

GOSPEL OF SRI RĀMAKRISHNA - PART 14

SWĀMI DAYATMANANDJI

ॐ जननीं सारदां देवीं रामकृष्णं जगद्गुरुम् ।

पादपद्मे तयोः श्रित्वा प्रणमामि मुहुर्मुहुः ॥

Jananim Saradam devim Ramakrishnam jagadgurum।

Padapadme tayoh shritva pranamami muhurmuhuh ॥

ॐ तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनं

कविभिरीडितं कल्मषापहम् ।

श्रवणमङ्गलं श्रीमदाततं

भुवि गृणन्ति ते भूरिदा जनाः ॥

Om tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanaṁ

kavibhir īḍitaṁ kalmaṣāpaham ।

śravaṇa-maṅgalaṁ śrīmad ātataṁ

bhuvi gṛṇanti te bhūri-dā janāḥ ॥

First of all, I will deal with the two questions which Anuja had sent me.

Q1)The first question is, why are Tuesdays and Saturdays considered as sacred by Sri Ramakrishna?

A)The answer is, in Bengal Tuesdays and Saturdays are considered as very special days for the worship of the Divine Mother. Every region has its own special days. For example, in South India, Thursday is called Guru's day or Hanuman's day, and Friday is considered Laxmi's day.

So there is this universal, I would call it superstition, but a very very good superstition for us to think of God. If someone says, every day is a God's day, so every day is a, what

we call, holiday. The word holy day, which Christians used to consider as Sunday, now has become a holiday. Because on that day, with the intention of allowing people the opportunity of attending the church, etc. for that reason they have stopped the work, and given what is called holiday. But now it has become a real holiday.

Similarly, for the Jews it is the Saturday, Sabbath day. For the Muslims, it is Friday. And for Hindus, in Bengal, they have considered Tuesday and Saturdays as very special days.

And that's why when we are studying the Gospel of *Sri Rāmakrishna*, we find a most wonderful thing. He used to ask His close devotees, If He, whenever *Sri Rāmakrishna* wanted to impart some special instructions, or to open the doors of, secret doors, of spiritual progress, or to initiate them, usually He used to do it on either Tuesday or Saturday. It's not a superstition. It is - He is just going along with the local sentiment, that's all.

The truth is, every day is God's day, every day is a holy day. And the day on which we do not remember is the worst day. And the day, on which we remember God is the most sacred day.

So, that is the answer. It has no special significance, excepting *Sri Rāmakrishna* was born in Bengal, so He was merely allowing the human sentiments of the local area, so that the other people will consider Him more as a human being, than as a peculiar being.

Q2)The second question is much more serious, but very very deep question. *Sri Rāmakrishna* says for householders, advice to householders, that he should consider, pacify women, means his wife, his children, and everybody.

Many times I clarified it, but I would like to clarify it.

A)In any saint's eye there is no man woman distinction. They see only - Everything as *Brahman* or God. God in everything. But when *Sri Rāmakrishna* or any saint for that matter, when they talk to men... And men are usually tempted, they get temptations only in the presence of a woman. Of course nowadays I cannot give a categorical answer like that. Society has changed a lot. But, as usual, sexual attraction between the opposite sexes is the most common thing. So for a householder, that means for the man who wants to progress in spiritual life, how he should behave.

(5:05 mins)

Here *Sri Rāmakrishna* refers to a great *tāntric* rite, it is called *Shavasādhana*. *Shava* means corpse. *Sādhana* means spiritual practice. Every spiritual aspirant must consider his body as a *Shava*. Until he realizes that he is not a *Shava*; he is *Shiva*.

What does that word *Shava* mean, corpse means? That means **everything other than God is inert, non-conscious, therefore non-ātman**. Means in plain words, not God, not *Brahman*.

But what happens because of *Māyā*, we consider *Brahman* as unreal. And this world, meaning our body and mind, as the only reality. So, whenever we use the word 'I', we mean really, not the truly conscious Divine Being, the consciousness, awareness, we do not mean it. We mean this body, of course, associated with the mind.

So this identification with this body, and this body is inert, and that is why it is called a *Shava*. And that's why the whole world is also *Shava*. Anything that is not God is a *Shava*. Until we become divinised, until we feel we are divine, I am divine - we are non divine. That means we are *Shavas*. My body is a *Shava*. I am identified with this body, and therefore I am also *Shava*.

