

38. Project Site, Worship Site

I live upon the bliss (*ananda*) that you derive when you sing the name and glorify the form of the Lord. That is My food, My daily sustenance. So I have no need to talk to you. It is sufficient if I sit here and draw in the bliss that you feel when you do *bhajana* (group singing of the glory of the Lord).

You have all gathered here from the distant corners of our country, from every state and every linguistic unit, in order to pool your separate skills of hand and head for the successful completion of this great task, which will give food and happiness to millions of brothers and sisters for centuries. This is a great chance for all of you, a chance that comes to few, however skilled they might be. It is a rare chance that comes to few in any country. The lake that will fill this gorge with waters of the Krishna river when you build the dam across it will be your selfless service with renunciation of its fruits (*nishkama karma*), an ocean (*samudra*) of selfless effort. You will all see it and feel its coolness, depth, and strength. It will gladden you and inspire you and make you feel that your life has been worth while.

Don't go about this holy work in a haphazard way, without faith and devotion. By that faith and devotion, you have to curb this mighty river, which has carved its way through these hard rocks since the beginning of time. And you have to obstruct its speed and its rage for the benefit of humanity and beast. Humanity must, by its skill and daring, make this wayward child of nature halt for a while, and pass on.

Canalise your passions into useful fields

This task will become lighter if you curb your own waywardness and your own egoism, anger, malice, envy, greed, and the roaring flood of your passions. Dam them in your own hearts, and canalise them into useful fields. Utilise the force of those qualities to gain better results from your efforts and spiritual discipline. Grow in those fields the fruits of peace and love. That is the agriculture that aspirants know and that you can also learn with ease. For it is an ancient science, which your own forefathers practised for ages. I have come to remind you of it and to tell you all of the need once again to follow that path.

Blood, phlegm, bile —these decide, by their proportion and predominance, the physical health of a person. So too, three qualities decide by their proportion and predominance the mental health of person. Just as you obey the rules of health for fear of falling ill, you have to practise certain mental restrictions and regulations so that you may have peace, contentment, joy, enthusiasm, and faith. You have to apply the brake on the wayward mind so that it may not drag you into disaster. You have ever to work in the cool shade of two dreads: the dread of sin and the dread of God.

You do not remember that you are really and genuinely Peace and Bliss, that you are fundamentally (and therefore, mentally too) Truth, Eternal, and Pure. The anxiety and fear that haunt you now are caused by this loss of memory. The intention of the Lord is that you should have peace and bliss every moment of your life, but you forget the springs that well up within you, that have their source in the Divinity enshrined in your hearts, and you pine for what you feel you have not.

Prescription for peace and contentment

All of you gathered here may not have the same name and form for the God whom you adore. You may differ in habits, customs, manners, and styles of food and dress. But the bliss you derive from them is the same. Every one of these has been designed by the wisdom of ages to give you security, safety, and satisfaction. When the word (*pada*) is changed, the matter (*padartha*) remains the same. Water is known by the word *paani* in Uttar Pradesh, *thanneer* in Madras, and *neeru* in Andhra Pradesh, but the substance is the same. So, you may speak different languages or use different sounds and signals and follow different habits of food and dress and even of worship and prayer. But they are all, believe Me, instruments for your uplift and progress.

I shall give you one prescription that will give you the peace and contentment that you seek: It is remembering the name of the Lord (*namasmarana*). Install on the tongue any one of the thousand names of the Lord, current in any part of the world, among any community of devotees. Repeat the Name for some time at least every day as part of your duty to yourself, a discipline that will yield good results, a habit that you should cultivate as compensation for the hard toil that you do by your body from sunrise to sunset.

Spend a few minutes daily with God

Bharatha (India) is the land where everyone has *rathi* (attachment) to *Bhaa* or Bhagavan (God). But today, people are in fact losing that taste and that attachment. You may tell Me, “We are so busy, we have no time to spare.” Well, I cannot believe it is true. I know that you are finding time, in spite of the hard work throughout the day, to attend cinemas, to engage in wayside chats, to promote and partake in factions and quarrels, and for many other distractions that add to the sum of your worries.

It is best to stay away from companions who drag you to such distractions that weaken and worry you. Spend a few minutes every morning and evening in the silence of your own shrine or home, spend them with the highest of all powers that you know of. Be in His elevating and inspiring company; worship Him mentally; offer unto Him all the work you do. You will come out of the silence nobler and more heroic than when you went in.

Just consider. Do you come out of the cinema theatre more peaceful, more heroic, purer, nobler than when you went in? No. Your passions are aroused, your animal impulses are catered to, your lower nature is fed. Nothing else can give one that rich reward that silence and prayer and communion with the Master can give. Not even a decent bank account, nor a string of degrees, nor the muscles of a prize fighter.

