

47. On To Victory

Today, you heard discourses on the excellence of the divine name, on the indispensability of devotion, and on the omnipotence of divine grace. In so far as these three are concerned, whatever a person may say or expound, it is one's own experience that matters, not scholarship or skill. The divine name, when uttered by a dedicated soul like Prahlada, brought out the Lord from wherever he sought Him!

The divine name saves and liberates! It is armour against the onslaughts of pride and self-pity. When pious repetition of a holy name or sacred formula is started by you in a systematic manner, fixing your inner eye on the form that illustrates the name, you will meet with many obstacles, disquieting thoughts, and enticements. They should be ignored, bypassed, treated lightly. Strengthen your habits, stick to your discipline, improve your inner administration. Mix more in the company of the good and the godly. The unruly bull has to be roped and tamed, its nose bored and ringed; it has to be yoked and trained to drag heavy loads and become the docile servant of its master.

Some people condemn the six passions as dire enemies and advise you to eject them outright. But I would advise you to keep them with you as docile servants, useful for your purposes. Hate those who slight the name of the Lord and tell you that it is a hollow meaningless sound; hate them so much that you avoid them for ever! Attachment can be used to fix your heart on the Lord and be fascinated by the overwhelming beauty of His form reflected in all the loveliness of nature.

Scriptures are binding on every living being

Desire (*kama*) is not a vice —in fact, it is given the status of one of the goals of human endeavour. Develop desire, but not for the material, the momentary. Desire for the deathless, the indestructible. Desire for the steady development of faith in the holy scriptures (*sastras*) as a means to this.

The holy scriptures (*sastras*) are binding on all people, said Ganapathi Shaasthry. I will go a step further and say that the scriptures are binding on every living being that has sacred knowledge or even discrimination. Or else, how can we explain the killing of Vali by Rama except on this basis? Vali argues about the right and wrong of Rama's action; he pleads for the protection of the principles of *dharmā*; he charges Rama with a number of unrighteous deeds — but himself, when accused, claims exemption from the scriptures on the score that he is a monkey while the scriptures bind only people. You cannot have it both ways. When you discriminate between right and wrong and pompously argue on the basis of the principles of *dharmā*, you are bound by the scriptures, which lay down the discipline.

If you adhere strictly to the path of virtue and stick to the yearning, you can become an ascetic of the highest order, a realised sage, though you may now be a novice or even a non-believer!

Sometimes, by just seizing a chance, you can elevate yourselves steadily. Someone comes to Me to get his stomach-ache cured; then he likes this place and its atmosphere and its chanting of *Om (Omkara)* and devotional singing (*bhājana*) and its peace (*prasanthi*); he sees Me and observes My movements and words and actions. He takes home a picture or a song book, and before long, he forgets the ache that brought him hither and cultivates a new ache — for Supreme Peace (*Prasanthi*), for an audience, contact, and conversation; for remembrance of the

Name, meditation, realisation.

Of course, I never deviate from Truth. Since I recline on Truth, I am called Sathya Sai; *Sayi* (as in *Seshashayi*) means reclining. The name is very appropriate, let me assure you. It is only those who fail to follow my instructions and who deviate from the path I have laid down that fail to get what I hold out before them. Follow My instructions and become soldiers in My army; I will lead you on to victory. When someone asks you, in great earnestness, where the Lord is to be found, do not try to dodge the question. Give them the answer that rises up to your tongue from your heart. Direct them. He is here in the Prasanthi Nilayam.

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