



The Importance of a Human Birth¹

Creation

In this wonderful universe, God has created billions of creatures or beings (including Gods, demigods, insects, beasts and men) inhabiting heaven, hell, earth, ocean, sky and other intermediate regions. Of these, those creatures or souls, whose merits preponderate, go to heaven and live there till they enjoy the fruits of their actions, and when this is done, they are cast down; while those souls, whose sins or demerits preponderate, go down to hell, and suffer the consequences of their misdeeds for so long a time as they deserve for it.

¹ These excerpts are taken from a great Eastern Saint Shirdi Sai Baba and from the writings documented in the “Shri Sai Satcharita – The Life and Teachings of Shirdi Sai Baba.” This rare book can be obtained through StillPoint Library (www.stillpointlibrary.com)

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Human Birth

When their merits and demerits balance each other, they are born on earth as human beings, and are given a chance to work out their salvation. Ultimately when their merits and demerits both drop down (are got rid of) completely, they get their deliverance and become free. To put the matter in a nutshell, souls get their births or transmigrations according to their deeds and intelligence (development of their minds).

- Here the “development of the mind” refers to one’s point of identification meaning, does the individual identify as body – mind? Or as the soul which animates the body-mind? Or the Source, which manifests as an individual soul with a body-mind?
- Development of the mind refers to “state of consciousness.”²
- The human “development of the mind” refers to mastery of the details and operation of the matters regarding creation.³

² Reference “Journey of the Soul” which can be found at the StillPoint Library (www.stillpointlibrary.com)

³ Creation refers to anything that has a beginning and an end i.e. “temporal.” Or the “wave” in the analogy of the individual “wave” as an expression of the Infinite “Ocean.”

- The development of the “spiritual mind” refers to the capacity to understand, that which is beyond creation, the Essence, the Source, the Ocean in the analogy of the Ocean and the wave.

Commonalities of All Physical Beings

As we all know, four things are common to all the creatures, viz. food, sleep, fear and sexual union.

- These are the primary functions of the “lower self” or the “animal self” which the human soul inhabits to experience creation.
- You can see how the body-mind is attached to the fulfillment of these functions, as they are the basis of the human vehicle.
- However, the human soul seeks to “transcend” these functions as primal goals of life. It rather seeks Divine Union with its source.

- This does not mean the denial of these functions. Not at all! The “balanced” being is one who respects these functions, uses them and fulfills them wisely – by not allowing them to “overshadow” one’s attention.

Man Is Unique

In this case of man, he is endowed with a special faculty, viz. knowledge, with the help of which he can attain God-vision, which is impossible in any other birth. It is for this reason that gods envy human species, and aspire to be born as men on earth, so as to get their final deliverance.

- It is only in a human body that the great task of creation can be fulfilled: that is, the Unbounded can experience Unboundedness while in boundaries.
- The Ocean can experience its own nature in and as the wave.
- This is also similar to living the full value of the “I AM” while having within creation an aspect, which is “i am this and that.”

Form of the Human Body

Some say that there is nothing worse than the human body, which is full of filth, mucus, phlegm and dirt, and which is subject to decay, disease and death. This is no doubt true to a certain extent; but in spite of these drawbacks and defects, the special value of the human body is—that man has got the capacity to acquire knowledge:

- Here knowledge is “state of consciousness” or reference point of identification which ranges from “I am this body – mind” to “I AM the witness of creation.”

It is only due to the human body⁴, or on account of it, that one can think of the perishable and transitory nature of the body itself, and of the world and get disgust for the sense-enjoyments, and can discriminate between the unreal and the real, and thus attain God-vision.⁵

⁴ The aspect of the human body that allows higher states of consciousness is the Central Nervous System.

⁵ God Vision or Beatific Vision is an aspect of “God Communion.”