Spend money you earn usefully and wisely

There is a story connected with the construction of the great temple at Kalahasti. It was built according to tradition by sage Agastya, helped by Brighu and Bharadwaja. Every day when the sun was about to set, Agastya called every worker before him as he sat on the river bed. Under his instruction, the two sages poured sand taken from the bed into the lap of each worker; that was his wages! Now, that sand changed into gold in strict proportion to the work that the receiver had put in that day. One who did more work got more gold; one who did less, less. If one had wasted the entire day, it would remain sand as far as that worker was concerned. There was no injustice, no grumbling, no favouritism. All worked in the presence of the All-seeing, so all accepted the gold that was vouchsafed by the Almighty, for it was just his due, no more, no less.

It is work that is done in this spirit, the spirit of the constant presence of the Lord, that is honest. The Lord will reward by His grace work that is done sincerely and gladly, not work that is done for fear of superior officers

or foremen. If your hearts are pure, your work too would be pure.

Remember the grandeur of what you are engaged in here. Remember the might of this river, which you are persuading to obey you. That will make you humble and devoted. In the Prasanthi Nilayam, the devotees themselves carried on their shoulders stone, mortar, and sand, and as a result of the selfless service they did, we have now a big hospital, a fine school, and a huge auditorium. The entire building is saturated with their devotion, so I once said that the patients are cured by the aroma of that devotion itself.

Be careful when you choose your friends

You should use the money that you earn usefully and wisely. Millions of rupees are distributed at every project site to the workmen, but at the end of it all, when the camp is broken and the people start packing, they have little to carry home! Do not fritter away your hard-earned incomes on tinsel, entertainment, and temporary pleasure. Think of your future, your children, your parents. Think also of the reaction these wasteful attractions produce. Think of the harm they inflict on your precious character. Think of all those who are dependent on you for food and shelter and the love that you alone can offer them. Examine each item of expenditure with reference to these noble tasks. That is the sign of the wise person.

Do not admit into your mind the demon of restlessness (*a-santhi*). Direct all your cleverness and all your intelligence to the successful execution of the great drama that all of you are helping to present. It is His drama. He is the Director, and you are but a role, an actor carrying out His will, speaking words that He has put in your mouth, making movements as directed by Him.

It is all a matter of the company you fall into. Be careful when you choose your friends. Form small groups of good people (*sathsangs*) and meet regularly for *bhajans* and mutual consultations about spiritual matters. Read some fine spiritual classics like the *Bhagavad Gita*. Fill your eyes with the beauty of His form, your ears with the story of His miraculous activities (*leelas*), your hearts with the sweetness of His glory. Inspire yourselves by seeing Him everywhere. Think of His immanence in every hill and dale, every human being and beast, every tree, bird, and insect. You will be really thrilled by the joy of that vision. That will make your work as light and as satisfying and worship (*puja*).

Dwell on Brahman that binds all individual souls together

The monkeys (*vanaras*), while building the bridge across the ocean, carried huge boulders on their heads, repeating Rama's name all the while, and that made the rocks weigh less. It is even said that they wrote the name on the stones, and that made them float! Each time they hauled or lifted a stone, they sang Rama's name in unison, so they were a happy lot, doing worship, not work, which is unpleasant. Rama's grace helped all to overcome obstacles. Take the name and make your work light. That is My advice to you.

Your officer here gave Me a garland of flowers just now. It is made up of two things: flowers that were buds yesterday, blossomed today, and will fade before morn and the thread that was, is, and will be. The flower is impermanent; it represents the living being (*jiva*), which is subject to birth, growth, and decay. The thread is eternal, it is Brahman (Omni-being) on which all living beings are strung. The living beings, like these flowers, are of different characteristics and natures and past impressions, but the string is one uniform consistent base, the *Brahma Sutra*, which binds all together in one common creation. Dwell upon that unity for some time at least, every day,

and that will save you from all types of agitation.

You are engaged in the task of conferring welfare, happiness, and prosperity on millions of people. I bless you so that you may complete the sacred task quickly and successfully, without the shadow of misfortune or interruption of any sort, and with no discordant note.

Address to the Workers, Srisaïlam Project Site, 1963-12-06

Without control of the senses, a person is like a horse without blinkers, like a bull that refuses to yield to the yoke, and spiritual practices are a waste of time and energy. The special feature of one's composition is that one has discrimination, detachment, and synoptic intellect; one can discover Truth, be fixed in it, and gain unshakable peace.

Sathya Sai Baba