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3. EXPERIENCE OF UNITY IS REAL SATSANG

Date: 01 March 2003 (evening)	Occasion: Mahasivarathri	Place: Prasanthi Nilayam

Oh spiritual aspirants!
Whether one is a renunciant or a householder,
whether one is attached to the world or not,
whether one performs actions or not,
when one realises that the same Atmic principle
is present in oneself as well as in others,
one will always experience and enjoy
the company of God in all three states of
existence.
(Sanskrit Sloka)

Devotees should recognise the unity of the Atmic principle that exists in all beings. Satsang (good company) is very essential to understand the oneness of Atmic principle. Satsang does not mean association with good people, devotees, or spiritual aspirants. 'Sath' is that which is changeless in all the three periods of time. It is the Atmic principle. When sath and chit come together, what results is ananda (bliss). Sath-chit-ananda is the very form of Atma. This is referred to as Transcendental Truth. In order to understand this truth, three mantras are to be practised. They are Bhadram Trunvantu, Bhadram Srunvantu, and Bhadram Kurvantu. When you practise these three principles, you don't need to search for God.

BBhadram Trunvan means, "I am not different from the Atma." There is no entity in this world other than the Atma. Bhadram Srunvantu means "I do not listen to anything else." Bhadram Kurvantu means "I don't need to perform any sadhana (spiritual exercise)." When one recognises the oneness of the Atmic principle, where is the need to undertake any sadhana? Every sound that is heard is a resound of the Atmic principle. One who realises this will not listen to anything other than the Atma.

Divinity is the essence of all actions. Bhadram Trunvantu, Bhadram Srunvantu, and Bhadram Kurvantu means that the divine darshan, divine sambhashan and divine activities are embodied only in God. Hence, to live always in the company of God is true satsang.

God is one. He is referred to as Sath. Ekam sath viprah bahudha vadanti (Truth is one, but the wise call it by different names). That which is changeless in all the three periods of time is Sath'. You should live in the company of the One who is changeless, with unwavering mind and steady vision. Your thoughts, words, and deeds should be steady and sacred. But due to the impact of Kali Age, modern youth find it difficult to control their thoughts, words, and deeds. They do not have steady vision. They do not keep up their word. Their activities belie their thoughts and words.

> Manasyekam vachasyekam karmanyekam mahatmanam
> Manasyanyath vachasyanyath karmanyanyath duratmanam
>
> Those whose thoughts, words, and deeds are in complete harmony are noble;
> Those who lack harmony of these are wicked.

Your deeds should be in consonance with your thoughts and words. Harmonising thoughts, words, and deeds is true satsang. To experience the oneness of Self is true satsang. The Atma is only one. It attracts the entire world. What is prakriti (nature)? It consists of objects that delude man. All objects in nature are transitory. You do not find anything permanent. They attract man and delude him. The objects that are temporary in nature will give only momentary happiness. The Vedas speak about the principle of ritam. It symbolises the truth that is changeless. All worldly objects undergo change. When you develop ritam, you will be able to understand the changeless and eternal Divinity.

You may question, "How can I have the vision of God?" Oh simpleton! You don't need to search for God! Wherever you see, He is there. He is imbued in every object. You are unable to see Him because you are deluded by external appearances. Pashyati iti pashuhu (that which goes purely by external vision is an animal). Whatever you see, whatever you experience is but the manifestation of God. In fact, you are God yourself. Hence, the Veda exhorts man to develop faith that "I am God and God is none other than myself." Names and forms are many, but God is one. Sarvam khalvidam Brahma (verily all this is Brahman). Such unity in Divinity has to be realised. There is underlying unity in apparent diversity. Satsang means experience of unity.

Today, people think that satsang means a congregation of spiritual aspirants. People join such congregations and think that they are in satsang. But it is not satsang in the true sense of the term because people whom you think to be good may turn wicked. They are bound to change. How can such temporary association confer everlasting happiness? It is impossible. Till this day, people have not understood the true meaning of satsang and its significance.

Tell me your company I shall tell you who you are. When you associate yourself with ephemeral things, the results also are bound to be transitory. You should develop friendship with Divinity, which alone is true and eternal. Divinity is very much present in you. You cannot find it outside. The external world is subject to change. The world is nothing but a combination of matter. Everything in this world is transitory. Nothing is permanent. All that is seen in this world is illusory. The unseen Atmic principle alone is true and eternal.

