

20. The Guru is the guide

THIS day is called *Vyaasa Poornima*, holy day, which must be celebrated with the prayer and contrition which alone can cleanse the heart, and not by feasting or fasting, which affect only the body. The fact that Sage Vyaasa is associated with this day or that Lord Raama or Krishna is connected with some other day is merely an opportunity to mark the day as outstandingly important, when something holy has to be done. It is full moon today, when the moon shines, without any let or hindrance, when moonlight is bright and cool and full. The mind of man is compared to the moon, for it is as wayward as the moon with its swing from brightness to darkness; this day, the mind too has to be bright, effulgent and cool.

Vyaasa was born with a great urge for spiritual uplift and he entered into deep study and *saadhana*, even as a child. He acquired such divine wisdom and glory that he is identified with Naaraayana Himself. He stands out as the Lokaguru (World Teacher) for he codified the *Vedhic* hymns, and prepared the great *Vedhaanthic* text of *Brahmasuuthra*, besides the epic commentaries of the *Vedha-vedhaantha* (teachings based on *Upanishadhic* philosophies) for the people whom he loved to educate, commentaries named the Mahaabhaaratha and the Shrimadh Bhaagavatha.

You have to traverse the path

He is called *Vedha-Vyaasa* because of his service to the students of the *Vedhas*, which defied understanding, since they were countless and fathomless: *Anantho vai Vedhaah*. He composed also the eighteen *Puraanas*, on the various *Naamaruupas* (Names and Forms) of the same Godhead, *Puraanas* which are text-books and illustrative descriptions of moral codes, historical episodes, philosophical principles and social ideals. Vyaasa sought to bring home, through the *Puraanas*, the need for mastering egoistic impulses, as the *slokha* says,

*Ashtaa dasha puraaneeshu
Vyaasaaya vachana dwayam;
Paropakaara punyaaya
Paapaaya para peedanam.*

"Two statements can summarise all the eighteen *Puraanas* composed by Vyaasa. Do good to others; avoid doing harm," says the hymn. Doing good is the drug; avoiding harm is the regimen, that must accompany the treatment. That is the cure for the disease of suffering from joy and grief, honour and dishonour, prosperity and adversity, and the dual throng, that bothers man and deprives him of equanimity.

Vyaasa is the *Lokaguru*: he is Divine Effulgence. Even Vyaasa can only show you the road. YOU have to traverse it alone. He gives you a *manthra* (a sacred word or formula), which you repeat; though you may not know its meaning, it will act as the purifier of your mind.

When a ryot has to get something done for him by the Collector, he goes to a lawyer, who knows how it has to be asked for', he writes it out in English, and gives it to him as a typed sheet, which the ryot presents to the Collector. He does not know what is written or its meaning but it does the work because it has come from the brain and the experience of a man who is his *Guru* for the purpose. The Lord is kinder than any human officer and far more eager. He takes on the roles which will save the devotee from harm, as he did to help Sakkubhai.

Make the offerings without egoism

There was a devotee who felt that Seetha was his sister and Raama his brother-in-law; he loved Raama as Krishna loved Arjun! He came to know that Seetha had gone into the forest following Raama in exile; he imagined the distress she must be suffering, for want of sandals in the thorn-infested jungle paths and of a cot in the snake-infested depths of the forests. So, he went about in the jungle, with a pair of sandals and a cot, calling out, "Sister! Seetha!" long after his throat had turned hoarse. This happened a few decades ago. He took the Raamaayana as a contemporary event.

Raama appeared before him and consoled him. He fell before Him and prayed that He should accept the sandals and cot from him and use them, pleading that Seetha cannot walk on the hard thorny ground, or rather, that he would not be happy until she used them. "My dear brother-in-law," he addressed Raama fondly. Raama accepted them and asked him to leave happily. Offerings that are made with no defilement of egoism are gladly accepted by the Lord. If you feel proud or conceited, even the most fragrant flowers placed at the Feet of the Lord will be rejected by Him as unbearably stinking.

Man is a mixture of *dhaiva*, *dhaanava* and *maanava*, (god, demon and man). The wickedness of the ogre can be overcome by *dhaya* (the quality of mercy and charity), of sympathy and fellow-feeling; the pride of the god can be overcome by *dhama* (self-control), detachment, renunciation; the egoism of man can be overcome by following *dharma* prescribed by the impartial sages who have been purified by *thapas* (penance), and by canalising the instincts and impulses into fruitful fields. When these three are thus sublimated, *maanava* (man) is transformed into *Maadhava* (God). Each one must take up this process of purification, by discovering his faults and failings and realise the road to success.

