

Sharad Sangam 2009
2.30 p.m., 4th November 2009
Meditation Brings Proof of God's Existence
-by Sw. Smarananandji

Today's topic is meditation brings the proof of God's existence. In the very beginning of the Autobiography of a Yogi, it is written (in the 1946 edition):

***"Except ye see, signs and wonders, ye shall not believe."* – John 4:48**

From Autobiography of a Yogi:

"It merely signifies that to the unenlightened man, dependent on his senses for all final judgments, proof of God must remain unknown and therefore non-existent. True Sankhya followers, with unshakable insight born of meditation, understand that the Lord is both existent and knowable."

God is unknowable solely for those who depend on their senses for their understanding. This should not surprise us. The ordinary man sees through his eyes, hears through his ears, feels through his senses and is guided by his feelings. If that is the realm of his perception then one may not perceive God, because it takes intuition to perceive God. If one experiences through intuition then God is both knowable and achievable. Essential proof of Self Realization, of God's consciousness in you, that he is making his presence manifest in you is felt during the ever deepening joy felt in meditation.

Before going any further about God's existence let me say that we have been hearing the word 'God' since childhood; the word is familiar, but we have not understood the meaning. All the definitions of God are right in their own right. But the definition of God closest to my heart is that 'God is *satchitananda*.' To someone else He could be different. We have been hearing that word 'God' since childhood, yet we don't know what is God. If there is someone called God, then can that God be sad. Let me start from that point. So God must be someone full of 'joy.' And to say God is 'joy' is a gross understatement. 'Joy' is so vague. If I eat one mango it gives me joy, a second mango makes me feel a little more happy, I don't want to eat a third mango, the fourth mango will not make me happy and I want to hit the person who is giving me a fifth mango.

This is as per the Theory of Marginal Utility and the Theory of Diminishing Returns. But there is one thing that gives me joy which can never become less. Saints down the ages keep meditating on God as He is ever new joy. God is 'ever new joy.' But if God is not aware of His joy what good it is? It is like a prince playing with slum dwellers but is aware that he is a prince. In the evening he will

go back to his palace. But if he is not aware then he is as good as a slum dweller himself. So that brings us to the fact that God is '*chitta*' – ever-conscious. He does not exist for some time, He is ever existing, ever conscious joy. But I don't stop here. God is '*satchitananda*' and He is '*ahambrahmasmi*.' That means He is in me. The best way to contact God is through meditation – because I can experience that joy only in meditation. The joy of earthly life and the joy of God is something different. Earthly joy is physiological (you find something sweet, some taste buds get excited and I am happy) and psychological (I hear some good news and I feel happy and that changes my system.) Not that physically I took something. The spiritual shade of the joy is 'When bliss consciousness comes over you.' In the Autobiography it is mentioned:

"I am sure you aren't expecting a venerable Personage, adorning a throne in some antiseptic corner of the cosmos! I see, however, that you are imagining that the possession of miraculous powers is knowledge of God. One might have the whole universe, and find the Lord elusive still! Spiritual advancement is not measured by one's outward powers, but only by the depth of his bliss in meditation.

"Ever-new Joy is God. He is inexhaustible; as you continue your meditations during the years, He will beguile you with an infinite ingenuity. Devotees like yourself who have found the way to God never dream of exchanging Him for any other happiness; He is seductive beyond thought of competition.

"How quickly we weary of earthly pleasures! Desire for material things is endless; man is never satisfied completely, and pursues one goal after another. The 'something else' he seeks is the Lord, who alone can grant lasting joy.

"Outward longings drive us from the Eden within; they offer false pleasures which only impersonate soul-happiness. The lost paradise is quickly regained through divine meditation. As God is unanticipatory Ever-Newness, we never tire of Him. Can we be surfeited with bliss, delightfully varied throughout eternity?"

"I understand now, sir, why saints call the Lord unfathomable. Even everlasting life could not suffice to appraise Him."

