

18. The Arjuna attitude

ETERNITY extends before man; space too is horizonless; but, life is short and very unsure. Therefore, man has to make the best use of the years allotted to him in this world, and try to become one with the Absolute, so that these entrances and exits may be ended. That is his *Dharma*, the duty he has to do for himself. Know that *Dharma* and live according to its dictates--that is the meaning and purpose of life.

So, the Almighty who has made creatures evolve unto human beings comes down as Man, whenever that creature forgets or ignores this basic duty to itself. The *Rishis* of India have, through the process of purifying their intuition, discovered this fact and sensed the message that the Incarnations bring, the *Avathaars* carry. Many times in human history, *Avathaars* have come and awakened man. But, the animal past, and the demonic delusion drag him into the mire, where he foolishly revels in sensual, physical and transient trivialities.

This is a splendid chance to fulfil your human existence. The *Aanandha* (Bliss) that you hope to derive from kith and kin, from wealth and worldly fame, is but a pale shadow of the *Aanandha* that resides in the spring of your heart, where God dwells. Try to contact that spring; go to the very source; be centred in the *Aathma* or; God within. Few seek real *Aanandha*; the many are led away by the *pseudo-aanandha* of the senses, the intellect and the mind. Real *Aanandha* springs only from Truth. And, *Sathya* is the *Dharma* or duty of each to himself. Seek Truth, serve Truth, be Truth.

Pursuit of property cannot uplift the heart

Truth will reveal itself when the heart is saturated in Love. Man's nature is fundamentally Truth; his breath is fundamentally Love; his blood is fundamentally Tolerance. Falsehood, hatred and faction are characteristics of beastly or demonic natures. They are acquired from society, or ignorance or greed. Today, man is shaped by the head, rather than the heart. It is cleverness that is admired, that pays. But, peace and joy emanate from the heart not the head. The heart teaches compassion, awe, reverence, humility, equanimity, sympathy---qualities that bind men in love, and turn them towards righteousness and the source and sustenance of the Universe, namely, God. The pursuit of property and possessions cannot uplift the heart into the heights of Bliss. You are contemporaries of the *Avathaar* come to guard and guide; you have the capacity to catch the message and canalise it into action and activity. Make the utmost of this chance.

The Message can be grasped only by those who yearn to know the Duty, to which they have to be loyal. Or else, it will sound hollow and mechanical, like the prattle of a phonograph record. But, if the heart is ploughed by that yearning and made ready for the seed, the harvest will certainly follow.

Arjuna was the brother-in-law of Krishna; he was a close companion and even a chum of the Lord, for many decades! Krishna, remember, was 84 years old, at the time of the Kurukshethra battle, when He served Arjuna as a non-combatant charioteer! But, yet, it was only on that battlefield that the Message of the Bhagavath Geetha was imparted to him! Why? Arjuna developed the requisite attitude for the reception and retention of the Message only then.

First Arjuna was puzzled about his duty and was tremendously anxious to get light thrown upon it. He was torn between two paths, and in spite of all his discrimination and detachment he was at a loss to discover what his *Dharma* was. Second, he surrendered his judgement to God, and

declared, out of the deepest recesses of his heart, in indescribable agony, "I am your disciple; I dedicate my entire being to your Will; tell me what to do and I shall obey."

Every deed must be a step in the pilgrimage to God

Arjuna is also called Paartha---a name applicable to all men, for, it is derived from *prithivi* (earth). It means earthly, earthborn. So, this situation is a reminder to every man on earth. If only you cultivate a deep yearning for guidance about your appropriate *Dharma*, and if only you surrender your will, your intellect, your emotions, your impulses to God, He will lead you to Himself and endow you with Supreme Bliss.

Thirdly, Arjuna was overcome by Love, though it took on the colour of egoism and delusion. He felt that it was wrong and useless to kill his kinsmen, to plunge the land in misery, to slaughter the armies ranged against him. He preferred a life sustained on alms to ruling over an empire won by the sword. This compassion, though misplaced and based on an unreal sense of values, had its own appeal, to the Lord, who resolved to transmute it into the renunciation of the attachment to the deed, and the fruits of the deed.

Every deed must take man nearer the goal; it must be a step in the pilgrimage to God. It must cleanse the emotions, correct the attitude, clarify the path and co-operate in the consummation. This has to be the constant care and vigilance of every seeker and aspirant to Bliss.

Prashanthi Nilayam, July 1970

Maayaa creates the universe; it spreads before the mind the vast paraphernalia of the objective world. It is a nartakee (dancer), an enchantress who entices the intelligence and traps the senses. This na-rtha-kee can be subdued by kee-rtha-na (mark the change of syllables). Keerthana is the concentrated contemplation of the glory of God.

Sathya Sai Baaba