



YOU CAN'T BE IN
KINDERGARTEN
ALL YOUR LIFE.

You must go higher isn't it?



HER HOLINESS SRI SATHGURU
SWAMI GNANANANDA SARASVATHI

The minute we are born here a big veil of maya comes and covers us. When that maya comes we don't remember anything at all. You think that you are born here. All the family that you have here, they are the most important to you and nothing else matters. You live in this world just for yourself and those you consider yours, you don't remember how you are born here. So what happens is you think only that you are here to live, to make money, to look after your family or to look after anything else like your own body or any other concerns that you have. You don't think what is the reason and why you are born here. You forget all that.



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A few first words...

Dhrtarashtra said to Sri Bhagavan. “I know what Dharma is but I cannot practice it. I know what Adharma is but I cannot help committing it.” This is one of the eternal dilemmas faced by all of us in our lives. We know what we should do but cannot practice it nor can we keep away from wrongdoing. Sri Sathguru calls it the conflict of the lower and higher natures in creation. Sri Bhagavan refers in passing to the lower and higher Prakritis (in chapter 7 of the Gita) and later says that the Maya of the Gunas can only be crossed over by total surrender to Him. Sri Sathguru has tirelessly over the years called upon Her devotees to resist the pulls of the Lower Nature and increase the power of the Higher Nature in them.

Evil has been a constant companion to humanity from times immemorial.

What is evil? The impulses to mindlessly hurt, to dominate, to fulfill all cravings whether lawful or not and a supreme selfishness. When these impulses become powerful, they create a Hitler or a Yahya Khan, who coerce whole nations into evil doing. Virochana and Indra, the Upanishads tell us, went to Brahma to know the Self. Brahma told them what is seen in the reflection, that is the Self.

Virochana mistook the Self to be the body and rejoiced in that knowledge, Indra more discerning, went back to Brahma for higher knowledge. These are the two sides of us, the seeking for sense gratification and the quest for Higher Knowledge.

Sri Sathguru in this powerful discourse tells us of the veil that covers us at birth, creating in us the feeling of doership; how we can conquer our lower nature; the descent of evil and

how it should be combated by calling out to God for help and our relationship with Him.

It can be safely said without exaggeration that during Sri Sathguru's discourse at Sri Niranjan's house that there wasn't a single person who did not listen with rapt attention. A devotee who saw Sri Sathguru for the first time there said, "Her teachings are easy to understand, easy to practice and simple yet powerful.'

The Dhyanasloka of the Gita refers to Sri Krishna milking the Upanishads and giving the world the milk as the Gita. That milk Sri Sathguru has boiled with the fire of her tapas and sadhana, sweetened with the sugar of Her compassion and given to us. It only remains for us to drink it.

Swami Shrihariprasad
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Narayana!

The Veil that covers us

Niranjan had asked me a few questions about how life and death are not in our hands. How we are neither the doers nor the enjoyers. These are some of the answers that Sri Krishna has given to Arjuna and He has explained how we are not the doers. In reality we don't do anything. Though we think we do it, we are not really the doers. We think we are doing it but we are not really doing it because the actual power comes from God, that is, Brahman. Power comes from Brahman and because of that power we are able to do things. But it is from the Paramatma that it comes and the Jivatma, that is, the ordinary person he is called a Jivatma. That Jivatma thinks that he is doing it though really he is not doing it. It is actually the Paramatma who is doing it. There is only one doer in the whole world for

the power of doing comes only from God. He is the one who has got all the power. But we think in our ignorance that we are the doers, we are completely in charge. Actually we are in a dazed state when we are born here and live in this world – we don't know the Truth. The Truth is that in the last and final stages there exists only God. From Him all the atmas have come and then they live in this world and they work out the Prarabdha karma. Life and death are beyond us you said. That is true because we are born here by the force of our purva janma karma, good and bad. That forces us to be born again in this world and we have to work it out. We have to work out bad as well as good karma in this world. That is why we are born and we take a janma for that.

But what happens is when we are born here, the minute we open our eyes into this world, we forget the past. We don't remember anything of the past life.

How we are born here. Why we are born here. What are the good deeds that we have done, and the bad deeds. This is paapa and punya that we have done in our past birth, which was the cause of our being born here. But we don't remember anything. The minute we are born here a big veil of maya comes and covers us. When that maya comes we don't remember anything at all. You think that you are born here. All the family that you have here, they are the most important to you and nothing else matters. You live in this world just for yourself and those you consider yours, you don't remember how you are born here. So what happens is you think only that you are here to live, to make money, to look after your family or to look after anything else like your own body or any other concerns that you have. You don't think what is the reason and why you are born here. You forget all that. So what happens is you get lost in maya. Completely lost. You don't

remember anything. Then, when it is time for your to go, even that you don't know . Where you are going, when you are going, nothing. When you have to go, you have to leave the body here and go and yet none of these questions are answered because you have not tried to find out anything about it. When you are born in this world this punya and paapa that you did in your past janma continues to take its effect. So when the papa comes, you suffer. And the punya comes, you rise. You are happy. You are not able to understand that it is none other but the force that is making you feel like this.

