

21. YOU ARE GOD YOURSELF

Date: 25 Dec
2003

Occasion: Christmas
Celebrations

Place: Prasanthi
Nilayam

***For the sake of young Prahlada,
For the desperate elephant king,
For the infant Dhruva, steadfast in devotion
For the indigent Kuchela, prolific in family, pauper in substance,
The lotus-eyed Vishnu, extolled by the Vedas,
The ever compassionate one of manifold bounties conferred:
Take all these together, the Lord of Lords is now incarnate,
The embodiment of love and compassion of all the above,
And more.***

(Telugu Poem)

Embodiments of Love!

Where is God? When does He incarnate? Where does He incarnate? These are the questions that are troubling the minds of people today. God is omnipresent. All are the embodiments of God. Today, people attribute various names and forms to God like Rama, Krishna and Jesus, and celebrate their birthdays. Truly speaking, can there be a birthday for God? No. To think that God took birth on a particular day in a year is a sign of ignorance. God is in the form of breath in every man. 'Soham', this symbolises the process of inhalation and exhalation. 'So' means 'That' (God), 'Ham' stands for 'I' (individual). Though there are two words, namely God and individual, there is no difference between them. They are one and the same. God in fact has no birth. He does not need to achieve any goals. However, in order to instill faith in the minds of people, He incarnates. If there is birth, there has to be death too. But, God is beyond birth and death. He has neither a beginning nor an end. To think there is a birthday for God is only your imagination. Devotees limit God to a physical frame, worship Him and celebrate His birthdays. That is all a figment of their imagination and does not correspond to the truth.

Every day, in this world, many are born and many die. What is meant by birth and death? To assume a body is birth and to cast off the same is death. It is out of illusion that man experiences the dualities of birth and death, whereas God transcends both. Sarvatah Panipadam Tat Sarvathokshi Siromukham, Sarvatah Sruthimalloke Sarvamavruthya *Tishthati* (with hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth and ears pervading everything, He permeates the entire universe). It is out of ignorance that man is caught in the cycle of birth and death. Birth and death are caused by the Will of God.

God is the very personification of love. He is present in all beings in the

form of the life-breath. Since ancient times, people have made concerted efforts to understand the mystery of birth and death. One need not go that far to understand this mystery. The body which we have assumed makes us experience it every moment. The process of inhalation symbolises birth and exhalation death. Man is unable to understand the inner significance of this breathing process. What is it that man is supposed to do, to escape from the cycle of birth and death? He should develop love more and more. But, today man does not love his fellow human beings even. That does not mean that he lacks love. There is love in him but he is unable to experience it. He should attach value to the principle of love and not merely to individuals.

When we inhale ('So'), the life principle enters our body and when we exhale ('Ham'), it goes out. Every moment, this process of inhalation and exhalation reminds us of our inherent divinity (I am God). So long as there is life-breath, the body is considered to be Sivam (auspicious). Once the life-breath ebbs away, it becomes Savam (corpse). Both birth and death are related to the body and not to the life principle. Many changes take place between birth and death in a mysterious way. It is God who is responsible for all these. But some people deny the existence of God and waste their time in vain argumentation. God DOES exist. He neither comes nor goes. He is present everywhere at all times. Man experiences birth and death because of his body attachment. He will be released from the cycle of birth and death only when he gives up body attachment and surrenders himself completely to the Will of God.

Oh God, I offer the sacred heart to You which You have given me. What else can I offer at Your Lotus Feet? I pray that You accept my humble offering.

(Telugu Poem)

Birth and death arise out of illusion. Every day in this world, many beings are born and many die. Birth and death happen according to the time and circumstances. Between birth and death, man gets deluded by the physical body and develops various relationships at the physical level. He identifies himself with the body and gets carried away by the feeling of I and mine. This is a grave mistake. So long as the body lasts, you are related to so and so. Once the body perishes, what happens to your relationship? True relationship lies at the Atmic level and not at the physical level. Prior to birth who is related to whom? What happens after death? In fact, both birth and death are the results of *bhrama* (delusion) because of which you are unable to realise Brahma (Divinity). As we are enmeshed in this worldliness, we are unable to comprehend the transcendental principle.

True spiritual practice lies in understanding one's true identity. One should enquire, "Who am I"? All the spiritual practices are meant to make you realise who you really are. Everyone uses the term 'I' while introducing himself. It means that the principle of 'I' (Self) present in you

is the same as the one in others. But man is unable to understand this oneness. He is carried away by the differences based on physical body. Consequently, he is giving room to conflicts and unrest.

Embodiments of Love!

Birth and death are related to the body and not to the individual soul. Mind is responsible for both. Everything is man's own making. Life is a dream. How can anything that appears in a dream be true? It is all a mere illusion. So long as you are immersed in this *bhrama* (delusion), you cannot have the vision of Brahma. It is only when you break the shackles of illusion, can you experience the reality.

