

34. Yearn for God alone

THE man who is filled with love has great peace of mind, is pure at heart and is unruffled by any adverse circumstances, failures or losses. This fortitude is derived from love of the Lord, which endows him with self-confidence. Self-confidence generates an immense internal power. Everyone has to develop this power. Everyone has to develop this self-confidence so that the *Atma-Ananda* (bliss of the Self) may be experienced.

Love should be free from feelings of expectation of any return or reward. Love which arises out of a desire for something in return is not true love. Utterly selfless and motiveless love should be developed., This is the bounden duty of man.

You should not pray to God seeking this favour or that. The reason is no one can know what immensely precious, Divine and magnificent treasures lie in the treasure-house of Divine Grace. No one can know what God intends or desires to give to a devotee. In such a situation by asking for trivial and petty things, man is demeaning his Divine estate.

No one can understand what; valuable, sacred and Divine favour-God chooses to confer on a deserving devotee. Hence man should not seek from God, nor desire, nor pray for some petty trifles. More precious and desirable than anything else is God's love.

If you wish to ask for anything from God pray to Him thus' "Oh Lord! Let me have you alone." Once you have secured the Lord, you can get anything you want. That was why Mira sang: "Oh heart, drink the nectar of Divine love." When you can have Divine love, to crave for anything else is like asking for coffee powder from the *Kalpataru!* (Wish-fulfilling Tree).

Avoid excessive praise of God

What you have to seek from God is God Himself and not any small and worthless benefits. Even while praying to God for His grace, you should not indulge in extravagant praise and flattery to win His approbation and seek His favours. "Oh Lord! You are the Ocean of Compassion! Your mercy is boundless! You are the refuge of the distressed and the protector of the abandoned!" Addressing the Lord in this manner palls on Him.

Such praise for securing favours has a commercial tinge. Even the favours got through such praise are not proper at all. It is because the *rishis* and the *yogis* in the past resorted to such praise that they had to perform penance for hundreds of years to get a vision of the Lord.

Consider God as friend

God has a partiality for the human form. "*Daivam maanusha rupena,*" it is said. (God has to be experienced in the human form). It is only when God is regarded as friend and a companion that He is pleased most. By addressing Him as: "Oh, my dearest friend! My beloved one! The darling of my heart," you can give Him the greatest joy. Instead of that, if He is described as one who is beyond praise by Brahma and other gods, who is not accessible to mind and speech, whose glories are beyond description, who prevailed over the God of Death, who was born as the son of Devaki and Vasudeva, who went to the rescue of Draupadi, who protected the Pandavas, and so on, and then He is entreated to confer His grace on you, there is an element of the ludicrous in the comparisons made. Such praise even savours of envy. When you say, "Oh Lord! You have talked to them and given them so much! Why don't you come to my help?" the comparison seems to stem from jealousy.

It is only when God is approached as a loving friend who has the power to come to our aid that our desires will be fulfilled. We use words of praise towards an unfamiliar person to show him respect and regard as a stranger. But we welcome an old friend with easy familiarity and intimacy.

Thyagaraja performed *sadhana* over many years to obtain a vision of the Lord. By that *sadhana* he established intimate relationship with Sri Rama. Because of this, he could greet Rama with friendly familiarity and welcome Him to his house as a companion in the song: "*Raara maa intidaaka*" (Rama, come to our house!). Because of his intimacy, Thyagaraja could address Rama in the second person singular.

In the context of the Navarathri celebrations, on this Purnaahuti day, we must learn to recognise the Divine in this intimate manner. Reduce your desires. Don't pray for trifles. Don't go to a shrine with the intention to seek fulfilment of some petty desires. It is an unfortunate sign of the *Kali* age that everyone goes to a temple or pilgrim centre only to get some trivial benefits.

If you can win over the Lord Himself, what is it that: is beyond your reach? Thyagaraja declared: "Rama! If only I have your *anugraha* (grace) all *grahas* (planets) will be in my palm."

Pandavas' unwavering faith on Krishna

It is essential to please God and win His grace by regarding Him as a friend and not indulging in excessive praise. For this, supreme Love is the primary means. This love should be firm and unchanging, unaffected by trials and tribulations and the vicissitudes of life. The Pandavas are the supreme examples of such unwavering love (for Krishna). When Draupadi was being humiliated in Duryodhana's assembly hall, when Abhimanyu was attacked and slain by the Kauravas, when Aswathama massacred the Upapandavas (the infant children of the Pandavas), or when they performed the glorious *Rajasuya* sacrifice at the height of their power, or when they were in exile in the forest, without succumbing to the difficulties and troubles they were subjected to, they adhered firmly to the name of Krishna, with unwavering faith in Him. They relied only on Krishna's love.

Difficulties and troubles are passing clouds which come and go. Do we remember all the kith and kin with whom we were related in our previous lives? While all these relationships have changed, only the relationship with God remains unchanged. We should attach ourselves to this unchanging love and not cling to other ever-changing relationships.

