

2. Revealing You To Yourself

Deekshith just said that this is a sacred day, not only for the 35 boys who were initiated into religious student-ship (*brahma-charya*) but for *Sanathana Dharma* (Eternal Universal Religion) itself, since the sacred thread ceremony (*upanayanam*) here is an important step in the restoration of the code of conduct prescribed for the four social groups of Hindu Society (*varna-ashrama dharma*) itself.

The study of the *Vedas* is the highest type of learning, since it leads to the conquest of death. All other studies deal with the means of living or the surroundings within which you have to live; they deal with earning and spending, deriving a little pleasure by this trick, escaping a little grief by that other trick. The *Vedas* show the path to the Realm of Eternal Bliss, where there is no birth or death.

People learn details about China, Russia, and America. They know about the volcanos of the Pacific and the islands of the Arctic regions. But they do not know an iota about the features of their own inner realms.

Spiritual wisdom must grow from within

There are five sheaths in people, but they are aware only of the outermost one, the material sheath (*annamaya kosa*), in which they are housed. Even this is just an awareness, not full knowledge. There are deeper layers of which they are ignorant: the sheath of vital energy, mental sheath, sheath of intelligence, and sheath of divine bliss (*pranamaya, manomaya, vijnanamaya, anandamaya*). Those who are conscious only of the material sheath can claim to be the embodiment only of embodiment of desire but not of Rama (*kama-swarupa*, not *Rama-swarupa*). That is to say, they will be swayed by every gust of desire; they will scarcely be able to control desire and rise to the demands made on nobler virtues by the Divinity latent in them. They will get proper inspiration and instruction to explore and exploit the inner realms only from the *Vedas* and the *Sastras* that expound the *vedic* truths.

The *Karma Kaanda* (Chapter on *karma*) is the biggest part of the *Vedas*, because sanctified activity (*karma*) is the means by which the tree blossoms and the fruit matures and grows; the *Upasana Kaanda* (the contemplative portion) deals with the method by which the fruit ripens; and the *Jnana Kaanda* (chapter on spiritual wisdom) describes spiritual knowledge (*jnana*), the process by which the fruit fills itself with sweetness. The first stage takes the longest time, so it comprises the largest portion; the second and the third are quicker by comparison. They are shorter.

The third stage can be accomplished even apart from the tree by keeping the fruit in a warm place amidst straw or in a hot room. One can acquire the sweetness of spiritual knowledge by keeping oneself in the company of the good or even by remaining in a solitary place, all by oneself in meditation, for example. But by whatever means, the sweetness (the spiritual knowledge) cannot be injected from outside; it must grow from within. It is a transformation of the inner nature, won by a struggle with inner foes.

Get rid of grief in this life itself

Just think of this for a while. You are in this body, in this receptacle, in order to realise the God you really are. This body is the cocoon you have spun round yourselves by means of your impulses and desires. Use it, while it lasts, to grow wings so that you can escape from it! You came into this world crying, announcing your grief at

being thrust into it, grief for having lost hold of God. Having come with grief, decide not to go with it from here. Get rid of it in this life itself.

You were told now that the *Ramayana* was welling with sorrow and misery; the main mood of that epic was, it was said, agony, Well, the first step to prayer is a touch of agony. Agony is more potent than awe in leading you Godward. Grieve for lost chances, lost time; every day, move forward to the Goal. Amidst all these absurd loves and hates, the meaningless game of having and hoarding, losing and lamenting, building and demolishing castles in the air, you have no moment of real calm.

Everything in the universe is divine

Peace of mind will not descend on you because your room is air-conditioned or your sofa soft-cushioned. It does not depend on your bank balance or the diplomas you have collected. It can come only when you deny the demon in you all chances of moving you and encourage the Divine in you to manifest Himself. The demon is the prompter of the demonic (*asuric*) traits mentioned in the *Gita*. Everything in the universe is divine; it is; it shines; it is lovable. It is Being-Awareness-Bliss (*Asthi-Bhathi-Priya*, or *Sat-Chit-Ananda*). For it is the same as the Universal, Eternal, Absolute, which is also Being-Awareness-Bliss.

This is the spiritual instruction that these boys got today through the mantra that was taught them. *Upanayana* means, “near-leading,” leading near, leading the boy to the teacher, taking him to the teacher, the *guru*, for this initiation. The *guru* who can give this initiation must himself have transcended name and form, the relative regions of worldly ambitions and achievements; the *guru* must have experienced the Oneness of all this variety. Such people do not put up boards to announce their greatness or compete with others for status or reward.

These boys are especially lucky: Good fortune, of which even they are not aware, has brought them here for this ceremony, which will transform them. They have consciously done meritorious deeds in previous births, the fruits of which they are now tasting, unawares. The *guru* does not teach anything new but reveals you to yourself. The *guru* trains you to cleanse the mirror of your heart so that you may be reflected in it, without warp or twist. The spiritual disciple (*brahma-chari*) must obey the commands of the *guru* without flinching and to the full.

Use your fullest powers to grasp the truth

While Anjaneya (Hanuman) was bringing the Sanjivini Mountain, he had to take a course that made the citizens of Nandigrama see him in the sky; Bharatha, who saw the strange sight of a monkey carrying a hill, brought him down with an arrow, but when he learnt that the hill had the drug that could cure Lakshmana, who was stricken in battle, Bharatha offered to send the hill quicker to where Rama was, by shooting an arrow that could lift it and carry it fast. But Anjaneya said that he could fly quicker than any arrow from the bow of the fastest marksman! Use your fullest powers to grasp the truth. Rely on your own skills, your own force; then they too will develop to the utmost demand you make of them. That will give you the greatest joy.

Many of these boys are today joining the *Vedic* School (*VedaSastra Paathashaala*) here or have already joined it. They will be enthused by each other in their study and spiritual practices. When ten friends gather around you and shout, “Come, come, let’s go,” you feel like joining them, and you gladly go on the adventure. Teachers at the school, who are experienced men, will foster virtues and encourage at every step. I am planting the sapling in your heart; they will water it and manure it. I shall also water the sapling off and on, especially, when

they are not with you. In order that the lotus may not go dry, the lake has to be full of water. Love (*Prema*) is the water that must fill the heart: hatred will make it a parched waste. Have faith in your own *Atma* (true Self or Being); that is the medicine. Act always in the spirit of service and kinship with all; that is the regimen.

Surrender must be complete, without reservations

To all of you I say, “Let mountains fall, let the sea overwhelm the land, but do not give up your spiritual practices. And remember, spiritual practices are a waste unless you grow at the same time in virtue and uprightness.” If you give up all and surrender to the Lord, He will guard you and guide you. When you complain, “Oh! He has not guarded me,” I reply, “You have not surrendered.” The Lord has come just for this very task. He is declaring that He will do so; that is the very task that has brought Him!

Of course, you only talk of surrender (*sharanam*), of placing all at the Feet, but you withhold a great deal. Your minds are wayward like monkeys that skip and jump from bough to branch. Give them to Me; I can make them steady and harmless. When I say sit, they will sit; when I say stand, they stand. That is what Sankaracharya offered to do; he told Siva that he would hand over to Him the monkey that was his mind so that it might be tamed and used for His delight. But it must be a complete handing over, with no reservations.

Upanayanam Day, Prasanthi Nilayam, 1963-02-03