

Questioner. Gururaj, you have said that in order to reach enlightenment, it is necessary to have a great yearning, a burning fire towards that end. If the yearning is not so great and the fire only an occasional flicker, does this mean one is some way at fault and if so what should one do about it?

Gururaj. Beautiful question. Some of you, that might have read the Gospel of Ramakrishna, it gives an analogy there, where the guru, where the chela goes to the guru, and says 'I want enlightenment'. - Are you comfortable there? - Good. - 'Where I want enlightenment'. The guru says 'Yes, sure, I'll show you, give you enlightenment, I will show you God. Stay, relax for a few days in the Ashram'. So one morning while the guru was going to the river to bathe, he sees this chela and says 'Come along with me and have a bath in the river'. In India they normally do that because of the hot climate and the Ashram was on the banks of a river. So while they were having a bath, the guru pushed down the chela's head in the water and held him there for a little while, until, until the chela couldn't breathe anymore and at the last moment, the guru pulled him up. And he asked him 'What was your thought when you were nearly being drowned?' And the chela answered, 'The only thought I had in my mind was for one breath'. That is the yearning a chela should develop if he wants enlightenment.

Now this yearning comes after a long period of preparation. It is the build up, like water boiling in a pot, it starts slowly and reaches the boiling point, where that yearning becomes so, so, intense that like the boiling water, it really burns. And when a person has reached that intensity of yearning then be sure to know enlightenment is round the corner. You don't even need to get out of the river then, you'll find it there and then. Good. So the rest of humanity are not at fault whatsoever in not having that yearning because all this is a preparation to become one with Divinity. And there is nothing wrong with preparation. It is essential. If the housewife wants to cook a meal, look at the amount of preparation that goes into it. She's got to cut up various types of vegetables and this and that and the other, before it could be put onto the heat, onto the pot. Likewise the cutting up of the vegetables is just as important as the heat, the stove would give, or the finished meal would give. And funny enough all the time is passed in the preparation, the housewife would spend hours at the stove and yet you finish the meal in ten minutes. Do you see?

So, the beauty of enlightenment also lies in the preparation. It means that attainment is beautiful but attaining is beautiful as well. So the attaining contains joy, from a lesser degree to a greater degree until one has arrived. Then the joy of attaining ceases and then you find bliss, a bliss which is totally indescribable because you are in that state of being, where you do not experience joy any more, you do not experience bliss anymore, but you are bliss, because that state is, cannot be known with the mind, it goes beyond the mind and it is a state encompassing everything. So with what could

you compare it? You only know sweetness if you have tasted bitterness. You only know sunshine if you have known rain.

So, there is no comparison whatsoever in that state of bliss but while on the journey to attain that state of bliss, comparisons are made. And comparisons could be very, very joyful. And here is the secret of finding everything in life joyful is to have the proper perspective, the proper perspective. And the proper perspective as the old saying goes and which everyone knows, the man was sad because he had no shoes until he found someone who had no feet. Yeah, that saying holds very true, because man's mind can take something very beautiful and make it seem very ugly, at suffering to himself and those around him. So he sits down to his meal and it just happens that it's slightly salty and he can kick up a scene. Why? So what. Why not think of the ninety nine times when your beloved wife has cooked such a beautiful meal and just that once, when there was a slip of the finger, the pinch was a bit larger of the salt, than usual. Why on that only? When such a thing happens if we turn our attention to the other meals that were provided to us, then the saltiness, although it does not disappear, one can still find enjoyment in it. For what's wrong with the meal that's slightly salty sometimes, really nothing. You see. Perspective, attitude towards things, the acceptance of things, for in anyone's life everything can never go right all the time, in no one's life, until one reaches that state of enlightenment, where nothing really matters and life just becomes a play. You are the observer. All the things happening on the screen of life, all the violence and the drama, the pathos, the comedy, the tragedy does not affect you. You are sitting apart and watching the show. So life is a play, as Shakespeare so well said. One can objectify every thought that occurs in the mind.

Now during this week I think, we discussed the origin of thought and how thought is translated into the action of daily living. Good. So if we start at the source of thought and the source of thought starts at the superconscious level of the mind, and through our practices, when that glass is cleansed and cleared and the light flows through, the quality of our thoughts also improve and they become more and more positive. And if they become more and more positive, then our attitude to everything, assumes a different meaning altogether, and those things that seemed so ugly before, would seem so beautiful now.

