

33. Foundation For Education

Into this tiny hamlet ringed round by “pigmy hillocks” there has come from the far-off Himalayan region the Governor of Uttar Pradesh, Dr. Burgula Ramakrishna Rao, to lay the foundation stone of your school building! Really, this should make at least one thing clear to you: if sincere spiritual exercise is done, even the most difficult thing can be accomplished. I find the whole village of Puttaparthi and even the surrounding villages are immersed in joy today.

I too am very happy, for it is not simply a building that will rise up on this spot. It is a new era of prosperity and of progress. He lays the foundation not merely for an educational institution but for education as well. He has not only sacrificed much for the freedom of his country and earned the respect and affection of the leaders of the land, but he is also a great scholar in many languages, and he is an ardent believer in *Sanathana Dharma* (Eternal Religion). To have the village school begun by him is indeed a very auspicious event.

You can be proud that Puttaparthi is a village that has become famous from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari, as the Governor said now. But, as he himself added, it is a great responsibility as well. I consider this function to be the crown and glory of this year’s Birthday Festival, for I see the faces of the farmers before Me, beaming with a new hope and a new joy. The elders of this village have at last realised what they have missed all these years due to their own defects.

Puttaparthi is revered with gratitude by millions

To secure pearls, one has to go far out into the sea and dive deep; simply wading in the shallows and declaring that the pearl story is a myth is a sign of foolishness. So too, the elders here wondered so long at all stories of My miracle powers and could not make use of the splendid chances that lay at their very doors. They saw only the light, but did not feel the warmth. That itself proves that though they were physically so near, they were very distant for all practical purposes. They could see the Splendour, the Glory, the Effulgence, but they did not come near and share the Warmth of my Heart.

Entangled in the false and the fleeting, men lose the golden chance of grasping the true and the lasting. They refuse to recognise the fruits that grow on the branches of the tree in their own garden; they pluck it before it becomes ripe and go about decrying it sour. Such is the fate of man; he has always ignored God and pursued the paltry joys of pride and greed.

As a matter of fact, Puttaparthi is a name revered and remembered with gratitude by millions today, and it will be treasured in history as an immortal name. No other village has such fortune, but you have been slow to recognise this. For twenty years now, efforts have been made to calm the waves of faction in this village, years during which many other villages sought and won My Grace and Blessings. On many occasions, devotees have pleaded with Me to move out of this miasma and settle down in Bangalore or Madras or some such town, or, if I preferred, some other quiet rural spot.

But let Me tell you here and now, this tree has to grow at the very spot where it sprouted; it will not be transplanted; I shall not give up this place, no, not I. This place will be transformed into Tirupati, and those who are little boys and girls today will surely see it in all its magnificence.

Three requisites essential for all advancement

Not only this village but every village is sick with animosities and petty quarrels and vendettas. As the Governor said, many attempts have been made during the last fifteen years to better the lot of the farmer, but the result has been far below expectations and expense. For there is an absence of three requisites essential for all advancement: courage, enthusiasm, and joy. The very nature around is enough to instill awe and wonder, to impart courage, to inspire enthusiasm, and to fill you with joy! It is a type of false non-attachment to close the eye to all the beauty, all the plenty, all the mercy that you receive from Mother Nature, and to mope in sorrow, bewailing your lot.

You should be thankful to the Lord for the chance given to you to serve others and yourselves, to observe His Glory and His Grace, and you should look upon all as brothers and sisters. If, instead, you poison your hearts with hate and revel in quarrels, well, what is the great profit you have earned thereby? Have you at least derived peace and content, following that course? You have reaped only further hate and further waste.

The surrounding villages have gainfully made use of the help given by the government and advanced in some ways, but here, you need not stretch your hands before the government; you have a wish-fulfilling tree (*Kalpavriksha*), ready to give you all that you want! You have the Lord, who protects and promotes all. The virtues of the people are the treasures of the State; remembering the Name of the Lord is the root of all virtues.

The royal road to ensure joy and peace

Narada, who was afflicted with conceit that there was no other who had dedicated his very breath to the recital of the Name, was once humiliated to find that a farmer who managed to repeat the Name three times in the course of his overwhelming multitude of distressing preoccupations from cock-crow to dusk was judged a greater devotee! Joy is your birthright; peace is your inmost nature. The Lord is your staff and support. Do not discard It; do not be led away from the path of faith by stories invented by malice and circulated by spite.

Take up the Name of God, any of his innumerable ones, any that appeals to you most, and the Form appropriate to that Name, and start repeating it from now on; that is the royal road to ensure joy and peace. That will train you in the feeling of brotherhood and remove enmity toward fellowmen.

Many seeds are sown in the field by you. Some are eaten away by ants, some are washed off by rains, some are picked by the birds, some are destroyed by pests, but some sprout strong and sturdy. This little school will grow into a sturdy high school, believe Me. You, on your part, must do everything to uphold the honour and reputation of this village.

When I went to Nainital, right in the midst of the Himalayas, thousands of miles from here, they welcomed Me with an Address written and printed in Hindi, and therein they mentioned this village of Puttapparthi, which they called a sacred place! Well, when people actually come here from the various quarters of the world, let them see a virtuous community of God-fearing men and women, living in peace and content.

Puttapparthi, 1960-11-23

The journey of every man is toward the cemetery; every day brings you nearer to the moment of death. So, do not delay the duty you must carry out for your own lasting good. Recognise that you are Siva (God) before you become a *sava* (corpse);

that will save you from further deaths.

Sathya Sai Baba