But this little bit of awareness is there, so I feel like doing *Sādhana*, and I have to use this body, consider this body as a corpse. And just as we react to any corpse, so we should develop the idea of considering this body as *Shava*. And yet it is the instrument for us to become *Shiva*. So that is called *Sādhana*.

A dead body cannot do *Sādhana*, but a dead body with the *Jīvātman* can do *Sādhana*. So this body mind, both are *Shavas*. They have been given to us by God, so that we can use them, as we use any inert instrument, like a hammer, like a knife, like spectacles etc. And with that help make our journey move forward, go forward. That is the symbolism.

Now I will have to tell you a little bit, in *Tāntrik Sādhana*, there are different types of methods of *Sādhana*. One method is to develop *Vairāgya*, dispassion. And to develop deep devotion, and faith in the Divine Mother. Usually *Tāntrik Sādhana* means devotion to the Divine Mother, not to the male aspect of God, but to the female aspect of God.

Some people, very courageous people, they stay near the crematoriums. And in the olden days corpses, especially of the poor and indigent people, used to be thrown. And there they will find a corpse, and then they will, of course, be preparing for certain type of worship. And they will go, and after purifying, sit on the corpse, and then go on doing *Japam*. So it is said that the corpse now and then comes to life. 'I want to say swallow you', it opens its mouth. At that time the *Sādhaka* has to keep ready, some like puffed rice. They call it *khoyi* in Bengal, some sort of fried rice, they keep ready. Whenever the corpse opens its mouth, uttering some *Mantras*, they put a little bit of this *khoyi*, just as we pacify a child with chocolates. And then it will be satisfied for some time. And again, it opens its mouth. So, until the *Japa Dhyāna* is over, worship is over, we have to go on pacifying. This is the background.

And *Sri Rāmakrishna* was talking about that background. In that connection He said you are householders. So, He was talking about men, but it equally applies to women also. Because a woman's body is corpse, man's body is also corpse. So a wife should consider her husband and pacify him with a little bit of *masala dosa*, or *paneer*, *sāg paneer*, *pālak paneer*, things like that. So he will not get angry, then he will not obstruct her spiritual practice.

(10:39 mins)

So also, every householder, man or woman, should develop first of all that attitude. This is a body, it is a *Shava*, but it has been given to me to progress in spiritual life. And I have to pacify it to the extent that is possible. So for a householder, he should be detached. Just as we are not attached to corpses, we should develop pure detachment.

But at the same time when people are married, they are also responsible. And if they are not responsible, they are very wicked people. They cannot be even *Sādhakās*, they will be committing the worst type of sin.

So, I hope I have answered it. It is not discriminating against woman, though many times this word 'woman and gold' comes. And many women also have this problem. Of course in the olden days, nobody had any problem. Only this modern times, women have this kind of problems. But the answer is, *Sri Rāmakrishna* considered every woman as the Divine Mother. Every saint, every spiritual person, considers every woman like his own mother or sister, or even better, as a Divine Mother. Because we have tremendous respect to women, or our sisters, we will not have an animal feeling, but that is also human feeling only. We have to develop a spiritual divine feeling, that's necessary.

So this is a general advice. I am a corpse, everybody, everybody is a corpse, but this body is the only instrument for progressing in spiritual life. So I must use it just as a pole vaulter uses a pole, and discards it when he has jumped on the other side of the pole. So every object in this world is a corpse, whether it is *Japamāla*, whether it is shrine room, whether it is photograph of our *Ishta Devtā*, or our *Guru*. Please do not forget, all these are aids, helps. Once we realise God, then everything is divine. There is no *Shava*. Each so called *Shava*, before realization is a *Shava*, after realisation becomes *Shiva*. That is the answer. I hope we understand the situation better now.

But I want to add something, I might have mentioned it in our earlier classes. This symbolism of Mother *Kālī*! You will always see that where there is *Kālī*, there will be *Shiva*. And usually, the *Kālī* figure will be sitting on her husband, *Shiva*, *Shivā*'s body only.

Some people question me, 'How come that this woman is sitting on her husband? She's supposed to be the Divine Mother, an ideal for all of us, especially for women'. I

made fun, 'This is the only way to control the husbands. There is no other way'. First feminine movement started many many many *yugās* back in India, America should not take the credit.

Second, real symbolism is - this *Shakti*, without *Shakti*, that means without the power of knowledge, and action, and will - *Jnāna Shakti*, *Kriya Shakti*, *Ichhā Shakti*. These are the three ways the *Shakti* manifests.

- *Jnāna Shakti* means consciousness.
- *Ichhā Shakti* means the ability to desire what is right.
- *Kriya Shakti* means, translate that desire and enjoy this world.

