

41. The Root Of Dharma

Today, long before the sun rose, I could see Bliss (*Ananda*) rising in your hearts, for you woke up long before dawn and got ready to come here for the inauguration of this ritual of sacrifice (*yajna*)! I had suggested 9:30 as the time for this event, but others suggested an earlier auspicious hour due to the showers that came this morning. My resolve prevailed, and we are meeting here to inaugurate the ritual at 9:30 itself!

Bliss is ultimately based on food, food is derived from rain, rain is the gift of God in exchange for sacrificial offerings. Sacrifice is a rite done as per the *Karma Kaanda*, a part of the *Vedas* that deals with action. So, the *Vedic* God-head (*Veda Purusha*) is the spring out of which Bliss wells. That is why this ritual of sacrifice is called *Veda Purusha Yajna*.

Sacrifice (*yajna*) is the destiny of every living being. Life is sustained by the sacrifice of the living. Every being, from the tiniest amoeba to the most profound scholar, is perpetually engaged in sacrifice. The mother sacrifices for the child, the father for the progeny, the friend for the friend, the individual for the group, the present for the sake of the future, the rich for the poor, the weak for the strong — it is all *yajna*, sacrifice, offering.

However, most of it is not conscious, most of it is not voluntary, most of it is not righteous. It is done out of fear or greed or with a view to the fruits thereof, or by mere instinct or primeval urge. It must be consciously done, it must be for spiritually elevating purposes, especially in humans. Then, when life becomes sacrifice-filled, egoism will disappear and the river will merge in the sea.

Bring out the priceless pearls of India's past

The stream of sacrifice is the river Saraswathi of the *Vedic Triveni* (the three rivers Saraswathi, Ganga or Ganges, and Yamuna). The meaning and significance of every single hymn and rite of the *Vedas* is sacrifice. Every single syllabus of the *Vedas* is a name of God —it has about thirteen lakhs of such syllables. When the river Saraswathi underneath the twin rivers Ganga and Yamuna dries up, it will be a terrible tragedy; so also when the stream of sacrifice dries up, it will be a great loss of spiritual wealth. Because when that happens, India cannot continue to be India. The culture of India (*Bharathavarsha*) is called the land of *Vedas* (*Karmabhumi*), since sacrifice (*yajna*) is the action (*karma*) that is the most worthwhile. It is *Vedabhumi* (land of *Vedas*), not the *Vedanabhumi* (land of anguish) it is fast becoming. *Vedana* (suffering) can never come if the *Vedas* are learnt and practised again.

Do not be satisfied with simply collecting a few gaudy shells from the shore of this ancient culture. Dive deep into its past and bring out the priceless pearls.

“The *Vedas* are the root of all virtue (*Vedhokhilo dharma muulam*).” If the roots are injured, the tree will die. If the roots are alive, the tree can grow again. It can survive the lopping of the branches, the denudation of the leaves, but once the roots decay, there is no hope. The *Vedas* and the *sastras* (scriptures) are the two eyes of India. But by blind imitation of Western cultures and by blind carping on the native culture, these two eyes have become dim. Those who have no vision have to be led by others. Indians too are thrown into this plight, when they allowed the *Vedas* and the *sastras* to be neglected. They are reduced to dependence on others, who showed them the way to their own culture.

People have bandaged their eyes with egoism

Do not cry out for help to the rulers or governments if you desire to revive the *Vedas*. No, the *Veda* belongs to those who crave it, who know its value, who are afflicted with an insatiable thirst for it, who desire to practise it, and who are eager to derive the joy and calm that it can impact. No one else has the right to patronise it and talk highly about it; such talk will be insincere and, therefore, valueless and even false. People who do not know how to distinguish between the fleeting and the fixed, the right and the wrong, the true and the false, sit in judgement on the *Vedas* and strut about pompously in their narrow conceited circles; but others keep aloof from such critics. To say, as some of these do, that the *Vedas* are contraptions put together by a few *brahmins* for their aggrandizement is the height of folly; it is the case of the mentally weak judging a thing beyond their ken.

A fish, even if it is put into a golden bowl, struggles desperately to return to the sea from which it was pulled up. It is in mortal agony until it reaches its primal home. It wants water all round it to be happy and alive. Mankind also is of the nature of divine bliss (*ananda*); one cannot survive without bliss. A person is Immortality embodied (*Amritha swarupa*), so it is difficult for a person to imagine that their body will fall off and have to die one day. People have bandaged their eyes with egoism, and they say the darkness is very congenial; they take as true the curious shapes of things they see darkly.

Vedic scholars must save the Vedas

There are some disciplines and some righteousness (*dharma*) to follow if you desire to take off the bandage and see the Light and all things in the new Light. This worldly disease can be cured by the *Vedic* drug and the regimen of restrictions and regulations, the various do's and don'ts that these *brahmins* are following. Do not dismiss these restrictions and regulations as mere superstitions. No one practises them for the fun of it all; they are very hard limitations on conduct and on the details of daily life. It requires great faith, courage, and hardihood to hold them as true and put them into practice. Honour those who have that faith and that courage. I know the sincerity with which they have been leading this regulated life, for I have been with every one of them since years.

By long neglect, the road laid down by the *Vedic* seers is overgrown with thorns; it is now well-nigh unrecognisable, what with potholes, scutings, hollows, and brush. Just as some travelers spoil the very rest-houses where they are given shelter, the *Vedas* have been covered with calumny by the very people whom they have blessed and elevated. When a country is in danger of invasion, the army, that is, a part of the population selected carefully and trained systematically for the specific purpose of war, rushes to ward off the invader. Similarly, when the *Vedas* are in danger, this well-trained, selected band of dedicated *Vedic* scholars must take up the task.

These *pandits* and scholars were struggling in agony because they felt forsaken and alone. Now look at them, sitting gaily dressed, as brides in the marriage pavilion; with joy in their faces and hope in their hearts. They had no one hitherto even to listen with patience to their scrupulously correct recitals of the *Vedic* mantras (holy letters, words). Henceforth, they have no reason to fear.

My task comprises protection of *Vedas* (*Veda sam rakshana*), fostering *Vedic* scholars (*vidhwath poshana*), and establishment of righteousness (*dharmasthapana*). All three are interdependent. Fostering *Vedic* scholars helps both the *Vedas* and *dharma*, so I assure them that their scholarship and sincerity will not go unrewarded. The era of neglect has ended.

When Rama enters the mind, *kama* (desire) has no place therein. Desire ceases when God seizes the mind. In fact, since desire is the very stuff of which the mind is made, it becomes non-existent, and you are free.

This stage is called the death of the mind, the merging of the mind, or the killing of the mind.

Sathya Sai Baba