

Eternal Bliss

I am no Saint. I now know that I was born to two Saints though. My father, Sri Balan, and my mother Srimathi Visalam I believe were true Saints in my world. What evidence do I have? I have had my own share of seeing and hearing about people die over these four decades. I wrote “My Pilgrimage” (<http://www.doers.us/pilgrimage.html>) upon the demise of my dad on March 29, 2007. The events that I narrated there provided me the evidence that I needed to consider my father a Saint. If I used my imagination a little, I might have considered him a master of Bhakti too. Instead, my father demonstrated that he was a master of Karma when his moment came.

Many people that I know have expressed feeling afraid when their moment arrived. Others have passed from this world with no one by their side when that moment came. Today, thirteen years later, May 7, 2020, I start writing a tribute to my mother. I know how my brother and sister-in-law have described the physical condition of my mother since April 30, 2020 (on phone and e-mail). I appreciate them serving my mother during these challenging times. I know of very few people who have expressed what I hear my mother say. She has been saying these words since May 2 (on a video recorded by my brother on May 2, 2020). I am in eternal bliss! I memorialized these words to honor my own native tongue Tamil first with some help from my wife.

"ஸ்வாமிநாதா ரொம்ப செளக்கியமா இருக்கேன் பா"

“Swaminatha, I am in very pure bliss”

I always thought she was a master of Karma. I am just beginning to understand the depth of her Bhakti (devotional service). I am listening to the late Sangita Kalanidhi K V Narayanaswamy (KVN) render Saint Tyagaraja Swami’s “intha sowkhyamanine . . .” on YouTube. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada described people can connect with the Lord by any one or all nine forms of Bhakti in *Srimad Bhagavatam*. Prahalada Maharaja, shares with other children how he learned about such transcendental knowledge from Sage Naradha in Canto 7, Chapter 7, Text 38 with this Sloka.

Sravanam keerthanam vishnoho Smaranam Paadasevanam

Archanam vandanam Dasyam Sakyam Atma Nivedanam

Prahalada Maharaja calls out the nine forms of Bhakti in the Sloka: sravanam (listening); keerthanam (singing); smaranam (meditating); paada seevanam (worshiping at His feet); archanam (incessant worshiping of the Lord); vandanam (paying obeisance); dasyam (serving); sakyam (friends’ devotion); and atma nivedanam (surrendering). From my own lived experience now, I can confirm that my mother, Srimathi Visalam is a master of Bhakti as described in Sri Bhagavatam. It is now Brahma Muhurtam, Friday, May 15, 2020. It is barely five hours ago, when I last beheld my mother’s open eyes when my sister-in-law called me. Srimati Visalam started her ascent to Vaikuntam a few moments later and has been rejoicing in Dyavam since 9:30 AM (IST). Srimathi Visalam listened to the needs of her parents (my grandmother and my grandfather) as a child first. Then she served the rest of her family. She sang melodiously with great devotion. She meditated in her own way by following her Karma. She worshiped at the feet of her husband, Sri Balan. She was also incessantly worshiping the Lord. Her Lord was not only her husband (my father) but it was also the Divine. It is because of her service to her husband and the great Lord that I continue living with their Grace. Her friends can testify to her devotion too. Now, with her words to me, my siblings, extended family, and friends, we know that in attaining this state of eternal bliss (“sowkyam,” in Sanskrit), Srimathi Visalam is definitively a master of Bhakti too.