

15. The three-day fair

Man did not come here to sleep and eat; he has come to manifest, by disciplined processes, the divine in him. That is why he is called *vyakthi*, he who makes *vyaktha* (clear) the *Shakthi* (power) that is in him---the Divine energy that motivates him. For this purpose he has come endowed with this body and the intelligence needed to control it and divert it to useful channels of activity. You must achieve this by *Dharma-nishtha* and *Karma-nishtha*---steady pursuit of morality and good deeds.

You have been yearning for My coming among you, steadily for over six years now, I have therefore come today to cool your hearts and give you joy. When you suffer from the burning sun, you are refreshed by a dip in the Godaavari river. When your hearts are parched by the burning desire for equanimity, you must dip in the cool company of the spiritually great. Have a time-table for spiritual sustenance, just as you have now for physical sustenance. A breakfast of pious repetition of Lord's name (*japa*) and meditation (*dhyana*), a lunch hour of ritual worship of the Lord (*puja*), 'tea and snacks' of reading scriptures or sacred books (*pravachana*) in the afternoon and a light dinner of devotional music (*bhajana*) in the early hours of the night. If you follow this regimen, you can sleep soundly and wake up refreshed. Feel that you are born with the dawn of every new day; that you nestle in the lap of death when your eyes close in sleep. For, what happens in deep sleep? The body, the senses, the mind, the intelligence, all are negated and there is not a trace of awareness of the world.

All human beings are part of His Glory

If you do so, there will be no accumulation of the consequences of acts, from day to day; the accounts of every day will be closed with 'death,' at the end of that day, especially since you dedicate every act to Him who motivated it and surrendered the fruits thereof to Him who consummated it. If you plan to give joy to others, you will yourself be joyful. Who are these others? Even when the Lord has come with a definite human body, all human beings that you come across are but parts of His glory and His splendour. *Ishwarassarvabhuthaanaam hriddese Arjuna thisthathi*---"O ! Arjuna, the Lord dwells in the region of the heart in all beings", says the Lord in the Bhagavad Geetha.

You may ask how can we find time for all this, when we have to toil every moment for feeding and clothing ourselves? But you forget that the Lord will grant you these material things, and even immortality, if only you place full reliance on Him. Whatever you do, have the name, Raama or Krishna or Shiva or Haft, on your tongue; no extra time or energy is needed for that. When you rise in the morning, rise with the Name on your tongue, slide into sleep with the Name on your tongue.

You know a story of Naarada, I believe. Vishnu once chided him and said a farmer had greater devotion than Naarada. The sage felt annoyed and wanted to verify it for himself. He went to that village and sought out the ryot and observed his life for some days. The man repeated the name of the Lord only thrice a day (!), once as he rose from sleep, a second time when he started taking his only meal of the day at noon and a third time when he laid himself down to sleep. Naarada felt he was badly insulted by being pronounced inferior in devotion to this casual reciter of Names. He returned to Vishnu and presented his report and hoped that Vishnu would correct His estimate of the ryot's devotion.

The Lord asked Naarada to undergo a test which at first appeared to be a mere whim. With five pots placed one over the other balanced on his head, He wanted Naarada to walk around His Residence. Naarada had to comply; he walked warily, slowly, with his entire attention fixed on the five pots uneasily resting on his head, and managed to come safe to the sacred presence, with all the pots intact!, He was surprised when Vishnu asked him, "Now, tell Me, how many times did you remember My Name while walking round?" Naarada had to confess that he had cleanly forgotten the Name and did not pronounce it at all. Then, Vishnu declared, "Do you realise now that that farmer, who is carrying the five pots of fortune and misfortune, right and wrong, and attention concentrated on Nature and her vagaries, is really superior because he recites the Name at least thrice a day?"

Consider the cultivation for the spirit

You clear the field of thorny plants and bushes, you plough it and water it, you sow select seeds, you pluck out the weeds, you fence it to keep out cattle, you spray the crops with insecticides and at last, you reap the harvest for which all this struggle was undergone by you. But, you must get busy with another type of cultivation too, for the spirit. Consider the condition of the field of your heart; it is overgrown with the thorn and bush of lust, anger, greed and envy. Remove them, root and all. Do not allow the land to lie fallow. By continuous good works, plough the field and fill the field with the water of prema. Select the naama (divine name)---seed that appeals to you--and sow it on the field; discipline is the fence which will guard the growing crop against cattle; virtue is the pesticide. Fostering the field with great care you can bring home the precious harvest of *Aananda*, in due course, provided you do not hurry or get desperate.

Life is a three-day fair

Do not divert all your energy to the cravings of the body, which ages every minute and is fast moving towards the burial ground. Life is a three-day fair; it is like a flower' that fades by eventide. Old age, when physical charm is lost and when you have to depend on others for everything, will soon be upon all. Prepare then for death, have the equipment to meet it calmly, joyfully, with quiet resignation to the Will of the Lord. You cannot get it in a trice, when you want it; it is the result of long years of practice. See the hand of God in everything that happens; then, you will not exult or grieve. Then your life will be one continuous *puja* or *dhyana*.

I want all of you to develop brotherliness, the feeling of cooperation, of love and respect of each for the rest. Then, this village will be without parallel. Why foul the atmosphere with hatred and envy, when each of you ploughs his own land and eats his own food? You get into all this bother because you do not know how to fill your time with beneficial activities. In order to promote harmony, the first rule you must follow is control of the tongue. Do not give all your thoughts immediate expression; select, ponder, and then, speak out. Speak softly, sweetly, without malice in your heart; speak as if you are addressing the Sai who resides in every one. 'Use the tongue to recite the Name Of the Lord; use the feet to go on pure and holy errands; use the heart to contain pure thoughts and feelings.

Today, towns and cities with their noise and glare are attracting every one towards them; but, villages are far more desirable. Reverence for holy things, for elders, for moral codes are still strong in the villages; in the towns, men have become as quarrelsome as dogs. Their speech, thought and feeling have all been standardised into patterns. There man is considered to be an animal that has to be petted or tamed, fed and clothed and housed and humoured. The Divinity of

Man, the fact that *Maanava* is but *Maadhava* (man is but Divine), is ignored in the rush and worry of town life.

Sign of the genuine devotee

So, learn to be happy and content where you are; do not run towards towns hoping to secure happiness and contentment there; have inner riches, not outer acquisitions. Make your home the seat of virtue, of morality, of love. Control anger and greed. That is the sign of the genuine *bhaktha*, not unrestricted speech and movements. You may claim to be a devotee and declare yourself as such, when you speak; but, unless your egoism has gone and you love all equally, the Lord will not acknowledge your devotion! From this day, keep all personal animosity away from your conduct. Feel that you are kith and kin of each other belonging to the same family bound together by love and cooperation. Live amicably, live joyfully, undisturbed by faction and hatred; for, some day or other, you have to give up all that you hope to gain through these factions and these hatreds. Listen to the advice of the elders of the village' they have your welfare in their minds.

Keep this Aananda of today in your hearts and develop it by means of *manana* or rumination. Do not run about excitedly and fall on the car as I move out, causing injuries to women, old men, and children. *Bhakthi* must be disciplined and controlled. It is because you have that disciplined *bhakthi* (devotion) that I have come to your place.

Samara, 26-3-1965