Overcoming the Lower Nature

There are three forces in maya, that is. Rajas, Tamas and Sattva. Sattva Guna is the higher nature of man. Rajas and Tamas are the lower nature of man. All human beings have this higher and lower nature. It is with this higher nature we must control the lower

nature. The lower nature has Rajas and Tamas, which is Kama, Krodha, Madha, Moha, Lobha, Matsarya, Raaga, Dvesha, Bhaya. All these things belong to the Rajas and Tamas. And unless we are able to control the lower nature, we suffer in this world without understanding the why and the wherefore of anything. If you were to be master of yourself, you will be able to stand away from what is happening, look at things in a more objective way and you will be able to understand something of it. The main part of it is that you have to learn to control the lower nature. Control of the lower nature can be achieved only by using the higher nature to help you. The higher nature is Sattva Guna, all the good qualities, and the good attributes. Because of that you will be able to control the lower nature. Or else you won't be able to. Your anger. When you get angry you are not able to control it. Why – you are not able to understand from where it is coming and what is the

reason the anger comes and you just break. That should not be there. You must learn to control yourself. And to get that self-control you must work towards it. When you see other people sometimes doing very well in life and you find that you are not able to do as well as them, if not better than them, then you get upset – because you are not thinking. Each one has his or her own karma to work out in this world. Today he might or she might be living in better conditions, that is, because their punya karma is taking its course and you are suffering because your paapa karma is take its course. So you must be able to think and understand. You have to think of the realities of life. This is what you call Vichara. You must spend time thinking on these lines. For that you must have a calm mind. Unless the mind is calm you will not be able to do any Tapas or Sadhana. Without Sadhana you cannot reach anywhere. It is the calmness of the mind and the serenity of the mind, which gives you

peace. Peace comes from nowhere else. This calmness and serenity comes from God. That's the Sattva Guna. For this you must practice it is small things. In small things you must learn how to control yourself. You think about controlling others. We must learn to control ourselves because when you die and go from here, you don't have to answer for other people's sins. You have to answer only for your sins. What wrong you do, you have to pay for and you get Paapa again. When you are born in this world, you continue to rewind what you are trying to unwind, instead of unwinding, you rewind it again by doing evil. When you do more evil, you again suffer in the next birth. All this Paapa and Punya will come with you. Although this body does not come with you, this comes with you to the next birth. When you go there, you will find that you suffer for some time. You are born in this world once more. When you are born in this world, you forget everything. Where you were and why

you are here. Nothing you remember. You take everything that you see in this world as true and real. What are the conditions that made you to be born in this world, you don't know them. So when you think of that it is highly necessary for you to get a calm, strong mind, mental balance. And if you get that mental balance alone, you will be able to do any Sadhana or anything good in this world. You have to learn first to control that mind which is creating all the trouble. Now, to control the mind, you have to have to do some Sadhana. That is Japa. Then Dhyanam. After this is over, you have to do some Parayanam of some of the great Books. Srimad Bhagvad Gita, Bhagavatam, for instance. You see, the Narayaneeyam is so well known and famous and it is a story which is true – it happened hardly a few hundred years ago. It is not as though it is an ancient story that nobody can believe. It is something, which happened really, and it is a pointer that if you do the same thing,

you can reach the same state of Bhattathiri reached, isn't it? And the great happiness and joy, the bliss that he received from God, we can also receive if we do the same thing.

You see, there are qualifications for all this. This is the highest and greatest endeavour of man and for that we must have great qualifications. Towards that you must work. Even in this world, if you want to be a doctor or an engineer, you will have to study for so many years before you can get that degree. Then can you imagine how much more you must do for this? It is a lifelong endeavour and practice. Even in the small things in your daily life, you must learn to practice it. As grihastas, you must learn to practice that. That is, don't allow yourself to think anything that is bad or evil. Whether it is about anybody or anything else. Think and train your mind to think that which is only good.

