

16. The garden of God

MAN has to recognise his indebtedness to society and his duty towards it; this is the best way to solve the troubles of the day. Attention is paid only to arguments and counter-arguments, propositions and oppositions, plans and programmes; the aim of the egocentred is more to win a verbal victory than achieve a valid target. No attempt is made to foster the social virtues of honesty, tolerance and cordiality.

Society is the expression of Divinity into manifold phases, with its love, its ardour, its eagerness to comfort and console. A chance conglomeration of humans does not become a society. It has to be welded into a unity by the consciousness of kinship of God, by the sharing of each other's joys and sorrows, and the cultivation of *Samarasa* (empathy). The individual has to manifest through word and deed, the *Aanandha* (Divine bliss) inherent in him and in society.

Turning the beads of a rosary between the fingers or sitting erect contemplating the tip of the nose are only harmless ways of spending time; active participation in society in a spirit of dedication and surrender, conceiving all acts as acts of worship, all men as embodiments of the Supreme, is a more beneficial form of *saadhana* (spiritual discipline). For, there is no spot where He is not, no object which is not He. For, as the *Shruthi* (holy scripture) declares, He willed that He become all this! Worship, adoration, and pilgrimage cannot be the end-all! The goal is the realization of "I am He, He is I." That alone can fill the heart will Bliss.

***Dharma* fosters those who foster it**

When you separate yourself as an individual, envy, resentment, jealousy and pride start defiling you. Love alone can weld you into kinship with all. You are *Shivashakthi*---the latent-potent, positive-negative, inert-alert principle. Be ever cognisant of this secret truth about yourself.

Dhivaakarla Venkataavadhaani recited verses welcoming Me, in which he piled praise on praise. Of course, the style was sweet and the sentiment, sincere. When once you transcend the human scale, and reach out to. the Divine, the eagerness to adore will drop off. You can evoke the Divine in you by adherence to *dhama* (righteousness); that is the message of the Mahaa-bhaaratha. Weighed down by sorrow, Arjuna one day laid all the blame on his eldest brother Dharmaraaja. He said, "On account of you our dear mother is separated from us, our wife is disgraced in the open court, my only son is slaughtered by our wolfish cousins, our dynasty is forced into exile and our heritage is stolen before our very eyes." Dharmaraaja replied, "When you blame me, remember you are blaming *dharma*; no one can ever suffer through *dharma*. *Dharma* fosters those who foster it. The pain which *Dharma* inflicts is a blessing, it is a shower of joy. Since we have stuck to *Dharma* God will fight our battle and win victory for us."

To attain God, Love is enough

God is the embodiment of compassion. He watches for a grain of goodness or humility so that He can reward it with tons of Grace. In a certain temple for Shiva, the priest had silver basin with a hole in its base for water to drip continuously. He filled it with water and hung it over the *Lingam* (the idol of Shiva) so that the God who swallowed the poison which would have destroyed the Universe could be cooled and comforted! Even at night when the doors of the shrine were locked by the priest as he went home, the silver basin of water, was in its position. So, a thief broke into the sacred apartment; his eyes were on the silver: he could not reach the

rope that kept the basin in position; so, he climbed on the *Lingam* itself in order to take the costly booty down. Even as he was standing on the holy idol Shiva manifested Himself in all His glory before him, saying, "Son! I appreciate your surrender; you have cast on me your entire burden!" The thief prayed that Shiva may help him to secure the silver;-there was no ladder or bench or any other article on which he could climb. So, the *Lingam* was his only refuge..

Once a *Guru* sent a pupil for further guidance to a mendicant in a Shiva temple. When he reached the temple, he found the fellow reclining in the central shrine with both his legs resting on the sacred *Lingam*. The pupil was naturally enraged at the man's insolence; when he spoke angrily against the behaviour, the man said, "Please lift my legs and place them where the *Lingam* is not." When he did so, there was a *Lingam* under the feet in the new position. Wherever he deposited the man's legs, a *Lingam* rose to give them rest! That was the lesson the beggar taught him--God is everywhere; only win the vision to see Him so.

To attain God, feats of hard *Saadhana* are superfluous. Love is enough; avoid hating, envying or even disliking anyone. Put love into practice, through *seva* (selfless service). When the loveliness of the seed blooms, you have the flower. And God is the loveliness which blooms as mani In the Geetha the Lord has announced, "I am the Seed of all *Beings*"---"*Beejam maam sarva bhoothaanaam*." When the seed is immortality, the tree too is immortal, the flower and the fruit are immortal. When He is *rasa* (juice), sweetness and love, all His manifestations are sweet and loving. When He is light, nothing can be dark. When He is *Chaithanya*, *Chith* (Supreme, Awareness), nothing can be *Jada* (insentient), without awareness or intelligence or consciousness.

The Universe is a pleasant garden

You may pride yourselves on being God-minded and Godward-bound; but your pride proclaims that God is only on the circumference of your activity. You must be humble; you must not limit God to any particular Name and Form. How can you fix a label on God and compel Him to conform to your specifications.!' Study the emblem of the Sathya Sai Organisation; it declares that all faiths feed the heart with *aanandha*, all faiths cleanse the mind of littleness, all faiths confer courage on the weak and the vacillating.

The Universe around you is a pleasant garden full of charming patches of many-hued flowers filled with fragrance and nectarine elixir---each flower-bed being a Religion, which attracts the loyalty of millions of seekers. The garden too is God; God dances in that garden at His own handiwork, gladdening the flowers with the magic melody of the flute. Be full of joy and love; share that joy and love with all. If you utter "God, God," and inflict pain on man, you will be spumed as a cheat. You need not cry out God, God! But, if you confer joy on brother man, God will respond with His presence, though uninvited. There are, however, many in positions of authority-and influence who adore God and, at the same time, abhor mani They behave as if their God is a person of very limited intelligence who-can be easily deceived, who will. take their words at their face value and never look behind them for the motive and the. intention.

Believe that God resides in all beings; speak such words, as would spread goodness, truth and beauty; do such acts as would promote the happiness and prosperity of all; pray that. all worlds have peace. Expand yourselves; do not contract into your own tiny individuality. Expand into Universal love, unshaken equanimity, and ever-active virtue. That is the Path which will bring out the Divinity in you to the fullest.

Hyderabad, April, 1973

Swaami is always with you, in you and around you. When all differences are eradicated and devotees in Sai Organisations conduct themselves with selfless devotion, you will all realise that Swaami and you are one.

Sri Sathya Sai