

42. The Kingdom

STUDENTS, Embodiments of the Divine *Aathman* and supporters and promoters of education! This *Kaliyuga* offers more facilities for liberation than any previous one, for education is much more widespread now. There are educational institutions in the farthest corners of every land, but it is a pity that peace of mind has become very rare. Why has peace remained out of reach in spite of the plethora of gadgets and contrivances that offer man comfort and pleasure?

The fault lies in human conduct, which runs along evil lines. When man thinks, speaks and acts along virtuous lines, his conscience will be clean and he will have inner peace. Knowledge is power, it is said; but virtue is peace. The world reveres, even today, great men and women who have lived exemplary lives of virtue. Jesus, Muhammad, Zoroaster, Buddha, Shankaraacharya, Madhavaacharya, Raamanujaa-chaarya and others were able to command the loyalty and adoration of people solely on account of the purity of their conduct and actions. They have become immortal residents in the heart of mankind. Scholarship cannot confer this high historic ascendancy. Mastery of books may help you to expound or exhibit dialectical skill, but what really is the width and depth of your experience? And just examine how conceited you have become! Man must saturate his daily life in truthful speech, virtuous acts and holy thoughts.

Never pollute your speech with falsehood

Education must equip you with a discrimination sharp enough to discover these virtues. You must know what truth is and develop love and loyalty to it. And remember, acts of virtue grow out of overcoming of selfish desire or *thyaaga* (selfless sacrifice). You must keep high ideals before you and be prepared to sacrifice even your lives to achieve them. Never pollute your speech with falsehood; never poison your thoughts with hatred and greed; never degrade your body with violence in any form.

It is tragic that not even a small fraction of the student community values these ideals and endeavours to realise them. We have in this country plenty of scientists, scholars, spiritual teachers and seasoned politicians. But of what avail? They work at cross-purposes, each one unconcerned with the rest. One scientist is the rival of another; one scholar is at logger-heads with another expert in the same field. And of politicians, the less said the better. When this vice of disunity rules, peace and prosperity can never be established in the country in spite of all the progress in technology, scholarship and spiritual exposition. They can be developed only when mutual cooperation, friendly feelings, love and compassion grow in man's heart. The world can shine fresh and fair, green and grand with festoons and flags on every doorstep, only when these qualities are fostered by man.

Mainspring of all faults of man is egoism

Today there is a great need for every one to dwell upon the axioms that Dharmaraaja, the eldest of the Paandava brothers, kept before himself. When Krishna asked him one day where his brothers were, he replied, "Some of them are in Hasthinaapura city and the others in the forest." Krishna was visibly surprised, He said, "Dharmaraaja! What has happened to your brains? All of you, the five brothers, are here in the forest as you know. None is in the city of Hasthinaapura!" Dharmaraaja replied, "Pardon me, Lord! We are 105 brothers in all." Krishna pretended that the statement was wrong. He recounted the names of the five and queried the reason why he added a hundred more. "My father's sons are five; his brother, the blind Dhritharaashtra has a hundred

sons. When we fight with them, we are five and they hundred. But when we don't, we are a hundred and five."

Thus when hatred and greed end in fighting, brotherhood is broken and hearts drift apart. Today this fractionalisation is evident in every field, including even our *samithis* (organisational units)! As a natural result, anger, envy, faction and friction are fast increasing.

This is the reason why students have to uproot these evil tendencies from their minds. The mainspring of all these faults is egoism, the belief that the little self has to be satisfied at all costs. I derive much *aanandha* watching wild animals in their own habitat. Their movements, their relations with others of their kind and their free uninhibited lives are very attractive to behold. They do not bewail at the health and happiness of other animals. They do not grieve, lamenting their misfortune, comparing their fate with that of other denizens of the forest. They do not clamour for fame. They do not plan and prepare to earn positions of power and authority over other animals. They are not eager to accumulate possessions that are superfluous. When we consider these traits, we are led to conclude that they are leading lives of a higher grade than man.

Greed is the seed-bed of grief

Man has the extra qualifications of education, moral sense, and the capacity to judge and discriminate. But he is still caught in the coils of greed, and greed is the seed-bed of grief. Education today promotes greed instead of paralysing it. The aim is to earn more monetary income. So the struggle is directed to the acquisition of degrees which bring higher salaries. The learned man is anxious to exploit society, to pilfer from society by means fair or foul. He is not eager to give to society, to benefit society. He is concerned with what he can get from society, not with what he can give to it.

Boys from the villages are ungrateful to their parents who have bartered their own wealth and comfort to give them an education. As soon as they secure a degree (which is at best a convenient beggar's bowl), they flee to the cities and accept a job there for a pittance. They settle in the cities, neglecting their parents and treating their hereditary professions with contempt. But their lives in cities are not any smoother; they are led into wasteful and damaging habits until they pine for peace and joy. Instead they should remain in the villages where they first saw the light of day and dedicate the skills they have acquired to the service of its inhabitants. This is their real task.

