

THE FOREST OF LIFE

RAJESH: Beloved Bapuji.

VOICE: will you speak [??], too?

RAJESH: Yeah, sure. Beloved Bapuji, when lost in the forest, which is the quickest way out?

GURURAJ: The question is, when lost in a forest which is the quickest way out? Now, with my experience in traveling in forests, I've also found some lakes. So there are two ways of getting out of the forest: one is to climb up a tree, or the other is to jump in the lake. What do we mean by being lost? And what do we mean by the forest? And what do we mean by getting out of the forest? The entire existence is a forest and how little do we know of the forest. Who is here that could name every tree that's in the forest? Here, perhaps, yes, all the redwoods. But in the forest of life there are so many trees of which you know nothing. And the beauty is this that you do not need to know anything at all.

You do not need to know the names of the trees, as long as you know that it is a tree. And that is sufficient, because all trees would have branches and leaves. All trees do provide shade, depending in what position the sun is. And when you are feeling very hot, traveling in the forest of life, you need the shade. And finding that very shade where you can relax is the best way to get out of the forest. We are talking of the forest of life. So find the shade; repose, and lay calmly. But not with any wishful thinking. Enjoy the shade and its coolness. Let that cool breeze that blows permeate you to such an extent that even the tree is forgotten, the shade is forgotten, and you are only aware of the breeze that is within you. And that breeze within you is the vital force within you: the prana, the vital force that is keeping you alive in the midst of this forest that you live in. Now, when you become aware of the vital force within you and all else is lost, then as I said, the tree is gone, the shade is gone, the whole forest is gone, and it's only the vital force that is there. And the merge into the vital force of life, that life does not contain a forest. [SINGING IN THE DISTANCE] (You'd better get ready for His word comes to your town.)

VOICE: Hi, everybody.

VOICES: Hello. Hi.

GURURAJ: So we seem to ignore the beauty that surrounds us. For even in the forest lies great beauty, but you are not only to appreciate the beauty only. Because that could be appreciated only by your senses: touch, smell, taste, etc. So, let even the beauty of the forest disappear, and become merged in that vital force which is your life force. So become merged into life itself where everything else disappears and you do not need to find the escape route. Because wherever the life force is there is your home. And you have never moved away from home, ever. This movement that you think you are making is transitory, totally transitory. It could be likened to an illusion, that movement from one place to the other. You've always been in this forest. You've never been away from the forest of life, for that is all that exists. The life will exist even without trees, even without the flowers, for that life force is indestructible. It forever remains pure. And that life force could be said to be superconsciousness, the superconscious state of one's being, while we dwell mostly in the conscious level of ourselves, and in the subconscious level. But through our practices when we dive deeper and deeper and reach that superconscious level state, then everything disappears. Because the disappearance means one thing, that you have become one with everything. So where are you going to disappear to when you are it all? Where can you escape to? You can never escape away from the allness of that which we regard to be life. And yet, we feel life's motion. And if that motion of life, roving from one end of the forest to the other, must not be regarded as moving from one place to the other. It must be regarded that you are in the same forest, but just changing situations as life changes. Look around you at these trees. Can anyone tell me that one tree is more beautiful than the other? No. They are all beautiful, and they will always remain beautiful. It is their nature to be beautiful. And yet so silently how much it helps us. It draws away the carbon monoxide. Is that what you call it, hm? So even in its silence it's helping us all the time, so that we could breathe in pure oxygen. And that very breath is the life force that exists within you.

Now the question comes, how to appreciate the life force. True appreciation is never from the mind because the mind is analytical. It will analyze appreciation itself. And then appreciation will start analyzing appreciation in its varying degrees. And so the process goes on and on and on. So the idea is to not escape from the forest, but to be in the forest and find every tree to be just as beautiful as the other. Some might be fat ones and some lean ones. So what? They have to be that. And it is because of the bulky trees and the thin trees that adds greater beauty to the forest, otherwise life's forest would become monotonous. You will not enjoy it.

So you find all this variety. You find all this diversity in existence. But find the unity in diversity. And when you find the unity in diversity you will know that all these trees are but one tree. Dig deep enough in this ground and you will find a connection between the roots of one tree to the other tree. They're connected at their very root, although outwardly they might seem apart or far apart. But dig deeper down, dig deeper down within your hearts, and you'll find that oneness which is your inherent right because you have not been born two. You have been born as one, encompassing the

oneness of the entire universe. And with that wonderful tool you have in hand you explore the forest. It doesn't require gas. You just move around. Do you see? No gas is required. But to be able to move around without gas, remove all the gas from your brains and stomachs. Because they're quite gasified. Do you see? In other words, get away from your sensual selves. And the sensual self has to do with all the organs.