The Unreal and the Real

- When mystics say that the world or creation is “unreal” it is seldom understood. Creation is temporary. It is the impermanent wave of expression on the Eternal Ocean of Consciousness. Creation is a “shadow” of the “Tree” of Consciousness. What is “real” is unchanging, which is the Ocean. What is “unreal” is what is changing and depends on something else (Ocean) “Tree” for its existence.
- Carrying this analogy a little further: When we dream, the contents of the dream are very real, however they are completely dependent on the “dreamer.” And at some point the “dreamer” (Ocean) wakes up and realizes that the dream contents (creation) are ultimately unreal – they have no substance independent of Itself.
- Eventually we “wake up” like the Cosmic dreamer and realize that there is only the Self, Consciousness, the One – who appears to be “the many.” (Ever have a bad dream and wake up and say: “Thank God that is only a dream?” And then maybe go back to it and “watch” it knowing it is only a dream?) So, too, at some stage it is as if we are actively participating

and witnessing all of this reality as if it were a “dream.” Very real (as a dream is) but a “dream” nonetheless!

So, if we reject or neglect the body because it is filthy (or inferior), we lose the chance of God-vision, and if we fondle it, and run after sense enjoyments, because it is precious, we go to hell.

- Hell is a state of mind that is projected both in this life and the life hereafter. It is a state of both acute sense of loss and longing for God as well as a torturous state of experiencing overwhelming desires that have no fulfillment or satiety.
- Both neglect and overstimulation cause a core “fatigue.” Lack of caring and/or overuse damage the capacity to be at rest and tranquil. It is from this restful and tranquil state that the higher perspectives and inner states are founded. Meditation and pure knowledge both serve to relax and nurture the mind and central nervous system.

The proper course, therefore, for us to pursue is the following: that the body should neither be neglected nor fondled, but should be properly cared for, just as a traveler on horse-back takes care of his pony on the way, till he reaches his destination and returns

home. Thus the body should ever be used or engaged to attain God-vision or self-realization, which is the supreme end of life.

Man's Highest Achievement

The attainment of the Supreme is really the highest achievement of human life. Or else, what is so wanting in the existence of dogs, pigs, and other animals?

- On a primitive level of understanding it is obvious that any creature can experience happiness. It requires the presence of an object, which gives pleasure e.g. a good meal when hungry.
- Human beings have the capacity for Bliss, which is ever-new happiness that requires no object outside of itself.
- Bliss is the inner nature of human beings. It is the experience of the soul.

- The human central nervous system is capable of observing itself as an object, therefore it can witness itself as an aspect in and of creation.
- In other words the human can know that it experiences life within creation as a wave on the ocean, as well as knowing “the observer”, or the subject, or that its true self is the Ocean upon which the wave appears.

God Wanted to Know Himself

It is said that though God created various sorts of creatures He was not satisfied, for none of them was able to know and appreciate His work. So He had to create a special being—Man—and endow him with a special faculty, viz. knowledge (the capacity for higher states of consciousness); and when He saw that man was able to appreciate His Leela⁶ (creation), marvelous works and intelligence, He was highly pleased and satisfied. So really it is good luck to get a human body.

⁶ This means the ‘PLAY OF CREATION’ in which the Absolute experiences Itself within and as Its own self in limited creation.

While in such a transient human body, the time spent in listening to the stories of the saints—by remembering whom, merit is acquired—is the time well spent. The rest of the time is wasted.

- Shirdi Sai here means that we waste our time when we fill our time for spiritual nourishment and wisdom with the words of false teachers and the like.
- Remember that the mind is like water. Like water, the mind takes the form of the container that it is poured into.
- Balance! We are householders and have many responsibilities to attend to. Therefore there are many goals to be met, many places to put the mind. Just remember the Supreme Goal and always Practice the Presence.⁷
- Many people today ask if I have read this book or that book by this person or that person who must be a real enlightened person because they wrote a best seller or were on Oprah or some such show? I do not find many of these authors addressing the central issue of spirituality, which is relationship to Source. Many of them have very, very different

⁷ Practicing the Presence by remembering always: there is only One Consciousness taking all of these forms and doing all of these doings!

ideas about the nature and purpose of creation and mankind. Even such popular “enlightened” texts and authors such as “Course In Miracles” and Eckhart Tolle subscribe to nihilistic assumption about God’s Creation:

“The Course in Miracles” and the conceptual foundation of the work of Eckhart Tolle each have in common the presupposition of the nature of creation and man’s role it. Both insist that this universe is insane and therefore could never have been created by God. Instead, it’s a projection of the alienated human ego, marked by separation and death.”

