

36. Heroic adventure

GOD gave this body so that you may use it to sanctify Time, through beneficial acts. Of course, man is ever anxious that he should get contentment and joy, as soon as possible with as little exertion as possible. But, he places more confidence on material comforts and material possessions, hoping that they can yield joy and content. There is no effort by him to ensure being born in good circumstances and surroundings. Goodness is natural to man; it is his nature, when it is untarnished. But, man relishes the tarnish, not the pure core. Falsehood with all its enticements is liked more than truth which wears simple clothes only.

Consider this: Milk and curds are sold in the streets by vendors who shout about the *excellence* of their ware, but, no one runs to open the door, call them in and purchase the health-giving nectar! *Toddy* and *arrack* (home brewed liquors) are sold far from the village bounds; but, yet, people tramp the distance to where they are available, pay the price with no bargaining and consume the poisonous stuff, which robs them of all dignity!

This is the tragedy! Good counsel though given with love is seldom listened to. Bad talk attracts people so much that they walk miles to listen to scandal and abuse!

Man yields to senses instead of challenging them

The essential nature of man is Divinity; his strength is that of the unconquerable spirit. But, this hero has reduced himself to a zero, and is grovelling in fear and falsehood! To achieve his nefarious plans, man is demonstrating courage and confidence. Once his mind is set on vengeance or crime, man becomes a fierce animal, ready to inflict wanton cruelties. Or the heroism is channelled into mountain climbing, deep sea diving or walking on space, or other adventurous acts.

But, the most heroic adventure of all, the conquest of the senses and of their pulls is yet beyond him. When the senses challenge him he yields, instead of challenging them in return and overpowering them. Consider only the masters of their own impulses and passions as Heroes! And, no other.

Look at Vaalmeeki. He was a brave dacoit; he was an intrepid highway robber, dreaded by all who journeyed on that road. One day, the Seven Sages happened to pass along that fateful road; they revealed to him how wicked his actions were, and painted before his mind's eye the horrors he was becoming heir to, as a result. They told him that those who now enjoyed the fruits of his robbery will not be sharers of those horrors, for, he alone was the culprit and he alone will have to suffer the punishment.

That was enough to open his eyes; he left off his evil pursuit and forsook family, profession and wealth. He retired into the jungle and plunged into the severest austerities. He became a New Hero, the hero of a new type of adventure. He became a great sage, honoured by posterity as the First Poet, the author of the Raamaayana.

He gave up *toddy* and *arrack*, that is to say, the senses and their intoxicating poisons; he developed a taste for milk and curds, the *Saathwik* (pure) virtues, mastery over himself, the victory that confers the highest and the purest Joy.

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Make your heart soft; then, success is quick in saadhana Talk soft, talk sweet, talk only of God---that is the process of softening the subsoil.

Develop compassion, sympathy; engage in service, understand the agony of poverty, disease, distress and despair; share both tears and cheers with others.

That is the way to soften the heart, and help saadhana to succeed.

Sri Sathya Sai