

16. The Will Of Siva

Jonnalagadda SathyaNarayanamurthy spoke on fine topics in a fine language, but however nicely a person may talk and however great his skill in the use of language, he who can clarify the truth of God has never yet been born; nor will he be ever born. One can only relate what one has felt or experienced through His Grace. He who has touched the very base will not come again to this base world.

Of course, they show the Lord in books, illustrations, films, and pictures, as well as on the stage. But who among the writers or painters or actors has seen Him? The epics and *Puranas* relate only an infinitesimal fraction of His Glory; they set limits to the limitless, for words have a limit. Only one endowed with a vision of sacred knowledge, of union with God, or of selfless devotion for God can have a glimpse of that Effulgence. The rest only mislead by their claims of authenticity. Those who know will not speak; those who speak do not know, cannot know.

You all recite the verse in the *Gita* that says that the Lord will create a Form for Himself and come into human affairs whenever righteousness (*dharma*) is in grave peril. You have repeated it so often that it has become meaningless jargon. It has been quoted so often and by so many that it has lost all significance. Only those that are proficient in the scriptures can recognise an *Avatar* and test the credentials; only they can taste the joy showered by the Incarnation.

The *Puranas* and ancient legends and history describe the Lord in manifold ways according to the devoted individual (*vyakthi*) and the power (*sakthi*) that is described. But the *Vedas* and Scriptures (*Sastras*) do not indulge in such changing moods; they deal with fundamentals. Sometimes, in the confusion of interpretation and retelling, people miss the road. When the blind lead the blind, both are likely to fall into the well. Then the wise intervene and demarcate the road along safe lines.

God is beyond understanding

SathyaNarayanamurthy referred to Dr. Bhagavantam and the soaring claims of science. But religion begins where science ends. In science, when one door is opened and a passage is revealed, ten doors are discovered in that very passage, and each one of them has to be opened in turn. Science transforms things, rearranges them, studies their composition, regroupes their plans, and releases the energy that lies latent in them. But I create the things themselves —and they are as lasting as any that is found in Nature!

That is this, but this is not that. Nature is Brahman mistaken to be nature, on account of the delusion of Name and Form. But Brahman is not nature; it is only the rope that was mistaken to be the snake. When wisdom dawns, when light illumines, the snake disappears and the rope alone remains. The Lord is sweetness, you are sugar; He is fire, you are fuel; He has no heart; every heart where He is installed is His.

Narada, who moves always by and with the Lord, feels that God is beyond his understanding; Balarama, who came as Krishna's own brother, could not fathom His personality. How then can you grasp My Mystery? How can those who strut about in well-ironed bush coats fathom Truth? Yet, I know some here who sold away their faith to hollow men and started talking about My dress and My hair! If you dare seek My Truth, come, surrender unto Me. Do not teach treason to your friends and to other seekers. Dress and manners have become polished now, but

the inner man has deteriorated in virtue and faith!

Only yearning of the heart pleases the Lord

Ravana and Hiranyaksha were experts in the *Vedic* ritual of sacrifice with pious repetition of sacred mantras, but they never surrendered their ego to God. They did not pluck the weeds of sensory impulses from the fields of their hearts, so they harvested a crop of thorns. It is the yearning of the heart that pleases the Lord —not the grandeur of the ceremonial sacrifice, not the pomp of ritual worship, not the sum of all the miles you covered in pilgrimage, not the cost of all the articles you have given in charity. You need not even pray aloud, unless of course you picture Him as living far away in Dwaraka or Kailas. If you have installed Him in your heart, He will Himself emerge when you yearn for Him. Prahlada felt so, and since no fire could burn Him or no fall could break His bones, Prahlada also suffered no harm!

Ambarisha performed a sacrifice, but at the crucial moment the animal intended for the sacrifice escaped! The priests ordained that to make amends for this sinful neglect, a human being had to be offered as substitute to the Gods! The king promised 1000 cows in exchange for a son, but which father will send a son to death, even when 1000 cows are given in exchange? There were also other conditions: the king's messengers should not ask anyone for the son; they should not commit the sin of equating 1000 cows as equal to human being. The father also should not break the sad offer to the son; the offer to immolate himself must come unasked from the son, without any prompting or persuasion. Only such a son that would be accepted by the Gods.

