some order and discipline.

Then later, what is it that thrills us? The silence! We don't get silence like this anywhere else. Normally out in the world, we are not silent and we are not silent within ourselves. We don't want anybody else to be silent either, because we love to disturb them. Therefore, there is no silence. So the experience of the silence here thrills us.

Then what is it that excites us? Every darshan of Bhagawan: “Aah! I see Him.” Why this reaction? It is because every darshan of Bhagawan makes me forget myself, forget where I am, forget my problems and my ailments, forget my position, forget about everything! Wow! I am lost in ecstasy. That thrills me.

Then what further? Let me do some service. Let me do something. Let me do some *Sadhana* and I will stick to it. Whatever it is that gives great satisfaction, whether individually or in the community or at work, or just meditation, which now thrills me. So finally, you are bliss. You are not separate from bliss.

That’s all the different stations or different stop-overs. Some airlines want you to get off at different places – Bombay, Frankfurt and Chicago - and then take another flight; whereas some flights are non-stop and will take you straight to your destination. Therefore, this spiritual journey is an airline that wants us to change at different places in order to reach the destination.

Q. One of the most important challenges in student life is when you hear about God and various other spiritual topics. Somehow there is some confusion on how to manage them. Could you help me understand this?

A. Prof. Anil Kumar: I personally feel that the one who is sincere, the one who is faithful, the one who is spiritual, righteous and truthful is Swami’s student. Not merely those in His colleges and universities. You cannot find a better student than Chitra Narayan, for that matter. Wow! You cannot find a better student than Sainath Himself. So, where there is dedication, where there is devotion, there is Sai Baba and that one is His devotee.

Coming to the point of how to teach spirituality, I would introduce spirituality to a child in the form of story-telling and drama. To a secondary school student, I would teach him “Education in Human Values.” To a schoolchild, I would say, “Rama fought with Ravana.” To a high school boy, “Truth is Rama, wickedness is Ravana and enthusiasm is Anjaneya.” When he comes to the college level, teach him Educare, which is a still higher level.

These are the different levels of approach. I cannot speak of *Advaita*, Brahman, super-consciousness, *Atmavidya* and *Brahmavidya* to college students. What is spirituality to a college student, to an engineering student, to a professional, to a businessman? Self Confidence is spirituality. Self-satisfaction is spirituality. Self-sacrifice is spirituality. Self-realisation is spirituality. Excellence at work is spirituality

What is spirituality to youngsters? Hard work. To college students? Studies. To post-graduate students? Research, success, academic excellence, human excellence, dynamism, leadership and courage. That is spirituality.

After the age of sixty, when the body does not co-operate so well, when the mind refuses to remember and the eyes do not see clearly and mistake a man for a woman,

or when the ears cannot hear properly, spirituality is *namasmarana*, spirituality is meditation.

So, there are three levels, my dear boy. It is like the mango, which as a tender fruit is very bitter; but the same tender fruit as a bigger mango is rather astringent, fit for mango pickle. When the mango is fully ripe however, it is so sweet. Bitter, astringent, sweet – that same mango has three levels.

It is the same with spirituality; at the child's level, it is stories and dramas; at the youth level, it is leadership, excellence and success. And spirituality at the level of adulthood is meditation - *Karma, bhakti, Gnyana*. Hari Om!

Prof. Anil Kumar will have more inspirational questions and answers for us in the next session.

Thank you for your time,

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