If you pose the question, "Where is God?" some people will say, "He is in me", pointing to their body. Body is not permanent. Hence, this is not a proper answer. (Swami holding a rose) When I say the flower is in My hand, the flower is smaller than Me. In the same manner, when you say God is in you, you are bigger than God! In fact, the whole world is in the hands of God. Hence, it is not proper to say that God is in you. You are in God. All are in God. The world itself is a manifestation of God. This is the Transcendental Truth. This is the changeless truth. The word Sivam symbolises truth. Here, truth does not correspond to your body. It corresponds to the changeless and eternal Sath. Today, people go by the physical and worldly meanings and, as a result, spoil their mind.

Man's life can be compared to a tree. Asuya (jealousy) and ahamkara (ego) are like pests that destroy the tree of life. The day man rids himself of these pests, he can become a true human being.

What you have to know today is the principle of eternal and changeless truth. Our Narasimhamurthi (one of the previous speakers) said Divinity is in the form of the Atmic principle. How can one visualise the Atma? The Atma has no form. How can one visualise that which is formless? Bliss is the form of the Atma. It is present in everyone. Man is the embodiment of ananda. But he is unable to experience bliss because he is deluded by the material objects.

One should not crave for materialistic possessions. How long can they last? Here is a flower. Now it looks fresh, but by tomorrow it will fade away. Likewise all objects are bound to change with the passage of time. The Atma is permanent. Ananda is permanent. Bliss can only be experienced; it cannot be expressed in words. None can explain the nature of bliss. It can be understood only by experience. As I told you earlier, your drishti (vision), sravanam (audition), and karma (action) should be constantly focused on the Atma. Then you will certainly experience nijananda, nityananda and advaitananda (true, eternal, and non-dual bliss).

People sit in meditation for some time and start shedding tears of joy. They say they have experienced bliss. It is nothing but their imagination. Bliss is not that which comes and goes. It is permanent. In whatever

state you may be, waking, dream or deep sleep, you should be able to experience it continuously.

Embodiments of Love!

You should strive to attain Atmic bliss right from a young age. That should be your only endeavour. Your thoughts, words, and deeds should be aimed at this. This can be termed as true satsang. Worldly experiences, however long one may enjoy them, cannot confer the eternal bliss. You can experience the eternal bliss only in the company of God. All the worldly activities and experiences are bound to change. The Atma alone is changeless. This is referred to as ritam in Sanskrit. In order to experience this eternal principle, you should give up body attachment and understand the truth that the Atma in you is the same as the one in others. Just as the same electric current flows in different bulbs, the same Atma is present in all beings. Ekatma sarva bhutantaratma (the one Atma is present in all beings). But, today, man does not have such broad-mindedness. In order to experience divinity, which is the very form of love, you have to become the very personification of love. Divinity and love are not separate. Since man is endowed with such sacred divine principle, it is said, Jantunam nara janma durlabham (out of all living beings, human birth is the rarest).

Today man does not enquire as to what is gamyamu (goal of life). Instead of trying to know the goal of life, he is worrying about his janmamu (worldly life). Even animals and insects are concerned about their worldly existence. It is not essential to know the secret of life; one should know the purpose of life. That is very important. The goal of our life is Truth which is symbolised by the principle of Atma. Instead of enquiring into the goal of life, man is trying to know the secret of life. It is a futile exercise. Any number of births will not be sufficient to know this. Fix your mind on the gamyamu (goal). Do not worry about the janmamu (life).

The Adi Sankara said,

> Punarapi Jananam Punarapi Maranam
> Punarapi Janani Jathare Sayanam
> Iha Samsare Bahu Dustare
> Kripayapare Pahi Murare.
>
> Oh Lord! I am caught up in this cycle of birth and death;
> time and again, I am experiencing the agony of staying
> in the mother's womb.
> It is very difficult to cross this ocean of worldly life.
> Please take me across this ocean and grant me liberation.

You are born again and again, seeing, doing, and experiencing what you have already seen, done, and experienced. You should realise that you are born not to be born again. You should see and experience that by which your life will find fulfilment. That is the oneness of Atmic principle. Once you have experienced the Atma, you do not need to experience anything else.

Thousands have gathered here today. Each of you has a different form and behaviour. But the Atmic effulgence that shines in all of you is one and the same. When a bulb is glowing, one may sit and do his homework. Another person may write accounts with wrong calculations. Yet another person may write a letter with evil motives. Whatever one may do, the light is unaffected and untainted. It remains a witness. Likewise, the Atma also remains an eternal witness to all that man does. External activities undergo change, but the eternal truth of Atma remains the same at all times.