An end that even saints would envy

Sunashepa heard the news by himself and, approaching his father, said he would go, and gladly. For what greater good fortune could a mortal expect than to ascend to heaven through the sacrificial flame?

(I am reminded of a strange answer that a little girl, aged nine, gave Me when I asked her, “Well, what do you want from Me?” She said, “Baba, let me merge in You.” In a few weeks, she passed away and her wish was fulfilled. The child breathed her last asking that her face be turned to the wall so that she might look on Baba's picture when she died. She had a wonderful end, an end that could be envied by saints.)

God likes such pure souls who come gladly to merge in Him. Some people say, “Oh, it is the Dasara Festival and lakhs and lakhs of people throng there. And they pour lakhs (100,000) and lakhs of rupees there.” Well, what they give is disregard (*alakshyam*), not lakhs (*laksham*)! My hand stretches out to receive only when a pure heart full of love (*prema*) is offered; on all other occasions, it gives, never takes. People with poison in their hearts, barren of love and service — let them feel shame and resolve to cleanse themselves from now on.

The Lord will never disown a devotee

Sunashepa persuaded his father that his wish to proceed to the sacrifice and offer himself was legitimate and approvable, and he left for the capital. On the way, he went to his maternal uncle, Viswamitra, who tried to keep the boy away from the sacrifice. “This is all just foolish superstition; can anyone substitute a man for a cow?” Viswamitra asked. Sunashepa replied that all men are cattle, for until discrimination and detachment dawn, they are but animals. So, in spite of his uncle's arguments, arguments like the ones used by some to dissuade persons from coming to Puttappathi, Sunashepa managed to reach the the place of sacrifice. In the same way as the lights

before us are lit when a switch is moved up at Penukonda, when the Lord decides on something, it has to happen so.

Well, the Lord is not a rock or a stone; His Heart melted at the plight of the boy. Indra appeared in the sacrificial fire and departed, showering blessings on his head. It was Indra who had carried away the original cow and elaborated all this plot, to bring Sunashepa and his greatness to light and to bless him.

The Lord is Divine Love personified (*Premaswarupam*), believe Me. The earthly father or mother will show love only as long as you obey them; start going against their wishes and they will go to the extent of even disowning you! The Lord will never disown, for He is your very core, your very basic Reality. You derive from Him the fruits of your labour, of your meditation, repetition of the Lord's Name, and worship; faith will grow into sacrifice; you will feel that you are instruments with no individuality save as prompted by Him.

The one respectful obeisance (*namaskaram*) you do, do it with devotion. That is enough. You do not do even that; you do it so callously, so indifferently, so automatically. When you fold both your hands and bring them together, feel that you are offering at the Feet all the actions of the five organs of action and the five organs of perception as indicated by the ten fingers. Again, the purpose of *namaskaram* is to touch the Feet of the Lord. The negative pole, the power of illusion (*mayasakthi*), and the positive pole, supreme divine power (*Mahasakthi*) have to meet in order to produce a spiritual current that will flow through you.

Do not allow your faith to falter

Come, I am the repairer of broken hearts and damaged four-fold instruments of mind, intellect, memory, and ego. I am like the smith, who welds, mends, and sets right. Ten years ago, a devotee prayed to Me in song, "My heart has gone dry, my lamp has gone out, my path is dark, my brain is confused. Lord, make me fit again for life's arduous journey." The Lord will be waiting outside the door of the worship room of the devotee, anxious to fulfil their wish! Verily, one who has the Lord as His Servant—that one is the real Lord!

Only do not allow your faith to falter. Do not become a slave to others; no, not even to God. Test. Test, examine, experience. When you find God, demand as of right. But before you get that right, you should appear for the examination and pass, is it not? I set tests not as a punishment or because I enjoy putting you into trouble but just to give you the joy of passing!

