

29. Chant the Name : sing His glory

When one gives up what has to be renounced,

When one knows what needs to be known,

When one reaches what should be one's goal,

How can the Bliss that is got therefrom be described?

What have to be given up are these worldly thoughts;

What has to be known is the truth, about life;

What has to be attained is the Brahmic Consciousness;

What greater bliss can there be than this?

EMBODIMENTS of love! Belittling human life as trivial and transient, people are forgetting the effulgent Divine that is eternal. Man is no ordinary being. The term *Nara* applied to man, means *Aathma* (the Spirit). Man is the embodiment of triple entities. He has one form in the waking state, another in the dream state and a third in the deep sleep state. Although the waking state is described in many ways, the presiding deity of this is called *Vishva*. Tiffs *Vishva* is made up of twenty-five constituents--the five basic elements, the five *praanas* (life-breaths), the five sense organs, the five *Koshas* (sheaths), the mind, the intellect, the Will and *Ahamkaara* (Ego) and *the Jeevi* (Indwelling Spirit). Together, these twenty-five represent the Lord of the waking state. This *Vistula*, making use of the sense organs in the waking stare, experiences the cosmos as pervaded by the Divine.

Dream experiences are mental creations of dreamer

In the dream state, the presiding deity is called *Thaijasa* based on *Thejas*. *Thejas* has only 17 constituents. The five sense organs, the five life-breaths and the five sheaths and the mind and intellect.

In the dream stare, the individual is creating his dream experiences, including joy and sorrow. The dream experiences are mental creations of the dreamer. In the deep sleep state, *Prajna* is the divine entity. In this state there is only one faculty present: the *Prajnaa-shakthi* (the power of Awareness). This awareness represents the Supreme Brahma Principle. The scriptures declare "*Prajnaanam Brahma*" (Awareness is the Supreme Absolute). In this state, the five elements, the five-breaths and the five sheaths are absent. With the mind and the intellect also absent, the individual is in a state of Supreme *Bliss--Sath-Chith-Aanandha* (*Being-Awareness-Bliss*).

Man is thus not one entity but a threefold personality in the three states of consciousness. However, not recognizing the unifying factor, man revels in multiplicity, becomes a victim of his own self-deception through *Maaya* (delusion) and forgets his true nature.

Man is described as Thungabhadhra, the river of Life

It is because man becomes a slave of his senses that he descends to the animal level instead of rising to the state of the Divine Master, Pashupathi. Man is like a piece of sugarcane, which has many knots. These knots in man are the evil tendencies like lust, anger, greed, attachment, pride and envy. These tendencies assume various forms such as love of wealth, attachment to wife and children and the like. Because of these attachments, he forgets his true nature. The scriptures

describe man as Thungabhadhra. This name is familiarly associated with that of a river. But, in reality Thungabhadhra is the River of Life. 'Bhadhra' means that which is auspicious. 'Thunga' means that which is immense and immeasurable. Thungabhadhra refers to the body which is capable of conferring limitless well-being on mankind. By misusing such a body man is ruining his life and destroying his true humanness.

The body is intended for rendering help to others and not for self-enjoyment. Unfortunately because of the perversions of the mind, man loses himself in worldly pleasures. He is a slave to the vagaries of the mind and ignores the counsel of the *Buddhi* (intellect).

Man should remember that the same Divine *Prajna* (Awareness) is present in all human beings. This truth is accepted by all faiths. It may be asked why God is not visible if He is all-pervading. The-answer is that though God is omnipresent, He can be experienced only by those who have a pure heart. Just as a cow's milk can be got only from the udder and not from any other part of the cow, God's image can be visualized only by those with a heart full of love and which is pure and free from selfishness. God cannot be perceived by those with impure minds and polluted hearts. The sun cannot be seen when he is covered by a cloud. But when the wind sweeps the cloud away, the effulgent sun becomes visible. Likewise man has to drive away the cloud of ignorance enveloping his mind by meditating on God. In this Kali Age there is no greater or easier means of realising God than chanting His name.

Four ways of chanting the Lord's name

There are four ways of chanting the Lord's name. One is through *Keerthana* (song). Then there is *Sankeerthana* (community singing). Another is *Dhyaana* (meditating on the Divine). The fourth is contemplation of the form of the Divine. In all these, meditating on the name is basic.

By meditating on the Lord, Chaithanya and Meera experienced the ecstatic vision of the Lord within themselves. Both of them were immersed in the feeling of devotion to the Lord.