I was visiting a few years ago, visiting a friend a few years ago and he had a tree in his garden which he was just on the verge of chopping down, because it was partly dead, nearly dead perhaps. It had no leaves and to him it was an ugly sight and he wanted to chop it down. He was preparing to chop it down. So when I visited him, we started chatting and he says, 'This afternoon I must really get busy, getting this tree down'. Then I started explaining him, I said 'Let's have another look at that tree'. It could be seen from his living room window and I explained him, I said 'Isn't this a beautiful

example of abstract art? Why must a tree always have the kind of branches that you think there should be? Why should it always have the kind of leaves that you think there should be? Here is a tree without leaves. Look at its shape, it looks so gnarled but within that, how many lessons can be learned. Here is abstract art for you and the purpose of abstract art is that you should be able to project a different dimension into it from what your eyes perceive'. And he appreciated that and the tree seemed beautiful to him. So, look at the change, from something that is ugly to something that is beautiful.

So in the preparation that is required to reach enlightenment, all the little joys are there, sorrows are there, but why not turn those sorrows into joy, like this tree, like this example I have given you where to this person, even if you give him a thousand pounds now to cut it down, he'll say 'Sorry. No, it is living art for me'. And he has discussed it with me subsequently so many, many times. And sometimes 'When I feel a bit depressed' he says 'I go into the garden and I sit in front of the tree and I let my mind just go to the tree and watch its shape and it becomes a meditation to me and my mind calms down'. So here, something that was so ugly, turned to beauty and he even went beyond the beauty to find the other dimension, not only in the object but within himself, the subject.

So, here in this path, in this preparation, until that real yearning comes to become one with God that yearning could assume such a madness, such a madness, that you are overpowered with nothing else but God. You think of nothing else but Divinity. You live nothing else but love as the expression of Divinity. But then, you have gone past all the things that were required in the preparation. You have gone beyond all the laws of opposites, created by the mind, all the laws of opposites created by the intellect and so sorrow becomes joy.

Now as one increases in one's perception, as one's awareness expands, then sorrow does become joy because we would think in such a manner that anything and everything is good, within it's own perspective. That is why we say "Condemn the sin but not the sinner'. Why? Why? Why does theology say that? Because within the sinner, there is that Divinity, all the time and the sin he has committed is just from surface value. The sin is on the surface. Who knows what graver sins have we not committed in past lives perhaps? So then we stop judging. We start loving. Not the woman because she's a woman or the man because he's a man or a donkey because it's a donkey but because the Divinity is there. So we go beyond the analysis that the intellect is capable of. We operate from a deeper level of the heart, operate from a knowingness, operate from a recognition of all that is good and pure. And when that recognition comes, then all the virtues run after you. You don't need to chase virtues anymore. Automatically, you see the thief, okay, he has stolen but by seeing the Divinity there - now all this is developed in preparation - you see the Divinity there, you don't see the thief. And by seeing the Divinity, you love the man even if he is a thief. You see an adulteress, you don't despise her.

Wasn't it said that he who is sinless, cast the first stone, wasn't that said, which is very true. So in other words it means, who are you to judge to cast a stone, who are you to call her an adulteress? Who are you, what do you know of your life and past lives? You might be committing greater sins in a different form that has a greater and deeper karmic impression upon your subtle self, upon your mind, than the very act of the adulteress.

I heard of a prostitute and the story of this woman intrigued me very much. I was still a university student at that time and just arriving in Bombay, knew no one, slept on the beaches for a few nights, found a job that lasted three days, washing dishes. And the proprietor liked me very much but the health authorities would not allow me to sleep on the tables after the shop was closed, so I had to leave. And sitting there, forlorn, lost in a sense - just turned, was about turning fifteen, fourteen, I had just passed my Matric - and so, this lady comes by and I was crying, what to do now, I had run away from home, what to do now. So she says, "You are crying". Now this is something very unusual in the East where a lady would approach you. It is something - it's an accepted thing in the West, you know, different cultures, different customs, different traditions, different traditions and things like that. So I told her, still sobbingly "I have nowhere to sleep tonight. It's a bit cold". And she says "Come to my home" she says, "I will give you a bed". And this was unusual. And I found out afterwards that she was practising the oldest profession. But yet in this, in this woman, whom the world would regard to be so low, lowest of the lowest, she had the kindness and the compassion to take in someone unknown, feed him, clothe him and make him feel that all is not lost. What is greater? What is greater?