And people, because they had been animals in their previous existences according to the laws of evolution, still bring out the animal selves in them. Food, they must have food. They must fornicate, copulate: animalism. Big fish eat small fish. You're always trying to be better than the other. My curtains are better than the curtains of Mrs. Jones next door. That's the attitude, which should not be the attitude. My curtains in my home are good enough for me, as far as my pocket can go, and I'm happy and satisfied. Do you see? So here we move away to a higher stage of existence, where though we have the animalism within us, we are beyond animalism and yet are involved in our animal instincts, which is nothing wrong. Indulge in those instincts. You have been born from that. Appreciate this forest, because in some lifetime you have also been a tree or been a plant. And when the universe began with a big bang you were a rock, mineral. You evolved to the plant, then to animal, and then to man, and still farther to go.

So all those experiences of millions of lifetimes are still there within you. So when you are with plant life let the mind go back through your spiritual practices and become the plant, become one with the plant. You're caressing your dog or your cat or your snake, whichever pet you have. Become one with it. And when you are with humans, become one with humanity. And that is only an itty bitty part of life very small for there's so much more to explore in the vastness of your own being. And your own being resides not far away, not on any desert or mountain or forest, but within you. All these trees that you see around you are within you. You are only objectifying that which is within you already. How do you know this was a tree if that tree had not existed in your subconscious mind already? There would be no recognition of it. Do you see?

So all this forms the wholeness of life. The wholeness of life. It is from the black hole and its explosion that this whole universe came about. And you as an individual being also went through the same process. (Have you got any pennies? No, it's a joke.) They don't understand the difference between holes and wholes. So, go back into that bigger hole of the universe and find yourself (oh, now she's laughing) and find yourself at one ment. Atonement means at one ment with everything around you. And the only way that can be done is if you feel at one ment within yourself. That is a starting point. For when you feel that at one ment within oneself, you automatically are led into the process of feeling the at one ment, or the oneness, with everything else. And you find that everywhere if you have that love in your heart. And with the spiritual practices the heart develops in love, and more and more cells of your brain are opened so the universal mind can float through it, flow through it. So you become more and more aware.

To become aware of this tree you do not need to count all these leaves. Some young men walked into a mango orchard, and the botanists that were there started counting the branches, and some of them started counting the leaves. That how many leaves and how many branches are there in this tree? But one chap he plucked a mango and sat in the corner and enjoyed eating the mango. Who had the best of it? The one that experienced the sweetness of the mango, and not those that were counting how many leaves are on the tree.

In many many outdoor talks of mine around the world, we have found in public places people would just stroll in. They're of course very welcome, because the soul only knows of that oneness, of that deep love, of that brotherhood that exists in this universe. They might have a few beers in. And they might at first sound rowdy, but listening to the voice of love they become quiet. Because they too experience the quietude of love. Love is never turbulent. It is only quiet. And here and there where there is some turbulence, or movement rather, like the waves in the ocean, remember it is the rapture, the ecstasy, which the waves are experiencing. So you complain that the sea or the ocean is very rough, too many waves. It is very easy to go beyond that. Become a surfer and enjoy the surf, enjoy the waves. Again it's a question of attitude, how you look at the truth. Is it the tree you are looking at or the forest? You know the old saying. I look at neither; neither tree, neither the forest. I do not need to look at them. How can I look at something that is within me already, with which I've found that divine oneness?

