

20. Undernourishment and the cure

We hear many people lamenting the state of affairs and talking of the spread of injustice and falsehood, of cruelty and hatred in the world and in this country. This is like shouting for a drug after the illness has set in; prevention is much more beneficial than cure; sometimes, the cure is rendered more difficult on account of the complications due to long neglect.

The present decline in morality is due to decreasing faith in the *Vedhas*, *Shastraas* and *Upanishads* in our country. Some people are in the habit of condemning all those who do not believe in the *Vedhic Dharma* as atheists; but, there are no atheists at all among men. An atheist, when he declares "There is no God," is first affirming. "There is", and then, denying something that he has affirmed. Though he may deny God, he does not deny Love or Reverence or Wonder or Awe; these are all expressions of theistic faith. The 'atheists' too yearn for a goal; they remember a place from where they came, though like all others they are unable to locate it. They know they are proceeding to a place where they get full happiness; they pine for it; they dream about it; they have their plans for reaching it. They have like all others the hunger, the pain, the discontent.

Just as the doctor diagnoses the origin of the pain, the aspirant goes to a *guru* who is an expert in the different forms of mental yearning for the goal. Every one feels the urge to see and know Unity, where there is multiplicity; this knowledge is contained in the *Brahmasuuthra*, which like a string penetrates all the different beads of the same rosary.

There are different approaches to God

All the thousands of individuals here before Me now are so many thousand flowers, strung on that one thread, *Brahman*. In *Brahman*, you all find unity, the unity you have missed, because you were engrossed in your own separateness. That is the truth; all else is delusion; you have let this unity go un-noticed, because the men who know it are neglected, their declarations are dismissed as depraved! There is no dearth of sustaining spiritual food in our country; but, yet, we have this pitiable spectacle of a people starving in the midst of plenty.

The ills of the country are due to under-nourishment; not so much under-nourishment of the body, but under-nourishment of the spirit, want of spiritual exercise, neglect of spiritual regimen. Allowing the malady the fullest scope, people are engaged in reciting the names of the drugs in the pharmacopoeia! They do not make any attempt to take the drug in. The means of conveying into every home and village the life-giving waters of the spirit have all dried up or got choked up. That is the reason why undernourishment, with all its attendant symptoms of debility, nervous disorder and mania is so rampant today.

'*Matham*' is a matter of *mathi*---*religion* is a matter of the intelligence. Unless you are able to equalise intelligence, you cannot equalise religions. There are different approaches to God for different *mathis*, suited to the likes and dislikes of individual temperaments. Some are work minded; some are contemplative, some are exterior-oriented; some are prone to examine the inner consciousness, more than the external.

There are disciplines suited for each of them in the *Sanaathana* (ancient) scriptures: *Bhakthi*, *Jnaana*, *Karma*, *Upaasana*, *Yoga*, etc. The milk in which butter is immanent, implicit in every particle, in every molecule, is the One. The curd into which it is broken by fermentation has the butter separate, but yet as part; that is the One, with the Second, as an integral part of it,

Vishishtha - adwaita (qualified non-dualism). The churning separates the butter clearly and it is rolled into a ball, it is kept floating in the liquid from which it has been taken. The two have become clearly distinguishable; they are spoken of as two, *dwaita* (dualism). These are but three names for three stages of the same substance.

People should strengthen the hands of Pandits

The One is the reality. It is not to be found exclusively in one place only, however hoary the place. Neither Arunachalam, nor Thirupathi nor Kedaaram can claim to be the place where It is to be found. Its address is given in the 61st *shloka* of the 18th chapter of the Bhagavad Geetha: "in the heart of all."

Pandits who are versed in the sacred scriptures of this land are the real leaders of the people, for, they can show the path of self-realisation, which is the highest duty of man. They must, as the sages and scholars of old used to do, counsel the rulers and guide them in the path of *Dharma*. But now, the rulers keep them afar, while the people shower ridicule on them! If they now cater to the low demands of the rulers, they will degrade the ideals which they must cherish and promote. It requires a great deal of integrity and courage for them to escape the temptations of the situation and stand firm on the principles laid down for them in the *Shaastras*. Hence, there is not much hope of the Pandits being used by the rulers. There is every chance of the Pandits themselves losing their grip over fundamentals, if they approach the rulers for patronage. So, the people themselves have to take up the task of strengthening the hands of the Pandits and of deriving the utmost benefit out of these repositories of ancient learning.

Faith in Almighty is the strongest foundation

The Pandits themselves are a divided lot; they have lost the capacity for united effort. I am speaking so plainly here, for this *Kona Seema* is the nursery of many learned Pandits. My task is to bring together the Pandits and make them aware of their noble heritage and their still nobler duty, to develop contact with the rulers who will benefit by the impartial wisdom of the *Shaastras* and the *Upanishads* and the *Vedhas*, seen and recorded by masters of detachment and thus establish peace and harmony in the world. I will certainly succeed; only, you have to be patient for some time.

The mansion called life must be built on strong foundations; the pursuit of *artha*, and *kaama*---of wealth and welfare, of all desirable objects---must be regulated by the standard of *Dharma*. *Dharma* fosters those who foster it--"*Dharmo rakshathi rakshithah*." The strongest foundation is ever-present Faith in the Almighty. Some may ask, "If He is Almighty, why then is he not patent?" Well He reveals Himself only to the person who yearns for the answer, not the one who puts questions out of impudence or ignorance.

