

18. Name, the never-failing fountain

"ASCETIC practices, years of constant recitation of the Name, pilgrimages to holy places and shrines, study of sacred books---these will not help the aspirant to spiritual victory as much as communion with the Godly and the good." "Bhaarath is a rare treasure-house of spiritual jewels; it can confer all boons on sincere seekers; this conference of seekers is indeed a great opportunity, and for the people of Bombay, this is a great piece of good fortune. Having thus spoken a few words as befits this glorious occasion in Sanskrit, the parent and core of all languages, I shall continue any discourses in Thelugu, and it will be translated into English by Kasthuuri" (These sentences were spoken by Baaba in Samskrith).

Bhaarath is the birthplace of the *Vedhas* and of the *Shaasthras*, epics and *Puraanas* that have elaborated the principles enunciated therein for the education of the common man. It is the nursery of music and other fine arts, inspired by the noble passion of consecrating human skills for adoring the Divine and communicating the supersensuous. It is the staff and sustenance of the mystic and the ascetic, the intellectual and the dynamic adorer of God; it is the field where the science of *Yoga* was cultivated and systematised. No wonder, therefore, that this land, India, has survived through the ages as the Land of *Yoga* (Self-control) and *thyaaga* (detachment).

One Divine principle circulates through all lands

Though these traits of Indian culture may be eclipsed for some time by the forces of secular cultures, civilisations catering to material comfort, storms of doubt and disbelief that sweep through the corridor of time, they cannot be totally uprooted from the hearts of men. The duty of Indians is to foster these traits and sow among human communities the seeds of love, so that they may grow and fill the world with the fragrant blooms of tolerance and reverence. No man can live away, apart from the rest of his kind. No country can play its role alone and unrelated to the others on the world stage. Other nations influence the destiny of India; India too has its impact on others. One bloodstream circulates through all the limbs; one Divine principle circulates through all the lands and peoples. The universe is the body of God; He knows and feels every twitch, every pang, be it from a black man or white, from land or sea or air or space.

Morarji Desai uttered the word, Dharma, often during his speech now. If the leaders of India have Dharma installed in their hearts, they can elevate all their activities, in accordance with the high claims Dharma makes on conduct and condition. *Dharma* will compel integration of thought, word and deed. It will cleanse the mind and rid it of greed and hate. This is a gathering of representatives of all faiths, and so here you can testify that every faith is but an endeavour to cleanse the impulse and emotions, as part of the process of discovering the truth of the world, seen and unseen. No one who has trodden that path and engaged himself in that process has escaped calumny and cruelty.

Tracks leading to one Summit are many

Mohammad, who sought to establish the primacy of the One Formless Absolute had a large share of persecution, defamation, and privation. Jesus who attempted to rebuild mankind on the basis of Love was crucified by little men who feared that their tiny towers of hate and greed will be toppled by his teaching. Harischandhra who had resolved never to waver from truth was subjected to ordeal after ordeal, each more terrifying than the previous one. Those who seek to know God must steel themselves to bear insult, injury and torture, with a smile.

The search is for the same treasure; the summit is One, the tracks leading to it are many; the guides are also many; they clamour and compete among themselves. Seven blind men examined the elephant and imagined that it was what each one was able to touch; each one interpreted his touch--they could not get a complete and correct picture of the animal. Hinduism is the stomach of the elephant, supplying strength and stamina to all other faiths; but one has to admit that the stomach is not all! The limbs are the other faiths.

Even those who assert that they did not find any trace of God in outer space, or who aver that God is dead, or that even if He is alive, He is no longer necessary for man, that He is a handicap and nuisance---all these have to admit that there is something inexplicable, something inscrutable, beyond the reach of reason and science, some unknown which pervades the world and affects the course of things!

