

Satsang by Swami Amar Jyoti

Freedom and Joy,

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E WERE CREATED FREE AND JOYFUL in the eternal way—Ish-shashwat in Sanskrit. This is not simply poetic imagination, it is true. Not only have we forgotten, but so many circumstances, at least in this life, if not from life to life, have disturbed it. I do not know how to say this without blaming ourselves, but knowingly or not, we went certain ways by which our freedom and joy were affected or curtailed.

When we take anything for granted we do not know the value unless we lose it. Maybe we took freedom and joy for granted. God has provided His abundance and a shoreless ocean of freedom and joy, but if we do whatever we want, we can lose it. Looking back, this would not be over ten or twenty years, but maybe over eons. For those who do not believe in reincarnation, it would be at least one birth.

Our Natural State





Children are both ignorant and innocent. If you give a small child a marble, a crystal, or a piece of gold, they will not know its value. They may just be attracted to its glittering aspect. If the gold is lost the child may not notice or cry, but when he grows older and wiser he will understand his folly. This is one way of projecting backward to when we were free and joyful—not as a human being, not as a mental or psychological being, but as a spiritual being, a soul: *atman*.

The corollary or logic would be to get back to that original pristine soul and reclaim our freedom and joy. When a father sees that his child does not know the difference between glass and gold, he locks the gold away until the child grows up, thinking, “When he

grows, I will give it to him.” In the same way, God does not deprive us of our spiritual wealth. He just wants us to take responsibility and have a deeper understanding of how to value things, not take them for granted.

We have wasted our freedom and joy—that is one way of looking at it. Now to get back to the womb of creation may not be so easy. We have to start from where we are. Amidst our present circumstances, is it possible to attain freedom and joy? We say, “Yes, but you have to pay the price.” Two ways are possible. The first, which we call *vidyut*, the “lightning” way or natural way, is easier. The second, which we call *vividisha*, is step by step and takes longer. Trying to be free while dealing with the circumstances and demands of life produces its

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own struggles and paradoxes. In my humble opinion, God has never closed any doors. Which way we take is our choice. I would advise the first way, but not everyone can do it, so there is the gradual method. Or some of you could take both together. Let us see how that is possible.

You have to believe and humbly accept that you have *forgotten* your freedom and joy. This will give you the impetus to find it. It is within you, so do not go too far from yourself. Remind yourself, "I am ever free and joyful; that is the inheritance from my Father in heaven. I have forgotten that I have it, while being busy with my life, my circumstances, conditions and changes—however good or trying they may be." When disturbances and tensions occupy your mind, you may feel as if you have no time or energy to focus on your own Self. But freedom and joy are already there. Freedom is where there are no barriers, limitations, conditions, resistance, pull back, push back, and so on. There is nothing to build—on the contrary, anything you build will be a bondage or burden. Joy is a conscious state of the soul, *anandam*. It is not something you have to create or find to be happy. Whenever you bring in these propositions, you are disturbing it.

You have forgotten your natural state, which is unconditional freedom and joy. So what to do? The only answer I find in scriptures, experiences and realizations, is to just *be* it. It is your heritage, that golden treasure your Father has kept for you. How do you find that? Be patient. Pray to the Lord to help you, but also remember God. Ninety-nine-point-nine percent of the time, we begin to fight with our mind and try to deal with it ourselves. This is where our difficulty arises. We cannot do it all ourselves. We are so locked into our mental struggles, we hardly remember that a higher power is there to help us. Certainly, we have to pay the price, but

now we can change; we can reform ourselves. There are many methods, but to me the simplest is to accept the defeat, relax, and be humble.

Remind yourself: "I am free, my natural state is joyful. Why have I accumulated these disturbances? Maybe I did it willfully, maybe I did it unconsciously, or maybe circumstances forced me to do it, but now I am understanding." If you value your freedom and joy, your natural childlike innocence as a devotee of God, you will get it back. Your Father has kept it for you. He is not a miser; He is magnanimous. Not only magnanimous, He is everything, but He wants to give to us when we will not lose it. He says, "Once is enough. You lost it, so I took it back. Now you will get it when you earn it." Even now at this moment, you can have it.

Evaluate your life so that tensions are not created. You cannot satisfy both God and mammon. By our own willfulness, ego assertions, misunderstandings and misconceptions, we have divided God's creation. Just give unto God what belongs to God, and since everything belongs to Him, give everything to Him. What about me? Give *me* also to Him, what else? Remind yourself on and on, on and on: *I belong to God*.