"That is true; but He is also near and dear. After the mind has been cleared by Kriya Yoga of sensory obstacles, meditation furnishes a twofold proof of God. Ever-new joy is evidence of His existence, convincing to our very atoms. Also, in meditation one finds His instant guidance, His adequate response to every difficulty."

So God is not someone with four hands and many heads. He is someone with whom you can make a connection. Now don't you think that meditation brings proof of God's existence. You felt not through your eyes and ears and senses but your whole being experiences the joy of meditation. There is a universal being to

whom you can appeal. There is concrete proof that can otherwise never happen. There is a conviction of how you can get to know God.

A person went to a holy man and said, "O Holy Sir, I am very busy, I am very active in life, I don't have much time, tell me in one word, what is God?"

The holy man answered, "Silence".

"What is silence?" asked the person.

"Meditation" answered the holy man.

"How can I meditate?"

"In silence," answered the holy man.

Silence is not mere silence of the vocal cords. Thoughts, emotions, principles of judgement, eyes, nose, skin, all the senses, mind and feeling have to be silenced. Better word is stillness. Emotions, thoughts, anxieties all are stilled in *pratyahara*. We have to become *antarmukhi*. We have been hearing the term – *ahambrahmasmi* – meaning we are the expression of the same Divinity. If Divinity is in me, why can't I see it? If you want to see the reflection of the moon in the lake it has to be stilled. I can't perceive God as the lake of my consciousness is always ruffled. Even in sleep it is not still – I get dreams. If the consciousness is always ruffled how can you perceive God? It is not in doing but in being that we perceive God. It is not in action, but in awareness that we get God.

How do you get the awareness? By meditation. Meditation takes you where the thoughts are subdued. You don't have to do anything further. In the Autobiography of a Yogi:

"How quickly we weary of earthly pleasures! Desire for material things is endless; man is never satisfied completely, and pursues one goal after another. The 'something else' he seeks is the Lord, who alone can grant lasting joy.

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"I see, Guruji; you have solved my problem." I smiled gratefully. "I do realize now that I have found God, for whenever the joy of meditation has returned subconsciously during my active hours, I have been subtly directed to adopt the right course in everything, even details."

"Human life is beset with sorrow until we know how to tune in with the Divine Will, whose 'right course' is often baffling to the egoistic intelligence. God bears the burden of the cosmos; He alone can give unerring counsel."

The ordinary man knows not what is calmness, peace, joy. He is not aware of stillness. The Bible says: ***"Be still and know that I am God."*** Then you get the proof of God's existence. Meditation takes us to that state of awareness. We are very fortunate. Not every ordinary man on the street is given these techniques of meditation. They will help us to get some level of *pratyahara*, and make us *antarmukhi*; they will give us interiorization and we will be able to say – Yes God is there.

How do we get interiorization? We have the five sense telephones. I have to switch off the senses, the skin. In sleep you don't hear songs, a mosquito lands on you but you do not feel. In sleep we switch off (depending on the depth of sleep) the senses, but the mind is not under control. In meditation, sensations are switched off and the mind is under control. These techniques that take us to that state of stillness were not invented by Guruji or even our param Gurus. They have been there from times immemorial. There are scriptural references to the Sankhya Yoga in the Bhagwad Gita, God Talks to Arjuna , Chp.2, Vs.58:

***yada samharate cayam kurmo 'nganiva sarvasah
indriyanindriyarthebhyas tasya prajna patisthita***

When the yogi, like a tortoise withdrawing its limbs, can fully retire his senses from the objects of perception, his wisdom manifests steadiness.

As mentioned in the Bible: ***"Be still and know that I am God."***

Meditation also helps scientifically. In the Bhaj Govindam, Adi Shankaracharya has mentioned:

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***satsangatve nissngatvam
nissangatve nirmohatvam
nirmohatve nishchalatattvam
nishcalatattve jivanmuktih***

Good company leads to non-attachment, from non-attachment comes freedom from delusion and mental perplexities, which leads to self-settledness. From self-settledness comes Jivan Mukti (liberation).