And of course as I started knowing her, I started finding out the reason. She was from Pakistan and during the partition of India there were so many refugees that crossed the border and how her family had been massacred. She witnessed with her own eyes, how her mother was, her mother's breasts in front of her were slashed with a knife, ugly, terribly ugly, very gruesome, if I should describe it to you, how her father in front of the children was castrated, how the sisters were raped by more than half a dozen men and she just managed to escape into an unknown place where poverty is rife, no work is available. I have seen last year B.A's and M.A's driving buses, can't get jobs. So in the circumstances, for survival, she was doing what she was doing. She had her own form of prayers and I used to watch. From the morning for about two hours, she used to be merged away in her Puja, in her prayers and the same thing in the evening. I was very intrigued. I always had a mind far advanced than my age and I started studying her very deeply. I said what can be done for her.

Now while I was at Varsity, I met a Senior Lecturer who was later a Professor of Sociology, Professor Davere, so he was doing some research on this problem of prostitution. And he was actually commissioned to do this research because

there in Bombay it is legalised, like we have in many countries of the West. The reason why they did this, was because there are eighty percent villages and only twenty percent cities, eighty percent villages and twenty percent cities and all the men from the surrounding villages used to converge to the cities to find work, to make a living. And that is why, for sociological reasons, for hygienic reasons, for psychological reasons, prostitution was legalised. I don't agree with the concept but nevertheless that was there which I faced. And here Professor Davere was commissioned to do this research. So I introduced Professor Davere - and those guys, used to like me and wherever I went they always used to like me and it was fun really. And I introduced him to her and he was very interested because he was doing this research. He was doing research into what makes the woman tick in her profession, why, what are the reasons, blah blah blah. And in the end what happened was this, that he fell in love with her and she with him. They are married. I get occasional letters from them. They have three children and living very, very happily. And she still thanks me. She says, "I gave you just a roof and a few plates of food. You have given me life". I said "Don't be silly, the Lord gives, not I". Good.

Nevertheless, what I am trying to point out to you in the preparation to reach this intense yearning is this, that man might have to go through all kinds of experiences. This that was placed in a certain circumstance and she was doing which is regarded to be socially wrong, immoral. And she used to say, which I did not really agree with, she used to say "Well, what about these business people, what do they do? They skin you alive, they suck your blood and I give my flesh and blood to please someone". That was her attitude. But amidst all this, the point was this, that whatever she was doing and I do not justify it at all, that whatever she was doing, she had developed within her, kindness, compassion, forgiveness - constant in her prayers, constantly thinking of the Divine. So, who are we to judge, who are we to judge? And it is because of her life or what was inside of, not the outer act, not the outer thief but the inner self that brought about these changes where her life just became very beautiful and smooth and happily married. For Professor Davere knew the pathological side of it, knew the trauma 'Didi' went through, knew the psychological impact that must have been created witnessing this, what she had witnessed. And in a land where you would scramble for a crumb of bread, what could she have done? He understood all this and accepted all this and made a woman out of her, a decent loving woman.

So in the procession - this is just one example, it could be a very extreme example - but in the process of life, many things we have done and there is nothing to feel guilty about. Never, ever feel guilty of any act that one has committed, for that very act is also a part of your preparation. Because by feeling guilty, you are not being helped in any way. Like I always say, you repeat yourself "Oh I am sick, I am sick, I am sick, I am sick" and you'll get sick. Why not the other attitude, "Oh I am feeling much better today, I am feeling better, I am feeling better" and you will feel better because the mind is so susceptible to anything you want to put into it. So why not, if you have the choice, put in good things.

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Sometimes I get Forms and I read things, and things which seems so minute, so small, and so much importance is attached to it. I don't blame the person whatsoever but I would encourage that the importance that is attached to the circumstances is necessary to a certain extent but not to the exaggerated extent that you are applying the importance.

So in this life's journey, in this preparation, the waves rise and fall and ultimately they reach the shore, the shore of bliss but the sting out of the preparation can be taken away. The sting can be taken away. And there is not a single talk when I don't repeat this, at least a few times and it is this that the sting can be taken away by meditation and spiritual practices, where the awareness expands, one sees things in a different perspective altogether. There are things which we just cannot change you know. We have signed up in this lifetime for certain things that we have to learn and we just cannot change it, we just cannot change it. And we don't believe in miracles. There are subtler laws that operate that we do not understand and call miracles but there is no such thing as miracle. Say for example, a woman she can't bear children, she has done everything possible, perhaps, all the doctors and specialists and she just can't. Now if she just can't; she just can't. Perhaps she has been born in this lifetime not to have a child. Perhaps there were circumstances and happenings and actions in other lifetimes which by our own selves, by our own Karma, by our own actions, we have created the condition in this lifetime to learn to accept the fact that I am not going to be a mother. And once that fact is accepted and learnt, it will not worry one so much. It won't become a source of sorrow. For that very yearning for the child can be converted, - forget sublimation - can be converted, into a yearning for something else, always for betterment of course. That very yearning can be concerted into devotion for one's own parents, for one's brother, sisters, guru, God, whatever, whatever. It is not the object that's important, it's the love and devotion that's important.

