

14. Objective, not object

THERE is need for a *Guru*, some one who can guide and lead, who has covered the road and knows its ups and downs. You may have the lamp, wick and oil; but, someone must light it. there may be some convolute drawn on the board, but, some one who knows that it is the letter G, the letter O and the letter D must teach the child to identify them as *Jee*, *0* and *Dee*. That is enough, some one must tell him that it has to be read, not as *Jeeodee*, but as *God*, and that the sound God represents the concretised Divine principle that is immanent in the Universe, that moves the dew to drop, the lotus to bloom, the butterfly to flit and the sun to rise, that is all the power, all the wisdom, all the love, all the miracle that ever was, is and will be.

Those who teach about Nature and its laws, matter and its properties, forces and their pulls, teach to bind, not to liberate; it is a burden, not bliss. It provides a stone boat for you to cross the sea, with waves of grief and crests of joy. It cannot float you along; it is certain to sink. What you need to cross the sea is the bark of *bhakti*, of assurance of Grace, of surrender to His Will. Throw off all burdens, become light, and you can trip across, with one step on one crest and another on the next. God will take you through. You have no need to bother at all. For when He does everything, who is concerned about what?

Love alone can alleviate anxiety

The spark of Love in you has to be cherished and fed so that it may reach God; then, every being will be God, every act will be Divine; every reaction you get from the outside world will be charged with *Prema* and sweetened with that nectar. You love the God in all beings and the God in all beings responds with love. Love God, though tribulation may be your lot, love Him though you are refused and rebuked; for, it is only in the crucible of travail that the metal is purified and cleared of blemish. Adoration of God has to be through one name and one form; but, that should not limit your loyalty to that particular province only.

The dominion of God is horizonless; it envelops space and even beyond it. So do not allow the needs of worship or *puuja* to put blinkers on your eye. Do not hate other names or other forms of the same Supra-Cosmic Magnificence, the *Purushottama*. For, hate breeds fear, hate is the seedbed of anxiety, scandal and falsehood. It drains your mind of peace. You may have light without oil, fire without smoke, breeze without a bearer fanning you, a chillness in the air of your room in the sizzling heat of summer---but, unless you are at peace with yourselves and with those around you, your pulse will be quick and your blood will be racing in rage and rancour. Love alone can alleviate anxiety and allay fear.

Nature is the vesture of God; immortality has put on the raiment of death; old age is latent in the new born child; darkness is sleeping in the womb of light and light is latent in the night. Reality is the basis, the unrecognised basis, of all this glamour and glitter of Appearance. The ocean of purity from which the nectar of immortality was churned threw forth the poison of *Haalahaala*, which threatened to destroy the three worlds.

Develop a due sense of values

Develop a sense of proportion, a due sense of values. Love the things of the world with the love that is their due, and not more. Suka, the purest of the sages and the wisest, was teaching a number of disciples including the wise emperor, Janaka. One day, Suka started his discourse late, for, Janaka had not yet come. The others resented the extra attachment that Suka bestowed on

Janaka; they ascribed it to the fact that he was emperor of the realm; they felt that their *Guru* was unfortunately moved by these mundane considerations. Suka knew how their imagination was weaving falsehoods and prejudices. So, he derided to exercise this envy from their hearts.

After Janaka came and the discourse lasted for some time, Suka so managed with his mystic powers that they could see in the far distance, near the horizon, the City of Mithila, the capital of the empire, caught in flames and crumbling in the conflagration. The disciples were listening to *Aathmabodha*, the lesson that the *Aathma* alone is real and that all else is appearance, imposed on the *Aathma*, by the fog of illusion and ignorance. Every other disciple ran off, leaving the class and the preceptor, each to his own cell, afraid that the oncoming fire will burn his clothes or books. But, Janaka whose capital city was being reduced to ashes sat unmoved for he knew that what was being consumed by fire was only appearance' and not reality'. Suka himself asked Janaka to go and assess the damage and try to save what can be saved from the fire. But Janaka replied that his treasure was the *jnaana* he was getting from his master and that he was unconcerned about the objective world, approachable by external instruments of knowledge. At this, Suka revealed that the fire was a make-believe created by him to tell others the depth of real scholarship earned by Janaka, in contrast to their superficial learning.