So the Divine Mother manifests through these. But she can only manifest... Any action can be done only in time. **Time, space are the only way any action can be carried out.** And this time, **root of this time is in timelessness.**

(15:18 mins)

So, *Kāli* means the Active Time, time when we are conscious of any activity. **And universal activity is called creation, maintenance and dissolution.**

And time is always a concept of the mind, of timelessness.

And *Shiva* is called *Mahākāla*. *Mahākāla* means timelessness.

So, time can only stand or spring from timelessness.

That is beautifully represented. And many of our Hindus, unfortunately, without knowing the symbolism, they think that *Shiva* is *Shava*.

No, *Shiva* is actionless, that is called *Shava*.

And why He's actionless? Action requires time, space and causation.

And *Mahākāli* represents manifestation of time, for the sake of creation, maintenance and destruction.

And by the way, we are all *Mahākālis*! We are all creators!

In our Bhagavad Gita Class I found out *Brahmā* creates this world, when His day time is the time of creation, and His night time is the time of dissolution. But our scripture categorically, explicitly, without the least bit of doubt tells that *Brahmā*, means God, has nothing to do with creation. He is only a supervisor, *Vidhāta*, *Karmaphala Vidhāta*.

But each one of us, just as if we have awakened from a long night's sleep. And when we awake, we find ourselves with the same set of circumstances, *Samskāras*, and *Kriyāphalas*, *Karmaphalas*. So we create! Every creation is nothing but opening a bookmarked book, and start our life from there.

What is the essence of what I'm talking about? I'm talking, nobody creates us, nobody has any influence upon us. We create ourselves, we maintain ourselves, we destroy ourselves. We are the architects of our own fate.

Naturally, the question comes, where comes God? Yes, God is compassionate, He is waiting like a grandmother, for our cry. If we have faith in Him, if we are sincere and longingly pray to Him, then He will carry us, or He will give us what we want. And that includes *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama*, of course, finally *Moksha* if we really desire so. I have taken a long long time, but I hope this will help in our future understanding also.

Now we carry on, from where we have stopped in *The Gospel of Sri Rāmakrishna*. In our last class, what did we discuss? The topic under discussion was *Vivekā*, the 4th commandment of *Sri Rāmakrishna*.

What was the 4th commandment of *Sri Rāmakrishna*? He says you must practice discrimination.

What is that discrimination? Lust and gold is impermanent, God is the only eternal substance.

Then *Sri Rāmakrishna* says, as soon as a man finds his mind wandering away to the Unreal, he should apply discrimination. He gives an analogy, the moment an elephant stretches out its trunk to eat a plantain tree in a neighbor's garden, it gets a blow from the iron goad of the driver.

- The driver is all of us, *Sādhakās*.
- And the elephant is our mad mind.
- And the goad of the driver is discrimination.

So, this was the 4th commandment of *Sri Rāmakrishna*.

What is discrimination? Discrimination is the faculty of distinguishing the higher from the lower, right from wrong, the sacred from the profane. And living that life after we come to the right conclusion.

(20:01 mins)

Then, in that connection, I have made certain points, just a brief recollection. Always, when I give a talk, I summarize what we have discussed. And I introduce what needs to be discussed. And that way, even though it takes a little time... Most people don't take the trouble to go through what we have discussed last week or last class. And just probably pay a little attention to the present time, and promptly forget it. Of course, you know, I can make a little bit fun out of you. That it is very advantageous to me because I can repeat the same lecture, every time, because you don't remember.

Alright, what are the important points?

- First, discrimination is not mere intellectual gymnastics. Right understanding, without the effort to lead an appropriate life, is not only useless, it is dangerous and results in much suffering.
- Next, discrimination should be followed by dispassion and self control.
- Next, right discrimination gives great result. It brings us peace, joy, of course self knowledge.
- Next, discrimination is in the heart of every creature, helping it to survive and thrive. Only thing is it is confined, mostly, only to surviving, survivor.

But a wise *Sādhakā* and every *Sādhakā* is a wise person, every wise person is a *Sādhakā*. And worldly wisdom is not referred here, only spiritual wisdom.

- All successful people, even in this world, whether spiritual or secular, possesses it in great degree. Most people though use it for worldly ends.
- Needless to say, discrimination is indispensable in spiritual life. Without discrimination man can never make progress, either in the world or in the world of spirit.
- One of the reasons why so many aspirants make little or no progress, in spite of many years of regular practice, is due to the lack of discrimination.

