

## **10. The sour and the sweet**

AN officer of the Insurance Organisation and another from the Iron and Steel Organisation spoke to you now, from this platform. Their speeches provide good bases for my discourse. You insure life, because you are not quite sure of it, isn't it? To assure yourselves of a comfortable life, you are persuaded to insure and pay premia. But you can derive happiness by controlling and conquering the mind and the senses. God alone can guard you against the terror of Death.

Iron and Steel are produced in blast furnaces, where ore is melted and other components are added. The molten iron is carried in pails by cranes and poured by ladles, which though they handle heat are themselves immune to heat. The crane holds other materials, but does not hold itself! The mind is like that. It holds, it manipulates, it handles, all other things; it cannot carry itself, it cannot manipulate and transmute itself! The mind cannot hold the holder, that is to say, the Inner Motivator, God. So, in order to save yourselves from the waywardness of the mind and its minions, you have to hold on to the 'holder.'

### **Profess only as much as you can practise**

There is iron; there is, also, a magnet. The magnet will draw the iron to itself; that is the destiny of both. But, if the iron is covered with the rust, the grace of the magnet may not operate strong enough to draw the iron near. Greed for sensual pleasure will certainly act as rust! It acts as dust, which induces rust; the rust will ultimately burst the iron itself and change its innate nature. So, it has to be tested constantly and dusted. Then, when it contacts the magnet, it too earns the magnetic quality and it gets rest from its quest. That achievement is the best, for both magnet and iron.

The dust of sensual greed can be prevented by keeping good company, and putting into practice the axioms of good conduct that one can imbibe from it. Hypocrisy is rampant now in the spiritual field more than in any other. For, here, the claims are tall; the promise is prodigious; but, the performance is pygmean! There is the stow of a lost fowl, in a village. The ryot (farmer) complained aloud: "Only one stranger came into this village yesterday! And, he was a Brahmin! But, my cockerel has been stolen and eaten!" Thus, the Brahmin's vow of vegetarianism was revealed as a hoax. Profess only as much as you can practise; do not blabber more than you are prepared to fulfil. Be sincere and honest to your own conscience.

The universe, including the house within which you dwell, namely, the body, is composed of the five elements: earth, water, fire, wind and ether---elements that act upon the senses as smell, taste, colour, touch and sound. Since the elements are 'divine emanations,' each of them has to be treated with reverence and circumspection. For example: the earth. If you scatter seeds on the soil, they may not sprout; if you plant them too deep in the soil, they may not throw up their shoots, They may give up the struggle to rise up into the light! So too, each element has to be used, under some limitations, not as and how you like.

### **Treat the elements as vesture of the Almighty**

Pouring water down the throat can well become torture, if the limit is crossed. So too, there is a limit to the heat you can bear or the sound you can hear, with safety. You cannot breathe comfortably in a typhoon, nor can your ear-drums stand the pressure of an explosion within earshot! Any use of the elements, over and above legitimate bounds, is a sacrilege. Bend and place the bed-roll silently on the floor; if you stand erect and throw the bed with a flop, on the

floor, the avoidable noise you cause is a sacrilege on the God who gave you the medium through which sound travels.

Water is the emanator of the *rasa* principle, the taste factor. There must be a balanced equilibrium in the stomach of man of the various tastes---sweet, bitter, salt, acid, sour, acrid, hot, etc. If the balance is upset, by the predominance of any one taste, health suffers a downfall! If the emanations from any one of the five elemental components in your body are more than tolerable, health will be damaged and *saadhana* (spiritual practise) will be affected adversely! Treat the elements as if they are the vesture of the Almighty. He is the current that activates everything everywhere.

Sharpen the intellect, then the Unity in nature will become evident. The most revered and the most popular *manthra* (prayer clothed in ritual formula) in the *Vedhas* is the *Gaayathri*; it seeks the grace of the Source of all Light, to foster one's intelligence, and for nothing more!

Thenaali Raamakrishna, the famous Andhra poet, humorist and philosopher, once happened to lose his way while traversing an area of thick jungle. You know that he lived in the reign of the famous Emperor Krishnadheva Raaya, of the Vijayanagar dynasty, about 1500 A.D. He was attached to the Court and was honoured as a wise and quick-witted minister.

#### **Raamakrishna's encounter with Goddess Kaali**

While Raamakrishna was wandering desperately in the jungle, he saw an old sage. Raamakrishna ran forward and fell at his feet, in reverential homage. He asked the sage how he got caught in that wild forest. The sage said, "The same mysterious force that dragged you here has dragged me too to this spot. The moment when I have to cast away the body I occupied so long, has arrived! I shall initiate you, now, into the *manthra* which I have recited all these years, as my talisman and treasure." It was the *manthra* of Mother Kaali, and he whispered it into the ear of Raamakrishna.

Raamakrishna was overjoyed at the great gift; he retired into a temple of the Mother, deep in the recesses of the jungle and was intent on the meditation of the Mother, propitiated by the *manthra*. At mid-night one day, the aboriginal Koyas of the forest came into the temple, with a goat which they sought to offer as sacrifice to please Her and propitiate Her. Raamakrishna hid behind the idol and when the knife was about to fall on the neck of the victim, he exclaimed, "I am the Mother of all living Beings, including you. If you kill my child, I will curse you, I cannot bless you!" Believing that it was Kaali that spoke, the Koyas desisted and went away.

Now, Kaali manifested before Raamakrishna; She asked him what he liked to receive from Her! She was pleased with his *saadhana*. "Which do you want?" she queried, holding a plate of curds-rice in one hand and a plate of milk-rice in another. He wanted to know the consequences of eating either plate before deciding which plate to ask for. She explained, "The curds-rice will endow you with riches and economic prosperity; the milk-rice will make you a wise scholar. Now, make your choice."

#### **God loves those who have self-confidence**

Raamakrishna thought within himself, "This not good being a fool in possession of vast riches; nor will scholarship fill the stomach, three times a day." He was a clever person! So, he asked a further question: "I see two plates before me. Before I make the choice, tell me how each will taste?"

She laughed and said, "How can I describe the taste and make you understand the difference? You will have to taste them yourself" and gave him both the plates for the purpose.

The clever Raamakrishna hastily put them both in his mouth and managed to swallow the curds and the milk and the entire quantity of rice from both plates!

Kaali was mortified and exclaimed that his impertinence called for dire punishment. Raamakrishna accepted his mistake and invited the punishment she proposed to inflict. But, can the Mother's punishment destroy the child, however reprehensible the conduct of the child may be? "My sentence will certainly save you, do not tremble," said Kaali. Then she pronounced the sentence thus: "Become a *Vikatakavi*." That is to say, "Be a clever clown, having great influence at Court, accumulating much wealth and guiding all those who approach you with good advice."

As Bhat said, "Everyone has the right to earn Grace," but, those, like Raamakrishna, who have faith in themselves, will earn it soon and plentifully. God loves those who have the self-confidence and the courage of conviction and who seize every opportunity to improve their spiritual status.

*Prashaanthi Nilayam, 11-3-1968*

*I do not accept from you flowers that fade, fruits that rot, coins that have no value beyond the national boundary. Give Me the lotus that blooms in your Maanasa sarovara---the clear pellucid waters of the lake---of your inner consciousness; give Me the fruits of holiness and steady discipline.*

*I am above all this worldly etiquette, which enjoins you to see elders with some fruit or flower in your hand. My world is the world of the spirit; there, values are different. If you are happy, with faith in God and fear of sin, that is enough "service," enough kinkaryam for Me. It pleases Me so.*

*Shri Sathya Sai*