They are weaklings who revel in imitation

I know that is very difficult for students to overcome the banal influence of society and of the elders; they do not come across inspiring examples to follow. But old students of the Sathya Sai Colleges must enter the world fully equipped with courage, compassion and inner peace and render selfless service to the people. Be vigilant always that you do not deviate from the ideals marked out by Me. Participate in all activities, armed with humility, a sense of honour and the skills needed to triumph. Distinguish yourselves in the moral, ethical, spiritual and material fields. Do not extinguish yourselves as soon as you proceed out of the Brindhavan campus. So long as you are within the area, your style of dress and your manners, your character and conduct are different from what they become when you pass out. This relapse into the old baser levels, reveals a fundamental flaw in character. Such persons can be written off, for they are of no help

to anyone. Instead they are a burden on society. They are weaklings who revel in imitation. Heroes are those who rely on their eyes and ears and value their own national heritage.

You have resided in Brindhaavan for five, seven or nine years, and experienced maternal love more intense than what a thousand mothers can offer you. If you go out of Brindhaavan and adopt the behaviour patterns and life-styles considered fashionable by the outside world, how can you be considered an 'old student' of this college? "He who chops the nose of his mother, can pluck the nose of his aunt as a flower from its stalk," says the proverb. When you commit treason against God so freely, how can you be expected to honour human rules of conduct? I desire that, at least from now, you steadily develop noble thoughts, holy feelings and selfless actions, and maintain the fair name of your college.

Whoever hurts the society is a traitor

Students occupy the role of the heart in the physiology of the social organisation. Whoever hurts the society in which he dwells or brings disrepute to it, is a traitor. Whichever position you occupy and wherever you reside, you must draw on yourself the admiration of others by your humility, discipline and manners, and by the simplicity of your dress and sweet speech. If you parade your transformation by the style of your tie and pants, by your long hair and moustache, how can you claim to be an old student of a Sathya Sai College? Your dress itself will proclaim that you are not. Prove that you are true heroes, true servants of the poor and the distressed and recipients of true education.

Of course I am warning you against falling into wrong ways of living. One day Pandith Madhan Mohan Maalaviya shaved off his thick overhanging moustache and, with a clean face, went to an old friend and shocked him into the question, "Sir, why this transformation today?" The reply was, "I cultivated the impressive moustache out of pride that I was a man, but I realised that I could not relieve the misery of a single fellow-being. So I felt I could not justify the moustache any longer." The manifestation of manliness comes about by involving ourselves in social service and reducing the pain and poverty of human beings like ourselves. Allow yourselves to be judged not by your dress or the growth of beard, but by your motives and actions and your progress along the path of practising the ideals implanted in you by Sai.

Be vigilant that you do not slide into wrong

Do not seek to secure jobs in order to earn a high income. Wherever you are, be vigilant that you do not slide into wrong. Money comes and goes; morality comes and grows! Amassing money is easy; no one is to be appreciated for that. It can be accumulated through cruel or unjust means, through falsehood and blackmail. Only beggars are prompted by the urge, to gather riches. Study and earn knowledge in order to rescue the world from decadence, to develop peace and joy throughout all levels of society and to add your mite to the prosperity of the state. The members of the kingdom of Sathya Sai must follow those ideals and spread them throughout the world. So, as you claim to belong to the Kingdom of Sathya Sai, you have the special task of propagating the ideals of Sai by your precept and example. Direct your lives as citizens of the Kingdom of Sathya Sai. Let the Name be your guide and your goal.

Thyaagaraaja lived up to his name. When the ruler offered him gifts of precious gemstones, houses and land, he spurned them, declaring, "My heart is laid at the Feet of Raama. You cannot secure it in exchange for this trash." *Raamaraajya* has become a word charged with sanctity

because Raama's Kingdom was the home of righteousness, justice and peace. You have a great responsibility because you have named your association the 'Kingdom of Sathya Sai.'

Some old students of the college are worried because when they come to Brindhaavan later I do not speak to them or cast even a glance at them. The reason is they are not even identifiable as students who were in this college for five or seven years. Good thoughts, words and deeds have not taken root in them. Your action produces the reaction. Sai only reflects your mind. He has no prejudice or preference. He is a mirror wherein you can see yourselves as you really are. In order to correct their mistakes and remove your faults, I have sometimes to use harsh words; but you may rest assured that My sole aim is to turn you to better ways. I have no anger in Me. It is the inner compassion which takes the outer form of anger. I have caused these colleges and hostels to be constructed and lakhs of rupees to be spent every year in the hope that at least a few among the students who join them will follow the ideals I set before them. Listen to that call and let it reverberate in your hearts every moment of your lives.

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Nivriithi (detachment) confers fearlessness, even while you accept a little of it. It gives strength and courage, for, it is desire that weakens man and makes him cringe before those in authority and with influence. Detachment endows you with self-respect, and the capacity to stand up to slander and calumny.

Sri Sathya Sai