There is nothing more precious than *Prema*

That was the type of *Guru*, that was the type of *sishtya* (disciple) which was acclaimed as the standard by ancient India. Now, you know why India had such glory in the past, as the preceptor of hungry mankind. The role is once again being thrust on her and her sons have to get ready to prove by example that the ancient lessons can never become out-dated! The *Aathma*, when it is believed is in the core of every one, will produce sympathetic vibrations in you, so that when the other is happy, you are happy and when he is in misery, you feel it to the same extent. That is *Prema*, love at its highest and sincerest.

This *Prema*, when you cultivate it, will remove the weeds of anger and of malice. It will blossom into peace and calm. My teaching is *prema*, my message is *prema*, my activity is *prema*, my way of living is *prema*. There is nothing more precious than love, within human grasp.

A word spoken in love is balm to the tired feet. You come to Prashaanthi Nilayam, by road, rail or bus; you walk into the garden, exhausted and eager. I ask from the verandah, "O, when did you arrive?" Others may doubt, why is Baaba asking this question? Does he not know? Surely, he must be knowing all about him and us. Why then this query? But you, to whom this question is put, you are elated that "Baaba spoke to me, as soon as I walked in!" I seek to give you joy and so, though I know, I ask such questions; if I do not ask, but keep quiet, you feel forlorn and frustrated, don't you?

You know that I am asking you, not for the sake of the answer which I am already aware of, but for the sake of the satisfaction my words give you. So also, I may ask, "How are you?" though I know that you are well and that is why you could come or that you are unwell and that is the very reason that has brought you to me! This is the *Maayaashakthi*, the spirit that charms; if it speaks, if it casts its eye, if it does something, we derive pleasure thereby! It is *Yogamaaya*, which makes you happy when I accost you or talk to you or do something to you.

Try to sense the commands of God

Do not entangle yourselves in inquiries about the caste, creed, custom and convictions of others whom you may meet in the Nilayam or on your way to this place and back. It is not a profitable

habit. Look to your aim and your gains. Leave the rest alone. Let each one seek the fulfilment of his desire and leave it to Me to correct their course. Give up this search among others, among the objects of the outer world for peace and joy, satisfaction and wisdom.

Develop the inner eye, not the exterior sight. Try to sense the commands of God, which will set your feet on the path of silence and steady *saadhana*. Grow in faith; that will make you an iron ball that cannot be lifted by any gust of wind. So too, be so firmly fixed in faith that a gust of grief or a puff of pain cannot agitate you and make you lose hold of God.

There are some who worship my picture with great gusto, but, if the buffalo which was yielding two seers of milk per day starts giving one, they attribute it to the picture and the *puuja*, and they turn the picture to the wall and rue the day when they brought it home! Some who have been coming to me since fifteen or ten years have not yet invested deep devotion in their hearts, and so, are liable to fits of disbelief! How can you get Me on the film, if you turn the lens towards the world and click? Focus the heart correctly and click the switch of intelligence; that is the way of getting a clear picture of mine imprinted in your heart.

Mere formal worship cannot please God

The Kannada saint, Basavanna, sang that God is won, neither by *Naadha* (melody) nor by Vedha (knowledge), but by *Bhakthi* (devotion, dedication). The devotee decides the Form which God takes, in order to install Himself in the heart that is cleansed by devotion. Mere formal worship or mumbling of hymns or mechanical routine performance of rituals cannot induce God to reside in the heart. Such a heart is encumbered by trivia, by lumber, by cobwebs and impediments. I am not enamoured of the devotion that desires to show off, to impress others of its depth! I do not appreciate *Aadambara-bhakthi* (pompous parading of devotion); I appreciate *Aanandha-bhakthi* (devotion that is too deep for words and too intense to care for publicity).

A letter on some scrap scribbled over in illegible style carrying some absurd bit of information will be carried by mail and will be delivered at the address with care and exactitude, provided it has the exact stamp fixed on it: A letter on costly note-paper carrying exquisite calligraphy and florid with a weighty message, worth its weight in gold, will lie neglected and condemned, if it has not affixed on it the stamp, which the postal regulation requires! The stamp of *Bhakthi* is what makes the prayer reach the destination, God; not the festoons, the fanfare, the heap of flowers or the festive nature of the feast-offerings. The simple sincere heart is the stamp, which makes the prayer travel fast.