Yajna is the quest for discovering the One

Yajnas are designed to lead you to the One who is unchanging and eternal. *Ya+Jna* is *Yajna*. *Ya* refers to the one who is the basis of the entire Cosmos. *Jna* refers to the quest for knowing that one. *Yajna*, therefore, is the quest for discovering the One who sustains the Cosmos. How is this search to be made? The *Veda* has declared: "Permeating everything inside and outside is the Lord Narayana." Where can you search for the Lord who is omnipresent? Why search at all?

The sages performed severe penances to get the ultimate Reality. Finally they declared: "*Vedaaham etham Purusham mahaantham Aadityavarnam tamasahparastaat*" (We have known the Supreme *Purusha*, who is effulgent like the sun and is beyond the outer darkness). They declared that the Supreme Lord is beyond *Tamas*. This means that the Lord is beyond the *Tamo-guna* and to experience the Lord we have to get rid of our *Tamo-guna* (the darkness of

ignorance). The Lord is beyond the veil of *Tamas*. When the veil is removed, the Lord can be seen. When one is filled with *Tamo-guna* from head to foot, how can one experience God?

One is not prepared to make any sacrifice. With a mountain of desires in his heart, a devotee offers a petty coconut to the Lord! This is not the way to pray to the Lord. This is not devotion. This is not Love. To seek a favour is not prayer at all. Only a selfless person can engage himself in service to society. Only such a person is entitled to serve God. The first pre-requisite is the spirit: of sacrifice. This can be developed only through love. The person filled with love is ready to make any sacrifice. The person without love will not be willing to make any sacrifice.

God does not dwell in any particular place. You are God. When you get rid of the body-consciousness, you will realise your divinity.

The experiences of the Physical world

In the waking state, you have various kinds of experiences relating to the phenomenal world. All the experiences are through 19 agencies---the five *Karmendriyas* (organs of action), the five *Jnanendriyas* (senses of perception), the *Panchapranas* (five life breaths) and the mind, the *Buddhi* (intellect), the *Chitta* (Will) and the *Ahamkara* (Ego). It is only when all these 19 are present that you can enjoy the experiences of the physical world in the waking state. The *Atma* principle that is conscious in the waking state is called *Viraataswaroopa*---the Cosmic Form. The Cosmos is the form of the *Viraata Purusha*. In this form the Divine is called *Viswa*. As the universe has emerged from *Viswa*, it is called *Viswam*. Another name for *Viswa* is *viraaja Swaroopa*--one who confers joy and stands out as an ideal to the world and is the embodiment of *Sat-Chit-Ananda* (Being-Awareness-Bliss).

When you go on to the sleeping state, you have dreams. Even in the dream state the 19 agencies are present, but in a subtle form. Wherefrom have the dreams arisen? They are created by the dreamer himself and he is also the experiencer. The Divine Principle in the dream state is called *Thaijasa* (the Effulgent). He is called *Hiranyagarbha* (The Golden-wombed One). This appellation means that he is the one who contains all within himself and projects them from himself. The third state is *Sushupti* (deep sleep state). What is it that is experienced in deep sleep? Forgetting himself, in an unconscious condition, he experiences bliss. In that state only *Prajna* (Constant Integrated Awareness) exists. "*Prajnaanam Brahma*" declares the *Upanishad*. This state of awareness is equated with *Brahmam*. The Divine Principle that one is aware in this state is called *Praajna*.

Experience the Divine present in everyone

The *Viswa* present in the waking state, the *Taijasa* present in the dream state, and the *Praajna* present in the deep sleep state, all three are one only. When the states of consciousness are dispensed with, we have only one experiencer present in all of them. That is the unity of the Divine indicated by the dictum: "*Tat-Twam-Asi*" (That Thou Art).

Every person has this Divine Principle in him. There is no need to search for the Divine elsewhere. He is everywhere, omnipresent. Forgetting one's inherent divinity, man is searching for the Divine in the external world. Even in this search the primary requisite is pure, selfless love.

Chant the name of the Lord with that love. God loves the human form. That is the reason why *avatars* come in human form. You can experience the vision of God by following the path of *karma* (prescribed actions). The Lord has declared in the *Gita*: "You are qualified only to

perform actions." A scriptural text says, "Only through the body can you pursue *Dharma*." All living beings are bound by *karma* in this world.

The Divine is being worshipped as a decorated idol or image, with an artificial form. The Lord should be experienced in His natural form, in a natural way. All the ornamentation the devotee resorts to does not please God. It may please the heart of the devotees, but God's heart is not moved thereby. Only through love can God's heart be moved and softened. The devotee has that power. Without resorting to extravagant adulation of God, not seeking petty favours from God, yearn for God alone and you will get everything. Endeavour to make God your intimate friend.

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*There is no happiness greater than that obtained from sacrifice.
Only those who sacrifice are the children of immortality because
they live for ever.*

BABA