

2. Learning a lesson from a child

The farmer has no fear of going without food;

One who chants the Lord's name has no fear of worries;

The silent man has no fear of discord;

The careful man has no fear of danger.

EMBODIMENTS of Love! The hard-working farmer has no fear of starvation. The one who chants the name of God has no fear of worldly worries. The man of few words will be free from enmity. Through excessive talk man falls a prey to quarrels. Everyone should cultivate moderation in speech. Restraint in speech is conducive to friendly feelings. The one who is careful in his behaviour, doing all actions after due deliberation, will have no fear of danger.

All these precepts are related to education. True education consists in knowing how to lead a peaceful life. This means that in embarking on one's educational career, one should aspire for world peace. The reason is, he is a part of the world community. His well-being is intimately bound up with the well-being of the world. He should give up all narrow feelings. Students have also got to acquire unity and fellowship.

All these qualities cannot be taught by teachers. For every individual, Nature is the best teacher. Nature is teaching all lessons to man all the time.

The supreme virtue in a man

What lends beauty to sports and games is the spirit of unity with which the participants play in them, eschewing feelings of envy and hatred. The supreme virtue in a man is to forget his individual differences with others and move with them in a spirit of equality and harmony.

Today people derive only physical fitness and strength from taking part in sports and games. But man is not the body alone. Fulfillment in life is not attained by physical health and strength alone. Even when the stomach is full, the mind must get satisfaction. Hence, efforts should be made to promote mental health also. Only when both the mind and the body are hale and well can one experience happiness. However, young people today are concerned only about physical appearance and fitness.

Man is endowed by Divine grace with physical, mental and spiritual potencies of many kinds. Unfortunately young people tend to misuse these powers and come to grief. They do not recognise the magnitude of their internal powers. The mind is the source of all powers. Only when the mind is subdued can man realise the Divine.

Use and abuse of energies present in man

For achieving anything, strong determination is necessary. Young people in particular should take note of the powers in them. It is comparable to a kind of electrical energy. This energy enables them to see things through the eye (which is like a bulb). You must ensure that your vision is pure, sacred and pleasing. Do not taint or pollute your sight by looking at undesirable objects. Do not look at anything with bad thoughts. The eyes are spoiled by misuse.

Then you have circulating in the entire body a magnetic energy. Although this energy is present throughout the body, its presence is conspicuous in the hand. Hence the hands should be employed for good purposes. They should not be used for doing harm to others or hurting them.

Moreover, there are in the body rays emitting light. The electrical energy in the body serves to transmit these rays throughout the body like radio waves. People do not use these energies for right purposes. The ears listen to gossip, slander and evil talk. The result is that the power of hearing gets polluted.

Then, you have the power of speech. This power finds expression in sound waves. This power has to be used with great care. The words one utters should be examined to see that they do not excite, irritate or anger others. Bad words come back to the speaker with double strength. Hence one's speech should be soft and sweet.

The major weakness of young people is the tendency to misuse their boundless potencies. This degrades them as human beings.

Young people, failing to exercise control over their actions, tend to become unruly and ungovernable. You may be great scholars or intellectual giants. There are many Nobel Laureates. How many remember them? But the great benefactors of mankind, the men of noble qualities, are cherished by all mankind. For instance, there is the example of a noble soul from Calcutta. Calcutta produced many great intellectuals. After a time they are not remembered at all. But if today Raamakrishna Paramahansa, an illiterate person, is enshrined in the hearts of millions all over the world, is education responsible for it? Likewise, if many noble persons are enshrined in the hearts of people, what is the reason? They have earned their good name by their faith in God, their character, magnanimity and spirit of sacrifice. God has been the prime factor in their lives.

A child's faith in God

The other day you witnessed in the sports festival a young child dancing as Krishna on the hood of a serpent. Owing to the firing of some crackers, the cloth on a platform where the child was dancing caught fire. As the flames rose, the police, the students and others rushed to the spot with buckets of water to put out the fire. There was great commotion. But the child Krishna went on with his dance, totally indifferent to what was happening all around. His entire concentration was on the role he was playing. The child went on with the dance with his concentration on Svaami. His eyes were centred on Svaami. When one's look is centred on the Lord, nothing untoward can happen. All around the child, the decorations had been prepared with paper. Behind the decorations five hundred children were seated. What disaster might have happened if the fire had spread towards them? But, even a mountain of danger will melt away like ice if one's thoughts are centred on God. This means that together with concern for worldly things, there should be devotion to God. Together with education *Samskaara* (refinement of character) is essential.

What is meant by *Samskaara*? "*Samyak Krithi ithi Samskaara*" (Refinement of action is culture). The true implication of the benediction, "*Lokaas-Samasthaas-Sukhino-Bhavanthu*" is not properly understood. "All should be happy." This is the assurance of the Divine.

Valmeeki, Vyaasa and Pothana

How did a highwayman like Rathnaakara become the immortal author of the great epic Raamaayana? By continuous chanting of the name of the lord, as taught to him by the *Saptharishis* (seven great sages), his face acquired a new effulgence and he could become the sage Valmeeki, who is immortalized as the author of the Raamaayana. He composed his work to please the Lord. He did everything in a spirit of dedication to the Lord.

Take the case of Sage Vyaasa. He was the author of eighteen *puraanas* (ancient spiritual epics). He wrote the Mahaabhaaratha and many other great works. But it was only when he was filled with divine fervour and wrote the Bhaagavatham that he became enshrined in the hearts of the people. Valmeeki and Vyaasa have become immortal through their devotion.