Do Japa and Iswara smarana all the time. You do Iswara smarana and Japa. When you do that you will find that your mind slowly gets calm. It may not suddenly come. It won't come suddenly because it is used to so many years of this restless life. To calm down, it will take time. So you must be patient. And during the time that you are doing this, pray to God with all your heart and soul. With all sincerity you pray to Him that you get peace. That He must relieve you of all these evil qualities, which all people are born with. There is nobody who is not born with it. You see, Rajas and Tamas are there. Maybe some people are very highly Sattvik. So they might have very little of this.

The Descent of Evil

You find there are different types of people in the world. So many different types there are. Great saints are born – they are different. For instance Prahlada or Kuchela. But understand that they

were of a much higher level. Very high level, much higher level. But what about those who have to climb? They must be serious about it and even if you are doing some work at your house, keep on thinking of God. That is Iswara smarana, so that you will not think of something bad. Let anybody do anything. Sometimes this worries you. "They said this about me, they said that about me" Why do you worry about that? Let them say what they want. See, somebody calls you a donkey; you will not become a donkey. You will stay a human being, won't you? (Laughs)

Then why do you worry about all these things? Just forget it. You will find that you will become calmer and calmer. Then, if somebody says something also it won't matter to you. It won't hurt you at all. So then, you do your work. Whatever work you are doing keep on saying the Japa. Repeat the Japa all the time. So no evil forces will get into your mind and spoil your peace.

This is Kaliyuga at its worst so you find that the maximum evil forces are strong and get settled in the mind of the human being. In olden days it was on another plane altogether. Now it has come down to the mental plane. In the mental plane, all the people, human beings, are suffering because of their minds being changed from good to evil.

Combating Evil-within us and outside us

You find when you open the newspaper, you find so many murders and bloodshed and violence. Can you find anything else but that – that's the sad part of it. And still people will not learn. They do so much of wrong, so much of wrong is happening and they forget that whatever they do comes back at them. That is what you call the law of Karma, which is very, very strong and very, very powerful. If one does wrong, it comes back to you. It won't go to anybody else.

In the same way, if you do something good, that also comes back to you. Of that you can be sure. You can't miss that also. You get the Punyam as well as you get the Paapam. So once you make a mistake, learn from that. It will be very good if you can observe other people's lives and learn from their mistakes and be sure you will not do the same things. That is how you should learn, by observation. That is one way that you learn, from observation. Or if you don't do that you will have to learn it the hard way. That is out of suffering. Why should you learn from suffering when you can use that God given intelligence and see what happened to other people who have done something wrong.

You find today people in high positions doing things that were unthinkable some 50 years ago or even 25 years ago. Now you find such terrible things are happening. Yet unthinking they are – they are not even thinking when they see this happening to somebody else

that it could happen to them also but they are not able to think. The mind is totally manipulated by the evil forces. That is why when you sit down to meditate – Dhyanam – you will find your mind is always roaming around, roaming around. It does not stay in one place. For that you must pray to God to give you His Grace and blessings first before you start – “make me strong enough to meditate on You”. It is not easy to get meditation like that. For the mind to become calm is very hard. So sit down and pray with sincerity that God will give you His Grace and His blessings so that you will be able to sit and meditate. When you meditate, you will find that as days go by and you grow in meditation, you will find that there is more calmness in you, there is more peace in you. And you find that you yourself have changed, that your reaction to worldly things has changed. That is, you do not think or care about it. That which was worrying you and upsetting you then, will not worry and

upset you once you reach certain high stage in meditation. Meditate on the feet of God. That is to learn humility. Without humility, you can't attain the Goal because one of the main things that trouble people today is ego. Everybody has ego. But egoism is at its worst today. That egoism is called Ahankara. Very strong. That drives you to do so many wrong things and when the result comes, you get broken. But what is the use? Before doing that action you should stop yourself. So you go to the brink of it and come back. This is why you should always do Iswara smarana. As long as you are going on repeating your mantra and Japa, you find that nothing happens to you. When something bad, so bad has to happen to you it will happen. The Karma is so strong, you will find that you will have stopped repeating your mantra accidentally at least. You would have stopped repeating it. And then only you get the blow. As long as you are repeating it, the blow cannot fall. Do

you know that? But when it is time for you to get it, you will stop repeating it. Automatically you will stop repeating it. So therefore you must pray to God "at no time will I stop repeating Your name". I mean repetition of God's name, or your mantra. As you go on meditating on God and at His feet and repeating the mantra, always in Iswara smarana, you will find that you are a very, very changed person after some time. You don't get upset, you don't get angry, and you don't feel any greed for getting things, which are not necessary. But still, when you are not established in at least even a little in the spiritual life, you find that anything in the world upsets you. But as you climb higher and higher, you will find that certain detachment comes to you. Vairagya it is called. To attain that Vairagya, you must get Viveka first. First Viveka comes and then Vairagya. When you get that Viveka, you will gradually understand how things are changing. And what is there in this world? There is nothing.

