

13. Sacred role of mothers

EMBODIMENTS of Divine Love! All that you see, hear, think and do are due to the power of *Brahman* (the Absolute). The feeling that you are the doer and the possessor is the source of all troubles. It is only when man realises that everything is permeated by the Divine that he will be able to experience the Divine bliss. The phenomenal world enables man to participate in mundane activities related to the physical, the social and the natural. But human life should not be confined to these alone. The sensory life is based on the inner life. Life and the world are like two sides. The world is external and life is internal. The phenomenal universe is based on the inner subtle entity.

The phenomenal cosmos is a vast, boundless mansion. But every mansion has to stand on an appropriate foundation. Without a strong foundation, the mansion will collapse. For the vast physical, gross and mighty mansion of the world, the subtle, infinite and powerful mind is the foundation. Consequently, man can be powerful only to the extent his mind is powerful. Society benefits equally from the powers of man's mind. Not is that all. The entire human race benefits thereby. There is thus the interdependence of man, society and humanity for their security.

Without the mind, one ceases to be a man

When the mind is good, man can divinise himself. Only the one endowed with a mind can be called a man. Without the mind, one ceases to be a man. It is only when the subtle, invisible, inner base of the mind is in a proper condition that a being that has donned the human form can attain his true state.

In the world to-day various changes are taking place. There is no shortage of wealth and property. Not is there any dearth of amenities for comfortable living. There is no lack of facilities for entertainment or recreation. Nevertheless, modern man is oppressed by frustration, depression and disappointment. What is the reason? It is the failure to use the divine power of the mind properly that accounts for the frustration and the lack of peace of man to-day. The differences between man and man are growing continuously. These differences lead to disastrous conflicts.

Hence, the first requisite is to strive for the proper use of the powers of the mind. The mind of man today is that of an intoxicated person because his mind is giving free rein to the senses.

The world today is filled with two kinds of intoxication. One is intoxication arising from wealth. The other is the intoxication of power. These two are not different from each other. They are like the two parts of a seed. Through wealth one secures positions of power and power is used to acquire wealth. Man's life today is based on these two- power and pelf. Man's conceit grows beyond bounds even when he has only one of these two. The stare of those who have both needs no description. Forgetting humanness, cherishing animal qualities, man develops a demonic nature. Man today makes no efforts to realise the greatness and power of the mind. Instead, he is submerged in worldly activities and wastes his life.

Education should serve to refine man's nature

Man's heart, which ought to be filled with compassion that is natural to it, is today full of cruelty and bitterness. Education, which should serve to refine man's nature and make him a hero, is failing in its purpose because in his conduct man is a zero. An education which does not develop humanness is an utter waste. The educational system should ensure that along with knowledge

right conduct is also developed. Raavana and Dhuryodhana achieved unrivalled eminence in scholarship. But it was of no avail because of their polluted minds. They ceased to be human. True education should produce a blossoming of human qualities. It should not be merely for earning a living, but should result in a ripening of the heart, filling it with love.

*What happiness can one achieve
if all his education makes him concerned
Only about filling his stomach
and makes him forget the Supreme Lord?*

The goal of human life should be, to strive for that which will give enduring happiness and not transient pleasures. The yearning for this sacred goal should be developed while one is still, young and has a pure, untainted, innocent mind. Of what use is all your book knowledge if you have not learnt to lift your hands in prayer to God? You salute persons of no account for selfish reasons.

What is in a name given to the physical body?

People should cultivate faith in the Divine. It is the duty of parents to imbue their children with faith in God from childhood. Here is a story to illustrate this need:

Rithudhvaja and Madhaalasa were a pious couple with intense faith in God. Madhaalasa was a woman of noble character. She excelled every one in virtue, wisdom and sacrifice. She was the embodiment of holiness. The couple had a son, to whom the father wanted to give a name that would be in accordance with his Kshatriya lineage. After considerable cogitation, he gave the boy the name Vikraanth. Madhaalasa burst into laughter when she heard the name. She was unhappy over the excessive interest taken by the king in naming the child. She felt that some name should be given for the physical body for worldly purposes. But to show excessive interest in it was meaningless. Later a second son was born, who was named Subaahu (which meant one with fine arms). Madhaalasa again laughed at the naming of the child. The king felt insulted by Madhaalasa's behaviour. Sometime later a third son was born. Rithudhvaja told Madhaalasa: "You don't like the names given by me for our sons. You better name the third son yourself."

A name has to be given to anyone in the world as a mark of identity. In keeping with this need, Madhaalasa named the son, Alarka. The king was angry on hearing the name. He burst forth: "Is this the name that should be given to the scion of a royal family, a warrior's son and belonging to a line of courageous Kshatriyas? What a shame! I will not call him by this name."

