

12. Why I love villages most

THE Sun is not the only gift that has dawned on this village this day; *Aanandha* (divine bliss) too has dawned. For, I have come to make you aware of the *Aanandha* you are. *Aanandha* is the home from which you have strayed away! It is your place of Nativity. You seek your home elsewhere and so, you are afflicted by distress and disappointment. Know that *Aanandha* is your Nature, your sustenance, and your goal.

Villages are the places where this knowledge comes easier to man, and takes deeper roots. That is the reason I love villages most. For, the virtues of detachment, uprightness, honesty, and sincerity which are essential prerequisites for acquiring this awareness are surviving, in however attenuated a form, only in villages this day. They have disappeared from towns long ago. Of course, you have your troubles and handicaps; but, certainly, you have less obstacles to overcome, when you decide to lead the good life and attain the awareness of your Divinity.

Man's body is essentially the receptacle of God

Why is man-afflicted today with fear and anxiety? Are we to search for the reasons outside us or do they lie with us? The reason lies in the false emphasis we have laid on things of the material world, ignoring things of the spirit. The body that man bears is essentially the receptacle of God. It is a temple, where God is installed and where God is the Master. It does not deserve all the attention you now pay to fulfil its urges, needs and whims. It is equipped with very valuable instruments which can help you in the journey; but you seldom use them! The senses bring you impressions from the outside world, but, you do not evaluate these impressions by the touchstone of a clear reason or a balanced mind. You do not proceed from one step to another in the march towards the elimination of the ego and the emergence in to the One. City-dwellers are buffeted by storms of passion and emotion, and they are hunted or haunted by phantom desires and wild imaginings. They have neither the inclination nor the insight to dedicate their time, their skills and their activity to Divine ends.

The Divine is the core, the essence of your being. God is everywhere; when He is recognised and adored as the Indweller of your body, it becomes a Temple, and it is no more a burden. God is shining, announcing Himself through you; He is expressing Himself through every thought, word and deed that emanates from you.

Go deeper within, where the treasure is stored

In the temple that is built and put together, we have an idol that is sculpted and moulded by man. But, in this temple that is gifted by God, God shines in His own Light, and manifests in His own Glory as Love, Power and Wisdom. He shines and manifests thus not only in a single body, but, in all bodies. He is the Indweller in each; so, when you insult, injure or inflict infamy on another, remember you are inviting the pain to visit your own self, for, the other is none other than your own self.

Seek the gem of Divine Knowledge within you, just as precious stones have to be sought in the bowels of the earth. Now, what you seek is trivial trash. Go deeper, where the treasure is stored. I know you have, in this village, as in most villages, a big chariot festival, when the replica of the 'Installed Idol' the processional *Form*, is taken round the entire village with great pomp and paraphernalia. The wheeled chariot or the palanquin is decorated with reverent attention; bands of musicians and dancers are engaged to precede the chariot; many come to the festival to admire

the decoration of the chariot; more are interested in the songs and dances, the songsters and the dancers; only a handful are drawn by the idol which is the central figure of all the gaiety and adoration.

The human body too is a temple chariot; the *Aathma* (divinity) is installed therein; and it is dragged by emotions, impulses, passions and urges along the streets of desire. Success and failure, joy and grief, gain and loss, are the dancers who accompany this procession of Life. Here, too, many pour their attention only on the chariot, its height, its decoration and its progress. Many others are concerned with the dance of dualities, the pain-pleasure duet, that is part of the procession. Few pay attention to the *Aathma*, the Crown and Consummation of human existence.

Develop the habit of listening to the Inner Voice

But, sages and saints have known that the most noteworthy achievement of the senses of man is the glorification of the God within. "They are not eyes, they are but globules of glass, that do not earn a vision of God," says one. "They are not ears, they are but muscular protrusions that do not relish the praise of God," says another. Suurdhaas condemns the hand that does not worship God and calls such hands, sucks of wood. The world and Its attractions may appeal to your instincts and impulse but, God draws out your Love, as no worldly thing can. Develop the inner Vision, the habit of listening to the inner Voice, and you are assured of unshakeable peace and infinite joy.

In the village, you are ever in contact with God, His Grace, His tenderness and His Love. In the cities, life is more superficial. You may not have the benefit of the radio or the electric current; but, you can hear the birds sing at Sunrise and you can bask in the bright Sun underneath the pure blue sky. When you get the twin gifts of medical care and schooling facilities, you need nothing more for marching onwards to happiness and peace. But, I find that in several villages, the behaviour of some one person or some one family disrupts life and breeds fear, faction and fighting. This can be cured only by the potent drug called Love. The forces of brotherhood, mutual help and sympathetic understanding have to overpower the sinister influence of these individuals and promote unity and strength.

Heart and spirit of man have to be fed and fostered

Many leaders of this country are promising to provide a quantity of food, some kind of dwelling, and a few yards of clothing to everyone so that people may be happy. They also promise to each sufficient schooling so that they may write and read letters, and grasp the news from the papers. But, these cannot ensure peace, for, man is not merely a bundle of bones and muscles; he is equipped with a heart and a spirit and these have also to be fed and fostered.

