

27. Uplift of villages

The very first function in the New Year Vishwaavasu is this vast gathering at Sathyavada, a veritable ocean of humanity, formed by rivers and streams from miles around, an ocean of joy, rather than an ocean of humanity! Man is born for the attainment of that joy, not for sheer eating and revelling. Real and lasting joy can be won only by a life led along the path of *Dharma*. *Dharma* makes the inherent Divinity of Man shine forth; that illumination is the purpose of Life, of the recurring sequence of birth and death. Man has in him the spark of Divinity, which is omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent and immanent in the entire Universe; in order to become ever aware of this innate Reality, man must learn the technique laid down by the scriptures, revealed by the same Divinity.

The very first lesson in the primer of this spiritual text is "the control of speech." Speech is the armament of man; other animals have fleetness of foot, sharpness of claw, fang, horn, tusk, beak, talon. But, man has sweetness of speech, which can disarm all opposition and defeat all the designs of hatred. Sweetness makes you *Pashupathi*, (Divine); harshness makes you *Pashu* (bestial). Mere outward politeness or sweetness is hypocrisy! Sincere speech must flow from real sweetness of heart, a heart full of love. Remove all evil from the *Maanasa sarovara*, (the pellucid Lake of your Mind), and make it a fit abode of Godhead.

Dedicate the deed and its consequence to God

Do not aspire to be a servant of God, working for wages; you reduce yourself to that level if you ask for this and that from Him in return for the praise that you offer or the sacrifice you undergo; even if you do not ask, if the bargaining attitude is in your mind, or, if you feel disappointed that God did not give you desirable objects in return for all the trouble you took to please Him. Do not calculate profit; do not count on returns; do not plan for the consequence; do, since you have to Do, since it is your duty. That is real *puja*. Dedicate the deed as well as the consequence to Him. Then you become His own, not a cooly, demanding wages. That is the highest level a *bhaktha* can reach through *saadhana*. That is the reason why *nishkaama karma* (desireless action) is so highly extolled in the Geetha by Krishna.

The heart has the precious treasure of *Aananda*, but man does not know the key to open the lock; that key is *Naamasmarana*---the repetition of the Name of the Lord---with a pure heart. Purify the heart with the four instruments' *sathya*, *dharma*, *shaanthy* and *prema*. Always endeavour to do good to others, to think well of them and to speak well of others. This endeavour will wear away your egoism and attachment to things that cater to your pleasures. Do not behave like birds and beasts, always engaged in earning a living or rearing a family. Struggle for higher things; use the higher talents with which you are endowed.

I am glad this village has responded so well to the call of the higher things in life! All villages must awaken to this Vision of the Supreme. Do not be dispirited; it will happen soon. As a matter of fact, humility and reverence are fast disappearing in the towns; uppishness and irreverence are becoming the fashion there. The fear of sin has faded; there is no faith left in the towns, either in God or in themselves. But, these virtues---humility, reverence, dread of sin, faith in the victory of truth and the efficacy of virtue, the existence of an eternal everpresent witness---these are still existing and flourishing in the villages. People who have themselves fallen, are now attempting to "uplift" the villages; people who are suffering from the mania to imitate strange cultures are

talking of preserving and propagating the genuine culture of India which villages are still nourishing, and planning for the same.

Man becomes a prisoner of his own desires

Some consider themselves great because they have vast territory, some because they have finance, some because they have arms, some because they have vast populations; but, the real wealth, real greatness is virtue which earns the Grace of God. The Kauravas had everything that the world honoured and envied; arms, ambition, friends, allies, forces, riches. But, God was not on their side, for, they were wicked; and they reaped disaster and disgrace. All things that people pride themselves on having, give *aanandam* only when they come, but they have grief when they disappear, as they must some day or other. But the Grace of God is *Sathya*, that is to say, persisting without change at all times and at all places; it is *Nirmala*, uncontaminated by any blemish, full, complete, almighty; it is *Nischala*, unaffected by modifications. Instead of earning that Grace and the *Aananda* that flows from it, man spins a cocoon around himself from the sticky fluid of objective attachment and becomes a prisoner of his own desires. "I" and "Mine" are the two poison fangs of the cobra of worldly life. Pluck them from your make-up and you are no longer dangerous to society, and to yourself.

Discover the prime purpose of human life

I know that you have to lead an exacting life in the villages, waking with the cock-crow and sleeping when the birds start sleeping. Of course, you have to work for your food, raiment and housing and for your family, to keep all those depending on you happy and comfortable. But, I want to ask you a question: Is this all? Does this complete the task? What has happened to the prime purpose of human life, which you have earned after ages of struggle? Of what avail is all the long years spent in this body if you have not discovered the answer to the essential question: "who am I?" Know that, become masters of your own realm, the realm of the senses, the intellect, the feelings, the impulses, the instincts, the attitudes, the prejudices. Then only can you claim to have *Swaraajya*. When in your own household, the sons rebel against the parents and brother harbours hatred against brother, how can you call yourself 'master'? So, too, when your senses drag you in one direction and your intellect in another, how can you claim to have *Swaraajya*?

I must warn you against two infectious diseases that are rampant in the country now; selfishness and the habit of reviling others. Investigate, examine, and then you have the right to pronounce judgement. Investigate, examine and then, you will realise that the self is better served by serving others; you will realise that there are far more useful ways of spending time, the little time that you have here in this life than reviling others or praising them. Rather than, concerning yourselves with the faults and excellences of others, care more earnestly for your faults; foster more carefully your own excellences. That is My advice to you today.

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