

10. The key the sages own

LIKE an elephant which was once the leader of the herd, which is caught and tamed for hauling timber in the self-same forest where once it was the monarch forgetful of its prowess and grandeur, Bhaarath has forgotten its supremacy and wealth of spiritual achievement; it is hauling material lumber and feeling supremely satisfied when it gets sustenance and bondage! Man should be like the tiger, which refuses to eat grass even in the last extremity of starvation. There are certain things that man must refuse to do, even at the worst provocation or the most enticing temptation. Then only can he deserve to be termed human. In this land where *thyaaga* (sacrifice) and *seva* (service) to others were proclaimed as the twin paths to fulfillment, the fell diseases of greed and selfishness have spread in recent years. This is a tragedy for the entire human community.

I am emphasising this today, because I find that this vast gathering is mostly composed of students from schools and colleges. These diseases are affecting the youth of this land. The youth are the very foundation of the nation; they are the roots that uphold and feed the ideals of the nation. They must, therefore, grow in an atmosphere of reverence and humility, not in the hot-house of passion and faction. The elders must provide the atmosphere, in the homes, in the villages, in clubs, in civic bodies, in legislatures, in all walks of public life. Youths try to behave like their elders; so the elders must be good examples to them.

Those who draft the syllabuses and curricula for the schools and colleges must be imbued with reverence for our national culture, which is really pure international culture. Then only can our students become true sons and daughters of India. This is the responsibility of the legislators and the rulers of whom there are some on this very platform. That is why I am telling them this.

Our sages had the welfare of humanity at heart

Now the students have started querying, quite against the culture of India, the very existence of God, the very need for morality and the very value of sacrifice and service. This is the combined effect of the home, the school, the society and the leadership. If this is overcome, the youth of this land can well raise up this land to grand heights in the coming years.

A virtuous character is the lamp which illumines the path to peace and joy. This is the teaching of sages who had the welfare of humanity at heart and who bore the rigours of asceticism to discover the key. The teachings of these ancient seekers attracted the respect of men like Dhara Shukoh, the brother of Aurangzeb, as well as women like his sister, Zebunnissa Begum. Dhara had the *Upanishadh* translated into Persian; he adored them as the highest wisdom.

Zebunissa was also an ardent student of the same culture. One day, when her maid was holding the mirror to her while combing her hair after her bath, it slipped and broke. She was morally afraid to be near her mistress and stood shivering in dread of her anger. But the Princess consoled her saying, "Why worry over the damage to the mirror? Even the body to which all these articles cater is liable to damage and destruction." Like a bird that sees a lump of flesh in the far distance, but does not notice the net spread over it to catch, man too sees but the charms of material objects; he does not notice the entanglements which they cause.

Man tries to map the craters and canyons and the volcanoes on the moon, but ignores the craters within his own heart; how then can he acquire peace? Man undergoes enormous trouble to guard his *viththam* (wealth), but does not spread an iota of energy to guard his *chiththam* (inner

consciousness).

Aathma is the source and repository of everything

You say, "Seeing is believing; I believe in God only if I see Him, but are all things seen or heard or touched or tasted as real as they seem? Is it the eye that sees? Your eye may be open and turned in that direction, but if your mind is wandering elsewhere, you will not notice anything at all. You see things only through the illumination of the *Aathma*; you love only because the *Aathma* is Love; you know because the *Aathma* is knowledge. You have *shaanthy*, for the *Aathma* is the source and repository of *shaanthy*. The subtle effect of *manthras* (mystic formulae) mentioned in the *Vedhas* cannot be seen or heard by the senses; they have to be experienced in and through the inner consciousness, the *Anthah-karana*.

The sound of these *manthras* has the power of transforming the impulses and tendencies. The word *manthra* means "that which saves when turned over in the mind." Revolve the *manthra* ever in the mind; that will keep off wild talk, purposeless conversation, aimless gossip and scandal. Talk only when the talk is most essential and talk only as little as is necessary. Talk sweetly and without any reservations or circumvention.

I want students to be convinced of the excellence of these teachings of the *Vedhas* and *Shaasthras*. I am glad efforts are being made by the Sathya Sai Seva Samithi to spread this knowledge among them. Things cannot be bettered by the grown-ups. Their attitudes have been shaped already. The youth have to develop fine qualities of head and heart. They must join and partake in spiritual groups and be useful to themselves and others. Revere your parents and be useful to themselves and others. Revere your parents and try to make them happy. That is the one item of worship which you can whole-heartedly take up, from this very day. When your parents are rendered miserable by your actions, how can God be pleased with you and listen to your prayers?

Mahaaraashtra is the land of many saints who have spread *Bhakthi* through their teachings. It is the heart of Bhaarathavarsha on account of this. Try to deserve being the children of Maharaashtra by following their valuable teachings.

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