

30. Achieve nil balance

You will find in the Dashara Programme here various items like *Vedhapaaraayanam* (Vedhic chanting), *puuja* for Divine Forms, the feeding of the poor, dramas, music, *Harikathas*, reading of *Puraanas* (moral epics), lectures on *Shaasthras* (scriptural texts), etc.---all designed for various purposes that may not be evident on the surface. You may be under the impression that all this is but customary and traditional. No. Each item has a deeper significance; it is intended to bring about a definite benefit for some section or other. The *Vedhas* are for all mankind; they have prayers for peace, subjugating the anger of the elements and of human communities; they invoke the forces of nature to be calm and beneficent; so, the *paaraayanam* (recitation) of the *Vedhas* promotes world peace and human welfare. For those who derive joy when the names of the Lord are recited, each name evoking one facet of the splendour of God, we have the *puujas*.

For those thirsting for directions along the path of *saadhana*, we have the discourses by the pandits: Musical recitations and discourses transmit the teachings of the *Shaasthras* and *Puraanas* in pleasant palatable ways. The dramas are visible representations of the essential lessons embodied in our scriptures. All these unfold the petals of the heart of man.

The lotus in the heart of man pines for the Sun, the splendour of the Lord. But to attain it is hard. Withdrawal of all affection towards the world alone can win it. God is the nearest and dearest entity, but ignorance hides Him from the eye. The love that God bears man is unequalled; yet, He appears to man as a distant, formidable, unapproachable phenomenon. The stars appear as dots of light, for they are at a great distance from us. So too God appears insignificant or ineffective to many, because they are keeping themselves too far from Him. If some people say there is no God, it only means they are at too great a distance to be aware of Him.

Be free from desires that drag you down

A green gourd sinks in water; but a dry one floats. Become dry, rid yourselves of attachments, desires, avoid anxieties, worries. Then you can float unaffected on the waters of change and chance. Even water, when it becomes steam, can rise into the sky. Become light, lose weight, bale out so that you may rise higher and higher. *Yoga* is defined as *chiththa vriththi nirodha*--the prevention of impulses that agitate the inner consciousness of man. These impulses add to the ballast. Be free from desires that drag you down; have only the yearning to come face to face with the Truth. That Truth is shining inside you, waiting to be discovered. Like the *dhobi* (washerman) in knee-deep water dying of thirst, man too suffers with the panacea in easy grasp.

God is the *antharyaami* (Indweller), and so, when He is sought in the outer world He cannot be caught. Love Him with no other thought; feel that without Him nothing is worth anything; feel that He is all. Then you become His and He becomes yours. There is no nearer kinship than that. Fifty others may be peeping into the kitchen, hungry and expectant, but if you are the child of the master, you will be served first.

The *naamam* (name) can light the spark of that Love. When two branches of a tree grate on each other hard for some time, enough heat is generated to set the tree on fire. So too, when one Name and another rub together quick and hard, spark of *jnaana* (spiritual wisdom) ignites the mind. *Jnaana-agnidagdha-karmaanam*--"The flames of *jnaana* reduce to ashes the effects of all activities" says the geetha; they do not affect man any more. Like a rope that has been reduced to ash, it can bind no more. So long as the consequence of *karma* persists, man is bound to be born, to finish the consumption thereof. For, the slate of karma has to be wiped clean so that the

account of birth and death can be closed with nil balance. Desire is the prompting behind all activity. Desire is the urge. No activity, arises in those who have attained all desires, for they rest in the *aathma* which has no desire.

Wipe off the balances of *karma-consequence*

Any balance of *karma-consequence* will involve some years of imprisonment in the body. The *Shaasthras* advise man to wipe off the balances by four steps: by scotching all sparks from the fire; by getting rid of all signs, symptoms and causes of fever; by paying off all balance of debt; and by suffering off all consequences of *karma*. A spark may start another fire; a virus may multiply quick and bring about relapse; a little unpaid debt will soon assume huge proportions through high rates of interest; a *karma*, however trite, done with intention to benefit by the fruit thereof will involve birth in order to eat the fruit.

The first stage is *karma-jijnaasa*---the execution of *karma* (action) on proper lines, with proper mental at-tirade; then comes *dharma-jijnaasa*---the observance of moral codes for the upkeep of society and the discharge of one's duties and obligations; last comes *Brahma-jijnaasa* ---resulting in the appreciation of *Naamasmarana* as the primary *saadhana*. The Name is sugar; you can make sugar dolls of any shape; call it by any name appropriate to the shape, cat or rabbit, eagle or elephant; the sweetness and the calorific value are the same. So too, when engaged in the *saadhana* of *Naamasmarana*, you can select *Om Shakthi*, *Om Naarayana*, *Om Srinivaasa*, *Om Paramaathma*, *Om Sai Raama*---the curative value, the cleansing value, is the same; the sweetness on the tongue is the same.

Start on the journey to God and travel light

Naamasmarana will make you stick to the thought of God. Now you are like a mouse caught inside a drum, a *mridanga*. When the player beats on the right, the mouse runs to the left; when the left is beaten, it runs in terror to the right. So too, you run from *Paramaathma* to prakrithi (objective world), reluctant to stick to God and at the same time, retreating from the denials and disappointments of worldly activity.

You have come from God; you are a spark of His Glory; you are a wave of that Ocean of bliss; you will get peace only when you again merge in Him. Like a child who has lost his way, you can have joy only when you rejoin your mother. The ocean drop rose as vapour, joined the congregation called cloud, fell on the earth, flowed along the ravines, and at last reached the ocean. Reach like-wise the ocean you have lost. Start on that journey and travel quick and light.

Mrs. Macrae is so full of devotion that she considers every spot connected with Me as sacred beyond words. So, she went into the village the other day and collected stones and pebbles from the ground on the site of the house where this Sai again appeared with body. Every stone that lay there appeared attractive and precious to her mind; so she brought a big bucketful to her room, not realising that it would be too heavy a luggage for her when she emplanes for Teheran, Rome and New York. Do not store much, for you will have to discard them one day. Have devotion in the mind, cultivate the feeling, the attitude, the dedication. That is enough.

It is only in *Sanaathana Dharma* (the eternal Moral Code) that the importance of *karma* in shaping the destiny of man, the fact of the individual undergoing many births in his progress towards birthlessness, and the mighty Grace of God's coming as man among men to gather them around Him in holy companionship for saving them and saving the world through them, is so strongly and so clearly laid down. If you doubt any of these great truths, you are certain to suffer

and grieve. Every one of you must be saved, sooner or later, by the Grace of the All-Merciful. Make it sooner rather than later. Keep the goal clear before the eye and march on.

Dashara, 17-10- 1966

Pure words, pure speech; holy listening, holy reading; seeing holy things--these make the heart pure. The confusion and travail that now afflict you, are the consequences of impure speech and impure sight.

Sathya Sai Baaba