

15. Horn and tusk

THE mica which is available in this Gudur region has to be dug out of the ground after separating it from surrounding rocks, with a great deal of effort. The exertion adds to the joy of achievement. If it could be collected from the surface, perhaps, it would not provide so much of joy. Through effort, *Aanandha* (bliss) is won; through a long period of suffering, of insult and calumny man sees the reality and derives supreme joy. When Janaka welcomed the sages who came to his palace for the *Swayamvara* (selection of the groom by the bride) of his daughter Seetha, Sounaka the leader replied, "We have come because the Lord is here, as the son of Dhasharatha; we have long prayed for a chance to feast our eyes upon the Lord and He has condescended to appear in human form. We are wedded to Him. This is the *Swayamvara* which we have done already" Only those who have decided that He is their Lord and Master can have that inexhaustible joy.

The 'second hand' in the watch moves fast, round and round; when it completes one full round, the 'minute hand' moves just a little. Its movement is not so perceptible. When the 'minute hand' has completed one round in its own slow manner, you find that the 'hour hand' has moved towards the next number! The 'second hand' is the symbol of *karma* (action); through *karma* done by the gross body, the various good works it engages itself in, the subtle body or inner consciousness progresses a little and moves forward.

Through sacrifice immortality is attained

As a result of increasing purity of the *chiththa* (inner consciousness), the *kaarana shareera* (the causal body) is led towards realisation. It is enough if the 'second hand' moves; the rest follows, in proper order. *Thyaaga* (sacrifice) is the key, which propels that hand. Through *thyaaga* is immortality attained. Be *Thyaagaraajas*, not *Bhogaraajas*---*monarchs* of the realm of renunciation, not monarchs of the realm of pleasure.

Explaining the significance of the *yaaga* (ceremonial sacrifice) that is being celebrated here, the Pandith said that through the rituals the 'terrific' nature of Rudhra is calmed and He becomes Shiva, the beneficent and compassionate. God is above all *gunas* (qualities); He has no *Aagraha* (anger). He is ever the embodiment of Love. He is in *gunas*, but *gunas* are not in Him. There is clay in pots, but there is no pot in clay. One should not fear God; One must love Him so much that all acts He disapproves are discarded. Fear to do wrong; fear to hate another; fear to lose Grace. *Yajnas* (ritual sacrifices) are valid so long as you feel that you are the body (*Aham dhehaasmi*). When you know that you are *Brahman*, *yajnas* lose value. Or, when you perform the *yajna* as a sacred act of *thyaaga* (renunciation) dedicated to God, regardless of the fruit thereof, with no calculation of the gains therefrom, then the *yajna* is worth while.

Raamakrishna Paramahansa was once asked by some one, "Why do you starve the body and suffer all this misery? Is not all this detachment from material comfort a sign of insanity?" Raamakrishna answered, "Those who find fault with me do not, alas, know their own faults. Is it not insane to suffer all this misery for the upkeep of this bundle of bones and flesh, this bag of dirt and foulness?"

Be in the world, but not of it

The only valid use to which this body can be put is to discover the source of lasting joy that lies at its very core. Raamakrishna rolled on the bare floor of the Dakshineswar temple and shed

tears of anguish, for days were passing one after another without his having realised the source of bliss. That *saadhana* has immortalised him, while the silly questioner has faded out of the pages of history.

"*Shaanthaakaaram bhujaga shayanam*," is one of the ways in which the Divine is described. *Bhujaga* is the cobra, the poisonous snake. Its *visha* (poison) is the symbol of the evil influence of *vishaya* (worldly desires). The Lord is said to repose on the *bhujaga*, the evil-filled multiplicity of the world. Yet, the description says, he is *Shaanthaakaaram* (in absolute peace, unruffled in the least). The Lord is unaffected, though He is immanent in the universe. Man too must be in the world, but not of it.

Holding the fan by the hand will not help; you must move it to and fro vigorously, in order to feel the cool breeze that blows on your face. There is no breeze in the fan; it is all around you, everywhere, as air. Direct it towards yourself by *saadhana* (spiritual practice). So too, direct the Grace of God that is everywhere, towards you and make yourself happy by *saadhana*. That is the advice you need and I give.

You have heard these scholars for three days. And you are now establishing a Sathya Sai Seva Samithi in this town. You will have to make your Samithi different from other associations and societies. Build it on the basis of Love, fed on the faith in *Vaasudheva sharvam idham*---"all this is *Vaasudheva* (God);" that all are God, and all must be revered. Believe this, experience this and act according to this---and no trace of envy or pride, malice or greed or hate will tarnish your *Samithi*. Faith in God will give you faith in man; for man is but a moving temple of God. It will also destroy the feelings of I and mine, for all are He and everything is His.

Faith in God makes man more efficient and wise

From the very beginning, take enough precautions to ensure that the seed you sow is good and free from defects. Do not start any work with evil motives of pomp, selfish aggrandizement, competition or challenge. Do not ascribe to God the failures due to your own faults and errors. Pray before, during and after, that the canker of egotism may not spoil the effort. The buffalo has horns; the elephant has tusks. But what a difference! The tusks are much more valuable. The man with faith and the man without it are both human; but what a difference! With faith, he is so much more efficient, courageous, and wise.

The Raaja of Venkatagiri told you now that the Name of God has tremendous might. Let the mind dwell on that Name, whatever work your hands are engaged in.

You will find that the thought of God will make work sweet and light. The snow-peak of *karma-consequence* (result of action) accumulated by you will be reduced by the avalanches and glaciers caused by the warming effect of *Naamasmarana* (remembrance of God's Name). The sun melts the snow-cap on the peak; but during the hours of night, the snowfall restores the cap and makes up the loss of height. So too, *Naamasmarana* melts the snow, but unless virtue holds back and overcomes sin, the snow falls again in the darkness of vice and ignorance. Repentance and prayer will certainly prevent further snowfall; the Sun of God's Glory, shining through the *smarana*, will level the snow-peak to the ground.

Be assured that you are free from faults

A patient afflicted with malaria cannot relish *laddus*; though *laddus* are sweet to the healthy tongue, the malarial tongue pronounces them bitter! Afflicted with worldly ambitions, pleasure-seeking megalomania and other forms of spiritual myopia, man cannot relish the sweetness of

God and Goodness. Members of *Seva Samithi* (Service Organisation) have to cure themselves and inspire others to cure themselves. Before pointing to the faults of others, examine yourselves and assure yourselves that you are free from faults. That alone gives you the right; but the wonder is' you discover faults in others only when you have faults in you. Once you rid yourselves of faults, all are pure and good. Whatever you touch becomes gold; that is the Divine alchemy of Love, Divine Love, Universal Love, Love for Love's own sake.

Venkatagiri, 28-3-1968