

45. Every hair's end

Naamasmarana saved Prahlada from the agony of torture. He was a *Raakshasa* boy, but, somehow, he learnt the sacred name and knew how sweet it was. He repeated it and imbibed its nectarine taste. Even when the enraged elephant rushed towards him, he did not cry out, "O Father", or "O Mother", to persuade his physical parents to rescue him; he had no consciousness of their existence at all; he called on Naaraayana and no one else. Naaraayana is the source of strength for the weak and the strong; He is the supreme power; so, elephants turned back from the boy, fire could not singe his hair; wind could not lift him; precipices could not fell him; poison could not affect him. The Name was his armour, his shield, his breath, his life. Aanjaneya too demonstrates the might of the Name. With the Name imprinted on his heart and rolling on his tongue, he leaped across the sea; temptations called on him to halt on the way; terrors pleaded with him to turn back; but the Name urged him on and carded him forward, through space, to distant Lanka where Seetha was. He had no space in his mind for anything other than the Name of his master.

If your thoughts centre round the body, you will have worries about pains and illnesses, real or imaginary; if they are centred on riches, you will be worried about profit and loss, tax and exemptions, investment and insolvency; if they roam round fame, then, you are bound to suffer from the ups and downs of scandal, calumny and jealousy. So, let them centre round the seat of power and love which deserve willing submission and let your whole being surrender to it. Then, you will be happy for ever. For the sages of the *Vedhic* culture, the *rishis*, the Name of the Lord was the very breath; they lived on the sustenance, which contemplation of the glory, inherent in it, provided.

Worship to fulfil desires tarnishes the heart

When the milk-ocean of the *Vedhas* was churned with Intelligence as the rod and Devotion as the rope, the butter of the three great classics---the *Raamaayana*, the *Mahaabhaaratha*, the *Srimad Bhaagavatha* emerged, for spreading the message of the *Naamasmarana* way to peace and joy. It is to revive this message and to restore faith in the Name that this *Avathaara* has come into the world, in the *Kaliyuga*.

When worship is rendered with a view to fulfil desires and realise wishes, the precious prize will be lost. Worship must cleanse the heart, so that the indwelling God may shine in all His Glory; but desires tarnish, instead of cleansing. Invite a prince who is yet a child to sit on the throne; he will start weeping for, he cannot play on the throne with his toys and pets. The adult sneers at this fondness for toys; he calls it childishness. All those who keep away from the throne of the "sovereignty over themselves" and prefer to play with the toys and pets of material things and men are equally childish, whatever their age or status!

Naamasmarana is an instrument to realise the Lord. Thyaagaraaja started the *Naamajapa* of Sri Raama in his twentieth year; he recited it ninety-six crores of times, and took twenty-one years and fifteen days for the vow to be finished. As a result, he had the *darshana* (vision) of Sri Raama, "the letters of the Name taken shape", he says. The Name signifies the quality of the Lord, His *guna*, and so constant contemplation arouses the same *guna* in the reciter.

Rub the Name vigorously and unintermittently

For *Naamasmarana*, no expense is involved; no materials are needed; there is no special place or time to be provided. No qualification of scholarship or caste or sex has to be proved. When a bit of iron is rubbed to and fro on a slab of stone, heat is generated; only, the rubbing has to be vigorous and continuous. When you do so at intervals and with poor pressure, the iron will not get hot. So, too, in order to get sufficient heat to melt the soft heart of the Lord, rub the name Raam Raam Raam Raam vigorously and unintermittently. Then, the Lord will shower His Grace. If you devote but two minutes and a half in the morning and another two minutes and a half in the evening, the little heat will cool off twice a day and His heart will not melt.

Gajendra called on Him from a forest lake; Vibheeshana called on Him from the enemy's camp; Droupadhi called on Him while herself unclean, but the Lord answered them nevertheless. He is the very embodiment of *Prema*. He can be won only through Love. Study the devotion of the *Gopees*; you will find it constituted wholly of *prema*---*prema* that will pardon 'theft,' 'desertion' and downright rejection. They had no boons to ask from Him, no wish to utilise His Grace for fulfilment; they knew He was the Lord and they needed no other. They had no consciousness of the body or of the world. Their love had but one objective---the Lord in human form.

Once Rukmini and Sathyabhaama both were taken by surprise by the amount of Grace that Krishna bestowed on Droupadhi, the Queen of the Paandavas, whose story was one long series of humiliations and calamities. Krishna rescued her from dishonour and distress time after time; they were curious to know the nature of the devotion that could draw down on her the Grace of God in such a continuous stream. So, Krishna took them both with Him. One day, when He went to Indraprastha, Arjuna had gone hunting and Droupadhi was drying her hair after her bath. Krishna asked the queens to comb her hair for it had got into too much tangle, as they remarked. When they did so, they heard from the end of each hair the sound of *Naama Japam* (repetition of Lord's name), "Krishna, Krishna, Krishna"---that was the extent of her deep devotion to the Lord; it had impregnated into each single hair of her head.

Give the Lord the fruits of your own activities

Of Hanumaan too it is said, "*roma romamu Raama Namame*"---every single hair recited "*Raama Naama*". His tail was a formidable flail, for it was suffused with the might of the Name. He is also called *Sundara*, the charming, the beautiful. Why? Because, he had Raama installed in his heart; since the splendour of Raama reflected on his face, he was charming to behold. He was a charming companion because he spoke of Raama only, sang of Raama alone.

I must now tell you something about Me, too, now. It is the custom when you approach the Lord to take something with you; this is an act which people do when they go for the fulfilment of some desire, the grant of Grace for the realisation of some wish. They take *pathram*, *pushpam*, *phalam*, *thoyam* (leaf, flower, fruit, water), as the Geetha says. The attitude is 'I am *jeeva*; He is *Deva*'. But, this is as bad a trick as some men do: they bring one cow when we ask them for milk, and milk another to give us the milk. They give the Lord the leaf, the flower and the fruit grown on some tree, and the reward of Grace goes to the tree, not to them. Give the leaf, the flower, the fruit that has grown on the tree of your life; the fragrant leaves of your mental resolves and plans, the sweet juicy fruits of your own activities and thoughts.

I know the relative value of these two; I require something that is your very own, not something bought in the bazaar or grown on some other tree or produced by some one else's intelligence or

devotion and steadiness. God has given you "the heart" to use in life; return it to Him as clean and as pure as when He gave it, after using it for *storing prema, shaanthi, dharma, and sathya*, and for distributing them to all who come in contact with you.

Prashaanthi Nilayam: Dasara, 3-10-1965

*Truth, Righteousness,
Peace and Love---
these are the four pillars
on which the mansion of happiness,
here and hereafter,
is built.*

SHRI SATHYA SAI