- The above is absolutely opposite the mystical experience of the saints and sages of all traditions who tell us that this Universe and man are a magnificent reflection of a loving Source. So that the phrase “the rest of the time is wasted” when not attuning to the works of the Saints and God-Realized Masters takes on a very REAL and current meaning!
- Also, “beware of false prophets” and remember the absolute need for “discrimination” when approaching the domain of

“spirituality.” Someone can very well say that they are, in their cosmology “enlightened,” but when you understand the way they perceive the world – this may not be the “enlightenment” you have been aspiring to!

Every Being Craves a Human Existence

But unpropitious, destructible and transient as this human body is, yet it is the only instrument of attaining God, the home of all sanctity.

- It is said the gods, demi-gods, angels, devas and other life forms are lined up throughout all the levels of creation waiting for a human birth.
- It is only in a human body that the great task of creation can be fulfilled: that is, the Unbounded can experience Unboundedness while in boundaries.
- The Ocean can experience its own nature in and as the wave.

- This is also similar to living the full value of the “I AM” while having within creation an aspect which is “ i am that.”

Discrimination In Daily Life

Realizing how precious the human life is, and knowing that Death is certain and may snatch us at any time, we should ever be alert to achieve the object of our life, we should not make the least delay but make every possible haste to gain our object, just as a widower is most anxious to get himself married to a new bride, or just as a king leaves no stone unturned to seek his lost son. So with all earnestness and speed, we should strive to attain our end, i.e. self-realization. Casting aside sloth and laziness, warding off drowsiness, we should day and night meditate on the Self. If we fail to do this, we reduce ourselves to the level of beasts.

- The great question or point of discrimination for those on a true spiritual path is this: “Does this person, place, thing, attitude, action, perspective, identity, belief, experience, or event bring me closer to God Realization – or not?”

The Supreme Value of the Company of a Saint

The most effective and speedy way to gain our object is to approach a worthy Saint or Sage—who has Himself attained God-vision. What cannot be achieved by hearing religious lectures and study of religious works is easily obtained in the company of such worthy souls. Just as the sun only gives light, which all the stars put together cannot do, so the Saint alone imparts spiritual wisdom which all the sacred books and sermons cannot do. His movements and simple talks give us “silent” advice.

- Not only are the words of a Saint “scripture” (or “Truth” in word form), but His very Presence brings peace⁸, and a capacity for us to understand deeper. It is said that Truth is not spoken but communicated through the Silence of the saint. Words are mere symbols to keep the mind distracted while the real transmission of sacred or Pure Knowledge occurs.

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- Of course, sometimes a Saint will bring conflict and strife in the service of breaking through ignorance and darkness. Even Jesus of Nazareth said that in effect He did not come to bring peace but the inevitable conflict that goes with discrimination and making necessary judgments about the Truth and godliness of certain teachings and traditions. He brought great distress to the scribes, pharisees and priests of His time.
- Luke 12:51 “Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay: but rather division: for from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son and the son against the father: the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.”
- Remember that the mind is like water. Like water the mind takes the form of the container that it is poured into.

- You absorb the consciousness of the author of any book you read!
- Balance! We are householders and have many responsibilities to attend to. Therefore there are many goals to be met, many places to put the mind. Just remember the Supreme Goal and always Practice the Presence.⁹

Shrutí, the compassionate Mother, says, “According to one’s knowledge, one is born.” As is the store of knowledge, so is also the birth that a being gets.

- Knowledge of God (state of consciousness) and not the mind’s knowledge of creation.

By greatest good fortune one gets a human birth and by great-accumulated merit is one born into the family of “holy parents.” But God’s Grace alone brings one to a “True Teacher’s” feet. Rare indeed, is the perfect gain to have all three!

⁹ Practicing the Presence by remembering always: there is only One Consciousness taking all of these forms and doing all of these doings!

- Some day we all need to be with a God-Realized Master who is either embodied or watching from the astral planes.
- Do we eventually need to have a True Spiritual Master to guide us? Only a fool would attempt to climb a mountain without a guide.

Man's Dual Capacity For Both the Heights of Wisdom and the Depths of Delusion

Varied are the species of created beings; but that of the human beings is the highest among them. For it is only possible for the humans to think, "Who has created us? From where do we come?" and the like.