Krishna moved by devotion of Bheeshma

One morning, Dharmaraaja went to Krishna, in order to pay homage. He found Krishna seated in the *padmaasana* (lotus seat) pose, meditating deeply, with teardrops rolling over His cheeks. Dharmaraaja wondered whom He was meditating upon. At last, when Krishna opened His eyes he dared ask Him the question and Krishna replied that He was exulting over the devotion of a great soul towards Him. He said that it was no other than Bheeshma, whose mind was intently fixed on Him even while he was on the bed of arrows. It is not enough if you claim to be a bhaktha; the Lord must acknowledge it and exult over it, as Krishna did, when He was lost in admiration over the steadfastness of Bheeshma.

Vyaasa composed the Mahaabhaaratha, also called *jaya* (victory) with its galaxy of great persons, like Bheeshma, Bheema, Arjuna, Vidhura, Dharmaraaja, Dhroupadhi, Kunthi, all revolving around the divine Krishna. This epic will remove the darkness of ignorance, the pettiness of selfishness, the cowardice of separation from the hearts of men. So, the title of *Lokaguru* for Vyaasa is very apt. He is extolled as Vishnu, sans *Shankha* (conch) and *Chakra* (discus); Shankara (Shiva), sans the three eyes; and *Brahma* (the Creator) sans the four heads. You must make the best use of this *Guru*, as you must, of this Puttaparthi itself. You must acquire here the skills for winning *shaanthi* and *santhosha* (peace of mind and bliss), the grace of God, the lessons of *saadhana*, the fruits of *sathsang* (company of holy men); do not fritter away your energy and time, seeking sensory satisfaction in ungodly company.

You pray, not for grace, but for petty impermanent pleasures; you do not try to know the ordinances of God and decide to follow them. Look at Dhruva. He started his penance, with the low aim of getting mastery over his step-mother's son; but as he progressed, he saw that he could get something far higher than even imperial honours, namely, the grace of God. Learn to appreciate the *Aathma* (Divine Self) and to detach your mind from that which is not *Aathma*. Become wise and discriminating.

Leave everything to the Guru

When I was in the previous body at Shirdhi, there was a woman named Raadhabhai who yearned to get a *Manthropadhesha* (inflated into a sacred word or formula) from me. That day was also *Vyaasa Poornima*. She was so anxious to get a *Naamam* (Name) that she refused to take even food until she got it. Three days passed like this, but Baaba did not yield. At last, Syaama who was with the previous body spoke about her and pleaded for her and feared that she might even die of hunger. He said that if she died, it would be poor reflection on the broad-mindedness for which Baaba was known. Raadhabhai was brought to the place in a weak condition. Baaba asked her to go to some *Guru* and get initiated into the name; she said, "I know of no other." Baaba asked her the meaning of the *slokha* "*Guru Brahma Guru Vishnu Guru Dhevo Maheshwarah, Gurusaakshath param Brahma Tasmai Shri Guruve namah.*" He asked her, "Why not take the *Guru's* name, then? Why demand another name from the *Guru*? If the *Guru* is God, obeying His orders, walking in the path He has shown, these are as effective as the *japam* (repetition) of the name."

You are judged by your words

Once you have secured a *Guru*, leave everything to him, even the desire to achieve liberation. He knows you more than you yourself ever can. He will direct you as much as is good for you. Your duty is only to obey and to smother the tendency to drift away from Him. You may ask, how are we to earn our food, if we attach ourselves to a *Guru* like this? Be convinced that the Lord will not let you starve; He will give you not merely money but even *Amirtha*, not only food but the nectar of immortality.

Become immersed in the sweetness of the Name on your tongue. That will render your words also sweet and soft. By your words, will you be judged. A Mahaaraaja out hunting happened to ride far forward, so that his retinue could not catch up with him. He saw a blind man by the jungle road and so he accosted him, "Hallo, dear man. Did you notice any one passing along?" The blind man said "No." Then, after a few minutes, the minister came along and asked the same man, "Hey brother! Did you notice any one passing along?" and got the same answer. The commander when he saw him asked "Here, you fool! Did you notice some one passing along?" and a soldier who came last shouted, "You blind rotter, open your dirty mouth and tell me whether any one passed this way." At last when the priest of the court came along and said, "Dear brother, please tell me whether any one passed this way," he could reply that a king, a minister, a commander and a soldier had passed and had asked him the same question. For their style of speech, revealed their status and character.

If you have *dhaya, dhama and dharma* (sympathy, self-control and righteousness), that will take you beyond the realm of the three *gunas* (qualities of the mind); there is no need then for getting a *Naama* (Name) from the *Guru* and repeating it. The *aajna* (command) of the *Guru* or the Lord is even more important than the Name of the *Guru* or the Name of the Lord. Of what use is the

repetition of the Name, without at the same time purifying the impulses by the observance of His commands.

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Maayaa itself has caused multifarious forms.

This is a clever stage-play, a kind of fancy-dress.

The objective world or Nature assumes many forms through the manipulation of Maayaa, the Deluding urge.

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