We have to live the life of the Spirit, to evolve to life divine. Absolute truth, the divine, can embody our earth life fully, not only relatively, provided that we live, attend to and adhere to That, first and last. Let everything else follow. A relaxed mind, a giving mind, accepting defeat before the Lord, is a good starting point for achieving back our inheritance. We have gone astray; we are prodigals, wanderers. That is why we have troubles. We have to reevaluate our lives, to make the life of the spirit as God planned it. We have made mistakes, we have fallen. By our attachments, greed, jealousy, competition, willfulness and ego assertions, we have disturbed the working of the Lord. We have interfered with Him. If He has allowed us to interfere, it does not mean it is right. He has given us free choice, free will, to live sensibly or nonsensically. Only because we have freedom to do something does not mean it is right.

Somebody has disturbed our minds. Who else could that be but you and me? If you burn down your own house, you cannot blame your neighbors. Others will help you be angrier if you get angry first. If you are sad, others will make you sadder. In India, there is a proverb: when miseries come, they come with all their ancestors and descendants. Freedom and joy are your heritage. Just be it. Nobody can take this away. Freedom

and joy are not limited commodities that you sacrifice for others. They are infinite and limitless. You do not lose them in order to give to others. On the contrary, the more you give, the more you get. Freedom begets freedom, joy begets joy.

The kingdom of God is within you. What does that mean? There are many conceptions that you can borrow from nature. Any flower, when it blooms, is joyful. That is what you are. Birds fly in the sky freely. Your soul is a free bird. Remember that. Rivers flow joyfully to the ocean. Your life is just such a flow. Do not obstruct it. Life is a river, God is the ocean. Look to the sky at night and see the infinite number of stars shining—marvelous, magical! It is so vast. Why are you narrowing down your mind, squeezing it by limited thinking? What is our tiny-hood worth?

Eons have come and gone; planets and galaxies and universes have appeared and disappeared. What is the meaning of my few decades on this planet? Why is my thinking so narrow? I am thinking too much about my life. Just look to history alone. Ages have come and gone, kingdoms have come and gone, billions of people have come and gone. Why so much hullabaloo about me? We are each like a grain of sand on a vast beach. It is humbling. We have to release our consciousness to be free and joyful.

Life and the world will go on, let them flow. We will be born again somewhere. Even if you do not believe in rebirth, in one lifetime too there are a lot of years. What you have lost is gone; what you have, maintain it. Do not worry. Worries and anxieties form their own habits. We all fall into these pits, no doubt. My compassion wants me to see you happy, really. I, for one, would not mind losing if that makes me free.

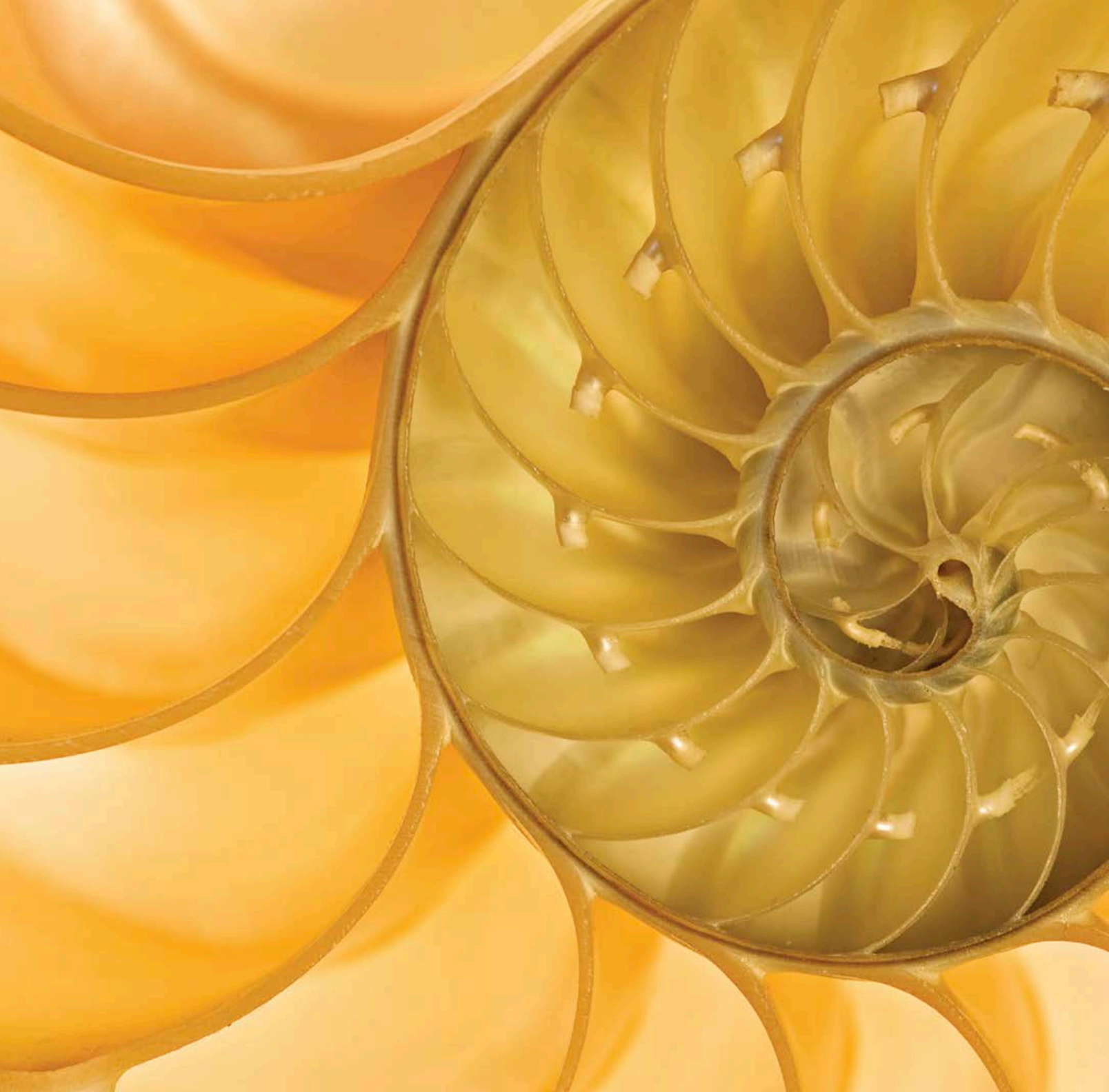
See that you do not base your freedom and joy on things and conditions outside yourself. If you are bankrupt within your own heart, then certainly you will search outside. Since freedom and joy are within you unconditionally, why base them on conditions? This is how we have disturbed it. Spirituality is not a career or a degree that I could foist upon you. Spirituality is the life of the spirit. Losing that is where compassion is needed.