Men may have superabundance of food, clothing and houses; but, their hearts may be dry and their spirits gloomy. Sense-control, self-confidence, contentment, absence of hatred and greed--- these are far more precious as possessions than land, money, or houses. The Seva Samithi that has been started in your village, with its subsidiary units of Mahila Vibhaag, and Baala Vikaas (all Sai Organisations) will sow the seeds of these disciplines and promote peace and happiness.

Above all, cultivate unity and brotherhood. A single fibre of hemp cannot bind even an ant; thousands rolled into a rope can tame a wild elephant into quiet submission. In unity lies strength and prosperity. Unity in the villages can usher in a new era of joy and prosperity in the entire nation.

Make the temple of Vinaayaka inaugurated today the hub of this new movement. The temple is to the village, as the heart is to the body. You have all joined to build it and bring it into being; continue to reap its benefits together and to share its light together. With the Grace of God, what seems impossible can be achieved quite easily. All are children of God; do not injure anyone, for, that injury will react on you quite soon. You reap as you sow; you cannot grow a fruit-tree when the seed you have planted is that of a weed.

Time spent on thoughts of God is rewarded

There are some ignorant persons who laugh at *bhajans* and other acts of worship and characterise them as waste of valuable time! These persons might laugh at your pouring bags of paddy seeds on slushy fields and condemn that act too as waste of valuable food material! But, you know that for every bag of seed, Mother Earth will give back, in a few weeks, grain tenfold or even twentyfold. Time spent in thoughts of God or adoration of the Divine is indeed well-spent, for, it rewards you with a rich harvest of mental peace and courage.

When thieves attack the neighbour, you become alert and keep vigil; you feel that it may be your turn next. So you must see that thieves do not enter the village. For, then, all can be safe and secure. Your neighbour's loss is as much your own. Do not inflame your anger and blow it into a conflagration which may destroy the entire village. Be cool, calm yourself. Take a glass of cold water and lie down quiet for a while, till the fury loses its heat. Do not fly into a passion and throw vulgar abuse at the person you dislike, And be careful; do not indulge in behaviours and start imitating them before your children; for, they will learn these behaviours and start imitating. You cannot easily correct them later.

Make all efforts to remove evil from your heart

Goodness is Godliness. Never talk ill of others; spend your time in showering love and in mutual help. Wake up early and sing the glory of God in group *bhajan* moving along the roads and cleansing the atmosphere, polluted by anger and hatred. Let the air you breathe be free from evil vibrations. When you mention the sky you point your finger upwards, to indicate that it is there. But the sky is here also. It is one of the five elements, the *Panchabhuthaas*. Its sign and symbol is sound; wherever sound is, there, we can infer, is the sky. There is an inner sky also, the *Aakaasha* in the Heart. Just as the Sun and Moon in the outer sky are hidden by thick masses of cloud, the Sun (Intellect) and Moon (Mind) in the inner sky are also hidden and suppressed by thick clouds of vice and evil. So, make all efforts to remove these clouds, by the strong gale of Devotion to God.

When you cook any item of food, in a copper vessel, however fresh and fine the vegetables are, however clean the *dhaal* (lentils) and salt, however free from grit and dirt the tamarind fruits, if the vessel has no lining of tin, the food made therein will turn into poisonous stuff. You all know this truth. The heart too is a copper vessel where you prepare various types of food for yourself and others. See that it has a good lining of Love; or else, it too will cause harm and pain, to you and the rest.

Conquer anger by means of fortitude

Love...Love...Love...First...Love, as long as Life lasts. For Myself, I can say, I shower more blessings on those who decry or defame Me than those who worship and adore Me! For, those who spread falsehoods about Me derive joy therefrom; I am happy that I am the cause for their exultation and joy. You too must accept this line of argument and be very happy when someone

derives joy by defaming you. Do not respond by defaming that person; then, the chain of hatred will bind both and drag both down. Life will become a tragedy. Conquer anger by means of fortitude; conquer hatred by love. Do not feed anger with retaliation; do not feed hatred with fury.

Forget and forgive all that has happened amongst you until this very moment; start a new chapter of Love and Brotherhood from now on. The Professors and the students of the Sri Sathya Sai College are ready and eager to come to your help, whenever you need it. Some young men from this village are students of this College; when they come home, you must remind them of the ideals of service and reverence that we are instilling into them. The College is trying to help them not only to earn a University degree but also to become skilled and enthusiastic servants of the weak and the disabled, and efficient citizens of the nation. They should not behave like the half-educated haughty youth, who wander the streets with a transistor on their shoulders, pursuing the vanities of the world and running into debt and dissoluteness. They should preserve and develop their ancestral patrimony; (not only land and riches; also, heritage and culture); they should be assets to their parents, the society and the nation. They should not exploit the innocence and ignorance of the very parents who have sacrificed their everything in order to send in them to college and maintain them hostels. Send your sons to the College; there they can learn to escape these temptations and to be useful and efficient for the task of preserving Indian culture and spirituality. Encourage your sons to realise the meaning of My Mission and to become fit instruments for spreading, by the example of their lives, the Message which I have come to give mankind.

Panathur Village, 28-4-1975

Illness is caused more by malnutrition of the mind than of the body. Doctors speak of vitamin deficiency; I will call it the deficiency of Vitamin G, and I will recommend the repetition of the Name of God, with accompanying contemplation of the glory and grace of God. That is the Vitamin G. That is the medicine.

Regulated life and habits are two-thirds of the treatment, while the medicine is just one-third only.

Sri Sathya Sai