

## Become Deserving of God's Love

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All people aspire for easy time, high position. and prosperity in life.  
Few aspire for good intellect, wisdom. and good character.  
What else is there to be conveyed to this congregation of noble souls?  
(Telugu Poem)

Only the experience of  
the *Atma* is permanent

### Dear Students!

In this vast world, every living being desires happiness that is eternal. Where can we attain this happiness from? Beauty is happiness, and happiness is the nectarine essence of life. Which objects are beautiful in this world? A number of objects attract people in various ways. You think it is the beauty of the objects that attracts. But beauty is temporary, whether it is in human beings, birds, animals, or things.

For example, this is a rose. It looks so beautiful. Its beauty gives happiness. But how long will its beauty last? It may last till today or tomorrow. Thereafter, all its petals will fall down and it will lose its beauty. When it loses its beauty, it can no longer give you happiness. Therefore, in this world, you can never find permanent beauty and permanent happiness.

Everlasting happiness can be attained only from God. Only God is permanent in this

world; the rest of it is all temporary, like passing clouds. *Anityam asukham lokam* (this world is temporary and full of misery). How can you experience eternal happiness in this ephemeral world, which is devoid of happiness? If you want to experience eternal happiness, you have to take refuge in God, who is the embodiment of happiness. God is the embodiment of beauty. You can derive eternal happiness by contemplating on the beautiful form of God.

Therefore, take refuge in God. Only then can you experience eternal happiness. You can become immortal when you experience everlasting happiness. But people today consider the temporary happiness that they get from the world as permanent happiness. Adi Sankara therefore cautioned man:

*Ma Kuru Dhana Jana Yauvana Garvam,  
Harathi Nimeshath Kalah Sarvam.*

Do not be proud of your wealth, progeny, and youth;

The tide of time may destroy them in a moment.

How long will the pride of youth, money, etc., last? It is all momentary.

Once, a student went to a palmist. Reading his palm, the palmist exclaimed, "What a good fate line of wealth you have! My dear, you are going to be a very wealthy person." On hearing this, the student became very happy. On reading his palm further, the palmist said,

“My dear, you will be highly educated.” The student’s joy knew no bounds. The palmist also said, “You will earn a good name and fame.” The student was ecstatic. After this, the palmist was silent for some time, looking very pensive.

“Sir, what are you thinking? Have you anything else to say?” asked the student.

The palmist said, “You have a very short span of life.” On hearing this, the student was totally crestfallen.

One may be very wealthy, highly educated and may attain great name and fame. But what is the use if one does not have a long life? Similarly, a person may experience any type of temporary happiness, but unless they experience eternal happiness, they will remain disappointed. The happiness you get from this world is not permanent.

Gautam Buddha got up in the middle of night, looked at his wife and son, and thought of his kingdom. Then he said to himself, “How long will everything last in this world? The happiness derived from these temporary objects is not permanent. I must attain the permanent happiness of *Nirvana* (liberation).” Having resolved thus, he at once renounced everything.

A person who wants to experience eternal happiness in this temporary world should lead a life with care and caution. Desire for permanent happiness leads one to *nivritti* (inward path) while desire for worldly happiness takes man to *pravritti* (outward path). Therefore, you should make efforts to experience permanent happiness. Though a person today is highly intelligent and educated, they are unable to realise this truth.

Pain and pleasure are common to humans and other creatures

When the fierce *Mahabharata* war was being waged, Sage Vyasa noticed a small worm running away with great speed. He questioned

the worm, “Why are you running away so fast?” He granted the faculty of speech to the worm and asked for a reply.

The worm replied, “Swami, very soon, Arjuna’s chariot is coming this side with great speed. Feeling the tremors of the earth, I have become fear-stricken. I must reach home before the chariot comes this way. That is why I am running away.”

Vyasa was surprised to hear this. He asked, “You are such a tiny creature. How come you also have so much love for life?”

The worm replied, “Swami, whether we are big or small, the life principle is the same in all creatures.

A person may be highly educated, intelligent, and great, but the happiness, comforts, and worldly pleasures the person experiences are the same as we experience. It is not the form that is important. Every being, whether big or small, loves its life. All other creatures experience the same type of worldly pleasure that man experiences. Just as a person feels happy on eating delicious food, we derive the same type of happiness when we eat tasty food. Just as a person feels happy to raise a family, we feel the same.”

