

25. Assert with every breath

THE Shaasthry explained to you the power and influence of Time on human affairs, taking examples from epics as well as from history. What is good today may be bad tomorrow, what is practicable today may be impracticable tomorrow. Time has a way of making habits and customs out-dated, anachronistic. What gives grief today may yield joy tomorrow. Going to school is an unpleasant task for the child; but, later, he is thankful for having been forced to attend classes while young! Seethe renounced Ayodhya, the palace and all the dreams of happiness she had, and followed Raama into the forest, when he was exiled; but, the sight of a golden deer aroused her latent desires, and she had to face a series of calamities as a consequence of the emergence of 'attachment' to worldly objects! Time had conspired to keep the roots of desire alive in her heart.

The *Raamaayana* teaches also another lesson. The search for Seethe is symbolic of the secret of self-realisation, in the field of experience. Raama, when she was recovered, recovered the wisdom of self-realisation, now confirmed by experience. Jnaana had become *Anubhava-jnaana*. The *Raamaayana* teaches that, when a person is yearning for the precious goal of self-realisation, all the forces of Nature and all Creation will help him and render all assistance. Monkeys, birds, squirrels, and even bounders and rocks were his comrades in the task. Aim high, resolve on the supremest adventure---everything will be set right to lead you on, to the goal.

The world is the triple complex of *Gunas*

In fact, you are urged on towards this adventure by your very breath, which repeats 21,600 times a day Soham (He-I), emphasising the identity of the Indweller with the Principle that is Immanent in the Universe. You may declare with your tongue, "There is no God," but, the breath repeats, *SO* as it goes in and *HAM* as it goes out, making it clear that the He who is Immanent is the I that is resident!

The regulation and restrictions imposed on daily life by the sages of India, the prescriptions for controlling and directing impulses and attitudes that they recommended, are all valuable ingredients of the culture and should be treasured, and put into practice. The world is the triple complex of *gunas* (*attributes*)---*Saathwik*, *Raajasik* and *Thaamasik* (the balanced, the passionate and the dull).

The *Upanishads* say the that thunder teaches a three-fold lesson, *dha dha* and *dha--dhaya*, *dhama* and *dharma*,--to the persons entangled in these three *gunas*. *Dhama* (self-control) to the *Saathwik* who craves for *Aanandha* (bliss); *dharma* (right conduct, ideals of righteousness) to the *Raajasik*, who craves for adventure, heroism and activity; and *dhaya* (compassion, based on Love, which enables attachment and sublimates greed) to those dominated by the *Thaamasik* qualities like craving for objective pleasures through attachment to senses.

The sages discovered the truth Thath *Thwam Asi* (That Thou Art). That is the Divine, out of which all this arose, of which all this is, into which all this merges. It can be known by the *Bhakthi maarga*--the path of dedication, of devotion and surrender of the Self. The 'thou,' that is to say, the Individual can be understood by the *Karma maarga*--the path of selfless activity, of the abnegation of the consequences of all activity, done in a spirit of adoration and with as much sincerity as an act of worship. Then, the process of identification of Thath and *Thwam* (That and Thou) called the recognition of the *Asi* has to be consummated, through *Jnaana maarga*--the path of knowledge, of sharp and relentless discrimination. When *Bhakthi* and *Karma* merge, it leads

to Jnaana. Bhakthi everything as Thath; Karma wipes out the separateness of the *The. So, the Asi* (identification) process becomes easy.

Rendering services to the poor effaces the ego

Though all this is simple and explained in various texts that are expounded by eminent teachers everyday to thousands, the truth is not experienced, the identity is not tasted. It is all stage acting. The words are not from the heart; they follow the cue of the script, written by another person. More is done for effect on the audience, and for the sake of applause and the yield at the counters! Of what benefit is heavy shower of rain, if you keep your buckets, upside down? Can it collect any water? When you listen to discourses on religion, if your minds are not receptive, you derive no benefit therefrom, do you?

Dr. Mistry spoke about the *Seva dha!* activities in Bombay; about the donation of blood, about their visits to the hospital wards and rendering services to the poor inpatients. Really, this is work that effaces the ego and endows one with real *Aanandha*. Dr. Mistry is Parsi; note how he has mastered the Hindu scriptures also, so that he explained now to you how Shiva, Paarvathi and Ganapathi can be interpreted as symbols of the *Karma, Bhakthi* and *Jnaana maarga* to the Goal.

Seva rendered in the faith that all are Forms of the One God is the highest *Karma*. You must watch and see that the inspiration for the *Seva* comes from the heart, not the head. When I was speaking some time ago to the Lecturers and students of the Arts and Science College at Whitefield, I told them of the need to revere elders. The students now greet teachers with a nod, a movement of the head, that is all. I told them that the nod meant distance, hostility, discord. It makes it clear that students and teachers are engaged in opposite camps, that they are strangers. I wanted them to give up such ideas, accept teachers as friends, guides engaged in their *Seva* while themselves students. I wanted love and reverence to flow back and forth between the two.

Heroic exploits of Krishna and Balaraama

I must now finish and go to the children of the *Vedhapaathashaala*, (School of *Vedhic* Studies) in the green room. They will enact a play saturated with spiritual nectar. For, God is described by those who have tasted Him, "*Rase vai sah*" (He is nectar itself)! His story is bound to be sweet beyond words. The universe is sweet on account of Him; it gives joy because it is He. You do not know how to grasp that joy and hold on to it; so, you swing between joy and grief. Acquire it to the full and for all time; then, there is no birth, no death. You are immortal, you are Bliss, Power, Wisdom.

In this play, about to be acted by the boys, I depict the incidents in the lives of my old *Bhakthas*, Kamsa, the Gopees, Akrura, Devaki, Vasudheva and Nandha. It is the good fortune of these boys that I was with them, many evenings, singing and repeating the lines, so that they may learn these great truths, enact the inspiring events before you and both derive and distribute joy. The boys may not be able to represent the roles to the fullest, but, yet you can imbibe the ecstasy and the spiritual lessons it in intended to convey.

The story starts with Kamsa plotting to bring his arch-enemy(!) Krishna, the seven-year-old cowherd boy, with his brother Balaraama into his city and palace, so that he could kill him, with the help of either the royal elephant, or the royal wrestlers. The subsequent scenes depict the agony of the maids of Gokul at the separation from the Divine Boy, the dilemma that agitates the foster-parents, and the departure of the Brothers to Mathura, where Kamsa was awaiting them. Krishna accepts the hospitality of an indigent devotee, rather than that of the monarch who had

invited him; his arrival causes great joy to the populace. Meanwhile, his parents who are in jail are elated at the prospect of seeing him, after years of separation. The warders inform them, as and when it happens, the series of triumphs that the City resounds with, marking the heroic exploits of Krishna and his brother, the killing of the elephant, of the wrestlers and finally of the humiliation and destruction of the King, Kamsa himself!. Krishna and Balarama enter the jail and liberate the parents, and there the play ends.

Do not attach importance to the tender age *of the actors; the words emanating from them are wise and curative; they are the teachings of the Vedhas and Shaasthras*. Treasure them in your hearts and depart to your places determined to put at least a few into daily practice.

Prashaanthi Nilayam, 17.10.1969