

25. Birthday Sparks

This day, 23 November 1961, is significant in more senses than one. It is not only the day that marks the date of birth of this *Avatar*. The previous Sai *Avatar* was also inaugurated on a Thursday, and on the day after the full-moon day of the month of Karthika. Today is also the day after the full-moon day of Karthika and a Thursday!

You are all lucky that you could come to Prasanthi Nilayam from great distances and have this audience (*darsan*) on this auspicious day. But the joy you get today is only a reminder of the eternal full joy that is in store for you, in fact, for all humanity. That joy is your birthright; this momentary bliss is but a drop of that ocean; to get that, you must dedicate yourself to spiritual practice, continuous and conscious spiritual practice. The symbol on the Prasanthi Flag, the symbol that is put up in concrete form in front of the Nilayam, has therefore to be clearly understood by every one of you. Conquer lust, anger, and hatred, roam in the expanse of equal and impartial love for all created things, and then, you are fit for inner communion with Divinity (*yoga*), which will open the petals of your heart. Then, from the fragrance and beauty of that lotus will emerge the flame of spiritual wisdom, illuminating world illusion (*maya*) into destruction until you and the flame become One.

It is when you approach near that it appears in all its majesty, in all its overwhelming size. Suppose you see it small, what does that indicate? Not that it is small but that you are far away! Remember. The sun and moon appear huge, huger by far than the stars, for they are near and the stars are far. Approach the Lord and realise Him as Big; do not stand afar and prate that He is small!

You are all entitled to joy that is eternal

Incarnation is for the sake of fostering righteousness (*dharma*), for demarcating and directing it, and to show mankind the true path of desireless activity. That is the one task I am engaged in, through various channels. Instead of reforming you without your knowledge, it is better to reform you with your own cooperation and knowledge. So, I reveal to you my Glory, off and on, to a little extent, through what you call miracles. I do not engage in them for name and fame; I am miraculous by My very Nature! Every moment of Mine is a Miracle! The miracles are beyond your understanding, your art and skill and intelligence. I must save every one of you. Even if you say nay and move away, I shall do it. Those who have strayed away from Me have to return to the fold sooner or later, for I will not allow them to be distant for long. I shall drag them toward Me. That is My basic nature, love, and mercy.

Today, at this meeting, as members of this gathering, you are all overwhelmed with joy. I can see that. But this is momentary, this will not last. You are all entitled to broader realms of joy, deeper springs of joy, and joy that is eternal. Your real *dharma*, the purpose for which you have taken human birth, is to earn and enjoy that bliss, which no external contact can change or diminish. To earn it is quite easy. It can be done by everyone who just sits calmly and examines himself and their mind, unaffected by likes and dislikes. One then discovers that life is a dream and that one has a calm refuge of peace inside one's own heart. One learns to dive into its cool depths, forgetting and ignoring the buffets of luck, both good and ill.

If time is used well, an ignorant can become an ascetic of the highest order

The doctor first diagnoses the disease. Then he prescribes the course of treatment. So too, you must submit yourself to the diagnosis of your illness, viz. misery, travail, and pain. Investigate fearlessly and with care, and

you will find that while your basic nature is bliss (*ananda*), you have falsely identified yourself with the temporary, the frivolous, and the paltry and that attachment brings about all the sorrow. You have to realise that both joy and sorrow are passing phases, like white or dark clouds across the blue sky, and you have to learn to treat both prosperity and adversity with equanimity.

If only time is well used, the ignorant (*pamara*) can become an ascetic of the highest order (a *Paramahansa*) and that ascetic can also be transfused into the Universal Substance and Substratum (*Paramatma*).

Just as a fish can live only when it is immersed in water, when it feels the element all around it, so too the human is an animal that can live only when immersed in bliss (*ananda*). One must have bliss not only at home, in society, and in the world but, more than all, in the heart. As a matter of fact, bliss in the heart produces bliss everywhere. The heart is the spring of joy. That spring has to be touched by constant meditation, recitation of God's name, and the intermittent dwelling on the glory, the grace, and the inexhaustible manifestations of the Lord. Hold fast to the goal; the devotee should never turn back. Never give way to doubt or despair.

Pray, as the performance of a duty

A person driving a car concentrates on the road, for they are anxious to save themselves and others from accident. Fear is what induces single-mindedness in this case. Love is a greater force for giving concentration. If you have steady and resolute love, concentration becomes intense and unshakeable. Faith develops into love, and love results in concentration. Prayer is possible and begins to yield fruit under such conditions. Pray, using the Name as a symbol of the Lord. Pray, keeping all the waves of the mind stilled. Pray, as the performance of a duty for your very real existence, as the only justification for your coming into the world as a human.

“Mine” and “yours” — these attitudes are only for identification. They are not real; they are temporary. “His” — that is the truth, the eternal. It is like the headmaster of a school being in temporary charge of the furniture of the school. He has to hand over the items when he is transferred or retired. Treat all things with which you are endowed just as the headmaster treats the furniture. Be always aware that the final checking-up is imminent. Wait for that moment with joy. Be ready for that event. Have your accounts up to date and the balance already calculated to be handed over. Treat all things entrusted to you with care and diligence.

Narayana is the Lord of the Water; (*naaram* means water). But what is the water of which He is the Lord? He resides in the heart, and His presence when recognised melts even the stoniest heart, and the water emanates from the eye as tears of joy, gratitude, and fullness! His Presence is said to have been recognised by the person when the person is suffused by sympathy, making them sad while another is sad and joyful when another is filled with joy. Narayana is He who brings tears of joy to the eyes! The function of your tear glands is to express internal joy, not to weep like a fool or a coward.

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The person devoted to God knows no failure. The Name of the Lord, if taken sincerely, overcomes all obstacles. It is saturated with sweetness; it has no iota of the bitterness of defeat in it. When the Saviour is by your side, why doubt whether you will be saved?

Sathya Sai Baba