He will be patent only in the transparent heart, the heart that is not clouded by egoism or objective attachment. The string of the rosary is patent only in the *sphatika* or the crystal beads, not on the coral or *rudraaksha* beads. Though the string runs through these latter also, it can be seen only by splitting those beads; that is the meaning of the story of Hiranyakashipu who split the pillar; when he did that, he could see for himself the Lord who is the core of every object and being.

Coconut-breaking is symbol for destroying the ego

Try to break the coconut, as it comes from the tree; the shell is covered compactly by a coat of fibre. You cannot break the nut by hitting with a crow-bar even; take off the fibrous armour; breaking it is very easy. When you take a coconut to be offered in the temple, you take it, after removing the fibre; then, you offer it to God, breaking it into two halves. This is the symbol for destroying the ego and surrendering to the Lord. So you have to remove the fibre of desire for sense-objects and then, go before the Lord devoid of *kaama*, and *krodha* (desire and anger); there you declare that you are ego-less by breaking the coconut into two. You will be accepted then, not before.

This conquest of the ego is a very hard task; years of persistent effort are needed to get success in this endeavour. For getting a Degree you struggle in the University for a number of years, poring over books night and day; how much more difficult is this examination, success in which guarantees lasting happiness, and escape from the weary round of birth and death. Some people have their minds and senses like cotton balls and a spark of *jnaana* will set them ablaze and they achieve victory! Some others have them like dried faggots; they take longer time, but, victory is certain. Most have minds and senses like green fuel and even the raging fire of *jnaana* may be put out by the onslaught of the moisture contained in them.

Make your mind and senses like clean finely ginned cotton. How can you do this? By contact with scholars and those who have experience in spiritual practice, like these pandits here. Listen to them; revolve their teachings in the depths of your memory; practise what they advise; yield gladly to their guidance. Start now. Scholarship starts with the alphabet; learn A and B, C and D and go on until the end. The margosa fruit may taste bitter at first but, there are many who enjoy eating it, for, steady practice makes them sweet to the tongue, especially when you get convinced that they are good for curing illness.

Success or failure is your own making

For example, when you sing *Naamaavalis* (songs containing Lord's names) try to roll on your tongue the sweetness of the meaning also. On the basis of the material you can ascend to the spiritual; only, you must know that it is possible, and develop the faith that removes all hesitation. When you sing of Raadha, as you did just now, "*Raadhaa maadhava nanda laala!*" do not imagine that Raadha is a woman and Krishna, a man. You can become Raadha, now, here, if only you know what Raadha represents. She is the basis (*aadhaara*), which is worshipped (*aaradh*) as everflowing stream (*dhaara*); she is the very basis of the world, which is another name for God Himself. Have it as a *dhaara* (flowing from your tongue), the Name of the Lord; avoid all lesser talk. On the Ocean of Milk, (the *Ksheerasaagara*) of the Pure Mind, plant the peak of *Mandara*, steady faith, in the unity of creation; take the serpent, Grace of the Lord (*Ishwaraanugraham*), and use it as a rope to churn the ocean; churn it through meditation and spiritual discipline (*dhyaana* and *saadhana*); then, you are able to acquire the Nectar---the essence of *Vedha*, of spiritual knowledge, of spiritual experience.

The Lord is impartial; you punish yourself, you reward yourself. A young student who was nervous about the examination in the English language went to a temple and prayed to God for making the questions easy for him. He promised in exchange a Thanks giving Feast. It happened so, and he could answer all the questions to his entire satisfaction in half the time allotted for the purpose. He did not give in the answer sheets immediately; he called for extra sheets and wrote down a list of articles he must purchase for offering the Thanksgiving Feast to God: jaggery,

rice, cardamom, ghee, etc. He had many more minutes at his disposal; he noted down the cost and finding it beyond him, he revised the list and found many items which he could score off. While busy with this flippant assignment, the bell rang and the supervisor ran up to him to collect the answer sheets. In the hurry of the moment, he handed over the sheets whereon he had written the list of articles and through sheer miserliness, scored out most of the items! So, the young man failed; it was all his doing. God is impartial; He is like the thermometer that cannot misinterpret, or exaggerate or falsify. Success or failure is your own making, you decide your destiny; the Lord has no share in deciding it.

You have the appetite for spiritual truth

It is already very late, you have to go to your places. There are many old people, women and children among you. I can understand the trouble you have undergone out of your Love for Me, coming long distances, walking or journeying by boat or bullock cart, denying yourselves food, sleep and rest, struggling even for drinking water and a little shade under a tree. Seeing this vast ocean of humanity, one gets assured of the value, the continuing value of the heritage of *Bhaarithavarsha*. You have moved enmasse from your villages like ants from ant-hills. Why? Because you have the hunger for God, the appetite for spiritual truth.

I must tell you one thing now, for this has grown into quite a sensation, especially in East Godavari, around Amalaapuram! I am not blaming any one or laughing at any one; but the truth must be made public. There are quite a few who declare that I am coming "upon them" (!), possessing them rather, and they sway, shake and shiver and say all kinds of things, claiming that I am speaking through them or that they are under My Influence. They answer questions and 'foretell' things and perform many tricks to collect money or things from people who do not know Me and My reality. All this is sheer deceit; it is a disease that is spreading. Do not encourage it; nip it whenever you see cases of people suffering from it. Such people have agents and brokers; scotch them first and their puppets will disappear. They wear the dress of holiness, but their greed announces them as vile. People say 'Baba appeared to me in a dream and commanded me to do this and that, to you, to collect so much from you etc., etc. Do not give heed to such cheats; punish them in the way they deserve. That is the advice I have to give you.

Amalaapuram, 29-3-1965

It is easy to conquer anger through love, attachment through reasoning, falsehood through truth, bad thoughts through good, and greed through charity.

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