Do not cast mud on the reputation of others

Do not bewail and say, "I love God but He does not reciprocate." God resounds, reacts, reflects. He gives you back ten times the love that you offer Him. Yearn, dedicate, surrender. Keep steadily on, do not move forward two steps today and retrace them tomorrow. The ants, poor little weak things, they move one behind the other in an unbroken stream, conscious of the goal and of nothing else, overcoming obstacles that come in the way.

Ridicule and contempt must be met with joyous unconcern. Even *Avathaars* have not been free from such feeble tactics from small men. Krishna was scandalised as a thief who killed Sathraajith and stole the *Shymanthaka* gem, which Sathraajith wore, while out hunting in the forest! He set out to prove the traducers wrong! He found that he had been slain by a lion and that the gem was in the cave of a bear (Jaambavaan) which had tied it up above the cradle of the tiny child-bear so that it may watch its brilliance and play! Do not yield to the temptation to cast

mud on the reputation of others; it is a heinous pastime, fraught with disaster. Keep your tongue sweet, and innocent of slander.

I am not also enamoured of scholarship or of boasts that one has read the Geetha a hundred times or the Bhaagavatha a score of times. Observing in daily practice one verse is far more important for progress. The barber can shave off the hair on the head for a few paise and the ochre robe is easy to procure and wear. There are some who revel in what they call *Sahasranaamarchana* or *Laksha archana*---adoring me, pronouncing 1008 names or even a hundred thousand names! Calling out with sincere yearning once---that is enough to win Grace. I find some people breaking coconuts before the Nilayam, disturbing the silence by the bang! I do not know what benefit they get, except getting the coconut for the *chutney* they make for lunch!

Foster, feed and fertilise *Dharma*

I have come for "*Dharmasamsthaapanaarthaaya*"---for the restoration of *Dharma*---the Right that sustains the earth, that ensures peace among men and among the nations. Live in *Dharma*, promote *Dharma* by your acts, thoughts and words---that is the *puuja* I appreciate, for that is paying reverence to the task which I have set before Myself. Foster *Dharma*, feed *Dharma*, fertilise *Dharma*, encourage *Dharma*---it is My Work and I will be pleased.

When you meet each other, do not shout Hello! Or Bye-bye, or some silly chatter. Let the moment of meeting be sanctified by the remembrance of God; say, *Raam Raam* or *Ore*, or *Hari Ore*, or *Sai Raam*. What you call etiquette is only 'a ticket' to barbarism; you pronounce good-bye, as if it was the Thelugu word "*guddi-abbai*," meaning "a blind boy!" How can mere chatter lead you to the bliss you seek? How can the mirage quench one's thirst? Its waters arise from no mountain range nor do they fall into any sea!

Since I have the responsibility to correct you and lead you into the right path, I advise you against 'the evil of the eye;' do not relish ugly, vulgar, demeaning, degrading sights, sights such as the horrid film posters that are paraded at all city squares to draw you away into vice and crime. You must also avoid the 'evil of the ear;' relishing scandal, blasphemy, tidings of hate and greed, talk by the godless and the wicked, who have no love in their hearts and brotherliness in their deeds.

Keep away from all evils to succeed in *dhyaana*

Be guarded against the evil of the tongue, evil of the mind, and 'evil of the hand'---that is to say, desist from words that injure another's reputation, harm his interests, and cause another pain; desist from evil emotions and passions; keep away from bad deeds. It is only when these evils are absent that *Dhyaana* on your Ideal can succeed. Any trace of these will tarnish the mind and create turmoil and turbulence.

Do all acts as offerings to God; do not classify some as "my work" and some as "His work." All work is His; He inspires, He helps, He executes, He enjoys, He is pleased, He reaps, He sowed. He alone exists, for, all this manifoldness is but He, seen through the mirror of Nature! Everything is for the attainment of the Supreme to be utilised for that high purpose. Nothing is to be used as itself, for itself. For *Sai Bhakthas*, this is the only proper way of life. No *padhaartham* (no selfish object); all *paraartham* (only selfless objectives). And, the objective is Realising the Reality, that is, the *Aathma*, God!

Prashaanthi Nilayam, Guru Pournami, 18-7-1970