

28. The Day They Got The Light

I am surprised that you read out a welcome address to Me and extolled Me as the Embodiment of Supreme Knowledge and Love (*Jnana-swarupa* and *Prema-swarupa*). I must tell you that I am no stranger and therefore need no welcome. I am no stranger anywhere, much less here of all places, where I took birth. I belong to you. I am very near to you. Besides, I do not like this praise, for praise places you at some distance, whereas I take delight in being with you, beside you, around you. No father likes his sons to praise him! No son approaches the father with a welcome address in which his scholarship, wealth, strength, and virtues are listed and extolled. Kinship evokes kindness; there is no need or chance for formal ceremonial behaviour.

Now, you have asked Me to switch on these street lights, and you have mentioned that this is a supreme moment, for the village is to be free from darkness and full of light hereafter! Let Me tell you, this village is not getting light today! It got the Light the day this Sakthi (meaning Himself, Sai Baba) took birth in this place! For what is this little light that illumines just a few yards around each pole when compared with the Light that illumines the heart and spreads joy and peace.

Light from Puttapparthi is widening over the world

From that day, when this light appeared, you have been witnessing how the Light is widening over the country, attracting the attention of the entire world to this tiny hamlet nestled among these hills, away from the flow of the turbid currents of civilisation. Now, you have buses and lorries coming along the newly laid roads. Just today the decision has been made to improve the roads around this village to the standard of tarred roads. You have at the Prasanthi Nilayam an up-to-date hospital, you have a fine school building for your children, and this and the neighbouring villages have the benefit of this very useful electric current, which you can now direct for various purposes at home as well as in the fields.

You gave Me this garland of flowers when I came, but I would have been glad if you, every one of you, had become a fragrant flower, free from the insect pests of vice and wickedness, strung on the thread of devotion to God. That means you must be united and of one mind, free from hatred and spite, factionalism and greed. Villagers are being ruined everywhere by elements that promote faction and sow the thorny seeds of hatred in fields where useful crops have to be grown.

Here, many feel that you are not attending *bhajans* or frequenting the Nilayam as much as they do. They say among themselves that the inhabitants of Puttapparthi, the village where Sathya Sai Baba was born, have no devotion! But I know that you are every moment thinking about Me, watching for Me, talking about Me, pointing Me out to visitors, expecting Me to return soon when I have gone out of this place, etc. If this is not constant remembrance (*smarana*), what is it?

Injurious attitude is being perpetuated

You must have seen women carrying a number of water pots one over the other on their heads. They may have babies on their hips, and children that they lead along, but all the while their thought will be about the hearth in their kitchens and the food that is being cooked there, for they are anxious that it should not be spoiled.

The strength-giving, peace-creating culture of Bharath (India) has been submerged by the flashy, glittering ideals introduced from the West during centuries of foreign rule. The attention of the people of this land is drawn from the heights to the lowly needs of the senses and the stomach. Even after Indians regained the power to shape their own future, the situation has not improved, for the same injurious attitude is being perpetuated. The beliefs and practices of the past are condemned as superstitions by the inheritors of that very heritage! I won't agree with people who dismiss them as superstitions, for they gave those who believed and acted according to the belief the most precious treasure of bliss and peace (*ananda* and *santhi*). They helped to pull out the poisonous fangs of *karma*, fangs that inject greed, egoism, and hate.

They taught man to do action (*karma*) as a sacred duty and leave the result to God, thus avoiding the two evils of pride and frustration —pride that the act was a success, frustration when it did not succeed. It also contributed some positive good; the *karma* was done well, as well as the individual can execute it, for all *karma* was transformed into worship of the Supreme. Humanity was saved by this emphasis of selfless action, from unending desire and inexplicable sorrow. Now, like water, people flow ever downward, and at the least disappointment they break into bits and drops.

Faith in the Divinity of people has to be restored

Once again, that attitude must be implanted in humanity. One has acted the role of clown or servant or an extra much too long; it is time one took on the role of a hero for which one is destined and equipped. So, like the garland maker who selects flowers of various hues, sizes, and fragrances for preparing a garland, the Prasanthi *Vidwan Mahasabha* (Society of Pandits) too has selected these pandits and prepared a garland. The purpose of this Society is to remind everyone of the role of the hero they have to play. Of course, I am the sustainer of the flowers, not the garland maker! The heroism of the wise person has gone from this land, and the weakness of the ignorant has overwhelmed the people. Sloth has taken the place of earnestness; hesitation has halted courage. This has to be corrected. Even in other lands, the sense of values has to be restored, and faith in the Divinity of humanity has to be restored. That is the task for which I have come.

Even the pandits who have great scholarship have no happiness. The scriptures that they have mastered are designed to confer peace of mind, contentment, and unshakable joy, but the repositories of that scholarship are a very discontented group today. They have the umbrella in their hands, no doubt, but it does not protect them against rain or shine! So, even they have to be made aware of the excellence of the knowledge they are carrying and its curative property. Know thyself —not the sun and moon— is the specific for humanity's ills.

Act up to your professed declarations

Watch the mind, just as you watch the cable through which the current flows. Do not establish contact with the mind; it is as bad as contacting the cable. Watch it from a distance; then only can you derive bliss (*anandam*); search for the cause of ignorance just where it resides. Then you will find that the mind in association with sense objects is the cause. Cut it off from the vision of sense objects, and spiritual wisdom dawns.

Once, a man proclaimed himself established in super-consciousness (a *sthithaprajna*) and an adept in *yoga*. He went into *samadhi* in a trice and sent his inner cosmic energy (*kundalini sakti*) to the crown of the head! Then he got himself buried in the river bed, but he rose after a few days and started asking for cash contributions from onlookers! It was a descent from the sublime to the ridiculous. You must guard against that. Be consistent; act up

to your professed declarations.

The members of the Prasanthi *Vidwan Mahasabha* (Society of Pandits) have to share their learning and their experience and their joy with the people, that is their elementary duty. For this, they are not to receive any monetary benefits, for they are only doing their duty, increasing their own joy, sharing their own enthusiasm.

I am sure this assembly hall will move from victory to victory, for it is contributory to My work. This huge auditorium was erected, would you believe it, in 15 days! It was all done by the devotees; not a single cooly was employed. The Chithravathi river helped a good deal, for it supplied the sand with which the place was filled. No government, no force of authority could have achieved this so soon; only devotion can inspire this consistent firm faith. It is all the effect of Will. The Will is there, so the great hall also will carry on its great task, unhindered.

Prasanthi Nilayam, 1963-10-20

The body is the cart, and the mind is the horse that drags it. No food is given to the horse, which is really the more valuable of the two. Give the mind and its culture the importance it deserves; then only is life worth living.

Sathya Sai Baba