- Even though we may be the highest, they walk among us who teach that man has created this universe all by himself through his ego. This mistakenly assigns the power and omnipresence of the Ocean to the infinitely limited wave, which depends on the Ocean for its existence.

- Divine Mind has become creation. The human mind is not the Source, but the vehicle through which the Source experiences itself as its own manifestation within limitations (creation).

Understanding the Purpose of Creation

“Not a creature knows for certain, what is My purpose as the Lord of the Universe in creating this sport! Until, therefore, a creature is created with so sharp an intellect as to understand and admire the incomparable glory of My work, all this achievement of Mine is in vain!” So the Almighty created a being in human form. He thought, “With the power of his discriminating intellect, man will know me. He will be amazed with the knowledge of My inconceivable grandeur, as also My unexcelled prowess and will realize that the entire universe is but a sport of My Maya. Only he will be able to acquire Knowledge, reflect and meditate upon Me and be filled with awe and wonder. And that will bring My sport to completion. The happiness of the spectators is in itself the fullness of My sport. Seeing My perfect control over the world, man will feel fulfilled.”

- Isn't that hidden statement supremely beautiful and satisfying?

- Again, we see that the God Realized Masters teach that God and not man has control over God's World.

He who has gained this knowledge of non-duality (that the Teacher and the pure student are not separable – all things are the expression of One Consciousness) and worships in this spirit, will find it easy to overcome Maya.¹⁰

- In non-duality we realize that There Is Only One Consciousness playing all the roles and creating all the circumstances of life.
- The great wisdom and truth of mystical spirituality is: "I AM pure spirit, witnessing all of this creation and all these circumstances as God in form."

Highest Purpose of Human Existence Is Not Knowledge

Secular knowledge (knowledge of the things of the world) and ignorance are both states of mind that give rise to illusions and

¹⁰ Maya is the illusion that beings are separate and self-sufficient. Maya is the great play of Consciousness in which Consciousness becomes the many and then returns to be One again.

errors. As one thorn is pulled out by another thorn, so remove the one with the other. Dispel ignorance by knowledge.

However, the highest purpose of human existence is to go beyond knowledge and ignorance and merge in the Pure Self.

Nature of the True teacher (Guru)

The salt water of the ocean undergoes a transformation in the clouds to become sweet water. Happiness follows similarly when one is absorbed at the guru's¹¹ (teacher's) feet. No one except the guru knows how this human body can be truly liberated and it is only when the guru (teacher) takes them in hand that the dull and ignorant beings are uplifted.

Saints turn a worldly man into a spiritual seeker and such a seeker into a man emancipated.

¹¹ A guru is one who brings others from darkness to light; a teacher of the "I AM", the Absolute, Pure Knowledge. Often a true teacher cannot be seen because he will fulfill his individual nature which may not be what is commonly accepted as the look of a "holy man." A true teacher is known by his effect on those who come into his presence.

The saints' purpose must be that one should be happy in the worldly life and yet be always alert and wakeful about one's spiritual welfare, so that the purpose of this human birth is fulfilled.

Caution! Read This At Your Own Peril!

He, who has not achieved his spiritual welfare¹² in this world, has made his mother suffer the birth pangs in vain. And unless he surrenders himself at the feet of the saints, his life is a total waste.

- Many, many will waste their life, as Shirdi Sai tells us, by trying to save the world or find some grandiose world mission that they think or "have been told" they have come into life to accomplish.

¹² Spiritual means evolution towards Wholeness and reaching our full potential. This is different for each human being. Some have come to realize sainthood, others to become functional living in the world and carrying out their responsibilities.

- But as Jesus of Nazareth and the saints have said repeatedly:
“What does it profit a man that he save the world and lose his soul?”

Faith Is All That Is Needed.

In the same proportion as the degree of faith is reposed, will the measure of success be achieved.

Faith is knowing that our lives are orchestrated by a Divine Intelligence. The circumstances and conditions of our lives come to us specifically to give us the opportunity to “un-self” – to clear the vessel such that only God is left.¹³

Remember that nothing happens to us-
Everything happens for us.

¹³ Text written in teal is a commentary of the principles of mystical spirituality.