It was an eye-opening experience for Sage Vyasa. He said to himself, “Look, this worm appears to be a tiny creature, but it has told a profound truth.”

Every living being experiences the same type of pain and pleasure. There is no difference between humans and other creatures in this respect. Both experience the same type of happiness and sorrow. What separates humans from other creatures is their intelligence. If you find a person weeping, ask “Why are you weeping?” because sorrow is unnatural for humans. But do you ask a happy person, “Why are you not weeping?” No, because happiness is natural for humans and sorrow is unnatural.

Today you consider what is unnatural for people as natural and what is natural as unnatural. Since people today are not able to understand what is natural and what is unnatural to them, they are deluded to think there is so much difference between human beings and other living beings. There is no difference between the experiences of pleasure and pain; there is only difference in *upadhi* (form). You may think that smaller creatures have small pain and big creatures have big pain, or the pain experienced by a human being is much more compared to the pain of other creatures. This is a great mistake. The taste of a drop of water from a vast ocean is the same as that of the ocean itself. You may think there is a very small quantity of salt in a drop of water from the ocean. The quantity of salt may be small but the quality of saline taste is the same as that of the ocean. Similarly, the experience of pleasure and pain is the same for all living beings.

### **Lead your life with equal-mindedness**

How should a person conduct themselves in the world? As the *Bhagavad Gita* teaches, *Sukhadukhe samekruthwa labhalabhau jayajayau* (one should remain equal-minded in happiness and sorrow, gain and loss, victory and defeat). One should consider pleasure and pain, praise and censure alike. That is the state of true yoga. *Samatvam yogamuchyate* (equanimity is called true yoga). Sage Vyasa propagated to the world the lesson he learnt from the worm and exhorted people to develop equal-mindedness.

Do not observe differences on the basis of form. It is not the form but the qualities and virtues that are important. Observance of equal-mindedness is the main quality of a human being. People today attach a lot of importance to the form and think that it is the ultimate feeling one should develop. Hunger is the same for the mother and her newborn child. Mother eats rice and the child drinks milk. Food is different but the experience of

hunger is the same for both. In this manner, these experiences are common to all beings.

Sage Vyasa was a great yogi and one of wisdom who codified the *Vedas*, but even he could not understand this truth till his encounter with the worm. One can learn many lessons even from small creatures. Nature itself teaches many great ideals.

One cannot have the experience of eternal happiness merely by reading sacred texts or by listening to the teachings of preceptors. One cannot even receive it as a gift from elders. One should exercise discrimination with proper enquiry in every matter to experience this. One should enquire what is real and what is unreal in the chores of daily life. One should differentiate between the eternal and the ephemeral, *kshetra* and *kshetrajna* (field and knower of field). The human body is *kshetra* and the consciousness is *kshetrajna*.

How can you recognise this consciousness? You can recognise consciousness only with the help of this body. The body is the basis of this. Consciousness cannot be seen by the naked eye. That which cannot be seen by the naked eye can be experienced only by turning the vision inward. This is called meditation. It is the spiritual practice in which you close your eyes and try to experience that which cannot be seen by the naked eye.

It is a normal practice for people to go to temples. Why do they go to temples? You go to temples to see God and offer your salutations to Him. But once you go to the temple and stand before the idol, you tend to close your eyes and offer your salutations to God. Having travelled a long distance to reach the temple, why should you close your eyes on seeing the idol of the deity? Why can't you feast your eyes on the blissful form of God? The reason is that the idol is the visible manifestation of invisible God. The bliss that emanates from the idol is invisible.

Therefore, you can experience the invisible happiness with the help of the invisible wisdom with which you are endowed. Consciousness is present in every person. It is a witness to all that one experiences. The boy who spoke earlier referred to this.

### **Experience Atma by contemplating on God**

Once, while conversing with his ministers and courtiers after his supper one night, King Janaka felt a little tired and retired to his bedroom. The queen and royal servants served the king in many ways, and he fell asleep. Seeing this, the queen gestured to the servants to go out while she herself sat near the king. After some time, the king suddenly got up and started repeating loudly, “Is this true or that?” The queen was put to great anxiety and asked the king many questions. But without answering her, he kept asking, “Is this true or that?”

