

Joy of Life through the Joy in God

Om. A-sa-to ma sad gam-ma-ya. Ta-ma-so-ma jyo-tir gam-ma-ya. Mri-tyor ma a-mri-tam ga-ma-ya. Avir avir ma e-dhi. Rudra yat te dak-shi-nam mu-kham. Tena mam pahi nityam. Tena mam pahi nityam. Tena mam pahi nityam.

Lead us from the unreal to the Real. Lead us from darkness unto Light. Lead us from death to Immortality. Reveal to us Thy Resplendent Truth and evermore protect us, Oh Lord, by Thy Sweet and Compassionate Face, by Thy Sweet and Compassionate Face, by Thy Sweet and Compassionate Face.

The subject of my talk this morning is: The Joy of Life through the Joy of God.

Everyone of us seeks joy. There are hundreds of roads to joy. Joy may be physical joy. It may be intellectual joy. It may be some other kind of joy, but it is a fact that we are always seeking. We do not know whether a family will give us this joy, or the job, or the sport, or anything else. But it is also a fact that unmixed joy is very rare. Joy is always mixed up with its opposite, subtly. You are enjoying an excellent health, but you do not know it. Very soon you are attacked with a very dangerous disease and the doctors say it is incurable. Then all your joy becomes... vanishes. The same is true. You enjoy a big home, a mansion and you are proud of your home. You take people to show the two hundred rooms in that mansion, four-story. An earthquake comes (laughs)-- then what happens? Your joy vanishes. So when our joy, whatever may be the nature of the joy, we should not be too secure about our joy. We should not be too much confident about our joy.

The joy belongs to the fleeting objects and phenomena of life. This life is a life of change. Always what is today is not tomorrow. So, but the royal road, the enjoyment of joy-- real joy-- is to base it on the joy of God. If we can develop a faith that there is a God, a God who is the source of all movements of life, of all existence of life, and if we can believe... That belief may not come in one day, but slowly that belief, that faith has to be strengthened: that this universe, this world on which we are functioning is not a material universe. It is an universe pervaded by the consciousness of God, by the all pervading existence of God.

There is not a single point in this universe in which we can run away from God. Everything is clutched by God, if we can develop that faith. And that faith comes through study, through holy company, through contemplation. Sometimes through shocks of life, bereavement. When a great shock of life comes, we are led to believe: what is this? We begin to question and then those people are fortunate who tries to believe that there is a power, which is beyond me. It is not happening haphazardly. There is a justice. There is a truth at the back of all these phenomena of life and that truth is God. Somehow if we can have this faith, then our enjoyment is secure. With this faith, even misery, even suffering, even the different crises of life become... lose its strength. When a person has strong faith that I have behind me God, these crises, these sufferings, these... these are not pertinent. Wherever you look, you find that nothing is stable. Everything is changing. So this man, then comes to religion. Religion by itself is not a security-- but religion if understood, if practiced. We go to church every Sunday. We consider it our duty, our family duty,

our social duty, but we cannot go very deep unless we try to be deep. We listen to the sermons; we read religious books. But still [the] mind is always under the spell of fear. "What will happen? What will happen? What will happen? What will happen if there's an earthquake? There was an earthquake in southern California. It could be northern California. The only secure space they say is the Sacramento Valley." [Where the lecture is taking place. Audience laughs.]

Anyway, those people are fortunate who have that burning faith in God. They are not too much enamored of their own physical strength or mental strength, or any other kind of strength. Even though there are hundreds of channels of enjoyment, they do not much care. They know that these channels of enjoyment are alluring, they are dragging us but there should be a balance. And God creates that balance. God says, "You enjoy, but you take Me into your enjoyment." Don't be alone, because this world is a mixture of health and sickness, of wealth and poverty, of intellectual progress and the... also the degeneration of the brain. So it is only God. How that faith of God will come, we cannot say. One should pray to God, "Oh God, please give me a little faith. Give me an initial faith that You are existing." With that little faith, by slow practice that faith grows, that faith becomes a source of great strength in us, so we are not afraid of anything. We are not afraid of earthquakes. We are not afraid of illness, or dishonor, or bereavement.

A dearest friend dies and my life becomes miserable. All through my life I cannot forget that dear, dear beloved one. But if there is... if my loving my beloved is... is connected with God, if we know that all love is coming from God, God is the Source of all Love. Whatever we love, it may be an object, or it may be a person, this source of love is God. In Vedantic scriptures we have this statement repeated over and over again. In one of the Upanishads we read "Raso vai sah." "He, that God, that Infinite is the source of all rasal." Rasal means enjoyment. "Rasam hyevayam labdhva.a.anandi bhavati"¹ "By enjoying a little of that rasal, of that sweetness of God, man becomes happy." Man is smiling, dancing, and showing all signs of enjoyment but it is possible, it is becoming possible not by his own strength or own resources, but it is being possible by the grace of God.