We think it is so great.

Tomorrow we have to go, we leave everything and go. You were singing that now – ‘Krishna Krishna Mukunda Gnanapana.’ In that, the poet Poontanam Nambudri describes the whole thing. The whole experience of Poontanam. It’s wonderful thing, a wonderful poem. He explains the meaning of life, how people attain God, everything. The same thing about Narayaneeyam. Melapattuur Bhattathiri. He was dying, almost dead, but after many days of constant prayer and meditation, he slowly became better. And finally he stood up and he had the vision of Sriman Narayana and he sang that “Agre Pashyami Tejo.” A vision he had really seen. That’s why it is so powerful. Because it is an experience that he had. So we can also attain it. It is not that we can’t get it, but we are not making any attempt to get to that stage. We get lost in this world. So when you are lost here, there is no time to

think of God. Only when troubles come we run to Him. What's the use? One of the children were telling me that he did not have time to think of God because he had to see the cricket match. I told him that when you get into trouble, you would remember Him fast enough. Very fast. Then you will run to Him. Then you will find that Sriman Narayana has taken His phone off the hook. Why? Because He is watching a cricket match. He has also no time for you because you have no time for Him. Can you understand that/ (Laughs). That is why you have to call God. Gajendra had to call so many times before He came. Until the last minute. He didn't come. In the same way with Draupadi also, such a great bhakta, but there was one small little ego, the feeling that I can help myself. There must be utter surrender, you know, absolute Sharanagati. And when that absolute Sharanagati comes, then He will come. That means that you are totally His, your ego has totally merged with Him.

There are no two people. There is only one. Only God exists. It is a very, very high stage and the last stage because you merge with Him. The Parama Purusha. You must read all these stories. There are many stories in the Bhagavatham. When you read it you will understand they are not fables. These are stories that really happened. Some of the people used to say that Krishna did not exist. He is only a mythological figure; He is not a historical figure. But then what about the remains of Dwaraka? There it is very clearly seen. If the Hindus were more interested, then Dwaraka would have come up by now and people could see whether Krishna existed or not. There are so many stories of how He had appeared to whoever called, but that call must be sincere and must come from the bottom of your heart. You must be serious, not flippant. You have to be sincere.

Calling God

It is very reciprocal you know, very reciprocal. If you want it to work you have to put it into motion. You will have to call Him many times. Otherwise He will lie down there in the Milky Ocean with His eyes closed. Unless you call Him. He just watches the whole creation going on. Paapam, Punyam taking its course for each person. He doesn't interfere because they are creating it for themselves and it is a law, which He cannot break. It is His law that He cannot break. So this goes on. In between somebody surrenders completely and calls out to Him like Draupadi or Gajendra. Then He opens His eyes and He sees. If you call Him from the bottom of your heart, then He will come rushing. The story of the small boy, Dhruva. How he went to the forest, went on praying. He forgot the whole world and went on praying. Narada came and gave him the mantra. He repeated that mantra till finally

MahaVishnu Himself came. So these are not stories. One thing in this Kaliyuga, things go very fast. One of the attributes is speed. But the punishment and the reward also comes with great speed. So that's one thing good for us. We do something good, we call Him and he listens because in this Kaliyuga, life is very, very hard. Life in this world for people is very hard. He knows how much we are suffering here. So those days in Satyayuga, when they had to call a hundred times, there was no necessity for Him to come so fast because life was so smooth then. Now it is not like that. So God understands the conditions under which people are suffering. So when you call and if it is sincere, you find that the answer comes quicker than it happened in the olden days. It all depends on your sincerity, on your honesty. Remember, He can see everything, hear everything. He is everywhere – SarvaVyapee, SarvaDharshi He sees everything – it is to that greatest of all Divine powers that

we are praying. We have only to pray with sincerity and don't do anything that is wrong. Yatho Krishnas, Tatho Dharma. Where there is Krishna, there is Dharma. He will not take the side of anything if there is no Dharma there. He doesn't mind if you are nothing. You might be a fool, with no brains, no money, nothing. You might be a fool. But whatever you may be. He doesn't care about that. You must be leading a good, clean life. That's all. Without doing wrong – because if you do wrong, then He can't be on your side. He can't help you. Then He could have helped Duryodhana. Why did He help the Pandavas? The Pandavas were Dharmic people. That Dharma was on their side. Therefore Krishna was for them. Duryodhana had all the money. He had so much of wealth and prosperity. But that did not bring Him victory. Yatho Krishnas, Tatho Jaya. So these things you must remember. Whatever the sufferings you go through, it is just working out some bad karma of yours