Basis of the ancient Science of Astrology

The intuitive vision of the highly sensitive inner eye of the Indian *Yogis* was able to discover many secrets of the Universe and to peep into the past or the future, as far as they desired. It is now more than twenty years after the British left India to itself. This was predicted five thousand and forty-three years ago by an Indian *yogi*, who declared that India will free itself from the rule of a strange race from the far west, in the year Nandha! India achieved Independence from Western rule in the year Nandha! How could this be discovered and declared five thousand and forty-three years ago? The Bihar earthquake was accurately foretold two years previously, by the astrologers of Vaaraanasi. On what basis does the ancient *Shaasthra* (science) of Astrology rest? Its basis is not as scientific as the modern scientist demands. It is based on intuitive spiritual experience.

Leadbeater has declared that the correct recital of the *Gaayathri Manthra* with the orthodox *Udhaattha*, *Anudhaattha* and *Swaritha*, (modulation of the voice and the higher, lower and even accents) can produce experienceable and authentic illumination, whereas incorrect pronunciation and wrong accent result in thickening the darkness! Therefore, instead of scoffing at the disciplines of recitals, meditations, prayers, formulary worship and *manthra-utterances*, their values have to be accepted and their results tested and confirmed by practice and exercise.

The greatest formula that can liberate, cleanse and elevate the mind is *Raamanaama* (the Name of Raama). Raama is not to be identified with the hero of the Raamaayana, the Divine offspring of Emperor Dasharatha. He was named Raama by the Court Preceptor because it was a Name which was already current. Vashishtha, the preceptor, said that he had chosen that Name since it meant, "He who pleases." While every one else pleases the self nothing pleases the caged individualised self more than the free universal Self. The Self is therefore referred to as *Aathma-Raama*, the Self that confers unending joy.

Raama, the priceless key to salvation

There is a story in the classics to illustrate the worth of the name of Raama. Sage Prachetas once composed a text with verses numbering hundred crores! The three worlds competed among themselves to take the entire text; the struggle assumed calamitous proportions and so God brought them together and persuaded them to accept a third each, that is to say, each world (Heaven, earth and the underworld) received thirty-three crores, thirty-three lakhs, thirty-three thousand, three hundred and thirty-three verses each. One verse remained undivided. It has thirty-two syllables in all; so, when it too was allotted among the three co-sharers, at the rate of

ten syllables each, two syllables were left over! How could two be divided among three? So, God decided that they be adored and revered by all three worlds equally--the syllables were 'Raa' and 'Ma,' making up the priceless key to salvation--Raama!

Raama is the bee that sucks the honey of devotion from the lotus of the heart. The bee loosens the petals of the flower it sits upon; but Raama adds to its beauty and fragrance. He is like the Sun, which draws the water to itself by its rays and accumulating it as cloud, sends it back as rain to quench the thirst of earth. Raama, the mystic potent sound, is born in the navel and it rises up to the tongue and dances gladly thereon.

The *Vedhic* declaration, *Thath-thwam-asi* (That-thou-art) is enshrined in the word Raama, which consists of three sounds: 'Ra,' 'aa,' and *ma*. Of these, *Ra* is the symbol of *Thath* (That; *Brahman*, God) *Ma* is the symbol of *Thwam* (Thou; *jeevi*, individual) and *aa* that connects the two is the symbol of the identity of the two.

No particular Name is higher than the rest

The word Raama has also a numerological significance: *Ra* counts as two, *aa* counts as zero, and *ma* counts as five---so that, Raama adds up to seven, which is an auspicious number. We have the seven *swaras* of music, the seven heavenly sages, and reciting Raama for seven days continuously is considered specially fruitful.

However, since this conference will discuss this great spiritual exercise of *Naamasmarana*, let Me tell you that no particular Names can be raised to a status higher than the rest, for all Names are His and He answers to all. I propose to dilate on this point tomorrow, at the Sessions of the Conference, for it is a beneficent discipline, not only for this country but for all the countries of the world. I shall conclude with the expression of My satisfaction that the Conference is being held in the campus of the Bhaaratheeya Vidhya Bhavan; surely, no better place can be found in Bombay than this for a Conference that attempts to carry the message of Bhaaratheeya Vidhya to all mankind.

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