Love the Lord so much that your life becomes for Him; then you will not worry. Normally we love the Lord so that we are saved or helped or get what we want. Love the Lord so much that there is nothing left for yourself. Since everything belongs to him, give everything unto Him—heart, body, mind and soul.

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Doing for Him is doing for yourself. When His will is your will, His heritage is yours.

If you are weak, start where you are, not with arrogance or boasting. True humility will make you grow. *Aham Brahman asmi*, I am Brahman. *Tat twam asi*, thou art That. These are true, so imagining them is maintaining your focus, and when you get it back it shines. When you *be* it, it just shines like a flash.

Whatever your virtues or wrongs, they will not disturb you. You are giving in, and giving in is a way of releasing yourself. Try it. Eons of darkness can be removed by one beam of light.

Do not try to study, analyze or understand darkness. Whatever qualities or characteristics darkness may present, it is still darkness. It will never give you freedom and joy. It is the life of the Spirit that



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not all be good, but why worry before that? You are dying before dying. You have to come out of this hole. Be simple like children. Love your God so much that all your movements in life are dedicated and consecrated unto Him. Perfection begets perfection. Just open up. You have not lost your spiritual heritage; it is intact.

This is a reminder that we need on and on. It will relax you. Jesus said, “Thou shalt not live by bread alone but by the word of the Lord,” and, “Come ye who are heavy laden and find rest.” The Vedas proclaim, “What is perfect will be always perfect. If you take from perfection, it is still perfect.” You have lost nothing. Can you live this absolute Truth? Yes, it is written for life here on earth, not otherwise. Do you think God sends sages to give you scriptures that will only be useful in heaven? In heaven, you do not need these things. It is already perfect.

Bliss is your nature. Stay on that. Your mind may pull you to correlate with your conditions in life, but remind yourself that you have lost nothing. You are children of light and bliss—as ever was, now, and ever will be. That is your inheritance. This is the greatest healing, where you feel well-being and wholeness within you. That divine energy, spiritual energy, God’s word, is always within us. Do not forget. 🌸

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Swami Amar Jyoti is the author of several outstanding books; over 700 of His *Satsangs* (wisdom teachings) illuminating the classical path for modern times are available on CD and MP3 download. This *Satsang* was edited from *Freedom and Joy, Our Natural State*, given in 1979. A catalog of audio *Satsangs* and Retreats by Swami Amar Jyoti, recorded live, is available at truthconsciousness.org. Please see page 54 for further information. Photo on page 3: Swami Amar Jyoti at Countryside Ashram, Rockford, MI, May 1990.

we want, where we are spiritual beings, where we are ethereal bodies, where we are higher evolved beings. Just remember that. Only the spark of light you bring will make darkness vanish. Why not do it right away?

See that worries and tensions do not occupy your mind so much that you identify with them. The releasing factor is the Light, God, your Master, Spirit. That is the secret. Let tomorrow take care of itself. It may or may