

Dec 18, 1982

Kirtan at Quintessence (Raja Ram and Sita Dev)

This was sometimes known as the 'Spectacles' kirtan, because it was the only occasion when most devotees saw Ambikananda wearing spectacles. This gave him a pedantic, schoolmasterly look, and indicated that the ecstatic mood of the previous kirtan had now been replaced by something more instructional, even penitential. Ambikananda made it clear that, while many kirtans were joyous occasions, others were 'for repentance', and such kirtans often occurred around the Christian festivals of Christmas and Holy Week. Ambikananda disliked the secular excesses so prevalent at Christmas time.

Ambikananda reads from Sathya Sai Baba's Living Divinity:

'...''Real meditation is being absorbed in the thought of God all the time... Think God, breathe God, see God, hear God, eat God, drink God, love God and live God.'

'All this is not easy even for monks. How can it be easy for people who just come once in a haphazard here? Truth must be spoken. I know it hurts, but it must not deject you. You are here to be uplifted, body mind and soul, without levitation. Do not complain. You must have fortitude and forbearance, and get used to pain as well, and rejoice in both alike. Not only in light you should like God but also in darkness, and especially in the din and bustle of everyday life. So in town you pass through a dark jungle, while in solitude of retreat you come to the heart of the forest, and sit quietly with pacified mind, and see the glory of Rama, or Krishna, or Ramakrishna, or whatever is the name of your God, for there is one God with a thousand and more names and forms. You may see God in his creation, which is a part of Him, a ray leading to him, but you not think of Him because you are dazzled. To breathe God is not easy if your lungs are blocked. If you have no health you cannot have yoga, so all this is not easy - you have to have discrimination.

'Every ashram, every group is a school of learning, qualified or nonqualified. I don't know really who is fully qualified, who has really seen - that rests with God and the personal individual. "Hear God". Yes, this is very purifying, this diminishes human birth, slowly slowly, when you hear, sin gets blotted out, it's a way to get rid of your condition, humanity to divinity, back to original. We are just the signpost here, we are summoned like you, so it's up to you to make an effort, to daily discriminate, to daily separate these things and find what you want. The preceptor may show you the way, but you must make the effort yourself. Bondage and liberation are in yourself. We see you are in bondage, we tell you to come out of it, but if you don't want to come out I can't make you. It depends on your search, what your motive is. So instead of practising all these kinds of yoga, practise patience yoga. I tell you, physical suffering is the greatest yoga. You must suffer so that you do not suffer. You must die so that you are not born again. How could you share another's suffering if you had never experienced suffering? Suffering is a great boon, a gift; you must suffer, invite suffering a bit. Otherwise how will you sympathise with others, how will you understand?

*'Here it is the hearth of God. We poke you in the fire of divinity. You are aglow, you are warm - but when the kirtan is finished, or 24 hours later, or another week, do you think you are the same enthusiast? Christmas is coming, pub incarnates now, you drink the bliss of this Kabeer [Kabir], you dedicate everything to Guinessh [Ganesh]! You have come to acquire something of what I am trying to say, so don't go back to yourself. Desires predominate. We are led by the rein of the *vasanas*.¹ Jivatma is encased in the body and identifies with body. Body is the greatest temple, and body is also the greatest drag. We can't get rid of it, we need it, it's a vehicle, a *vahana*. Therefore there is misery in this life.*

'Who is your teacher? Yourself! This scripture is just a beacon, just a guide, but life rests on yourself, now or never. This life we are talking about is daily a very hard life before you get ananda complete, which is inside yourself. You have to dig and delve. There is water of peace within, but you have to start digging. Water of love, of humanity in everybody, water of God that swells – out of joy you cry!

¹ Past impressions in the mind that influence behaviour.

So when we come here, we tell you frankly we are not going to share bliss experience and all this, we are going to share our poverty and misery of humanity.

Raja Ram: Thanks!

Swamiji: 'It is true! If all this is not a penitence, what is it? There are seven worlds above and seven below - which one are you going to, which one have you released yourself from? The truthful colour of freedom is all these. This is also the state of Jesus who crucified himself for redemption of mankind, and Ramakrishna whose cancer was a rope of Prema around his neck. Ramakrishna was in bliss but he didn't deny the suffering. Sarada Devi said it's not just blissful, life is full of misery here. Yes or no?

'This body is only a loan, a loan for encasing the eternal thought, the permanent thought of truth – Sathya, Dharma, Shanti, Prema, love itself - the thought that is stainless if you are clean in body, mind and soul, no rust, no lust, no dust. Listen to God before you go to the shrine. Truth will conquer the second you have paid heed to the voice of God. Listen to what he has to tell you, he has got so much to tell you, but you don't give God a chance to remove the darkness that surrounds you daily and nightly. Pay heed to what he has to give to you. The mind is hovering in the three lower planes of "eat, drink, make merry", merry Christmas – and soon Boxing Day! But when the shakti rises a little bit higher in the heart, personality is lost into attraction and solemnity of universal divinity.

'Remember you are God – every day we are reminding you. But to *become* God – to trace yourself back to Him – it is like putting the hand into the bag of the devotees' kirtan and finding the needles, without lust, rust and dust. How to pick the soul out? It is the magnet of love that picks the soul out. Others cannot understand these realized souls, sometimes like a ghoul, says Sri Ramakrishna, sometimes like a great king, and sometimes completely naked. In that state there is no body consciousness, there is only consciousness of Consciousness. Have you felt this state? No, you are too bashful, too coy. So truth is a striptease – but not to sinners, not to lusty people. Therefore you cannot become a bhakta artificially. You have to become a bhakta by going through this procedure of birth. Spiritual birth is as you breathe. Every time is a new breath – a breath of progression, a breath of achievement, of rebirth. It's a hymn – *Soham*, I am He, I am He, I am He . Until you are trying to become, you are still being conceived, conceived into yourself. You are a mini-conceived amoeba, an *amoebaba*, surrounded by water in the macrocosm of this womb of consciousness, and you have to be born into yourself and to be a baby, one-legged, to start jumping like a frog as soon as you are born! Every time I take a step towards Him, I am liberating myself from the bondage of birth and death. I am free, *Azad*, *Azad*, I am, I am, I am, I am becoming – watch, watch, look out, there he goes, one leg, isn't it? [*Ambikananda does a strange dance on one leg*]. It's a picture, a show, but a show for God, not for you. You happen to be here, summoned, in the summons court of God. Therefore, be devotees. Devotion is light, and no devotion is darkness. As soon as you have devotion you strike a match in the darkness of a thousand years – what a dispersal! What a beauty! What do I behold?

'If AUM is chanted 21 times, Sathya sai Baba says, it purifies all the senses and all the impurities of the body will be washed and got rid of. And also it's very helpful for health, it's very helpful for anything. AUM from the heart, the heart of God.

AUM – Brahma/Vishnu/Mahesh.. AUM Creator/Preserver/Destroyer. AUM Sat/Chit/Ananda

From the unreal to the real, From darkness to light, From death to immortality. All this is included, thousands and thousands of meanings, Father-Mother God – and you as well.

Think you are no more on earthplane, everything is lifted up. Think we are doing our meditation in front of Mother Gayatri Herself.'

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