The queen sent out servants to call the ministers. The ministers came and asked the king what his doubt was. But the king kept on giving only one reply, “Is this true or that?” The ministers then called Sage Vasishtha. The sage asked the king, “Oh king! What has happened?” Even to the question of Sage Vasishtha, the king gave the same reply. Sage Vasishtha closed his eyes and meditated. Since he was endowed with the knowledge of all the three periods of time, past, present, and future, he came to know the reality.

He said, “The king saw a dream in his sleep. What he saw in the dream was like this: He had lost his kingdom and was wandering in a forest. In the forest, he suffered from acute hunger and started shouting, ‘I am hungry, I am hungry.’ A group of thieves were eating something there. On seeing him, they thought, what a pity, this fellow looks like a king! And they offered him some food. When the king extended his hands to receive the food offered by the thieves, an eagle swooped down and snatched it away from his hands.

Since he was not able to protect even the food that had been given to him, he started shouting all the more loudly, ‘I am hungry, I am hungry.’ At this point, the king awoke from sleep. As he got up from his sleep, he saw that he was lying on his couch in the bedroom of his palace; while in his dream, he was wandering in a forest, shouting, ‘I am hungry, I am hungry.’ He therefore wondered what was true, this or that!” The sage made this fact known to everybody present there.

Sage Vasishtha addressed the king and made him aware of the reality, saying, “Oh king! Neither this is true nor that is true. What is true is you. You were there in your dream, and you are there in your waking state also. But the dream does not exist in the waking state and the waking state does not exist in dream. What exists in both states, in dream as well as in waking, that is true.” In the true state of renunciation, life is just a dream. Knowing that this dream can vanish any moment, one should lead his life without attachment.

What is the inner meaning of this story? Whatever you experience in this world will ultimately disappear in the womb of time one day or the other. Only the experience of the *Atma* is permanent. It is possible to have the experience of the *Atma* only by contemplating on God. One can experience eternal happiness by contemplating on God, who is true and eternal. That is why God is described as *nirgunam*, *niranjnam*, *sanathana nikanam*, *nitya*, *suddha*, *buddha*, *mukta*, and *nirmala swarupinam* (attributeless, unsullied, final abode, eternal, pure, enlightened, free, and embodiment of sacredness).

You can attain eternal happiness only from God. All other experiences can never give you permanent happiness. When you are hungry, you go to the canteen, pay two rupees, eat chapatis, and satiate your hunger. When your hunger is satiated, you feel happy. But how long does your happiness last? You be-

come hungry again after two hours. Therefore, the happiness resulting from eating chapatis is only short-lived. You have to eat again to satiate your hunger. All worldly happiness is temporary and ephemeral. That is why Adi Sankara said,

*Punarapi Jananam Punarapi Maranam,  
Punarapi Janani Jathare Sayanam,  
Iha Samsare Bahu Dustare,  
Kripayapare Pahi Murare.*

Oh Lord! I am caught up in this cycle of birth and death.

Time and again, I am experiencing the agony of staying in the mother's womb.

It is very difficult to cross this ocean of worldly life.

Please take me across this ocean and grant me liberation.

Everything in this world is temporary, like passing clouds. No one knows when one will have to leave the body. The body is ephemeral, like a water bubble and, the mind is restless, like a mad monkey. Therefore, do not follow the body, do not follow the mind, follow the conscience. Your conscience is your witness. When you follow the fickle mind and the temporary body, the results are also bound to be temporary.

In this temporary world, you may experience some happiness if you have wealth and other means of comfort, but even that is not guaranteed. There are many people in this world who have everything, yet they cannot experience happiness. Dhritharashtra had enormous wealth and royal comforts, yet he lacked happiness. Though he had a soft bed of feathers to sleep on, his mind was restless and fiery like a volcano. These physical comforts cannot give true happiness. If one has money, one may buy an air conditioner. However, the air conditioner will cool only the body, not the mind. Contemplation on God alone will cool the mind.

You may have all types of conveniences in life. But they cannot calm the restless mind. Arjuna said to Krishna, "*Chanchalam hi manah Krishna pramathi balavadrudham* (the mind is very unsteady, turbulent and powerful). This mind is highly fickle, stubborn, and dangerous. How am I to experience happiness with this?" Krishna replied, "Oh simpleton, do as I say. Do not follow your mind. Do not think of your mind at all. Ignore it completely. Always think of God."