You can understand your true identity by observing your breathing process. But man is not interested in such an easy and simple path. He is taking to rough and difficult paths and is ultimately getting frustrated. So long as there is a thorn in the flesh, it hurts. Body attachment is like a thorn which is the cause of all suffering. Once you give up body attachment, you will know your true Self. You suffer because you identify yourself with the body. It is but an illusion. That is why Sankaracharya said:

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

(From birth to birth
From death to death
From womb to womb
Tarrying a while
Such is the sojourn
Of this transient life,
Oh destroyer of the demon Mura,
Be my boatman
On this turbulent ocean
By your bounteous grace.)

One need not undertake intense spiritual practices to cross the ocean of Samsara. All that one has to do is to contemplate on God incessantly. Though God is within, man is unable to realise Him. In the dream state, man may experience death and feel sad about it. When he wakes up, he will heave a sigh of relief realising that what he saw was only a dream. Then who was the one who died in the dream? It was just a creation of the mind. Similarly, even in the waking state, whatever man experiences is a creation of the mind. My father, my mother, my wife, my children, etc., all such feelings arise out of illusion. They do not correspond to the reality. It is because of illusion that man develops physical relationship and ultimately subjects himself to suffering. When man develops pure and

unsullied love, he will not experience pain or suffering. Love for the physical body is false and fleeting. Love for the Self is true and eternal. In order to understand the truth of your identity, you should enquire within.

Once Sankaracharya was proceeding to the river Ganga along with his disciples. On the way, he found a person sitting under a tree and repeating *Dukrun Karane, Dukrun Karane*. He was in fact trying to master the rules of Panini's grammar. Sankara took pity on him and advised him to contemplate on the Lord instead of wasting his time in the acquisition of worldly knowledge.

*Bhaja Govindam, Bhaja Govindam
Govindam Bhaja Moodha Mathe
Samprapthe Sannihithe Kale
Nahi Nahi Rakshati Dukrun Karane.*

(Oh foolish man, chant the name of Lord Govinda; the rules of grammar will not come to your rescue when the end approaches.)

Bhrama and Brahma are based on your mind. They are not present outside. Brahma is within you. But as you are immersed in *bhrama* (delusion), you consider Brahma (Divinity) to be a distant entity. Once you realise that you are Brahma, you will be free from *bhrama* once for all. You suffer because you identify yourself with the body. Once you get rid of body attachment, you will experience everlasting happiness.

Embodiments of Love!

Pleasure and pain are your own making. They are not given by God. You are the cause of your suffering, none else. Understand this truth. From the spiritual point of view, pleasure, pain and the worldly relationships are illusory. They are not real. Right from dawn to dusk, man is leading a life of delusion. Having been born as a human being, man should experience the truth. The physical body grows for a certain period and later on becomes weak and decrepit. Birth and growth are related to the body which is unreal. But man considers body to be real and thereby suffers. When you see with your eyes wide open, you are able to see many people. But, when you close your eyes, you cannot see anybody. From where do so many people come when you open your eyes? Where do they go when you close your eyes? You do not know. In fact, you do not know the place of your origin and also your destination. That is why you suffer. Once you realise that you are not the body and nothing in this world belongs to you, you will not suffer. Everything in this world is of your own making. Nothing is real.

Embodiments of Love!

It is only God, the embodiment of love, who is with you and in you always. Bereft of love, man cannot exist. Love is your life. Love is the light that dispels the darkness of ignorance. One who does not cultivate love will be born again and again. *Punarapi Jananam Punarapi Maranam*. Whoever is born will die one day and whoever dies will be born again.

Birth and death are the Prabhava (effect) of the objective world. As he is deluded by the Prabhava, man is subjecting himself to Pramada (danger).

Embodiments of Love!

Worldly love is transient; it cannot be called love at all. True love is immortal. You should cultivate such love. Physical body grows and decays. How can you consider it to be real? In fact, nothing in this world is real. Body attachment is the cause of delusion. Hence, gradually reduce your body attachment. This is the most important sadhana you have to undertake. Japa (chanting), Thapa (penance), Dhyana (meditation), Yoga (communion with God), etc., do not constitute true sadhana. Whatever you consider to be real is in fact unreal. Whatever is unreal has to be given up. This truth has to be understood in the first instance. It is very easy to give up body attachment. I wonder why people are not able to do so!

You can see a number of bulbs glowing in this hall. But the electric current passing through them is the same. Bodies are like bulbs and the principle of Atma is like the current passing through all the bulbs. Understand this oneness and share your love with one and all. Do not consider anyone to be your enemy. You consider the one who loves you to be your friend and the one who hates you to be your foe. In fact, there is neither friend nor a foe. It is only your imagination.

Today, people perform various sadhanas to experience divinity. Will God come closer to you because of these sadhanas or does He go away from you if you do not perform them? No. It is only the *bhrama* that goes away from you when you perform the sadhanas. As a result, you become closer to Brahma. You should make every effort to get rid of *bhrama*. Give up the feeling that you are the body and you are the doer. Only then can you be free from delusion and fear. Reduce your body attachment. That is the sadhana you are supposed to undertake. Spiritual practice does not lie in the performance of Japa, Thapa, Dhyana, etc. They are done only for your mental satisfaction and not for having the vision of God. Give up all these practices. Develop firm faith that you are God. Remind yourself constantly, "I am God, I am God, I am God". Then you will become God. Body is merely the vesture you have put on. It is not your true Self. As the body attachment increases, the suffering also increases.