Bhadhram here was asked by his guru, Deekshithadas, to go along the streets for some years and beg for food. He had enough to eat, but he had to do it as the customary and legitimate duty of a servant. And Bhadhram did it quite gladly. It is a training in the control and conquest of the ego; you have to take it as such and not give up the fruit, afraid of the exertion that the cultivation of the plant requires.

Also, do not yield to despair or become dejected. It is My resolve (*sankalpa*) that you progress in spiritual development. I have collected all of you and I shall lay the concrete foundation and build the walls and erect the roof and complete the mansion. My resolve never proves ineffective.

The story of a Divine Plan

I shall tell you a story of Will of the Supreme Lord (*Iswara Sankalpa*) and how nothing could stop its realisation. Siva was every day discoursing on Kailas to sages and saints and celestial beings in the evening hours. One day, Parvathi suggested that a Hall be constructed for accommodating them all, so that they could all listen

without being affected by the constant fog and mist and cold winds. Siva did not have the will to put it up, but Parvathi insisted that her idea must be implemented. The astrologer who was consulted before the foundations were dug said that “The stars forecast that the Hall will be consumed by fire, since Saturn is not propitious from the very beginning.” Nevertheless, the Hall was completed.

Now, that set a problem for the Couple. Siva proposed to ask Saturn for the favour of saving the Hall from his anger, though He doubted whether the planet, reputed for his inevitable ire, would ever agree. Parvathi felt deeply hurt, and she resolved not to give the tiny tyrant, Saturn, the credit for destroying the Hall that She had got built. She swore that instead of giving him the chance to declare arrogantly that he had set fire to the Hall, she would herself set fire to it. But Siva asked her to first await the outcome of His appeal to Saturn, for He was Himself proceeding to his headquarters! He told Her, “If Saturn agrees to exempt the Hall from his anger, I shall come back and report the good news to you; but if he is adamant, I shall raise My Hand and twirl this drum. On hearing that signal, you may set fire to the Hall and rob Saturn of the credit for doing so.”

The role of a tool in the Divine Plan

Parvathi was ready with a burning torch in anticipation of the signal, so that there would not be a moment's chance for the wicked planet to execute his nefarious plan of revenge. Saturn, however, agreed to Siva's request; he said that he would not bum down the Hall in Kailas, and Siva was happy at his reply. So, when Saturn prayed for one small boon, Siva agreed and asked him what it was. It seems Saturn had never before seen the famous Dance of Siva, which all the stellar divinities were extolling, and Saturn craved that Siva may show him a step or two. Siva readily assented and started the *Thandava* (frantic dance of Siva), raising His hand and sounding the drum! Listening to the signal, Parvathi applied the torch and the Hall was, as per the Will of Siva, burnt to ashes! Divine Will must be fulfilled! Saturn was just a tool in the Divine Plan.

About the conjunction of eight planets that is scaring you all now, if you have divine blessings (*anugraha*), what can the planets (*grahas*) do? If you have gold, that is enough; you can get made all varieties of jewels. Ask for and secure gold—that is all that you need. The astronomical junction of planets between February 2 and 5 next year is being made much of by the astrologers and calendar-minded *brahmins*, and they are reaping a rich harvest by creating panic and suggesting various counter measures.

Of course, it is good to give things in charity, to pray to the Gods, and to perform sacrifices; but do those things for their own sake, not with a view to escape the eight planets! Do them as you should, at all times, not because of this temporary fear. Do not give way to panic. Nothing will happen between February 2 and 5. You will all be coming happily and full of joy for Sivarathri to Puttaparthi, let Me assure you. All talk of annihilation is just a scare; do not lose courage.

Prasanthi Nilayam, 1961-10-17

Righteousness (*dharma*) is the root of the world, says the sacred text; so, as Krishna said, when *dharma* declines, the Lord incarnates as Man. Well, the *Veda* is the root of *dharma*, says sacred text. *Dharma* is the fruit of *Veda*, which is the Tree. Now, *Veda* itself is getting dried up! So, fostering *Veda* is one of the tasks of the *Avatar*.

Sathya Sai Baba