Arjuna asked, "Swami, how can I think of You when I am fighting in the battlefield?" Krishna said, "*Maam Anusmara Yuddhyacha* (remember Me and fight the battle). You may be in the thick of the battle, but it is only your body that is fighting. What does your mind do? Focus your mind on Me."

When you contemplate on God in all situations and under all circumstances, you will certainly experience eternal happiness. You can do it by all means; there is no doubt about it. There is enough power in your mind to do this.

### **See God in everyone**

Everyone is endowed with divine power. It is a mistake to think that only some people have it and others do not have. Right from a toddler to an old man, from a pauper to a millionaire, from a tiny insect to a big animal, it is present in everyone. There may be differences in form, but Divinity is present in all in equal measure. Discharge your duty under all circumstances. Do your duty sincerely. Whatever you see, consider it as divine. When you see with worldly feelings, you will see only the physical and ephemeral world. Therefore, see the world with divine feelings.

The Upanishads say: *Sahasra Seersha Purusha Sahasraksha Sahasra Pad* (The Cosmic Being has thousands of heads, eyes, and feet). All heads are His, all forms are His. When you have such a feeling, how happy and peaceful you become! On the other hand, if

you observe differences on the basis of form, you will have a dual mind and lose your peace. This duality is the main cause for lack of peace. A man with dual mind is half blind. Dualism makes us blind to the truth. Develop the feeling that you and I are one and consider the universe as the form of God.

As the *Vedas* say: *Sarvam Vishnumayam jagat* (Lord Vishnu pervades the entire universe). The divine power is the same in everyone. Therefore, never criticise, ridicule, or hate anyone. See God in everyone, constantly contemplate on God, and surrender yourself to Him. Only then can you get eternal happiness. If you want to attain eternal happiness, you must take refuge in God. If you desire only physical and worldly happiness, then you are bound to suffer.

The *Ramayana* teaches many subtle truths. Ravana was highly powerful and one of great penance. Yet, he could not control his desire. He wanted to exploit Nature, ignoring the Creator. Sita, being the daughter of mother earth, symbolises Nature. Whose property is Nature? It is the property of God. If you want to possess Nature without God's Will, what will be your fate?

Ravana wanted to possess Sita, who was the wife of Rama. What was his fate ultimately? He lost his kingdom, his kith and kin, and ultimately met his doom. If you try to steal someone's property, you are sure to come to grief. When you attain God's grace, then only do you have right over His property. Because of his desire and ego, Ravana wanted to take away Sita forcibly from Rama. This led to his downfall.

What is the main basis of the *Ramayana*? The main cause of *Ramayana* is *kama* and *krodha* (desire and anger). Manthara is the symbol of anger, and Surpanakha represents desire. Manthara and Surpanakha are responsible for the entire story of the *Ramayana*. Manthara became the cause of Rama's exile to the for-

est. Surpanakha was responsible for Sita's abduction to Lanka.

These two characters form the entire basis of the *Ramayana*. Similarly, desire and anger are responsible for all the sufferings of humanity.

People think they are suffering because of the influence of nine grahas (planets). In fact, these planets do not cause suffering to anyone; they only discharge their duties. However, two planets are responsible for all your sufferings. They are desire and anger, which are very powerful and cause immense suffering to humanity. What should you do to control these? You should develop friendship with God. God alone is your true and permanent friend.

Child Prahlada told his father, "Father, you may have the power to conquer all the worlds in a moment, but what have achieved when you are unable to conquer your own senses and *chitta* (mind-stuff)? You are deluded to think that you have achieved so much. In fact, you have achieved nothing. How can the one who has surrendered to the inner foes achieve anything in life?" In this manner, Prahlada taught a lesson to his father.

You have to subjugate your inner enemies. How can you subjugate them? It is possible only by attaining the grace of God. Many have no experience of Divinity. However, many noble souls achieved great powers with the help of prayer and penance. When you become the recipient of God's love, you can conquer the entire world. Therefore, you should become deserving of His love. Time is God. Sanctify your time and redeem your life by contemplating on God and serving Him.

(Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the *bhajan*, "*Prema Mudita Manase Kaho ...*")

– From Bhagavan's Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall on 22 July 1996.