How can you look at your own eyes? You can't see your eyes. Yet the eyes can do all the seeing. So you have to have a mirror to see your eyes. Yet, how many people really know how to look into their eyes with total truth and honesty, that this is me: I am John, Jack, Joseph, Joshua or whoever? To be totally honest within oneself and look in the mirror squarely, and half of your miseries are then gone. As they say in the medical fraternity, and as others would say, that proper diagnosis is half the cure. Do you see. So by looking at yourself squarely in the mirror you are diagnosing yourself: ah, this is my fault. This is where I'm going wrong. And what am I going to do to mend my wrong ways? Don't mend the wrong ways. Keep the wrong ways. You can't mend them. You can't run away from the path. The path is there. And it will remain there because others will also have to travel through the same path. But you can make a detour and yet reach the goal, yet reach the end to the main road down here by doing the detour. That's all you can do. You cannot destroy the path. Here there might be a river in flood and you can't cross it. So you make a detour. But that river will always flood in the rainy season. And which life is here... or who has not had the experience of the rainy season of life? Everyone has. And good for you. Have more rain to feed this forest of life. For that is how you learn. That teaches you how to yearn for the real meaning of life. And yet it is so apparent that we miss it. We don't see it. It's like a man having his spectacles in his hand and looking for his spectacles, his glasses.

This Mullah Nasrodin was searching around in the street. So this friend of his that was passing by asked him, "Mullah, what are you looking for?" So the mullah replies, "I'm looking for my key." "Where did you lose it?" He says, "I locked my door of the house, and I think I lost it there in front of my door." So this friend asked him, "Why are you looking for it under this lamp which is about a hundred yards away?" So, Nasrodin replies, "I'm looking for it there, because there is more light there." Do you see? [LAUGHTER]

And talking of spectacles, there was a young girl that went to a party. She took two glasses and made a spectacle of herself. [LAUGHTER]

Don't you make a spectacle of yourselves, you that are so spectacular, unique in God's creation. So become that spectacular entity that you really are by becoming one with the forest. Get that feel that I and the forest are not apart. Get the feel with your beloved that she and I are not apart. And we becoming closer and closer together in the mergence, what we are really seeking is the mergence of the Divinity that is within me, and the Divinity that is within you, and we're trying to weld the two together. And in the end we find it was the same Divinity all the time.

But we are like the musk deer. I might have told you this story, or perhaps some other place in the world, of the musk deer hunting around for the scent. You know, musk scent. Many of you ladies use it. Men use it too. What the factories do they dilute it a bit, and they put on musk deodorant for men. It's the same. One is diluted, the other is less diluted. Good. So this deer started hunting around seeking for the musk until it got so tired it just collapsed. And then in that total exhaustion it found that the musk was really in his navel, because that is where musk comes from, from a musk deer's navel.

So what are you going to gain in life? There is nothing to gain. You are it. You are everything. And do not measure life by how many dollars you have in the bank or how many homes you have or how many cars you have. Measure life by how much happiness you have. Even if you live in the forest in a shed, in a hut. Measure life by how much peace you have. And the greater the peace within yourself, the closer are you to Divinity. But you keep on striving.

I don't know if I told you of the story of Tolstoy, the very great writer. A short story. This very rich [zamendar?], which means a very wealthy landowner, made an offer to this man and he said, "As much as you can run in twenty four hours, all that land will be given unto you. So if you run for one mile, one square mile, that square mile is yours. If you run for two, three, four, five, six, ten square miles, all that land is yours." So this man started running as fast as he could to try and capture as much land as he could. But he got totally exhausted and he fell down. He was dead. How much land did he get? Six feet in which he was buried.

People must strive for things, otherwise you become lazy bums, drop outs. You got to strive. But striving for things must also have a direction. And that direction, the goal, must always be the happiness and the peace within oneself. That is

the direction. If it brings you that peace with ten, twenty million bucks in the bank, make the ten, twenty million bucks and have it in the bank. But I know so many many multi millionaires, having been in the business world of finance and films and textiles and the works, as you know. I used to deal with these multi millionaires. That's before I took on my present role as a spiritual master. But I have not found a single multi millionaire that was happy.

I don't know if I told you this story of [Beerbul?]. [Beerbul?] was the prime minister of the king Akbar this happened in the fourteenth century in India and Akbar was a very brilliant person. A lot of the art and architecture you would see in India and the classical music started from Akbar's time. He used to be the patron of the arts. But he wanted to meet a happy man. So he sent out all his armies, all his generals: "Find me a happy man and you will be well rewarded." So everyone went out hunting for the happy man. And no one could find a happy man, because the first approach they made were knock on the doors of rich people, thinking that they were happy, but everyone had a problem. And they went everywhere, to all kinds of people. They went to psychologists, they went to psychiatrists, who are more mixed up than the people they treat, and they couldn't find a happy man. So, [Beerbul?] the prime minister, who was a brilliant man, went out himself. And he traveled the whole world, and yet could not find a happy man. And then so very weary he started going back home to the king's palace. And then while crossing the river he saw a person bathing in the cool waters there, happy as a lark, splashing in the water with so much great joy and ecstasy that the happiness and his joy was radiating around him. So [Beerbul?] inquired of him and found him to be the happiest man in the world who never even possessed a second shirt. Do you see.

