

14. Be like lamps

YOU are all pilgrims, moving along this land of action (*Karmakshethra*) to the goal of land of righteousness (*Dharmakshethra*). The literary men, the poets, the teachers and administrators who addressed you so far are all guides who help you along; but, the road has to be trodden by you, every inch of it. "*Kavim puraanam anusaasithaaram*" the Poet is the person who commands, who lays down the law, the ancient, the timeless--that is what the *Vedhas* declare. So these Poets too have to place the rules of right conduct before people and warn them in time when they go astray. They should not themselves stray, while professing to show others the path. Kavi, the Poet, is called the all-seeing (*Kraantha Darshi*); he is the seer of *Manthra* (*Manthra Drashta*); his role is to interpret God to man. He should not indulge in meaningless talk, significanceless writing. That will be degrading his role.

He should not be asking questions without end, for, he should seek in silence to get the answers, without infecting others with his doubts and his posers.

Life is a mirage; it comes from no visible rain; it falls into no recognisable sea. There was a man once who was pestered by a host of relatives when he was dying. Parents, wife, children, brothers, sisters---all surrounded his bed during his last moments and wailed. They asked him "What is to happen to us?" The dying man lifted his head a little from the pillow and asked in return, "What is to happen to me? I am now more interested in that problem, than being worried about what is to happen to you." Well, it is better every one asks that questions even now and equips himself with the answer rather than wait until it is too late. "What am I for?" "What ought I to do?" These questions you must pursue, and arrive at the answers.

You are happiness in essence

Your nature is *Sath*, *Chith* and *Aanandha* (Existence, Consciousness, Bliss Absolute), believe Me. That is why you behave in the way you do. You desire to exist for ever; you enjoy continuing to live; you avoid all talk of your own death. That is enough evidence to conclude that you are Reality in essence (*Sath-swaruupa*). Then, again, you are filled with wonder and curiosity and a desire to know the world around you. You ask continuously what, why, how and when, about all and sundry. This is the prompting that is given by the Consciousness (*Chith*), that is in your make-up. Lastly, you are always seeking joy, through some means or other. You try to avoid grief, you try to taste joy instead. It is the nature of man to do so. For, he is essentially of the nature of Bliss (*Aanandhaswaruupa*). When he seeks *Aanandha*, it is like the call of the deep for the deep. When some one asks you, "How do you do," and you answer, "Quite well, thank you," he does not stop to enquire why you are well. It is only when you answer that you are ill, he stops and expresses concern and probes into the causes, symptoms and cure of the illness. "Well-ness" is natural; "illness" unnatural. Anxiety is caused by the unnatural only. So, you are happiness in essence (*sukhaswaruupa*) also.

Be strong to resist temptations

Sath, *Chith*, *Aanandha* are the attributes of the *Aathma* (Self) and you are the Self not the body. There was a king who had an abiding faith in astrology. So, when his son was born on a day when the *Moola Nakshathra* (Star) was in the ascendant, he feared that the child would bring calamity to the line; he therefore asked his soldiers to slay it and throw the carcass in the jungle. The servants were so overcome by pity that, instead of killing the child, they just cast it away in the jungle and came away. The child was discovered and fostered by a washerman for many

years. The boy was engaged in watching the clothes spread out to dry, when one day, the king lost his way and strayed into the village where the washerman lived with the Prince. While resting in the washerman's house, the king discovered that the boy who watched the clothes was his own son. He took him back and crowned him Yuvaraaja. Now, even when the boy was with the washerman, he did not lose his status as a Prince. Only he did not know his reality. You are all in the same plight: Princes, misled into believing that you are washermen, souls ignorant of the magnificence of the status, but declaring that you are only the shortlived, easily-destroyed bodies.