We have Pothana, the author of the Thelugu Bhaagavatham. He began writing his Bhagavatham with an invocation in which he declared: "What is being composed is Bhaagavatham. The one who inspires the writer is Raamachandhra. What is written by me will be redemptive. I shall write, as there is no greater story to tell." Pothana began composing his magnum opus with the feeling that everything he was doing was by the will of Shri Raama. So, when you think of Bhaagavatham, you are reminded of Pothana. By his great work he has installed himself in the hearts of the devout.

Mind should be directed towards God

Students should not end with mastery of books. The hearts should be filled with right knowledge. The students should see that the darkness which envelops the mind is dispelled. This was the prayer which the gopikas requested Uddhava to convey to Krishna: "Oh Krishna! Dispel the darkness in our hearts and fill them with your effulgence. Pour your love on the parched fields of our hearts so that devotion may sprout from them."

The gopikas and gopalas prayed to Krishna that they could not live apart from Him that therefore they should be endowed with forms related to whatever forms He took so that they could stay with Him. Separation from God is the cause of men's wallowing in sensuous pleasures. The mind is the cause of man's pleasure and pain. It should be directed towards God to secure freedom from pleasure and pain.

God will not give up devotees

People today speak about God having forgotten man. This is not true. God can never give up the devotee. It is the devotee who gives up God. God can never forget the devotee. It is the devotee who forgets God. God is never away from you. Only the devotee is away from God. You think that God is moving away from you. Not at all. You forget God and declare that God has forgotten you. Your own feelings are reflected in your utterances. What is the result of education? You find that in any conference, the members criticize one another in unspeakable terms. The critics are invariably petty-minded persons. Many leaders today indulge in mutual mud slinging, which is totally unbecoming. Indulging in abuse of others is a grievous sin. Develop your own good qualities and share them with others. That is the right way. Try to correct yourself rather than to criticize others.

Most young people today indulge in slander, instead of cultivating qualities like devotion to God, service to society and sympathy for fellow-beings. They should realise that they have to lead exemplary lives and serve their fellowmen. Every individual should dedicate himself to social service.

The spirit of sportsmanship which you display in sports and games should be displayed in other fields also. The determination displayed in sports should also be shown in the game of life.

You young people have to learn many things. First and foremost, get rid of *Ahamkaara* (arrogance). Earn a good name as a scholar, a man of character, endowed with a spirit of sacrifice. Realise that if you please God, you can please the whole world. You saw the film about the saint Ghora Khumbhar. In his total absorption in God, he forgot the presence of his son and

unwittingly caused the child's death. When he realised what had happened, he did not mourn the death of the child. He declared that God took away what God had given him. Such was his total faith in God.

While pursuing your studies remember that you have also to strive for the well-being of the world *Loka hitherathah*.

Service should justify the salaries

Make use of your education for public welfare. You have no doubt to take up a job for earning a living. See that the work you do justifies the emoluments you get. It is treason to the nation to receive thousands by way of salary and do hardly a few hundred rupees worth of work. Today such disloyal employees are, increasing in numbers all over the world. High salaries and poor turnout are the rule today. This accounts for the deplorable condition of Bhaarath today. The public debt is growing alarmingly. Who is responsible? If public servants rendered service according to the salaries they received the country would not be in such a bad plight.

Discharge your duties according to your conscience. Our students should live up to this ideal. There is nothing wrong in receiving a high salary provided you do the work to deserve it. Now young people are concerned only about the pay packets and not the work they have to do in the service of society to deserve the pay. Think more about what you owe to society than what you can get from it. It is sheer selfishness to be concerned only about your earnings. The *Vedha* has declared that immortality can be attained only through sacrifice.

"Students are my only property"

Students! Boys and girls! Wherever you may go, wherever you may live, serve the elders at home, serve the society and bring a good name to the institutions which have educated you. Observe discipline all through your life. Do your duty.

It is not easy to bring back the glorious days of the past. You young people cannot be aware of the times when a bag of rice could be got for four rupees, when people could go about without any fear of attack and houses could be left unlocked. Today fear stalks the country. No one is safe. For all these evils the insatiable craving for money is responsible. The evil began in a sway in the *Dhvaapara Yuga*. Today it has reached frightful limits. The craving for wealth has led to many other evils like jealousy and pride.

The money that comes from the people should be given back to them in one way or other. This is Bhagavaan's will. People say that Sai Baba is spending crores of rupees on the drinking water project. There is not a single rupee of Sai Baba in all this. What has been received from the people is being given back to them. I do not own anything. I have only one property, my most valuable property. My students are my only property. It is enough for me if my students conduct themselves well.

I bless you all that you should carry on your lives in the same spirit in which you have distinguished yourselves in games and sports. Win prizes in the game of life, carry out the injunctions of God and stand forth as ideal citizens. Never forget the supremacy of love as the ruling principle in life.

Discourse in the Puurnachandhra Auditorium on 14-1-1996, after distribution of prizes to winners in sports and games.

It is enough if Prema is cultivated, the. Prema that knows no distinction between oneself and another, because all are but limbs of One corpus of God Almighty. Through Love alone can the Embodiment of Love be gained. Here, no scholarship is needed; in fact, scholarship will be an impediment, for it caters to egoism and it breeds doubts and the desire for disputation and laurel of victory over others preening themselves as learned.

Baba