So those people are fortunate who have developed that faith and they live their life with that faith. The faith slowly becomes stronger and stronger. But he should not be satisfied with mere believing or reading, he should have experience of that. He should have experience that every movement of life – birth, people are born, people and objects are new. New people are coming, are appearing. And they are being preserved for some time. And they go away. This is the nature of life. But so, but if we have that faith in God, if we are practicing to love God, then we are not afraid of anything. Not that the worldly life vanishes, but I am not afraid. I know that God is with me. Even if there is a grave illness, even if there is an impending death, I am not afraid, because God is eternal; God is timeless.

God was before anything came; He is the Creator. In the Bible we read: "God in the beginning" he made this sky, the heavens and from that gradual evolution man came. Like this, we read the story of the Bible, the [book of] Genesis. Every part of that story is not taken literally, particularly by the scientific mind. It is not possible to have all this creation in seven days. It is not possible that everything... and bring a satan as a rival of God. That is also, some people cannot

take it, but there are some people who insist on it. “The Bible says this.” “The Bible says this.” Other people will say, “My Quran says this.” “Says this” is [only a] quotation, is no justification—[rather] what we read with our own thinking, our own contemplation, holy company, people who have found that peace and joy, unchanging joy.

There have been people, sick people, dying people, but even at the moment of death they show so much strength. They don’t think of death. They don’t think of time either, but because they have found within themselves, deep in their heart, God’s Light. God’s Light is not merely in the external world, but His Light is also inside me, in my mind, in my vital energy, in my organs. This big world, this vast world moves and this little world of mine which I call “I” meaning my body, my mind, my prana, life energy, my desires, many things which I do not like, my inner, I find sometimes that how many dangerous things I have harbored, I have sheltered in my mind. But he feels helpless.

The way is to pray to God. “Oh God, wherever You are, and whatever You are, help me in this crisis. Help me to be sober. Help me to be calm and self-controlled.” This is called the practice, the serious practice of religion. Through this serious practice of religion we begin to feel the presence of God. We establish a personal relation with God. God is my father; He is my friend; He is my mother; He is my beloved. In this way, in the Hindu scriptures and other systems of religion also, this is called practice of religion through love. And love requires an ... a person, whom you can love. So God becomes a person, a personal God. He is regarded as my father, as my mother, as my friend, as my sweetheart. All these things have been tried and practiced by spiritual seekers in all ages. So if we can love God dearly, then we know this is real enjoyment.

Loving God means you begin to feel his presence in your life. In every section of your life you see, you feel the presence of God. In the depth of your consciousness, you feel there is a light that is the light of God. Jesus Christ says, “I am the Light of the World.” And addressing his followers, he said, “I am also the Light of men.” So this light is found by contemplation, by prayer, by holy company. These are the simple methods by which we can strengthen our faith in God and feel the presence of God as Love. Then our vision changes. Then we begin to feel that there is God, not merely in the sky, not merely in great objects like the mountains or the oceans, but even in the tiny particle, living or non-living. In the vision of God, there is no difference between living and nonliving. Everything becomes pervaded by that love, by that joy of God.

This is a possibility, not a theoretical possibility, but it has been tried and experienced by hundreds of seekers. We call them men and women. We call them lovers of God – saints, seers. They guarantee that there is God, outside this vast universe, and inside me, this body-mind combination is a world by itself. In the depth of this world, in the deepest core of this world is God; a God of Love is residing. And to touch Him we have to practice prayer and meditation and the repetition of His holy name. Whatever may be the name, it does not matter. You may repeat the name of Jesus, the name of Rama or Krishna, or Allah. [It] does not matter. A name has a great power: a word, the power of the word. In one of the books of the Bible, it says, “In the beginning there was [the] Word.” And the Hindu

scriptures, the Upanishads also [say] the same. This “Om,” this is the beginning and eternal. It has no beginning. This word is coming and from this word, all words are coming. So they regard this original word, which we have in our temple, om. This om is a master word, a primary word. When there was no time, there was om. So with the help of this om, this mantra, they go on practicing their daily life. And religious life is a part of our daily life-- a serious religious life. Not a superficial curiosity, but an experience.