That stillness you get from meditation. There is a Chinese proverb:

"To a mind that is still the whole universe surrenders."

— **Laozi**

The whole world surrenders to him who is still within. There you get perception of God. And we also use the word scientific. It is like this: it is not something that is applicable to one but not to the other. $3 + 4 = 7$, for Hindus, Muslims, Indians, Americans, everyone. Similarly the principle of life force, meditation and pranayam is for the whole world. If it worked for Bhagwan Krishna, it will work for you and me – as long as the meditation technique is based on *pranayama*.

The modern man's dilemma is that he is not satisfied by some ritual. He wants to understand. If he doesn't get a satisfactory answer he is turned away. We are target oriented. Everything in learning, teaching, business, sports is being practiced scientifically. So even meditation has to be practiced scientifically to get definite results. The situation is like that of a man in a locked house. Any method of escape is useless. The only way is to get a key and go out into freedom. In the same way my consciousness is locked by environment, habits etc. The only way out is to get the key of pranayama – that will take me beyond the senses, beyond the body into freedom. The analogy which I often quote is:

One King invited a neighbouring King, for a function. To say a few words of welcome to the neighbouring King, the host King hired a professional orator and he spoke very effectively – Thank you for coming to our Kingdom and gracing the occasion, we are honoured etc. etc. When the function was over the invited King got up to say a few words of Thanks. Then the host King took the trouble to get up and said – "No don't worry, we have arranged for a professional orator to do that on behalf of you also."

So also when a baby is born, or we have the annaprasana, or the thread ceremony, or for the house warming, we invite a priest to come into the house and offer invocations to God. I am so happy, so grateful to God, that I have called a professional to offer thanks to God and to invoke His blessings. Someone else has to invoke the presence of God because I am too busy working, counting guests, preparing sweets. I also occasionally invoke blessings on behalf of others. I also go to a temple and ask the pujari to offer offerings to God. We are not against religion, but rituals do not satisfy the deepest needs of the soul.

The grandmother's story also applies to us, but we can put it on her and she will not say a word. A grandmother lost a needle in a dark room and she started to bend down and search for the needle. Someone came along and said, "Search for the needle in the light." So she went out in the street and started searching for the needle under the streetlamp.

Someone asked her "what are you doing here?"

She said "I am searching for the needle."

"Why are you searching here?"

"Someone said search for it in the light."

"Well then take the light in to where you lost the needle."

So we have to take the light to where we lost our peace of mind, our joy. We are always searching for joy in the wrong places, externally, in people, in outer things, in situations.

Pilgrimages are very good and definitely beneficial as long as I sit down and search inside. How do we search? By pranayama, by meditation. Then you will get the proof of God's existence, and you will find it where you lost it – that is within you. Outward rituals cannot destroy ignorance because they are mutually contradictory. Light can remove darkness. Ignorance cannot be removed by something equally ignorant. Bring in the light inside not by external rituals. That also helps but eventually you have to go inside. Autobiography of a Yogi:

"Through use of the Kriya key, persons who cannot bring themselves to believe in the divinity of any man will behold at last the full divinity of their own selves."

Often we see so much pain and suffering, we wonder how can God exist in this man? He is doing so many contradictory things. If you keep on doing kriya eventually you will find, something happens and you will be happy. Efficacy of meditation gives proof of God's existence that is convincing to our very atoms. When we believe in the Divinity of our own existence, then we will hopefully believe in the Divinity of others also. In the Autobiography of a Yogi, it is written about Lahiri Mahasaya:

The great guru taught his disciples to avoid theoretical discussion of the scriptures. "He only is wise who devotes himself to realizing, not reading only, the ancient revelations," he said. "Solve all your problems through meditation.¹⁴ Exchange unprofitable religious speculations for actual God-contact. Clear your mind of dogmatic theological debris; let in the fresh, healing waters of direct perception. Attune yourself to the active inner Guidance; the Divine Voice has the answer to every dilemma of life. Though man's ingenuity for getting himself into trouble appears to be endless, the Infinite Succor is no less resourceful."