The gods once were so elated at some victory they won, so proud and so forgetful of the Divine Grace that helped them to foil their enemies, that they held a great banquet to celebrate it. When they were engaged in the revelry, the Lord decided to prick the bubble of their conceit. So, He created a strange phenomenon which presented itself before them and arrested their attention. They went near it out of fear and wonder. It accosted them and when it was told that they were a company of gods celebrating a victory, it challenged them to prove their mettle by using their powers on a blade of grass that it placed on the ground. *Agni*, the god of Fire, tried to burn it but was foiled; *Vaayu*, the god of Wind, tried his best to sweep it off but could not. Thus, each god tried to prove his worth by using all his skill on that tiny blade and it was demonstrated that without the overall Grace of God, each of them and all of them would have failed in the battle, instead of winning it. Humility was thus taught to the exultant gods by the all-merciful Lord.

Read elevating literature

You must be humble, but yet strong to resist temptation. Do not yield like cowards to the sly insinuations of the senses. Your time in school has to be used not only in the task of collecting information and earning certain skills that will give you an income on which you can live; it must also be used to acquire the art of being content and calm, collected and courageous. You must also cultivate at school an ardent thirst for knowing the truth of the world and of your own self. Your words must be like honey; your hearts must be as soft as butter; your outlook must be like the lamp, illumining, not confusing. Be like the umpire on the football field, watching the game, judging the play according to the rules laid down, unaffected by success or reverse of this team or that.

I want you also to read such books as will prompt you to ask and answer questions about your Self. Read good stuff, elevating literature, like the "Educator," which I am inaugurating today. I shall also write some articles for it, off and on, for it will be read by teachers who will pass on the inspiration to the pupils. I am glad the Teachers Guild of Anantapur District have taken up this task of publishing a magazine for their mutual benefit. They are the people who brought Me here today, to this School, which bears My Name. I am glad that the School is celebrating its Annual School Day. The Headmaster has a special responsibility to cultivate the enthusiasm Of the local people and canalise it for the benefit of the school. And, when the plan is for the benefit of the school, all should join hands to help him.

Grace is proportionate to exertion

I have heard discordant voices emanating from this town, and whispers that if Sathya Sai Baaba is really Divine, why is the Bukkapatnam Tank dry during the greater part of the year? Some of you here might have heard such statements, made by irresponsible persons who have no knowledge of the working of Cosmic Laws. What is the relationship between My Truth and the freshes that fill the tank of your village? It is really an absurd idea: that since Sai Baaba is within

four miles of this place, the Bukkapatnam Tank must be full all the year round and the lands below it must yield good profit for the owners! Why should I expend My Grace especially on this tank, as proximity gives greater attachment? All places are equally near for Me and, if they turn away from good ways, all are equally far! For Me, distance is not to be measured by miles. A tank in another continent might be as near to Me as a tank across the Chithravathi.

Again, unless the people of this village have deposited amounts in the bank, how can the bank honour the cheques they draw? Have you deposited devotion to the Lord, service to your kind, faith in your spiritual practice? Then alone can you draw upon the Grace that is won by such exertion: Grace is proportionate to exertion.

And, I may also ask, in what way have you suffered? Whereas other villages hereabouts are declining and people are migrating from them to the bigger towns, Bukkapatnam is thriving continuously. This is due to the stream of pious pilgrims who are flowing into Puttaparthi, through this village. The atmosphere is rendered cool by the company of the holy that gathers there. The Supreme Divine Power (*Mahaashakthi*) that manifested in your neighbourhood and the Supreme Devotion to God (*Mahaabhakthi*) radiating from that place have yielded benefits which you cannot deny. This school is but one of the many evidences of that Grace. I bless you that you may grow more and more in devotion to the Lord, under whatever Name and Form, and earn His Grace to a larger extent.

Bukkapatnam, 13-3-1964

When the Name is pronounced by the tongue,
and the image is adored by the mind,
these should not degenerate
into mechanical routine;
the Meaning of the Name and
the Content of the Form,
must, at the same time, inspire and illumine
the Consciousness.

SHRI SATHYA SAI