The point is this, that the peace and joy is within oneself. The forest is within oneself. It is all there, for life is a forest. And you are going through all the byways of the forest. Nothing wrong, as long as you enjoy the beauty of the trees, the beauty that constitutes the life of the forest itself.

The beauty's found everywhere. Divinity's found everywhere. Sattyam, shivam, sundaram: God, truth, and beauty are all the same one, and that is our trinity. Sattyam, shivam, sundaram. The beauty of Jesus, the Father, the Holy Ghost, which is the truth. Because truth to people is so intangible. And so is God so intangible. And so is this Christ spirit so intangible to people. Therefore, they do not realize God and beauty and truth. That's the only way out of the forest of life. Because from this opening here that helicopter comes that lifts you above the trees, above the forest. And you have the bird's eye view of the forest of what you call life. And when you are high up, this forest will seem so small. And yet it seems so enormous while you are living in life. But from that vantage point up there it seems so small. And then you start realizing, "Why have I been bothering myself so much about it?" But you only bother yourself so much about it because you are entangled in it and you feel lost. Do you see? But you are not lost. You are never lost, because all paths meet like rivers in the same ocean. You might be going down one river and someone else down another river. It does not

mean that because they are traveling from different directions and from different rivers that they are lost. No, because the meeting place is only one the ocean. Do you see?

So when it comes to thinking of life's problems you have to rise above them. Have the bird's eye view, and you will find them to be so small. But standing down here you find this tree to be so tall. But standing up there it seems so small. All life's problems are in reality small. And yet the word "small" contains the secret, it is "all." So he who could find the allness in the smallness of life is the one that goes beyond the forest. He is the one that realizes, "I am never lost. I am never lost."

A lady advertised in the newspapers. Her little dog was lost. So she advertised: If someone sees a brown puppy with white spots on it and she gave the name of the dog, you know, fifty dollars reward. Dog wasn't found. And then one day when she was of still mind, not a chattering mind, a still mind, she heard a sound, as if was coming from the cellar. The cellar under the house. Is that what you call it in America? A cellar? In England they use the word cellar, too, but in there they store wine mostly. I've got a cellar too, but in there I store the spirit, not wine. Yes. So she heard the sound and went down into the cellar and found the little dog. The dog was always there, not lost.

So how can you find that which is never lost? So finding and losing is a contradiction of terms in the present context. Never lost, and never found, but always is all around. That sounds like a poem. Never lost and never found and all is forever around. Twenty five till two. Would you like to hear some devotional music?

[END SIDE ONE]

GURURAJ: This devotional music by Mira, a great poetess and what you'd call a saint, wrote this. It's Indian classical, but I'll try and simplify it for you as far as the raga goes. Raga means the structure. (I've lost it. Oh, there it is. Oh, I see a note here: Gururaj, Tuesday, find ruby ring, do forms, finish up paintings, check accounts, poetry, arrange intensive, radio press book.) [singing] When classical music starts in the West... Leslie what do you call it in France, the no, no, the [??????]?

LESLIE: Prelude?

GURURAJ: Prelude. Now, in Indian it's called [alap]. [SINGS]: [Prabu?] means Lord. Let me be your servant to serve you. If I become your servant I could be close to you, and I could have the sight of you all the time. Isn't the king's servant lucky? People would write in for months and months and even aristocrats, and yet they can't see the king. And yet this servant has the opportunity from morning till night of being with him. It's nice to be a servant of the lord, if you

have an opportunity of seeing him all the time. [SINGS] Brindaban was the name of this town where Krishna stayed. And this great bhaktani, which means devotee, says, "I shall go through all the streets and all the lanes of this town singing of your praises. Govinda is another name for Krishna. [SINGS] [CLAPPING] Get the beat! [SINGS] I will inherit from you the bhakti, the devotion. [Bala?] means love. I will inherit from you the love and devotion and worship. [SANSKRIT]: And yet all three I find to be one. Your darshan and your love. The bhakti, devotion. [SINGS] On your head I see that golden crown. And around your neck I see the sparkling mala. Mala, beads. [SINGS] [CLAPPING] This means that in Brindaban Krishna was a cowherd, like our Jesus was a shepherd, carpenter, shepherd; while Krishna was a cowherd, although being a king. And he used to call all the cows and his gopis together blowing his flute. [Moahim?] is another name for Krishna. And [Muhulivalla?, you know, the flute player. And the melody of the flute he used to call all his gopis and the cows together. Why did they choose cows and call him cowherd? Is because if you look in the eyes of a cow, it is so soft.