Though the capacity of man to get into troubles is endless, the Divine is no less resourceful in solving all these troubles.

“A yogi engages himself in a definite, step-by-step procedure by which the body and mind are disciplined, and the soul liberated. Taking nothing for granted on emotional grounds, or by faith, a yogi practices a thoroughly tested series of exercises which were first mapped out by the early rishis. Yoga has produced, in every age of India, men who became truly free, truly Yogi-Christ.

Then you can see for yourself. Then you do not take anything for granted. Until then the existence of God is questionable.

“...healing light of sun...equally...capricious... mind control.”

Mind control helps us to gain insight. From the Whispers from Eternity, Pg. 42:

Prayer at night:

In the peace of night I worship Thee. The sunlight that revealed a myriad earthly allurements has vanished.

One by one I shut the doors of my senses, lest the fragrance of the rose or the song of the nightingale distract my love from Thee.

Like Night, I adore Thee in hiddenness and silence. Within the shrines of darkness I invoke Thee, Blessed and Beloved!”

Many saints and devotees have used aromas and the love of nature to feel God. Guruji goes one step further. He asks us to switch off the ears to all melodious songs to listen to the voice of God; to go beyond the smell of the rose, beyond creation, where there is something more beautiful. You tell God, I love you; I cannot be tempted by all your sensations.

At the end of Autobiography it is written:

“Most men are utterly incapable of summoning those irresistible powers of devotion that are effortlessly possessed only by a few *ekantins*, “singlehearted” saints found in all religious paths, whether of East or West. Yet the ordinary man is not therefore shut out from the possibility of divine communion. He needs, for soul recollection, no more than the *Kriya Yoga* technique, a daily observance of the moral precepts, and an ability to cry sincerely, “Lord, I yearn to know Thee!”

If we have this we will get there even if we don't have that deep deep longing and desire for God. Another way of looking at it is this way:

As per the wisdom from the Bhagwad Gita, we are all evolving. All souls, not only human beings are going back to God. The soul starts its journey from the mineral to the plant to the animal and so on. The soul is covered by 5 layers or sheaths. Annamaya kosha, pranamaya kosha, manomaya kosha, gyanmaya kosha and anandmayakosha.

Annamaya kosha is covered with matter. Journey started from the mineral

kingdom. E.g. the diamond has a soul, it has an existence though it has no life. It is different from the soil. It is covered by the topmost sheath i.e. Annamaya kosha. It drops that sheath after many incarnations and then takes the pranamaya kosha. It takes the life of a plant the life force comes to the surface. Life is visible in the plant kingdom.. It is much more beautiful and of greater value in existence and lives in that life for many incarnations and then comes to manomaya kosha.

The soul enters the kingdom of animals. They have a mind but not discrimination. The soul lives in the manomaya kosha for incarnations and then it derives gyanmaya kosha – discrimination. It can distinguish between good and bad. When man uses his intelligence, discrimination and sense of responsibility properly he drops it and develops Anandmaya kosha – i.e. bliss. The soul is separated from God and finally it drops that sheath and merges in God. Does this mean we are all sparkling with Gyanmaya kosha? Then Guruji will be so happy – I don't have to do anything. But again we are back to square one. Man alone has the capacity to unfold all his sheaths and go back to God. We have all the sheaths. Don't we occasionally say: "Ye kya kar raha hai, admi hai ya janvar?"

