

## QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION,

### Q. 285, CLOSE YOUR EYES, MAN IS USELESS

Om Sri Sai Ram

Prasanthi Sandesh welcomes you to this Question and Answer session.

**Q. 285:**

***Usually when we go to a temple, church or synagogue or to any sacred place, we bow down with due respect and reverence and we close our eyes. This happens everywhere. We stand before the holy shrine and close our eyes. Why? Why should we stand in long queues, wait for hours and when the time comes and we are right in front of the deity, we prefer to close our eyes. Why?***

This is a genuine question indeed!

The first reason for closing our eyes is that in the beginning it will be difficult to see Him on the outside. There are so many forms to look at, that you may get confused. There is so much in the external surroundings and the world is so complicated that you may get lost.

Therefore, it is best to start from the simple, which is yourself. Close your eyes. Then there is only one -- you. It is simple to become acquainted with Him that way. Close your eyes and see Him. He is continuously passing by. He is your consciousness. He is in you, in your essence, but He is continuously slipping by and going ahead. That's how He evolves us.

God is evolution and God is revolution also because sometimes He moves slowly and sometimes He moves very fast. One has to be very alert to keep pace with Him. If you lose your alertness, He will be gone. Once He is gone, you'll never know when you'll come across Him again. So, if we lose our awareness even for one moment, He will be gone to the farthest end of the world. Therefore, one has to remain constantly alert and aware.

But first watch Him inside. It's not that He is not outside. He is there also, because all is His within and without. But first it is easier to understand Him within yourself. Once we can see Him there, we'll be able to see Him everywhere. That is the point.

Once you understand that He is inside you, then open your eyes and see He is present all around you -- in the trees, in the birds, in the man, in the woman, in the rocks, in the rivers, in the mountains, in the clouds.

But in order to see Him everywhere, you must first get introduced to Him. So, the best and easiest possible introduction is to close your eyes and look inside, watch there inside yourself.

God's name is a synonym for life. A strange feeling awakens in you when you become acquainted with God. You cannot explain what it is. You cannot describe it. It is so contradictory, so paradoxical. God is both death and resurrection. He is both the cross and the rebirth.

So the meaning of keeping the eyes closed is so that you can bring your heart and your eyes together and unite them. Only when you unite your eyes with your heart, will you be able to suddenly see the God of all paradoxes. Then you will be able to see Him as the source of all reason, of all life, but also the source of all death.

The important point is that our path is not the path of an austere man or a monk. It is the path of the dancer, the singer, the aesthetic man. His prayer is full of beauty. So God is not a concept in philosophy, but rather the Beloved.

When you reach deeply within yourself, when you touch your own core, your spiritual heart, you have come to the Land of No Separation. There, not only are you with God, but you are also one with Him because you have also become a part of Him. It is He who has expressed Himself as you. Feel fortunate, feel blessed that He has also chosen you to be one of His forms. Kindly note this. He has chosen you to be one of His forms.

Close your eyes and try to catch Him. He is slipping by. If you are stuck somewhere, you'll miss Him. You must be on the move because He is on the move. He is always slipping. He is always moving into the new and into the unknown. If you cling to the known, you'll miss Him. Close your eyes and watch how swiftly His moves! How dancingly He moves!

He is continuously slipping out of the old and into the new. We find that the snake is always moving and leaving its old skin behind. This represents the flow of life energy. So He is like the snake who comes out of his old skin, leaves the old skin behind and slips by.

God is continuously slipping out of history because He is eternity. God is continuously slipping out of that which has already happened because He is not repetitive. If you are clinging to history, you'll miss Him because then you'll be looking at the past and He is always moving into the future. God is the future and the mind is the past. So distance from Him arises when our mind remains in the past.

A religious man is one who has no past, no autobiography and who is continuously becoming new. Each moment he is moving with God and he doesn't bother about what has happened in the past. It is finished.

So, when something is finished, put a full stop on it and never look back. Go on! God is always calling you to keep moving ahead! He is always persuading you to move into new territories of being. From lust to love, from love to prayer! There are also higher realms than prayer and He is constantly moving on. If you want to follow Him, the only way is to be constantly on the move. Be a river, yes! The rivers are right as they keep moving on.

So in regards to this question, we are able to understand the meaning behind the practice of closing our eyes while standing before our chosen God, our chosen deity, in a temple. That's the answer for now.

Now we have many more questions and we shall try to answer them one after the other.

There are people who say that life has no meaning at all. Life has no purpose. There are famous authors like Jean Paul Sartre who say that man is but a useless passion, meaningless and futile. Yes, Sartre would be correct if there was nothing beyond man. If there is nothing transcendental in man, then Sartre is right.

However, in regards to all things, the meaning in life always comes from a higher source. The meaning is never in the thing by itself. It always comes from beyond itself.

For example, you can watch a seed. The seed by itself is meaningless unless it sprouts. Once it sprouts, it becomes meaningful. So the tree is the meaning for the seed. Thus the seed exists for a certain reason. Its existence is not accidental. It is meaningful because it had to give birth. It has to create something that is beyond itself, something that is bigger than the seed itself. Something that's more comprehensive.

So then, what is the meaning of the tree? Again the tree has no meaning unless the tree flowers. The meaning of the tree is in its flowering. When it flowers, yes, there is meaning. The tree has become a mother. The tree has given birth. The tree has become significant. It was not there without any purpose. The flower is the proof. It was there meaningfully, not accidentally. It was there waiting for the flower.

Now what is the meaning of the flower unless the fragrance is released into the winds? Once the fragrance is released, the flower has become meaningful. It has served its purpose. And so life goes on like this. Therefore, the meaning is always found in the higher state. The meaning is always beyond, so the meaning is transcendental.

If there is nothing beyond man, then Sartre is absolutely right. Then, man is a useless passion, running here and there, but he is doomed to be a failure. He cannot reach anywhere. He cannot arrive because there's nowhere to arrive. He cannot become more because there's nothing beyond him. He cannot sprout, he cannot flower and he cannot release his fragrance. So, if a man ends with himself, then man is certainly useless. However, man does not end with himself! He is growing, evolving! Man is becoming, developing, in a continuous transcendence. Yes.

Friedrich Nietzsche has said, "That day will be an unfortunate day when man will not aspire to go higher. When man will not aspire to transcend himself, that day will be the most unfortunate. When the air of man's desire will not be moving higher than man, when there will be no target to reach, when man will be confined, closed in himself, that will be the most unfortunate day!"

It seems that the modern man is coming closer and closer to that unfortunate day. That doomsday is coming closer and closer every moment. Sartre is going to be true if we allow him to be true. If you allow him by remaining a seed and you don't sprout, if you allow him by remaining a tree and you don't flower, if you allow him by remaining a flower and you don't release your fragrance, then of course life will be hell. Life will be just absurd and not worth living. Then, to be born will be to be born in misery. Then death will be a blessing and life will be a curse!

But it's not so! It depends on you whether life will be meaningful or meaningless. It depends on you! The whole point of religion is to understand that meaning is not already given, but it has to be created. That meaning is not already transferred to you. Only the potential, only the possibility, only the opportunity is there for you. You can flower into a meaningful existence or you can wither away uselessly.

The responsibility is great! If you don't do it, nobody else can do it for you. You cannot rely on your servants. Life is so valuable that you cannot rely on anybody else. You'll have to take control of the whole situation and you have to take the responsibility on your shoulders.

Thank you for your time.