God is one; goal is one. The same is conveyed in the following statements: "I am in the light; the light is in me, I am the light." Here 'I' symbolises love and devotion and light stands for wisdom. When you say, "I am in the light," it means devotion is contained in wisdom. The statement "the light is in me" reflects the truth that wisdom is contained in devotion. Light and love --you have to understand the unity of these two.

Devotion is an essential prerequisite to know the reality. You should develop love more and more and ultimately transform it into wisdom. You should not follow the vagaries of the mind. Come what may, your vision must be firmly implanted on the Atma. With such one-pointed devotion, sages and seers of yore performed penance and experienced bliss. Today people chant mantras and perform japa (soft repetition of the name). They do so for the sake of their mental satisfaction. They want to attain peace. In fact, what they get out of such practices is not peace but pieces! In a rosary there are 108 beads, but the thread that strings them together is one and same. It symbolises Divinity.

Divinity is like a magnet that attracts the entire world. In some places, this power of attraction is maximum. It is something very special. Here is an example. So many of you have gathered here. Who sent you invitations? It is the Divine Magnet that has drawn you here. This magnet is present not only here, but everywhere. Here, there, and everywhere, Divinity is present in the form of Atma. Here you can experience the power of divine attraction. Such power cannot be acquired for the mere asking. It can be acquired only through love. Love is something that originates from the 'source'. It cannot be obtained by 'force'. Worldly knowledge can be thrust on you, but love has to spring forth from within

in a natural way. Love is God. Love alone can confer true wisdom. Jnanad evatu kaivalyam (wisdom leads to liberation).

Worldly knowledge is associated with multiplicity. Love enables you to visualise unity in multiplicity. Hence, you should develop love and understand the fundamental truth that the same Self is present in all. Different people partake of different items to satisfy their hunger. Food items are different, but hunger is the same. You should understand such unity.

Each one of you may undertake a different sadhana (spiritual practice). Whatever may be the sadhana, it should be performed with Atmic feeling. You should make efforts to understand the principle of oneness. That alone constitutes true sadhana.

The principle of love in you should be steady. However, the love in modern youth keeps vacillating. One day it is sacred and the very next day, it is unsacred. Such love cannot be termed as true devotion. Ekam Sath (Divinity is one). You are in the light and the light is in you. Bear this in your mind. Ultimately, you will realise that "I am I". If you want to understand the principle of Atma, you should not give scope to multiplicity. All that you see and hear in this world are merely reflections, reactions, and resounds. The reality is within you.

I see many students here. Where have they come from? They are My reflections. Otherwise, they cannot be seen. Likewise, every person and every object is your own reflection. Life is like an ocean with the waves of Samyoga (union) and Viyoga (separation). You should treat this duality with equanimity. The principle of Atma is beyond union and separation. To Me, there is neither samyoga nor viyoga. Viyoga results only when there is Atma. They are but your imagination. In order to realise the principle of Atma, you have to get rid of such imagination and develop the faith Ekam Sath. It is only one and not two. It is changeless and remains the same at all times and in all states of existence. You should join satsang to know this truth.

This body is an angamu (limb) of society. There exists a sangamu (association of attributes) in angamu, a jangamu (individual soul) in sangamu, and Lingamu (Paramatma) in jangamu. Linga is Atma, which is our very life principle. That is why the Atma is considered to be of the form of Linga. A Linga has neither a beginning nor an end. It has no head or feet. Hence, when you perform worship, you can keep it anyway you like. The Atma has a name but not a specific form. Bliss is its true form. It is very much present in us. When you crave for external happiness, you lose your innate bliss also.

Today is the auspicious day of Sivarathri. What is Sivam? It means auspiciousness. God is the embodiment of Sathyam, Sivam, Sundaram (Truth, Auspiciousness, Beauty). All that you see, hear, and experience should be offered to God.

> Tridalam Trigunakaram Trinetramcha Triyayudham;
> Trijanma Papa Samharam Eka Bilvam Sivarpanam.
>
> Offer a trifoliate Bbleaf to Lord Siva, the three-eyed Lord, having trident in His hand, which destroys the sins of three births.

People undertake various sadhanas (spiritual exercises) and different modes of worship on the basis of their own imagination. Whatever may be the sadhanas, one should not give up the resolve. One should have single-pointed attention. One should listen only to the principle of oneness. One should offer one's actions to God. Karmanyevadhikarasthe ma phaleshu kadachana (Action is thy duty, fruit is not thy concern)

Whatever you do, let it be pleasing unto God. Sarva karma Bhagavad preethyartham (do all actions to please God). Then no sin will accrue to you. There is no easier path than this to experience the Atmic principle.

