

## 14. The voice of the ocean

THE seeker has to be very vigilant about his point of view, the things he seeks to visualise, the things he longs to cast his eyes on. For, it is *dhrishti* (the view) that decides attachment, sorrow, passion, etc. You are the noblest being yet created, and so, you have to develop a sight that sees no high or low, that sees all as suffused with divinity, and therefore, not different one from another. Shankara declared, "Make your *dhrishti* charged with *jnaana*; then, the seen will appear in its true light as *Brahman*."

Such sight is called divine, supernatural, super-sensual and auspicious. Each body that you see before you is a mirror in which if only you open your eyes you can see the image of God. The Go in you is in each of them, too. Do not imagine the others to be distinct, they are only you, in so many mirrors. The world is filled with your kith and kin; all are sparks from the same flame. The Geetha says, "*Pandiths* (the learned) see *Brahman* in the scholar, the sage, the venerable and the venerator, the cow, the elephant, the dog and the eater of canine flesh." Such *Pandiths* are very rare on the face of the earth; men claim to be *Pandiths* on the basis of the scholarship they parade, not the vision they have won.

Some *Pandiths* explain the Geetha verso, which declares that God incarnates when Dharma (virtue) declines, in this way: "*Dharma* stood on four legs in the *Kritha* (golden or fulfilled) Age; it had only three in the next age, the *Thretha*; (three legged) later, in the *Dhwaapara* (twin based) Age, it stood precariously on two and now in the *Kali* (iron or harsh) Age, it has only one leg to stand on!" They say also in the same breath, that God incarnated as Raama in the *Thretha Age*, and as Krishna in the *Dhwaapara Age*, with the avowed purpose of restoring Dharma! According to them, when Krishna incarnated Dharma had two legs, but, when His human career was dosed, Dharma lost one more leg and had to suave in agony, having only one solitary leg!. Can such absurdity be ever believed? No. The Incarnations of God have always fulfilled their tasks. Dharma has always been restored, in full.

### Truth is the lamp that dispels darkness

What they re-established on firm foundations is *Sathya* (Truth). For, as the *Vedhas* (sacred scriptures) announce, there is no Dharma higher than Truth. Truth gets hidden, appears distorted, is declared as failing, so, the *Avathaar* (divine incarnation) asserts its validity and value, once again. God wears Truth; the good seek Truth; the bad are rescued by Truth. Truth liberates; Truth is power; Truth is freedom. It is the lamp that illumines the heart and dispels doubt and darkness. The effulgence of God is Truth. Welcome God in your heart. Install Him there as a result of Yearning. Be always concerned with *Brahman*; then, you are entitled to be known as a *Brahmin*; if you are concerned with the skin and all that it contains, that entitles you only to be known as a *Chandaala*, who works on leather and skin!

There was Kanaka, born in a low caste. He was an ardent devotee, yearning in unbearable anguish to see Krishna. So, he went to Udipi, where there is a famous Krishna Temple, established by the great sage, Madhwaachaarya himself. Being of low birth, he could not enter the temple and see the charming idol of Krishna. He stood before the outer door, but the idol was hidden by the Flag- post in front of the shrine. He went round the outer wall and sought some crevice amidst the stones through which he could earn a faint glimpse. He saw a stone was loose: with his fingers, he scooped out the mortar and he made a narrow chink, and when he looked eagerly through it, he saw only the back of the idol. But he was overcome with delight! He

danced in ecstasy, singing the glory of Krishna. Just at the moment, the idol turned towards him and Krishna granted him the full vision of His Charm and majesty. Yearning was rewarded with Grace. Yearning leads to surrender, and surrender gives the highest joy. Leave everything to His Will, accept whatever happens, whether pleasant or painful.

### **Have firm faith in God and His Compassion**

There was once a rich merchant in Baghdad, who was leading a virtuous God-fearing life. He had a daughter whom he adored greatly, for she was the very embodiment of virtue. The father decided that he would give her in marriage only to a young man who was intimately devoted to God, regardless of any other excellence or handicap. He searched for such a groom in caravanserais, mosques and places where holy persons were likely to gather. One Friday, he noticed in the mosque a fair young man, on his knees, even after all else had left, crying out to God most endearingly and with great sincerity. He approached him and asked whether he would marry his daughter. He said: "I am the poorest of the poor; I have a leaky roof over my head, and a gravel floor whereon I sit. Who will wed such a beggar? I shall marry if someone who would not object to my spiritual saadhana, consents to share my poverty."