Have you ever looked into the eyes of a cow? It's very beautiful. I'm sure many gentlemen have looked into the eyes of a cow. [LAUGHTER] Therefore... you know, a cow is so tame. You know? A cow doesn't just go in there until you lead it to go. Every portion of a cow is useful, you know. It gives milk that feeds the world, yah. It gives milk to feed the world. Its skin it gives to make you shoes. And they do a lot of things with its intestines. Its manure is used for making fire. If you go to the peasant villages of India you would find them taking the cow manure and making into patties, and they store it away during summer to dry it. And you would find this in Israel, as well. And in the Middle Eastern countries. It's not only in India. Right. And it burns, firewood, and no smell to it. Cow manure also is used to rub down the floors with. And you will never find in the village homes of India any of the bugs that you have here. But it destroys the smell. It's not smelly to one's nose, no. But it destroys all the bugs. All the ants it keeps away. Doesn't destroy it, but keeps it away. And even its urine has great medicinal value. So therefore that fool of a president of India, [Moiral Gudesi?], publicized in the paper that he drank a glass of his own urine every day. You must have read about it in the paper. We were all very, very, wild about it. Do what you want to do. You can even... you can even eat your "s" for your breakfast. We don't want to know about it. [LAUGHTER] Okay.

[SINGS]: Oh, for you I shall build the tallest building, but I'll have many many windows in it. So while I am sitting out at the roadside I would be able to see you passing from one room to the other through those windows. Yes, I'll do that, my beloved. [SINGS] Oh, Yogi you have come to this world to perform your yoga, yet he would not put on the clothes of the sannyasin. Sannyasin means a renunciate. You know, the one that wear the ochre robes. You are the greatest yogi of the world and, yet, you do not show it by putting on the ochre robes. [SINGS]: Oh, man of Brindaban like we would say your man of Nazareth, man of Brindaban you have really come to show us love and devotion. [SINGS] Mira the poetess.

In Indian poetry you will always find the author or the authoress' name incorporated in the last two lines. So they don't put down such and such, the name of the poem, by such and such. The name is incorporated in the poem itself. [SINGS]: I know you have no patience. But we are so slow, please have patience. In you heart ridaye, reedhayam in your heart, please have patience for us, because we are so slow. [SINGS]: Even in the middle of the night let me have your sight, darshana. Let me have your darshana, because I'll be sitting waiting for you on the banks of the river Jumuna. (You understand, Jammu?) On the banks of the [Jumuna. [SINGS] Namaste.

Do you see the beauty of God? Those three or four men that came singing of Jesus, [INAUDIBLE] with beer cans in their hands, then they came, they sat quietly. [INAUDIBLE] Do you see the power of love? That is the power. They sat quietly, and then they left. After I finished with the devotional song, they bowed. They had quite a number of beers in them. [INAUDIBLE]. [INAUDIBLE] I could never [???] loving you. There was no [loving?]. If I never had the timber I could not build the house. So there is that love. [INAUDIBLE] of taking the lumber though lingering on to build the house of love. Jumuna is a feminine of Jammu, which is the masculine. So there was very much worshipping in Brindaban the town, a small town, village like. That is where Krishna grew up with his gopis, and worked as a cowherd. And there is based the place, the scenario, of this devotional poem.

Now, I would really like to bring my harmonium with me. You know what a harmonium is? Do you know what a harmonium is? It's an organ type of thing that you, the bellows you press, you know, when you play. It's a weight to carry, that's the problem, especially when you flit from place to place by air.

How do you guys feel?

VOICE: At peace.

GURURAJ: [INAUDIBLE] Good. Okay.

I'll take your offer of that soda water now. You know, someone had a cooler bag. It's a pity we didn't ask if we could put in the cooler bag. I think I saw a cooler bag, you know.

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