Next, I mentioned earlier, 4 things are necessary, if we have to be successful in the practice of discrimination. What are they?

1. First awareness.
2. Second rationality.
3. Third, a well defined goal.
4. And fourth, last but not the least, sufficient will power.

The faculty of discrimination will be absent or does not help us, if these four requirements are not met.

So to be rational means to be objective, fair and just.

So first, I have spoken elaborately, practically 2 classes before, in our third class, starting from here backwards, about awareness. In our last class, I have spoken about rationality, quoting from St. Francis de Sales, as well as Erich Fromm a social psychologist. So we have talked about awareness.

Awareness is the most wonderful faculty. If we are only aware what we are doing, then many obstacles can be overcome. Many difficult problems can be nipped in the bud, if we are aware.

Then we have to be rational. God has given us this special faculty, called rationality. That's why Aristotle called human beings - 'Man is a rational animal'. That is every man is potentially rational. But very few people use it. Usually what happens, our desires - they influence, control our rationality. But it should be the other way around. Our rationality should control our desires, right thinking, aspirations, etc.

So now we have to talk about a well defined goal, and of course sufficient willpower. That's what we are going to talk now. So, I also quoted so many things, and important points. Why we should develop rationality is most of the ills and sufferings in the world can be attributed to irrationality.

(25:13 mins)

Though probably not very relevant in this topic, I have to quote the contemporary situation. China has suddenly, after 40 or 50 years has occupied some part of Indian land. It occupied before also. So, what is the point? The point is, this is called expansionism, and they want to gulp down every country. This has been going on by everybody, the British had done it, the Muslims, moguls have done it, and previously Spaniards have done it, Americans have done it. They swallowed up all the native Indians, and kept them in reservation, and kept them out of present progress for a long time. Even now, there is terrible discrimination against non whites. We all know it.

So what is the point I'm making is, suddenly this Divine Mother, *Karunamayi Mā*, that is what people call Corona Mā. I call it *Karunamayi Mā*. Mother's will it has come. Now, what are you going to do when you get this Corona? And it is one of the Divine mother's greatness, no discrimination of gender, wealth, power, anything like that. Everybody from the kings to the paupers, from the professors to the poor people, everybody is subject. They have to be careful. And it is wreaking havoc on the world's economy, and also on each one of our lives. As we can see, every day it is affecting us.

Now what is my point? With one small organism, The Divine Mother is shaking this whole world. I'm reminded of *Swāmi Vivekānanda's* most marvelous poem on '*Kāli The Mother*'. If you have not read it, please just google *Swāmi Vivekānanda's* '*Kāli The Mother*'. Every shaking step destroys a world forever, that is one of the lines, it is there. Divine Mother is called *Kāla*. One step, is the softest step, and *Brahmāndas* will just crumble into dust, never again to be seen.

What irrational people we are, how foolish we are? We are goading ourselves, and then congratulating. 'O, India is weak, we got this little bit', and tomorrow if some such little more organism comes like that, it can kill millions and millions of people. What are you going to do with all this land, especially the land where it is terribly cold and not much grows etc? Excepting the idea that I possess everything. I just gave an example, how irrational can be.

That's why *Sri Rāmakrishna* used to say, 'O man, death is always behind you. It has surrounded you, it has declared war against you'. And He used to sing a beautiful song জীব সাজো সমরে (*Jiva sajjo somore*) *O Jivā* Be ready, death is arrayed against you, it's surrounding you all along. How are you going to fight? Beautiful! Take the name of the Divine Mother, That is the *Brahmāstra* against this death. And put on the armor of *Dharma*, then no death can ever approach near you. You will be the conqueror of death! This is the burden of this Gospel, and this song is repeated so many times in the Gospel of *Sri Rāmakrishna*.

So what are we talking about? Most of the ills and sufferings in this world can be attributed to irrationality.

And what is the cause of irrationality? Narcissism, pure selfishness.

So, on this quality, what Erich Fromm had to say, I quoted, just I will quote this, "The narcissistic orientation is one in which one experiences as real only that which exists within oneself, while the phenomena in the outside world have no reality in themselves, but are experienced only from the viewpoint of their being useful or dangerous to one."

So what is the remedy? "The opposite pole to narcissism is objectivity;"

So that is what we discussed, you please go back if you wish, these recordings are available on our website.

