

39. Through mirth and moan

The revered old man who spoke of the *upaasana* of Hanumaan referred to the *Ashtottthara Sathanaama* (the 108 names) of Aanjaneya. I wonder how many of you know the significance of that number 108. Why is it that the strings of the names of the gods are always 108? They could as well be 110 or 112 or 50 or 120, isn't it? All such mystic numbers have a deep meaning. Man breathes at the rate of 900 per hour, 21,600 times per day, 10,800 during daytime. With every breath, man is supposed to repeat *Soham*, "I am He," and so, the figure 216 and its half 108 has a deep significance. It is also 9 times 12, 9 being the number indicative Of *Brahman*, since it is always 9, however many times you may multiply it ($9 \times 12 = 108$, $1 + 8 = 9$, $9 \times 9 = 81$, $8 + 1 = 9$) and 12 is the number of the Sun; also, the Sun moves through 12 *raasis* or points, each *raasi* representing one month.

Just as 9 is the symbol of *Brahman*, 8 is the number of *Maayaa*. For, multiples of 8 go on diminishing in total value, instead of remaining the same or increasing, (2 times 8 is 16 which adds up to 7; 3 times 8 is 24 and so, the total has come down to 6; 4 times 8 is 32 which adds up to 5 and 5 times 8 is 40 adding up to only 4! 6 times 8 is 48, that is, 12 adding to 3. And 7 times 8 adds up to 2. 8 times 8 is 64 and so, only 1). This decrease in value is the best symbol of *Maayaa*. Every number has many such valuable inner meanings. It is an interesting subject. You must investigate and reason out, not laugh cynically and condemn. If you stand on the seashore and hesitate to dive into the waters, you cannot secure pearls.

The message of the *Vedhas*

One bhaktha sings, "O Krishna! You are dark; the 'Kalindi deeps' in the Yamuna river into which you have descended is also dark with rain clouds; my eyeball is dark; my heart too is darkened with dark thoughts. How then can I discover You? Your secret is beyond me; your majesty is ever receding before my imagination." Now, the dark colour of the Lord is the colour of the deep sea and the deep sky. It signifies the fathomless, unfathomable. What has to be changed is the heart, the intelligence. Above all, do not be traitors to yourselves. If you say one thing and do another, your conscience will itself condemn you as a cheat. You are your own witness. Not all the stones which Raama trod on were converted into humans; only one stone changed into Ahalya, for, repentance and penance had elevated it to that status.

Nothing ever is born without the will of God, nothing ever happens without His will; that is the message of the *Vedhas*; understand the *Vedhas* well and this lesson will be instilled into you. Fleas drink only the blood of the cow; but men draw from her the sweet and nourishing milk. So, learn from the *Vedhas* the potency of the Will of the Lord. Once you are fixed in that faith, you will be able to brave all dangers. You complain that God is invisible; but the fault is yours, not to recognise God in all His various manifestations. You are yourself "manifestation of God." But you do not know it; you call yourself a sinner, worm born in sin, wallowing in sin, essentially wicked. But, let some one, who takes you to your word, call you, "Hello sinner!" you resent it? Why? Because your real nature is purity, peace, joy. *Manas*, *buddhi*, *chiththam*, *ahamkaaram*, *indhriya* (mind, intellect, thought, egoism and senses)--these are like the bricks, iron rods, cement, wood, etc., that go to make up a house for the *Aathma* to live in. They are jewels that the *Aathma* wears. They are not you; they are only incidental. The real you is the *Aathma*. This can be learnt only by constant meditation, by moving in good company, by listening to the talks of

realised men, by following some prescribed course of discipline. That is why I lay so much emphasis on discipline.

The co-operative commonwealth

The *Varnaashrama* (social groups and stages of life) disciplines, to which the Shaasthry referred, is very useful in this field. *Varna* or what is called caste, is a convenient arrangement for the conduct of worldly affairs; the *aashramas* or the stages of life are roots of supra-worldly joy. The four *varnas* are universal; they can be found in any country. The leaders of thought are the *Brahmins*; the fighters carrying arms are the *Kshathriyas*; the entrepreneurs and the business executives are the *Vaishyas*; the busy producers and labourers are the *Suudhras*.

Whether head or heels, it is the same blood that circulates through each; it is the same body which claims them as limbs. Each limb has to perform its task, the task for which it has specialised. You cannot walk on your head or think with the feet. It is a co-operative commonwealth, the body as well as the body-politic. The eye is the master of sight; the ear cannot question the authority of the eye, nor the eye that of the ear about sound, or the ear that of the tongue so far as the taste is concerned. Each is the master in its own field. The *aashramas* are also steps towards the attainment of detachment and fulfilment. They ensure experience and the unfoldment of personality.

God cannot be bamboozled

Each *varna* and *aashrama* has its own rules, regulations and restrictions. A bullock cart cannot move on rails nor a locomotive on the road. Each type of vehicle has its own type of road. But, all move forward and reach the goal in their own good time. When the heart is pure, the Lord is revealed. He is the judge; He cannot be bamboozled. The doctor may assure you that you have no fever, but the thermometer cannot lie. The doctor may say so to save you from panic, but the thermometer declares the truth. God knows and God will deal with you as you deserve. Have the faith. Repent for all wrongs done and resolve not to repeat the mistake; then God will extend His grace.

You feel that there is something behind and beyond all this fleeting fantasy; something that persists through all the successes and defeats, all the tears and smiles, all this mirth and moan; but, you are unable to grasp it and realise that it is the same entity that underlies the entire universe. You are one with the most distant star and the least little blade of grass. You shine as dew on the petal of the rose; you swing from star to star; you are part and parcel of all this manifestation. The *Shaasthras* teach you this truth through many a parable and story, and even directly, supported by the experience of sages and mystics. Hanumaan may have the form of an ape; but that is simply the outer casement, the *upaadhi*. The Lord is the very breath of Hanumaan: every hair-end of his was echoing with *Raamanaama*.

All forms of divinity are equally sweet

Through *dhyaana* and *upaasana*, you can be aware of yourselves as all this. Mud existed before plates and pots; pots and plates are mud; mud there will be when plates and pots are no more. The plate and the pot must be aware of their being always mud; that, in other words, is self-realisation. When that is achieved, wherever your eyes are cast, you find yourself; wherever your attention is directed, you find your reflection. Begin to feel for it now, this very moment.

Do not hold *japam and dhyaanam* as the games of 'cracks'; hold fast to them, for they alone can save you from ruin. Offer the Lord, not the flowers got in exchange for a few paise from the shop, but the fragrant flowers of your own virtues. Let tears of joy be the holy water with which you seek to wash the feet of the Lord Let your *upaasana dhevatha* (deity being worshipped) be A anjaneya as in the case of this Shaasthry, or any other form; treat that *dhevatha* as comprising all forms of divinity; do not argue that one form is less and another is more; all are equally sweet. Seek to identify yourself with some grand and glorious Entity, for all Grandeur and all Glory is His ultimately,

Prashaanthi Nilayam, 25-11-1964

Life is a game: Play it. Life is Love: Share it.

Life is a challenge: Meet it. Life is a dream:

Realise it

Shri Sathya Sai