Tyaja Durjana Samsargam; Bhaja Sadhu Samagamam; Kuru Punyam Ahorathram (Give up bad company; join good company and perform meritorious deeds day and night). In this world, you see many names and forms. Does it mean that they are all different from each other? No. All are one. It is only divinity that expresses itself as mother, father, brother, sister, etc. Names and forms may be different, but the underlying truth is one. When you keep this principle of truth in view, love will flow from you incessantly. Immerse yourself in the river of love. Do not give up love under any circumstances. Even if someone were to hate you, treat him as your own brother. If you were to meet him on the road, do not show anger; greet him with love. Your love will certainly bring about

transformation in him. True happiness lies in the spirit of sacrifice. Thyaga (sacrifice) is the true Yoga. Man, today, does not cultivate Thyaga. On the other hand, he seeks Bhoga (pleasure) and thereby subjects himself to Roga (disease). When you develop the spirit of sacrifice, you will be free from suffering. True spiritual practice is that which helps you to overcome delusion. What is the use, if you get drowned in delusion more and more with the advancement of age?

I am not the body, nothing is mine." This is what you should know. Question yourself, "Who am I"? You will get the reply, "I am I". When you understand and experience this truth, nobody can cause any suffering to you. You cannot escape from suffering so long as you are immersed in the dualistic feeling that you are a mere mortal and God is separate from you. The feeling that "I am separate from you" is your own imagination. When 'I' and 'you' are joined together, it becomes 'we'. However, 'we' + 'He' (God) becomes only 'He' who is changeless. 'I' and 'you' change constantly.

Embodiments of Love!

Many people do sadhanas like Japa and Dhyana, but they are not of much use. However, they lead to some change in due course of time. They may confer temporary results but they cannot grant eternal bliss. You should not worry for temporary results. The feeling of 'I' and 'mine' is the root cause of worry. You will be haunted by worry so long as you don't realise Hari (God). You are worried because you identify yourself with the body. Once you identify yourself with the Self (God), you will be free from all worries. Hence, you should make every effort to realise your true Self. Under any circumstances, do not shed tears of sorrow. One will be free from sorrow when one gives up body attachment. In order to be free from worry and fear and to attain everlasting peace, you should realise that "I am I". When you have firm belief in this statement, nothing can shake you. Do not develop undue attachment to the body and material possessions. You will be redeemed only when you lead your life with a spirit of sacrifice. What you should achieve is Thyaga and not Bhoga. To consider something as yours ('mine') is Bhoga. To realise that nothing is yours ('not mine') is Yoga. This Yoga bestows on you the true strength.

Jesus performed various types of sadhanas and ultimately realised this truth. Once Mary and Joseph took their child Jesus to a fair in Jerusalem. In the crowd, the parents lost trace of Jesus and searched for him everywhere. All the while, Jesus was sitting in a corner of the temple and listening to the sermon of the priest. The parents were searching for him outside the temple. Mother Mary ultimately found him in the temple. She rushed towards him and affectionately embraced him saying, "My son, what happened to you? Where had you gone? We have been in search of you." Jesus told her, "Mother, I have not stepped out of the temple. I have been listening to the sermon of the priest. Why should you have any fear? Those who believe in the world will have fears. But, why should anyone believing in God, fear at all? I am in the company of my Father, why do you fear?"

Forgetting your innate divinity, you are in search of God in the external world. You are God yourself. Is it not foolishness to search for yourself in the outside world? Look within, only then can you find God. It is very easy to understand this oneness. However, you should have firm faith to begin with. You should believe that God is not separate from you. On a deep enquiry, you will realise that God is in you and also outside.

Embodiments of Love!

Turn your vision inward and search for your true Self. Self-enquiry leads to true Sakshatkara (vision of God). Once you have Sakshatkara, you will be free from all worries. It is a mistake to say that you have not experienced God. He is present in you. A person kept a ten rupee note in a book and forgot about it. He was carrying it all along. One day he was in need of ten rupees. He asked his friend to lend him ten rupees. His friend readily agreed. But before giving the money, his friend wanted to see the book he was carrying. As he opened the book, the ten rupee note fell from it. He was happy that he had the required amount with him and that there was no need to borrow it from his friend. Likewise, today man is in search of God, as he has forgotten his innate divinity. Man can realise God only by self-enquiry.

Embodiments of Love! Students!

You are making various efforts to experience Divinity. Do not search for God outside. He is in you. Everything is in you. All that you see outside is illusory. Do not be carried away by the illusory world. Only then can you attain peace and ultimately realise the truth "I am I". To know this simple truth, you need not go through various sacred texts. Keep the texts aside. Enjoy the taste of divinity within. Develop inner vision and visualise your true Self.

(Bhagavan concluded His Discourse with the Bhajan, "***Bhaja Govindam ...***")

**Date: 25 Dec 2003, Occasion: Christmas Celebrations, Place:
Prasanthi Nilayam**