(30:36 mins)

Now we are going to discuss about the third requirement - is a well defined goal. While it is true that discrimination becomes effective only after we have a goal. It is also true that **discrimination itself will not function without having, at least, some idea about our goal. An ideal or a goal gives a purpose and meaning to life.** It helps us release our

energies and potentialities. Without a goal, all our activities become desultory, and energies become scattered.

I can probably use the saying of *Sri Rāmakrishna* with regard to a godless life. *Sri Rāmakrishna* made a beautiful statement. Every achievement in this world is like so many zeros. The numeral '0' has absolutely no value, if we do not have that '1' in front. But first you get '1', and then any amount of '0's. And the more number of '0's, the more valuable that thing becomes. It is true, both in the world, as well as in the life of this spirit, spiritual life, Godly life.

Now, if this statement can be interpreted. If a scientist has that - first a goal. And that goal is not an irrational hypothesis. But after studying a great deal, the man produces certain hypotheses. This is what is called a working hypothesis. And on the basis of that working hypothesis, he formulates a goal, and says that there is a good rational chance that this goal can be achieved on the existing knowledge.

So, if the same thing applies in spiritual life too, that without God every achievement in this world becomes a zero, because death has surrounded. One millisecond is sufficient to, what is called, sweep away many things. Sometimes flash floods come and huge buildings are swept away, as we have seen in the, 22 years back or so, in the tsunami when it struck in Indonesia. One earthquake, whole cities can go. One nuclear bomb like Hiroshima Nagasaki, thousands and thousands of people can be killed. Now we have even more powerful weapons.

People forget even a Corona is much more powerful than any atomic bomb. It killed many lakhs of people, which even that nuclear bomb has failed to do so. So the nature has got much more powerful weapons.

Sri Rāmakrishna is telling, O man, do not be proud. Any moment, everything can be wiped off, swept off, you will not even remember what you had. Or if you are alive also, you can go through tremendous difficulties.

I do not know whether I reminded you that beautiful song, श्री राम भजो दुःख में सुख में सब नश्वर है मत मान करो (*Sri Rām bhajo dukh mein sukh mein sab nashwar hai mat mān karo*) Everything is *Nashwara*. *Nashwara* means very ephemeral. What does it mean? It doesn't mean something stays for 1000 years, other things stay for 100 years, some other things stay for one year. *Nashwara* means you don't know, we don't know, even the very next millisecond we may not be there. In fact we experience it every day, though we hardly take notice of it.

(35:00 mins)

A rich man- a millionaire, a pauper, both of them, they go to bed and enter into deep sleep. And deep sleep is considered as a *Pralaya*. That is why it is called *Laya*. And if it is

death we call it *Pralaya* - प्रकृष्ट रूपेण लयः (*Prakrisht rupena laya*)! So when a multi billionaire is sleeping is he a multi billionaire?

Sri Rāmakrishna used to funnily say, you have to excuse me, 'If a man is a very rich man, or even a king is overcome with sleep, and he's sleeping, any passing dog can lift it's leg on him at any time. He will not know anything'.

Such is the foolishness. This is called Death. There is no difference in that state between rich and poor. We don't even know whether we are dead or alive, because there is no body consciousness. Only consciousness is there. There is no thought, because mind is also absent. This is not a guess. This is not irrational thinking. This is what is called everyday fact of life. Death is a fact of life. And every minute we fall asleep, whether in the car, train, tram, aeroplane, or during our work, or during cooking, is a period of death!

So, always we have to keep aware. *Sab nashwar hai mat mān karo*. I cannot resist myself, quoting a little bit further. He says बहुवीर हुए बलवान हुए कितने ना महिपत मान हुए । अब कौन कहाँ कुछ ध्यान धरो । सब नश्वर है मत मान करो । श्री राम भजो दुःख में सुख में । प्रभु की ये माया कैसी है । कहीं धूप कहीं पर छाया है । तुम काहे भ्रमे कुछ ध्यान धरो । सब नश्वर है मत मान

करो । श्री राम भजो दुःख में सुख में । (*Bahuvīr hue balwān hue, kitne na mahipat mān hue. Ab kaun kāhān kuch dhyān dharo. Sab nashwar hai mat mān karo. Sri Rāma bhajo dukh mein sukh mein. Prabhu ki ye kaisi māyā hai, kahin dhoop kahin par chāyā hai. Tum kāhe bhrame kuch dhyān dharo. Sab nashwar hai mat mān karo. Sri Rāma bhajo dukh mein sukh mein*).

This beautiful song was sung by a blind singer, and was recorded nearly 50/60 years back. This is available on the YouTube *Sri Rāma bhajo dukh mein sukh mein*. Please go through it.