from the past. Let us not do more in this world. Let us not in this present life create more problems for ourselves. You know there is this, that when somebody does something wrong, the immediate reaction is to do it back. Don't do that. Hold yourself back. When somebody does wrong, they get the punishment. You won't get the punishment. Then why are you worried? So have a straight line chalked out for yourself like that. Walk on that line. It is the line of Dharma. Lead a life of Dharma. Then you will find Krishna will be there with you always. You don't have to ask for anything. That is the importance of Sharanagati. When absolute surrender comes, then He will look after you. You do your duty perfectly. That's all is expected from you. God doesn't expect more than that. You can't do more than that. You do your very best. Then leave it to Him, that's all. Don't worry what is going to happen tomorrow. Let anything happen. If you have God by your side, then you will be able to take

anything. And here is a meaning in everything that happens. You must understand that. Nothing happens without meaning. Maybe you can't understand it because you haven't got that Divine power or Divine knowledge to understand everything. So what happens is that you think that is wrong. Why did this happen? Why did God let this happen to me? It didn't happen to somebody else. All such questions come to people's minds. He's not letting anything happen to you. Your own karma is doing it, not God. God is innocent. (Laughs). He has not done any harm, so think on these lines and practice it. Whatever happens, that absolute surrender must be there. You do your duty and leave the rest to God. And in daily life, you must have a discipline for yourself. Self discipline. That you do things like self-control, self-discipline. This is small type of tapas. Small, but it is that – when you discipline yourself and control yourself without getting angry or doing anything wrong.

Control all these feelings. And then giving in to yourself. You like certain things, so you do it. That shouldn't be there. You must do it because it is right to do it. It must be right do it. It is that which is most important. So, as you do it like that your life itself becomes a Tapas. Slowly it becomes Tapas and you become purified of Rajas and Tamas and live in Sattva guna. Then it is a happy life.

Climbing the Spiritual Ladder

See, suppose it is time for you to have your food and you find somebody has finished everything else in your house. There is only your food remaining to have your lunch. A poor beggar comes. You take the food and give it to him. You will be doing a great self-sacrifice. God notes it and it is something which is a white mark on you, not a black mark. So this is what you call punyam. It's just a small self sacrifice. In some way you do it to other people.

There are so many suffering people. It may be just your neighbor or your friends or your relations. Somebody in trouble. You help them. You do that as Nishkamyā karma. Don't expect anything in return. You shouldn't expect them to come and thank you. You are doing it not for them but for God. Understand that. When you do it for God. He blesses you. You get God's blessings. But if you want them to come and thank you, then that's not right. That's not right. You should not look for their reaction. You do your duty and leave it at that. Do it on these lines. If you live your life like this then your whole life will change. Then, total surrender comes. When you totally surrender to Him, you will find that He looks after everything for you. From the smallest things to the biggest things. He will look after you. You must have the experience. Only if you do it, you will get the experience and then you will get a few more experiences. It makes you happier and more faithful to Him and

more peaceful at heart and more confident. Much more confident than before. Knowing fully well that “whatever happens is in my own interest if He has allowed it to happen. I’ve surrendered to Him totally”. That means real surrender like Kuchela. He didn’t ask for anything. You must remember that wealth came to him without asking. He was shocked himself. Think on these lines. Don’t waste time. Sit for some time early in the morning for your prayer, Japa, Dhyanam and Parayanam. Every morning you must do it. And in the evening spend some little time. The children in the house – they must also do the same thing. See, when everything is all right when we don’t want God. When we suffer, we go to Him. What is the meaning in that? Of course He will help you still. He will be kind and help you. Like in the Gita He says, four types of people come to me. One is the distressed. He helps them also. But you can’t remain in the Kindergarten all your life.

You must go higher isn't it? Higher and higher you go until you reach the higher classes. Only then can you go into the region of peace and calmness, of serenity. And you will be a very different person when you come to that stage. Try doing that surrender to God. Do your duty whatever it is, with self-sacrifice, maximum self-control, and maximum self-discipline. Suppose you are not allowed to eat something, it may be very tasty – but don't touch it. Say your mantra and you get the power not to touch it. It is only a bit of Maya. Nothing else. When you come to understand these things, you will be a different person than what you are now. You will grow in God's Grace and blessings. It is not easy to get it. You get that and more than anything else, you will be an example to other people of how true Bhakti and surrender (Sharanagati) can lead to complete Self Realization.

Narayana!



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