

24. Exercise in futility

CULTIVATE comradeship with the good, develop compassion for the distressed, foster the feeling of elation at the happy and prosperous, and deepen indifference towards the evil-minded--this is the ancient, well-tried prescription for a calm peaceful life. God will bless such men and award them Grace. The Name of God when uttered with sincere joy has great influence on the mind of man. It is like moonlight, for the waves of the inner Ocean in marl For, it is God echoing from within, the call of Go from without! But, lo, the fascination exerted by science --which deals with the objective world, with things and events that can be m red, weighed or calculated by means of ascertainable categories of thought,--has led man into the dreary wastes, in search of Joy! Chandramouli Shaasthry was telling you now about the manthras, which when repeated in faith and with full knowledge of implications, can endow you with mysterious experiences of the Divine. That is to say, the manthra enables you to be in the proximity of the Divine that is drawn near by the potency of the formula when charged with your own mental current.

What is *manthra*? *Man* (*manana*: continued reflection on latent meanings), *thra* (*thraana*: the act of saving, of enabling one to cross over sorrow). What are the conditions under which the mind can charge the *manthra* with the required potency? The first and foremost one is' one-pointedness. Now, the mind is a very poor instrument, for, it is blunt. It runs after too many objects and objectives. The moment you persuade it to fix its attention on God, it wanders into the cinema hall, the bazaar, the Card Room of your Club, etc. It will seldom agree to dwell on the vast magnificence of the Divine; when you direct it to the Divine, it will behave as if you are inviting it to face the deluge or to counter the horrors of Hell!

Faith in Divinity is essential to dwell upon God

The faith in Divinity essential for any exercise to dwell upon Him, is absent. That faith can come only slowly, by association with the godly, by reading the lives and experiences of godly persons, and by gaining experience oneself. *Naama sankeerthan* (singing of God's Names) induces faith, very quickly. In the beginning, the name has to be recited, willy nilly, as a routine; later, the taste will draw you into the habit; the recitation will yield unfailing joy. We speak of the Lotus of the Heart! Why? Because, the Lotus grows up in and from water and blooms in the sun. The heart too draws sustenance from *Bhakthi* (Devotion) and blooms through *Jnaana* (Wisdom).

Most of the Names of the Divine have but two letters or syllables; the significance of the number, two, (Raama, Krishna, Hara, Hari, Datta, Shakthi, Kaali, etc.) is, that the first syllable represents Agni (Fire principle), which burns up accumulated demerit or sin, and the second, represents the Amritha principle, the Restorative, the Refreshing, the Reformation force. The two processes are necessary; removal of obstructions and construction of the structure.

Krishna, the Lord, was fostered by Yasodha, but, she did not know where He was born! He was loved and treated as if He were her own son; that is to say, her love was pure and unaffected by selfish considerations. The parable is to be understood thus: Born in the region of the navel, the Divine vitality was later preserved and developed on the tongue (in Gokula, by Nandha and Yasodha), by constant repetition of the Name.

The Raama Principle is the Principle of Love, that descended from Heaven, as the gift of the Gods, as a result of the great sacrifice. Raama means Delight! Nothing delights more than one's own innate self, and so, Raama is *also known as Aathmaa-Raama*. How then could Bharatha

accept to usurp the throne, of which Raama is the rightful heir? He and Shathrugna were at the Kekaya capital, when Raama was exiled, and Dhasharatha died heartbroken at the separation. News was sent to him, and when he entered the palace, unaware of the double tragedy that had cast its gloom over the city, he sensed some calamity. Vasishtha, the family preceptor, advised him to ascend the throne, for, the empire was suffering an interregnum!

Bharatha's example of love for Raama the Lord

Bharatha appealed that he be allowed to go to "the God of my Prayers, the Lord who receives the homage of my unceasing adoration." Vasishtha told him that it was his father's command, and his preceptor's counsel that he sit enthroned as Ruler. Bharatha replied that the request was proof of the extreme hatred that the parents, the people, the preceptor and everyone in Ayodhya had towards him, for, had they loved him, they would not have pressed him to do such a mean sin.

Bharatha stood before Sage Vasishtha with folded palms; he prayed, "Is it just, is it fair, that you should burden me with the sovereignty over a kingdom, which slew my father, widowed my mothers, exiled my dearest brother whom I value more than my very breath, to the demon-ridden jungle, with his dearly beloved queen and which finally brought indelible disgrace on my mother? My empire is the realm which Raama rules over, namely, my heart, which is too small to contain His glory." Bharatha's name itself signifies that he is saturated with love of Raama. (*Bha---means Bhagavaan*, the Lord Raama; *ratha---means* pleased by, happy over, attached to).

Education has hardened the human heart

Let the Love for the Lord grow in you, as it did in Bharatha. Let that sense of adoration, which discarded even a throne, flourish in you. Then, you can be of great use to your country, your cults, your society, your religion and your community. Or else, all this bother that you have undergone, to attend Sathsang, to listen to spiritual discourse, to meet spiritual masters, study spiritual texts, etc, will be a colossal exercise in futility. The system of education laying emphasis on literacy, skills, conformity and material progress has hardened the human heart into another weapon, in the stock of military hardware! His intellect has been blunted by constant iteration of lies; awe and reverence which fed the holy emotions in man have been condemned as out dated! Holy men, holy places and rivers are ridiculed. India which was for ages the playground of the Gods and the nursery of saints and the *Guru* of mankind has now become a beggar at the doors of the very people who clamour for Vedhaanthic Light!

Know the splendour of that light, and fly unto it, as high as your wings can lift you--the wings of Bhakthi and *Shraddha* (Devotion and Steadfastness).

The Shaasthy said that it is an impossible task---the description of the miracles of Swaami. How can any one describe unless he understands the mystery? How can a man on the shore calculate the waves of the sea? He can never count the total. For him, the wave with which he began his count is the first and the wave with which he left off count is the last. Listen, ruminare and follow the advice---that is enough *saadhana* for you.

The first and foremost of my directions is: Revere your parents especially, the mother. There was once a place, which was hit by a hurricane so wildly that all the houses were razed to the ground, and people had nothing to eat and nowhere to lay their heads. Among the worst hit were a mother and her two sons. The elder boy was a gem of virtue; he felt responsible for the safety and care of the family, for, he loved his mother, and sought to win her love and blessings more than anything else.

A true devotee must first revere his mother

You speak of *Bhaaratha maatha*, the Motherland; every mother is of the same breath, of the same lineage. The mother with the younger child was going out begging and keeping alive on the little they could get from the famine-stricken land. Soon, she found that she was too weak even to walk a few steps and so, the elder son had to go a-begging all alone, to feed the family. He said, falling at her feet, that he would do what she was doing and collect food for all. He wanted that she should not over-exert, and worsen her health. How could they live on mere handfuls? The son too was rendered weak. With faint voice and fainter steps, he moved towards a zamindar's house and called out for a morsel. The lady of the house called him in and led him before a leaf, whereon she served some food. But, he tottered into an upright position, and fell plump on the floor. The zamindar came running into the room and placed his ear, near the dying boy's mouth, so that he could catch the last words that emerged from his lips. He was saying, 'No, No! First, she must be given food; my turn comes next. You may be able to pay back any debt; but, the debt you owe your mother, you never can repay. Those who claim to be devotees of God must have this credential: they must revere the mother!

Prashaanthi Nilayam, 16.10.1969

Bhakthi or devotion to God is not to be judged or measured by rosaries or candles, daubings on the forehead or matted hair or jingles on the ankles; purity of motives and intentions is essential, so that prema which is the one component of bhakthi does not leak out of the heart.

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