No names are given for the *Aathma*

Alarka means a mad dog. The king asked: Is my son to be called a mad dog? Madhaalasa approached the king and said: "A person who does not know his real nature, who has no awareness of his divinity and who does not know his oneness with the Divine is worse than a mad dog. What value should be attached to the names of persons who have not recognised their true nature? What significance can names have for foolish persons who are not aware of the oneness of the universe and who do not contemplate on divinity? The body is human in form. But they are not mere men at all. They are the embodiments of the *Aathma*, the Formless and Attributeless Self. They are pure and unsullied. It is sheer ignorance to give names to the

Aathma." In view of this belief, Madhaalasa started teaching her children from an early age their essential spiritual nature and their inherent divinity

Today, the mothers are responsible for the good or bad behaviour of their children. It is a matter for shame for any mother to say "My son will not heed my words." If the mother had brought up the son on right lines from the beginning, he would not behave like this. The snake-gourd has to be made to grow straight by tying a stone to it from its tender stage. Likewise, the stone of discipline and devotion should be attached to a boy from his infancy. Mothers experience the disobedience of their children because of their failure to inculcate discipline in the early years. Madhaalasa began teaching her sons from their childhood in this manner: "Child, you are not a son not am I a mother. Both of us are manifestations of *Sath-Chith-Aanandha*. We are like the waves on an ocean, not different from each other. All have arisen from the ocean of *Sath-Chith-Aanandha*. It is folly to think otherwise."

Placing the children in the cradle of *Omkaara* on the cushion of *Thathvam Asi*, Madhaalasa named the child, Erotica (Awareness, *Aathma*, *Prajna* or *Brahman*) and called upon all the *Dhevas* to swing the cradle.

To be a true human being respect your parents

In this manner, the mothers of ancient times taught the truth about their divinity to the children and made them aware of their true nature. Thus the sacred stories of Bhaarath were taught to the children, who learnt to respect their parents and elders. If one does not respect his parents and revere his preceptor, can he be termed a human being? To be a true human being one has to respect his parents and kith and kin in childhood, revere the teacher in boyhood, please elders in his manhood, and worship sages in old age. Ignoring these duties, youth today are running wild. They should realise the preciousness of human life as Thulasidhas described it. At the outset, mothers should teach the children the immense value of human life. Alas! They themselves do not know its value. How are they going to teach others? Hence, the parents themselves should learn the value of human life. They should have faith in the divinity of human life.

Today, because fear of sin and love for God have become rare, morality in society is absent. Even when people seem to offer *Namaskaar* (salutation with folded hands), it does not stem from the heart and is only an artificial gesture. How long can such artificial expressions sustain a man? What is needed is a pure mind, filled with sublime thoughts. It should be selfless. When the mind is selfish, the man becomes selfish. A man with a polluted mind displays vicious looks. His speech and actions are impure. If the heart is pure, everything else will be pure.

Aathma is like a flame in the body

The *Aathma* is like a flame in the body. When it is covered by the ten senses, its light filters through holes, as it were. And when it is covered, in addition, with the blanket of *Abhimaana* (attachment to worldly objects), the effulgence of the *Aathma* (Divine Self) is not visible. When attachment is given up and the body consciousness goes, the Self is revealed in all its brightness.

King Vikramaadithya once encountered a *Brahmana* who had been repeating mantras and performing *yaagas* for years to get a vision of God. Vikramaadithya prayed with all his heart for one brief moment and had the vision of God. The Lord told Vikramaadithya that God does not respond to mere mechanical repetition of *mantras* or performance of rituals. "I respond to the call of a sincere devotee even when he says Maadhava only once with a pure heart."

The rituals done by people without feelings from the heart are dry and lifeless. They are like the mirage in a desert where you see water but it cannot quench your thirst. Even while singing *Bhajans*, you should utter the names from the depth of the heart, not concentrating on *Raaga* and *Thaala* (Tune and Beat).

A young student, who had spoken earlier, referred to Shirdi Sai taking two rupees from devotees. The two rupees represented faith and devotion. When both join, it can grow into a big tree and yield the fruit of Divine Grace.

Today is observed as Children's Day all over the world. Parents should not hesitate to correct the children when they go wrong. Here is an episode from the Raamaayana which illustrates how a devotee who seeks nothing but the love of God is rewarded by the Lord in ample measure.

How Raama rewarded His devotee

Raama was giving away all his possessions before leaving for the forest. An aged *Brahmana*, who was staggering on his feet, came to Raama seeking His *dharshan*. When Raama asked him what he wanted, he replied that he didn't want anything and he came only to have a look at Raama as he was not sure he would live till Raama returned from the forest after 14 years. Raama was so much moved by the pure heart of the Brahmana that he insisted that the old man should receive some gift from him. Submitting to Raama's will, the *Brahmana* agreed to receive the gift. Raama then asked the Brahmana to throw a stick as far as he could. All the land covered by the place where the stick landed would be his. The old *Brahmana* said: "Though I have no desire I have to obey the command of my king." He threw the stick chanting the name of Raama. It covered a large area, which Raama gifted to the *Brahmana*. The *Brahmana*, whose name was Thrijata, said: "Oh Raama, why should I have this land? *My gathi* (fate), *sthithi* (position), *mathi* (mind) and *sampathi* (wealth) are all yours only. That is why I came to see you." Raama said, "Such persons as you are the pride of our society."

To-day, in the *Kali Yuga*, it is extremely rare to find such persons. Selfishness and greed are rampant everywhere. Parents have a duty to shape their children as ideal sons of the nation. Students who have acquired proximity with Sai should develop more and more spiritual wisdom. Get rid of negative thoughts first. Then try to develop good thoughts. You are living in Svaami's *Aashram*. How far are you following the code of conduct relating to *Aashram* life? There is no use in keeping only the body in the *Aashram*, and letting the mind roam elsewhere. You should have only *Dhaiva Chinthana* (thoughts of God) in your heart.

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Service without idea of self is the very first step in the spiritual progress of man.

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