So when we are discussing about 'The Gospel of *Sri Rāmakrishna*', we have to remember these things. Many times when I'm talking, I remember many incidents which are relevant. I remember these kinds of songs, and many other things, all in the context of what we are discussing.

So discrimination is - accept the fact of life. Do not forget, whether you are a believer in God or not, the fact of life, the reality of this world, it affects every one of us. Whether a believer or not, all of them in a millisecond, anything can be swept away. And we are experiencing, not occasionally, but every single day, every single minute of our life. By the time I started this talk, how many people have died? How many babies are again born? This terrible struggle for life and death is going on.

That is why discrimination, practice of discrimination, helps us in coping with life. And we become much more efficient, successful. And we can also become very progressive in our spiritual life.

But now we are discussing here, a well defined goal.

Now, what did we study so far? That without a goal, discrimination becomes difficult. If you don't know where you want to go, you don't know, you will go to the railway station and say, 'Give me a ticket'. If you ask the ticket seller, he will ask you, 'Sir, where do you want to go'?

If we don't know discrimination will not work. But it is equally true, if we do not practice a little bit of discrimination, we cannot fix our goal also. So, they help each other. From now I am here, now what do I want? I want to be more healthy; I want to be more successful; I want to progress in spiritual life; I want to be more healthy in this world also. Or I want to become more truthful, more *Dhārmic*. Whatever it is, the discrimination is necessary.

(40:02 mins)

So first fix a goal. And then, now we know I am here, and I have to reach there. Now discrimination comes.

- What is the best path?
- What is the quickest way of progress?
- Which path is strewn with least number obstacles?
- And which path has got shortcuts?

All these things our *Sadguru* will tell us. Or if we are very sincere, and we do not have any *Sadguru*, God Himself comes to us in the form of intuition and tells us.

Proof, as I mentioned many many times, *Sri Rāmakrishna* had practiced spiritual *Sādhana* twice.

1. First, through intuition- not a single *Guru*. Earnest prayer with intense longing, 'O Mother, I am a fool. I am relying upon you like a child. You please guide me'. And the Divine Mother had intuitively given Him all this knowledge of the steps necessary - You do this, you do this, you do that. Don't do that. And He attained to the highest *Nirvikalpa Samādhi*, Intuitively. But that path of intuition is only for few people. In the beginning, at least, and for a long time, we require the help of a *Sadguru*.

2. And that is why, second time, for our sake, many *Gurus* came to him. And that is a miracle. And all of them were experts in their own fields. All of them were well versed in the scriptures. All of them followed the *Sampradāya*, *Guru-shishya sampradāya*. Nobody had ever said, 'I did not have a *Guru*, and I learned everything from God Himself'. So, with the help of the *Gurus*, scriptures, and all the implements that were necessary, *Sri Rāmakrishna* practiced it, under their direct guidance and achieved the same goal.

Later on He remarked that whatever I have realized with the help of the *Gurus*, I have realized it, I had realized all of them earlier, purely through intuition. Purely through intuition. And why did... Divine Mother had made me follow because this is meant for other people.

So, without a set goal, any talk of progress is meaningless.

Why? A goal serves as a way of measuring our progress.

Even in this world, a higher type of goal brings a lot of peace and joy. It's a common experience, that even a little achievement towards a good goal, gives us a sense of well being, not to be had by any amount of sense enjoyment. If this be the case, we can imagine the joy and peace an aspirant is likely to experience, when he has God realization as his goal.

Sincere effort, however small, brings immense satisfaction immediately. Without a definite goal, and a strong desire for attaining it, discrimination doesn't help.

Many aspirants, after reading a few books, jump to the conclusion that God realization is the goal, and focus all their attention on it. Though this is the ultimate goal, it is well to bear in mind, it is the last goal. It is a long term goal, to be attained only after many lives of intense effort.

So, what should we do now? What should concern us right now, and is helpful, is to have short term goals that can take us to the next higher step. These goals include overcoming defects like hatred, jealousy, waste of time and energy in frivolous talking, and useless activities.

I think some time back I had sent a beautiful article - Am I a devotee of God? Therein I have formulated certain questions. Am I a devotee of God? If we answer to that question ourselves, after putting the question to ourselves, if we say yes, we are telling a lie! Unconsciously though. We have not yet become devotees. It is God who has to give the certificate, 'Yes, you are my devotee'.