The merchant felt that he was the most eligible groom and the wedding was celebrated soon. His daughter came to the *fakir's* (mendicant's) residence and started cleaning the floor. She was happy that her husband was of her own heart; she too was pilgrim on the road to God, a practitioner of spiritual exercises. While sweeping the floor, she found in a corner a plate with a piece of bread on it. She asked her husband why it was kept there, and he replied: "I kept it by, lest tomorrow when I go on my rounds, we may not get enough to eat." At this, the wife replied, "I am ashamed of you. You have so little faith in Allah. He who gives us hunger, will He not give us bread too? I shall not live with a person of this nature. You have no faith in God and His Compassion." After saying this she left the *fakir* to himself.

### **Live without being inimical to any being**

The Geetha says that if you give up all *Dharma* and take refuge in Him alone, then He will save you from sin and wipe your tears. Giving up *Dharma* does not mean that you can bid farewell to virtue and righteous action; it means, you have to give up the egoism that you are the '*doer*,' be confirmed in the faith that He is the '*doer*' of every deed. That is the genuine '*giving up*.' There are in the world *Bhojanaalayas* (hotels), *Vaidhyaalayas* (Hospitals), *Vilaasaalayas* (Homes of Entertainment, Theatres), *Vihaaraalayas* (Places of sport, gymkhaanas), *Vichith-raalayas* (Museums, Palaces of Art, etc.), etc. But, however they are named, they are all *Duhkhaalayas* (Homes of Sorrow). The only *Aanandhanilaya* (Home of Joy) is the *Dhevaalaya* (Temple of God), that is to say, one's own body where God is the inner Guide and Guardian.

On this *Guru Poornima* Day, the counsel that I can give you is this: Do not hate anyone, follow the Geetha prescription to spiritual health, *Adhweshtaa Sarva bhoothaanaam*, 'without being inimical to any being.' The reason for this injunction is that God is the inner *Aathma* in everything that exists. So, injury inflicted on any being is sacrilege, self-injury. Love is transformed into poison if hate contaminates it. Love some, but do not hate the rest, for that hate will foul the love and make it mortal. Love comes automatically to the realised soul; but, the spiritual aspirant has to cultivate it by means of service and inquiry into the unity of the *Aathman*. Love must flow not from the tongue, or from the head only, but chiefly from the heart.

### **Poor progress in Saadhana is as bad as failure**

You get the marks that your answers at the examination deserve, not more, not less. Sometimes, if you secure only 5 or 6 out of a total of 100, even the 5 or 6 may be cancelled and you will be assigned just a zero. For, there is not much to choose between zero and the 5 or 6 you were able to collect. But, if you get a number very near the minimum needed for a pass, the 2 or 3 that you fall short of will be added on as grace marks and you are very likely to be promoted. This is true of saadhana also. Poor progress in it is as bad as failure, whereas good progress will be appreciated and Grace will pull you through.

On the *Guru Poornima* Day, people generally take initiation into spiritual life from some Preceptor or get directions for some vow or fast or vigil. These preceptors cannot claim the status of the *Guru* as delineated in the *sloka*, *Guru Brahma*, *Guru Vishnu*, *Guru Dhevo Maheswarah*; *Guru saakshaath Parabrahma*, etc. The *Guru* extolled therein is the sage who has transcended Name and Form and is beyond the effect of the three gunas or attributes; he is neither good nor bad; neither passionate nor dull; neither enthusiastic nor uninterested. He is unaffected, calm, content. He is the *Aathma*, having realised that *the Aathma* is the One and Only. He makes you cast off the fear of death and birth, he renders you fit for the vision of the eternal absolute Truth.

### **Only dedication will take the prayers to God**

If you do not come across such preceptors, do not get downhearted; pray for guidance and from your own heart you will receive the Geetha that you need from the Charioteer who is there. You can easily get plenty of preceptors the moment you seek; for, it has now become a profession, full of competing practitioners, each one trying to collect as many disciples, as much money, and as wide a reputation as he can. There are some who have developed swollen heads, while others suffer from short sight or bitterness or itching palm. How can persons challenging each other for dry disputations be revered as *Gurus*? When they do not possess, along with the elation of scholarship, the ecstasy of Divine Experience, they are not entitled to that holy mission

However superfine the paper, however artistic the envelope, however poetic the composition of the letter, it will not reach the addressee by post when it lacks the 20 paise stamp! So too, the trappings, vestures, shawls, robes, and rosaries are ineffective; they cannot reach the addressee, God. What will take their prayers to the addressee is the 20 paise stamp---dedication or *Bhakthi*.