A person who is interested in computers, in the beginning some friend comes, says, “What is this?” “It is a computer.” “What does a computer do?” “Oh it does many things. I cannot explain to you. If you are interested, you study some books and study, make some experiments and all. You will see what a new world will open to you.” So God is like that great computer. When we begin to experience the love of God, then worlds open. We see in the great and small, in the rich and the poor, in human beings and subhuman beings, there is that truth of God, that great love, indescribable love. And when my love becomes deep, my meditation becomes deep. My mind goes to a region where there is no... word or no thought. We go beyond thinking. We go beyond speaking. In Vedanta we call it the Nirguna, without any attribute. We forget our body. Our body sense, our mostly our individuality is resting on the body and our organs.

When you say, “I see... I hear... I do this” this “I” this is a little “I.” At the back of this little “I” there is the Great I, of great individuality of God. So we have to slowly identify ourselves as that light of consciousness within me, which is animating this little world: every part of this little world – my fingers, my hand, my legs, my feet, my stomach, my heart, my lungs. Every part of it is not merely run by material forces, but by God. God has entered into [it]. One of the Upanishads say “God has entered into our body from the top of the head to the end of the toe.” He did that. We have to experience that. Then we say that really God is love. God is joy. Every joy, every desire is... its fulfillment is coming from God. Our life becomes filled with God. Filled with God and filled with joy is the same thing.

God is never a sorry God. Nobody has seen a sorry face of God, though we see sorry faces all around us. When we have come to a church and meet friends, you ask one friend, “How are you?” “Not too well.” “What has happened?” “My one cousin died.” You ask another friend what has happened, “Oh there is pain, unbearable pain in my back.” See, if you inquire, then you will see this world is... we cannot really understand what this world is. But in spite of that we know that there is an eternal, unchangeable God within me. And the more we can develop love in that, in that God in any manner... I may be a lover of Divine Mother; I may be lover of God as my Friend; but that God, really is a great source of courage and strength. He does not care for philosophy. He does not care for books. But within himself he feels a strength. Not that he retires and becomes a monk. Not necessary. Some people may like to be a monk in order to avoid the responsibility of... of marriage and family and children. [laughs] But people can live in this world, but in a different world – God’s world. They feel that it is God’s world. This body is God’s. My organs are God’s. It is God who is looking, who is seeing through these eyes. It is God who is hearing through these ears. God is present in every human being, in every subhuman being, even material things.

So this joy of life through joy of God is a wonderful ideal. And this ideal can be slowly practiced. Then we really find that it was worthwhile, because by such love, by such faith we overcome many of our fears, even the fear of death. This world becomes a different world – God’s world, a spiritual world. What we call material phenomena becomes spiritual phenomena. Such is God. He is not a myth. God is not a myth. God is real. And there are persons, and there will be persons who will be great lovers of God, believers of God. And with that faith, and with that belief they will have a life... They will say, “It was God’s grace that I was born a human being, because by being a human being, I had the power to understand God, to love God, and to be a part of God.” Such is God, a wonder of wonders. I as a man or a woman am also a wonder of wonders, because I am carrying in the temple of my heart, that Great Wonder.

That great wonder which is God need not be measured in terms of space or time. We cannot say God’s life is twelve million years. No. God has no...He is timeless. Where He is beginning and where his end, we do not know. Such is the wonder of God and we should enjoy life no doubt, but enjoy life through, through God. That is real enjoyment. Thank you.

*Om. Madhu vAtA R^itAyate madhu xaranti sindhavaH.
mAdhvIrnaH santu auShadhIH..
madhu naktamutoShaso madhumat.h pArthivam.h rajaH.
madhu dyauH astu naH pitA..
madhumAnno vanaspatiH madhumAm.h astu sUryaH.
mAdhvIrgAvo bhavantu naH..
Om madhu madhu madhu. ²*

Sweet blow the winds and the very oceans give forth blessedness. May the herbs and plants bring us health and happiness. Sweet unto us be the nights and dawns. May every particle of mother earth be charged with blessing and may the heavens shower us with benediction. Sweet unto us be the noble forest trees. Sweet unto us be the shining sun. Sweet unto us be all living creation. Om. Sweetness, Harmony, Peace.

1. [transliteration taken from <http://www.esamskriti.com/essays/TAITTIRIYA-UPANISHAD-TNS-COMplete.pdf> accessed 7/6/12]
2. [Transliteration of Rg Veda verse is taken from http://satsangh.tripod.com/pujatexts/satya_baskegar.html] accessed June 26, 2012. The site says: “This page uses Unicode encoding for Devanagari. Please set the fonts and languages setting in your web browser to display the correct Unicode devanagari font such as Mangal.ttf from Microsoft or Raghu8.ttf from the BBC site.” [Have not done that, so transliteration may need some editing.]