(45:07 mins)

That's what we get in the 12th chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, if you remember? *Bhakti Yogā*. So such a person, प्रीयो नरः (*Priyo narah*) 'Such a person is very dear to me, O Arjuna', The Lord tells us. Only the Lord can tell us, really, whether we are devotees of God or not. But we dare to consider ourselves as devotees of God.

So put some questions.

- Am I subject to jealousy?
- Am I greedy? Most of us, by God's grace, I think have enough to live a comfortable life, even if everything is taken away, our job, etc. Can I not live a simple life, if not in the cities, at least in the outskirts, or in a little bit village type? Can I live comfortably, or simple life? Yes. Then why are you worried about it? Why are you so greedy about future life, when we do not know how long we are going to live.
- Am I subject to hatred? Do I hate anybody?
- And am I a slave to either the tongue, or the eyes, or the nose?
- Am I attached to my family, to my husband to my wife, to my children, to my relatives?
- And how am I spending my time.

These are questions well worth to be pondered over, not one single time, but again and again and again. So that is this helps us, the more we ponder, it helps us.

That's why *Sri Rāmakrishna* used to say that just... Let me read this one, what *Swāmi Brahmānanda* said about *Sri Rāmakrishna's* teaching. *Swāmi Brahmānanda's* advice, in this regard, is an indispensable must for every spiritual aspirant. 'Every night before you go to sleep, think for a while how much time you have spent in doing good deeds, and how much time you have wasted? How much time you have spent in meditation? How much time you have wasted in idleness? Or even worse, doing or talking, which are purely secular things, which degrades the mind. Make your mind strong, through the observance of continence, and the practice of meditation, etc'.

So every night! This is a very good spiritual practice. At least just before going to bed -

- Do I want to become a devotee?
- How much time I have used properly?
- How much time I have wasted?

- Did I cheat anybody?
- Do I have any strong worldly goal?

And if we practice this simple exercise sincerely, a surprising result will come. Sooner or later, the unconscious reveals itself.

I know quite a number of cases. And I used to give this advice. And then, surprisingly a few people came afterwards and said , 'Swāmiji I never knew I had these kinds of defects within me. I thought that I am far superior to many of my neighbors, and other people whom I know. I thought I don't have these defects. Now slowly a Pandora's box is opened. I see a little bit peep into the unconscious. I see how many millions of things are wriggling, hissing. If they get a little bit of opportunity they come out'.

So this advice of *Swāmi Brahmānandaji* helps us.

So now, what are we talking about? Let us not forget. There must be a set goal, if our *Viveka Buddhi* had to function and lead us towards God. But most of us say, God realization is my goal. That is absolutely fine. Once you are determined, and you have decided upon it, forget about it.

What do I mean? You be aware where you are. And you should be aware where your next step should be. If you don't do that. You are not going to go anywhere. Like a blind man, you go round and round and round the same pillar.

So this is a very must spiritual porter, as you say, we must keep a watchman. That is called spiritual porter. I gave you, I think, the example of *Sri Rāmakrishna*, He employed his own mind, 'O mind that you watch over me. If I think anything other than the Divine Mother, then punish me'. And vividly He had a vision about it. We come about it, we read about it in 'The Great Master' also.

(50:31 mins)

A rich man employs a porter, whose duty it is to see, that neither thieves nor cows, nor sheep, nor any other intruder enters the compound. Man's mind is his own porter, and the stronger the mind becomes, the better porter. So that is very important.

The fourth requirement, we have discussed about the third requirement. What is it? A definite goal. And a little thinking, conscious thinking, will give us very good clue what should be the goal to reach the next step? Of course, each step takes us nearer to God.

Now the fourth requirement. In order to practice rationality, don't forget awareness. This goal is very necessary. And control over the mind. Now **the fourth requirement is a strong will!**

Oscar Wilde's quip 'I can resist anything but temptation', is a truism for most of us. If we give into temptation, what else is there to resist? Temptations, pitfalls, and sufferings in life are unavoidable. Not only that, they are in fact our best friends in spiritual life. But for them, all of us would be saints. If I am not tempted, I would be a saint from the very beginning. If there is no pitfall, then I will be a saint all the time. By birth itself I will be a saint.

Not only that, what separates a saint from a worldly man is suffering and temptation. If life is all joy and sweetness we will be forever stuck in this mire of *Samsāra*. Misery and temptations give us an invaluable opportunity of proving our mettle, and strengthening our willpower. These are the very steps of spiritual ladder, leading to self knowledge.