Meditation is the way to liberation. Autobiography of a Yogi:

"By daily stilling my thoughts, I could win release from the delusive conviction that my body was a mass of flesh and bones, traversing the hard soil of matter. The breath and the restless mind, I saw, were like storms which lashed the ocean of light into waves of material forms—earth, sky, human beings, animals, birds, trees. No perception of the Infinite as One Light could be had except by calming those storms. As often as I silenced the two natural tumults, I beheld the multitudinous waves of creation melt into one lucent sea, even as the waves of the ocean, their tempests subsiding, serenely dissolve into unity."

By correct practice of meditation through life force control, obstructions are removed for us. The body is gone. Man realized himself as delusive objectification of Spirit. He gets the understanding, "I am not this body, I am the soul." And what is happening in meditation? – the life force is going more upwards and inwards. When in meditation the life force goes up and above the senses become subdued. Man then doesn't depend upon erratic senses. Manomaya kosha is dropped off, discrimination comes to the surface. The intellectual sheath i.e. the Gyanmaya sheath is dropped off revealing the bliss sheath or the causal body. Any saint describes God as love, God is joy, God is satchitanand, premaswaroopa.

Meditation is the key to remove the sheaths one by one. Let me share with you a conversation between Guruji and Sw. Sri Yuktेशwarji from the Autobiography:

One day, however, I took a problem to Master.

"I want to know, sir—when shall I find God?"

"You have found Him."

"O no, sir, I don't think so!"

As a result of the effect of television and all God is sitting in a corner.

My guru was smiling. "I am sure you aren't expecting a venerable Personage, adorning a throne in some antiseptic corner of the cosmos! I see, however, that you are imagining that the possession of miraculous powers is knowledge of God. One might have the whole universe, and find the Lord elusive still! Spiritual advancement is not measured by one's outward powers, but only by the depth of his bliss in meditation."

Many people think if I have God I should have some powers.

The Lord is elusive, so the proof of his existence is also elusive. Man becomes so egotistical.

"Ever-new Joy is God. He is inexhaustible; as you continue your meditations during the years, He will beguile you with an infinite ingenuity. Devotees like yourself who have found the way to God never dream of exchanging Him for any other happiness; He is seductive beyond thought of competition.

"How quickly we weary of earthly pleasures! Desire for material things is endless; man is never satisfied completely, and pursues one goal after another. The 'something else' he seeks is the Lord, who alone can grant lasting joy.

"Outward longings drive us from the Eden within; they offer false pleasures which only impersonate soul-happiness. The lost paradise is quickly regained through divine meditation. As God is unanticipatory Ever-Newness, we never tire of Him. Can we be surfeited with bliss, delightfully varied throughout eternity?" Look at the words Sw. Sri Yukteshwarji is using. God is not only ever newness, but unanticipatory.

"I understand now, sir, why saints call the Lord unfathomable. Even everlasting life could not suffice to appraise Him."

"That is true; but He is also near and dear."

That's the point – just the bliss concept of God.

"After the mind has been cleared by Kriya Yoga of sensory obstacles, meditation furnishes a twofold proof of God. Ever-new joy is evidence of His existence, convincing to our very atoms. Also, in meditation one finds His instant guidance, His adequate response to every difficulty."

When it becomes so personal our daily problems also get answered. Then we don't need any proof. Meditation brings that proof.

But we have to be practical too. Bliss may not be within our reach. We may not touch that depth of bliss. Once in a while yes, but not everyday. Daya Ma has said: "Our relationship with God becomes very simple."

Only when I get that bliss in meditation I have God. If we seek miraculous manifestations we are getting sidetracked. A common cause of spiritual apathy is

that we expect that God will come in a great blaze of all inspiring illumination. "...steals over your consciousness. Learn to recognize God's presence in you. Know that this peace is God. God is peace. You often hear that because of Guruji I could take the right decision at the right time. Everyday life becomes more and more satisfactory. There is less and less friction, we can feel His presence. Let us close with an assurance:

YSS is resolved to show you that with proper and persistent practice proof of God's existence will be felt; and it will only deepen as you go on with the practice.