Those who experienced the Lord by chanting the Divine name are Naaradha, Thukaaraam, Thulsidhas, Raamadhas and others. In reply to a question from Naaradha, Krishna declared that He is present wherever His devotees sing His glories. The singing must not be merely a musical exercise but express genuine devotion.

Some devotees sing songs about the *leelas* (sportive miracles) of God. Jayadheva, for instance, sang only about the sports of Krishna and was oblivious of all other things. He totally identified himself with Krishna.

Raadha represents *Ruupa sankeerthana* (singing the glory of the Lord's form) of Krishna. She saw Krishna in every object. The heart is moved only when the words of the poem or song are rendered melodiously. (Here Bhagavaan demonstrated how the manner of singing makes all the difference in the appeal of the song: "*Raama Nannu Kaapaadu*"--- O Raama, Save Me).

By devotional singing one can get merged in the Divine. That is the reason why the Lord is described as *Gaanalola* or *Gaanapriya* (Lover of song or one who is charmed by music). It will be befitting if a devotee combines the reciting of the Lord's name with singing and praying for merger with the Divine.

Now these three are considered as distinct from each other. This is not correct.

God is one: names are many

Devotees are inclined to worship the Lord under different names. They consider the names different from each other. They forget that they are all equally, embodiments of the Divine: *Sath-Chith-Anandha*. (Being-Awareness-Bliss). There should be no feeling of high and low. Only the one who has the feeling of oneness can be called a renunciant. It is wrong to make a distinction between Raama and Shiva as some small-minded devotees do. Vaishnavaites and Shaivites who go to the Thirumala temple hail the Lord as Venkataramana or Venkateshvara respectively, as if the two names are different, though they represent the same deity. Thyaagaraaja pointed out that the word Raama is made up of the vital syllables "Raa" and "Ma" in the Naaraayana and Shiva *manthras* respectively. In this manner devotees should seek unity in apparent diversity rather than seek to divide what is one.

The nature of the Divine can only be properly understood, by those who are filled with devotion. All should be filled with love. Love cannot flow from the *manthras* of those who are steeped in selfishness and self-pride. Love flows from those who are humble. It cannot arise in those who are conceited and pompous. The love of God can arise only from loving thoughts. There must be yearning for God, just as one has to experience hunger to think of food. There is hunger for God in every one, but the disease of self-pride prevents one from feeling that hunger. The denial of God is a kind of disease. The unbeliever is afflicted by a variety of diseases like pride, envy, anger and greed.

One should be pure to be attracted by the Lord

There are some who have one foot on faith and the other on disbelief. For sometime they live with devotion and then they get lost in worldly concerns. The result is they have the worst of both worlds. One should not attempt to ride two horses at the same time. Stick to one thing and pursue it with determination. There is no such perseverance today because men are attracted by various worldly pleasures. It is not good to be lured by such attractions. Man should be attracted only by the Divine. Krishna has been described as one who is alluring in every way--by his looks, words and action. One should be pure to be attracted by the Lord. A sensuous person is like a rusty piece of iron, which cannot be attracted by a magnet.

In the world today man is caught between the forces of evil and the forces of good, similar to the war in the Mahaabhaaratha between the wicked Kauravas on the one side and the virtuous Paandavas on the other. Krishna was on the side of the Paandavas, though He did not take part in the fighting. God is always on the side of the good and the virtuous.

"See good, be good, do good, that is the way to God." Make every effort to experience the Divine.

***Bhajans* are supremely valuable**

People may say that when you go to Sai Baba, there is nothing but *bhajan*. Realise that there is nothing greater *than bhajan*. What bliss is there in *bhajans*! What a demonstration of oneness is it when a myriad throats join in uttering the name of God! The vibrations emanating from them make the heart vibrant. If you sing alone in your shrine, the vibrations return to you as reaction. But in community singing, what you have is not a reaction but a wave of vibrations. They enter into the atmosphere and purify the polluted air. The atmosphere today is polluted by bad thoughts and feelings. When you sing the glory of God, the bad germs in the air are destroyed and the air gets purified by a treatment with anti-biotics as it were.

Bhajans are therefore supremely valuable. It has been said that in the Kali Age there is no greater spiritual practice than chanting the name of the Lord. Let one remember the name of Raama at the time of passing, whether he is a millionaire or a pauper, whether he is a scholar or an illiterate. Sing the name of the Lord and redeem your lives!

Discourse in the Sai Ramesh Hall in Brindhaavan on 23-10-1994.