So this is how we must have a tremendous willpower. Of course nobody has that terrible will-power that we get in *Sri Rāmakrishna*, Holy Mother, *Swāmi Vivekānanda*, direct disciples and many other saints, etc.

An example of this tremendous willpower, often the direct disciples of *Sri Rāmakrishna* used to give the example of *Bhagwan Buddhā*. *Bhagwan Buddhā*, He renounced the world, renounced His kingdom, His beautiful wife *Yashodā*, and His just born son *Rāhula* and went out. 6 years He struggled inhuman intensity, the *Bodhi*, the illumination had not come. In spite of his practicing the most severe austerities, anybody in this world can rarely practice. Superhuman! But *Bodhi* did not come.

Then He decided, either I get it, or I will give up my life. Then it is said, He sat in that *Bodhgayā*, that is why it is called *Bodhi-Gayā*, *Bodhgayā* now it's called. The place where *Buddhā* got illumination. And He sat under a tree, and that tree has come to be known as *Bodhi-vriksha*. So they say the grandchild of that ancient tree has died, but it's saplings have been planted. That's what the legend says.

But whatever it is, but our point is, He sat down one night. What did He say? This body is not going to move from this *Āsana* until I get illumination.

इहासने सुश्रुतु मे शरीरं त्वगस्तीमाम् सम् प्रलयंचयातु ।

अप्राप्यबोधिम् बहुकल्प दुर्लभां नैवासनात् कायम् अथः चलिष्यते ॥

Ihāsne sushyutu me shariram tvagastimām sam pralannchyāt

Aprapyabodhim bahukalpa durlabham naivāsānāyat kāyam atha chalishyate ।

(55:10 mins)

Ihāsne sushyutu me shariram – let this body dry up.

Tvak asti mām sam pralayanchayātu – let death come.

Aprapyabodhim – without attaining that God realization, Self Realization. Which is *bahukalpa durlabham* – it is extremely rare. It is not obtainable even millions, in millions and millions of years – *bahukalpa durlabha*.

Naivāsanāt – from this *āsana*

Kāyam – this body

Atha na chalishyate – it is not going to get up, move etc.

Sri Rāmakrishna also had the same tremendous longing and willpower, and they go together. Tremendous longing and tremendous willpower, they are two sides of the same coin. He found out, He was praying and praying but the Mother was not replying. Occasionally She was giving some tidbits, but She was not giving the highest realization. Then one day, He saw the sword in the hands of the Divine Mother. And the madness He was describing, ‘That I could not resist’, and said, ‘My life has been wasted away. And I don't know, it may be wasted away also, but I cannot live without the Divine Mother. If I don't get Her vision, I'm going to put an end to my life’. Like a madman, He ran towards that sword. He seized the sword, but then the time had come. With that kind of longing, devotion, intensity, willpower, the Divine Mother could not hold, or we would say the screen of the *Māyā* has been violently torn away. That which was separating the Mother from the Child. And He had the glorious vision of the Divine Mother, and He fell unconscious.

Later on He was describing so graphically, ‘I saw from all four sides, waves of pure consciousness, like tsunami were rolling over, came at a mind boggling speed. I resisted not to become unconscious, but they overpowered me, and I became unconscious’. That experience will come to anybody who has that tremendous longing.

Now what I want to, I want to close this talk with this. There is something very funny about it. ‘Waves of consciousness came, overpowered me, and I became unconscious’. What is He talking about? I became unconscious – that I am a body, I am the mind, I am something limited and became the Infinite, the Unlimited, the pure consciousness. The broken pieces of consciousness, called awarenesses, have become merged in the ocean of pure consciousness, which is the Divine Mother.

That's what will happen to each one of us, if we follow the footsteps of *Sri Rāmakrishna*. And that is got through our own *Satgurus*. If we follow faithfully, with

sincerity, we are also going to reach. We may not get that intensity, we may not have that devotion, we may not have that willpower. But it's okay. We are small sticks and *Satguru* is like a stream. If we hold on to Him, just as small streams join the bigger rivers, and ultimately all the rivers merge in the ocean. So we are also going to merge in the huge ocean of the Divine Consciousness called *Brahman*, God consciousness.

Om tava kathāmr̥tam tapta-jīvanam

kavibhir īḍitam kalmaṣāpaham ।

śravaṇa-maṅgalam śrīmad ātatam

bhuvi gṛṇanti te bhūri-dā janāḥ ॥

May Sri Rāmakrishna, Holy Mother, and Swāmi Vivekānanda bless us all with bhakti.