Today, as different people follow different paths, troubles are on the rise. Such delusion is leading to confusion. As a result of this confusion, you lose the 'fuse' that links you and God. In fact, you are God. I am God. He is God. Everything is God. In order to understand this truth, you should rise from the level of the human to the Divine. You should know the principle of Sath, which is the underlying unity in diversity. You should not give scope to differences based on akara (form).

You should experience ananda (bliss) by being in the company of God. God is your true property. When you experience ananda, you become God yourself. Give up differences. All are in God. Keep this unity in mind.

Being students, you may pursue your studies. All your studies take place at the physical level. Along with your studies, contemplate on the principle of oneness at the mental level. Allah, Jesus, Rama, Krishna -- names are different, but God is one. Have unflinching faith in the unity of divinity. Undertake sadhana that will enable you to realise the changeless and eternal principle of Truth.

If you attribute various names and forms to God, you will not be able to realise the Truth. Names and forms are subject to change. Who was Rama? He was the son of Dasaratha. Who was Krishna? He was the son of Yashoda. In this manner, you will remember only their physical relationships.

When you worship God without attributing any particular name and form, the question of His physical relationship does not arise. There will be no differences whatsoever. Who is the mother of God? In fact, He is the mother of all. Today we find differences because we attribute various names and forms and physical relationships to God. You should get rid of such relationships.

Isavasyam idam jagat (the entire world is permeated by God). Easwara sarva bhutanam (God is the Indweller of all beings). When you contemplate on these twin principles, you can visualise unity in humanity. There will be intimate relationship between man and man. When you think of Divinity, you will not have any differences or difficulties. Difficulties come and go like passing clouds. You don't need to worry about them. Keep your vision fixed on the sun. Sometimes, clouds cover the sun. Then you don't need to be worried about it. Have patience. When the clouds move away, the sun will be visible again. In the same manner, the clouds of worldly delusions come in the way of Atmic vision. In such situations, you should not let your mind waver. Have patience. The 'clouds' will recede and the 'sun' will reappear.

Embodiments of Divine Atma!

You may get some thoughts, which are like clouds. Do not be carried away by them. Do not pay heed to all and sundry and ruin yourself. You should rise to the level of Divine and not degenerate to the level of demon. In order to rise to the level of divine, satsang is very essential. "One thought, one vision, and one action." These three must be unified. Sivarathri is celebrated to recognise the oneness of Divinity.

When you do bhajans tonight, you will have only one thought. You will experience the bliss of bhajans. It is the nondual bliss. Why is it prescribed that you should do bhajans all through the night? Bhajan is done to control the mind and focus it on Divinity. Some people keep discussing worldly matters even while they are doing bhajan. Do not go anywhere near such people.

> Tyaja Durjana Samsargam;
> Bhaja Sadhu Samagamam;
> Kuru Punyam Ahorathram.
>
> Give up bad company;
> join good company; and
> perform meritorious deeds day and night.

You should constantly think of the Atmic principle. Your parents may try to tell you about some worldly matters. They may lack discrimination. Why should you listen to such matters knowing fully well that they are

useless? Let them say anything. Do not waver from your chosen path. You should convince your mother saying, "Mother, you have your own likes and dislikes and I have my own. You are my mother and I am your son, yet our thoughts and feelings are different. Being your son, I will serve you and express my gratitude to you. But I cannot deviate from the path of truth."

Tonight, Lingodbhavam will take place. I created this Linga in answer to his (B. N. Narasimhamurthi's) prayer. But another Linga will emerge from within. In this manner, I can create any number Lingas. Everything is in My hand. The Lingas that come from the hand, from the stomach, from the mouth --all are one. Wherever you see, there is the principle of Atma. Understand this unity. Along with your education, develop Atmic feeling. When you develop Atmic feeling, evil qualities like hatred, jealousy, etc., will not come near you. You will not be perturbed by pain and suffering. You will be in a state of non-dualism. That is true bliss.

Focus your mind on God. Follow His command. Then your life will be redeemed. Now you can commence bhajans.

Bhagawan concluded His Discourse with the bhajan, "Sathyam Jnanam Anantham Brahma".

Date: 01 March 2003 (evening), Occasion: Mahasivarathri, Place: Prasanthi Nilayam