So there are many things in life like that. Now, I am quoting very extreme examples to drive, punch the point home. And of course, in between those, the range of that vastness, there are little things, little things. Oh, so the Hayes' cooks you know, give us such lousy meals, you know. And I know someone who is very disturbed by it, 'I don't eat this rubbish'. Okay, you don't. Did you come here to eat or did you come here to be with your guru? 'Ask yourself that question', I told him and his attitude changed. 'Because I came for the feast of the mind and heart and love. When I reach home I can always have my big meals, so these few days are nothing'. You see how attitudes change, if only the right perspective can be seen. And of course if you have the choice, why not choose the best. But if nothing can be done about it, then accept. It's no sense rushing the kitchen with a pistol and saying 'Hey, (General laughter) what is this, what is this you're feeding us with?' Yeah. And then if the food is not palatable, there is always cheese and bread at the grocery shop around the corner. You see like that. I am just quoting examples, instances. But we must really - I must speak to Mona, perhaps we can organise things differently next time. Why can't we get our own cooks, why can't we hire a professional

cook? And I'm sure, I'm sure ten ladies every day will take it in turns to help the cook. Sure they would, why not. I would be the first one to peel the potatoes. (General laughter) Nevertheless, that is all fun you know. BMS knows what it does and they do the best.

So in this path of preparation, a lot of things come about, and as I always say, sometimes the cross is hard to bear but it has its own rewards. There is always an opportunity in every adversity, always, always, always. There is an opportunity in every adversity. If we remember that, like the other saying would be, every cloud has a silver lining. Let's look for the silver, there might be some gold also hidden away somewhere. And then you see the darkness disappears, such beauty comes and then finally when that intensity of yearning begins. Now that yearning has a special quality after all the preparation, that yearning has a special quality where you don't yearn, yearning yearns. Who are you to yearn for God? You are only preparing to yearn. Yes. Fine, accept it. Yes. When you are so consumed by that yearning that you do not exist any more, you do not exist anymore, the entire ego is gone, the entire individuality is gone, not gone in the sense of being annihilated but in the sense of it taking a secondary, third, fourth or tenth place in one's activity and then the yearning that comes is not you. You don't yearn. Yearning yearns for fulfilment. And then when yearning yearns for fulfilment, fulfilment is there. And then yearning itself realises 'What was I yearning for?' It's a bit tricky I know, I know but that is the procedure. That's what happens. That is the meaning of 'To be'. That is the meaning of 'Being'. All preparation is becoming, becoming and then being. That is the secret. That is the purpose of life. And we all will be there. We are all reaching there slowly but surely. Just hold the right hand and you shall be led there, yes, always.

And now five to one, the difficult part, the difficult part of it all is to say "Au revoir", never good-bye. They have organised a Course, I'm sure this must have been announced, so it would amount to a repetition really, that I will be here in August from the first to the fifth. It is on the American trip where there is a gap of some days and I don't like to waste time, so, I believe that is a very good time as far as people are concerned to come on a Course here in England. And of course if you should ask some Astrologer, they might say it's an auspicious time too. For every thing in the name of Divinity is always auspicious. That is the only difference between me and the Astrologer. He talks about stars, I talk about God. So I'll be back for that five days and they are busy trying to organise a Course. So perhaps in a few months, I'll be seeing you all, because according to Savita and she's quite an optimist - I don't blame her for being that because she knows, being in the office and getting hundreds of phone calls, she knows how people are really benefiting and she is so happy about that. She is happy because others are happy. And she is optimistic, as I said of having between five hundred and seven hundred people on that Course, which really would be a record for us here in England. And I hope

her optimism becomes fruitful. Good. And she is busy trying to organise a venue to hold so many people and it is available I believe here in England.

So until then, I shall not be really leaving you, just disintegrate this body, re-integrate it elsewhere, for I am here, always, always, always. Thank you very much for the lovely hospitality. Thank you very much for your love. Thank you for your devotion. And I return your love and devotion a hundred-fold, for it is a mutuality. There is no pedestal there in the ground there, it is like that. And within that horizontal sphere of guru-chela relationship, we find the vertical bar leading there, firmly grounded on earth and yet leading up. That is the cross. Hah. Bless you all. Namaste.

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