He who seeks a *Guru* can find him in every word spoken within his hearing, in every incident that happens around him. The Deity, *Dakshinaamurthi* (primal divine teacher of eternal spiritual wisdom) was walking along a wide seashore alone, immersed in deep meditation. He turned towards the waves and watched the unending succession of breakers. He saw a dry little twig on the crest of a wave in the distance; it was being passed on from one wave to another, from trough to crest, from crest to trough, until it was cast on the sands on the shore, near where He stood! *Dakshinaamurthi* was astounded at the egoism of the Ocean that would not give asylum to even a tiny twig. Sensing His reaction, the Ocean declared, in words that He could understand, "Mine is neither egoism nor anger; it is only the duty of self- preservation. I should not allow the slightest blot to deface my grandeur. If I allow this twig to mar my splendour, it will be the first step in my downfall." Then, *Dakshinaamurthi* smiled within Himself, admiring the vigilance of the mighty Ocean. He pictured the incident as a great lesson in spiritual endeavour. The slightest twig of desire, if it falls on the mind, has to be immediately lifted out of the pure waters and thrown off. That was the lesson to be learnt.

### **Three stages in the journey to reach God**

The *Raamaayana* teaches that Seetha had to suffer, separation from Raama as a result of a tiny little desire: to own the golden-hued deer! If only she had cast it off her mind, as the Ocean did! Be free from the bondage of desire---this is the refrain in the *Raamaayana*, the *Mahaabhaaratha*, the *Bhaagavatha*, the Bible, the Quoran, and all the scriptures of mankind.

Each religion exhorts those who are attracted by it to meditate on God in certain Form known by a certain Name; but, one who is aware that He is all Names and all Forms will adopt a sound which is profoundly significant, which summarises all Names, namely, the *Pranava (OM)* sound, the Akshara (Unchanging, indestructible). Through the changing to the unchanging, that is the journey. From the kshara to the Akshara. There are three steps or stages in this journey. "I am YOURS"; "YOU are Mine!" and, finally, "I am YOU!" Every saadhaka has to walk from one to the other, and reach the journey's end. Move on, don't halt.

It is good to be born in a church, but it is not good to die in it. Grow and rescue yourselves from the limits and regulations, the doctrines that fence your freedom of thought, the ceremonials and rites that restrict and re-direct. Reach the point where churches do not matter, where all roads end, from where all roads run.

### **There is no shortcut to attain Self-realisation**

Duth from Calcutta said that it is a pretty hard assignment to listen closely, reflect deeply, and practise faithfully, the three stages prescribed in the *Shaasthras*. Of course, it is. Attaining Self-realisation is not done by a trick, or a ruse; it has no short cut. Listen to what happened to sage Raamadhaas of Bhadhraachalam, the singer who was imprisoned by the Nawab of Golconda, for misappropriation of public funds (to renovate the Raama Temple at Bhadhraachalam), whose liberation from jail was effected by Raama and Lakshmana themselves paying the Nawab the sum appropriated!

Raamadhaas had piled up a large mass of palmyra leaves, on each of which he had written with his style a song on Raama. When his eyes fell on the heap one day, a thought struck him: Did I compose these songs for my pleasure? Or, for pleasing Raama?" He wanted to know those songs which had pleased Raama, and fling away those which did not. He decided to throw the whole bundle into the Godhaavari River and let Raama save those which He approved. Almost the whole lot sank in the depths; only 108 floated and were recovered. They alone had arisen from the heart; the rest smacked of cleverness, artificiality, pandity, pedantry. Prayers must emanate from the heart, where God resides, and not from the head, where doctrines and doubts clash, Faith in God being within the heart, faith in His constant presence and constant guidance---these will confer courage, virtue, and illumination. The *Shaasthras* say, have faith in the doctor, so that you may get cured of illness; have faith in the *manthra* (holy formula) with which the preceptor initiates you, for then alone can your *saadhana* be fruitful; have faith in the sacredness of the temple, for then alone is your pilgrimage profitable; have faith in the astrologer's predictions, for, without it, why bother yourselves with him and his abracadabra? Have faith in the *Guru*, for then alone will your steps be steady and firm, on the path to Self-realisation. Faith in the *Guru* should bring faith in the Aathma (free Self), or else, the *Guru* is a handicap.

*Guru Poornima, Prashanthi Nilayam, 29-7-1969*

*When worship is rendered with a view to fulfil desires and realise wishes, the precious prize will be lost. Worship must cleanse the heart, so that the indwelling God may shine in all His Glory; but desires tarnish, instead of cleansing.*

*Sathya Sai Baaba*