

7. Recruits for my Army

The *samskaara* (purifying ritual) of *Upanayanam* (investiture of sacred thread) is beneficial not only to the boys who were initiated, but, for every one of you, who witnessed it and drew inspiration from it. The learned Pandit from Delhi spoke to you now of the meaning of this *samskaara*; it has made all these lads "twice born", "*dwithiyam mounji bandhanaath*" he said. The belt of munja grass has given them that status, he said. The *Upanayanam*---the ceremony of leading the lad to the teacher---and the recital by the initiate of the *Gaayathri manthra* (sacred formula) which prays for clear intellect, are the first steps towards the ultimate Realisation of the Reality. Pandit Raamasaran explained how the *Gaayathri* is the essence of the *Rig, Yajur* and *Saama Vedhas* and how the traditional conception of the *Gaayathri Devatha* embodies a harmonious blending of the five divinities---Vishnu, Surya, Maheshwari, Ganapathy and Ishwara, representing the Five Elements---and how prayer to *Gaayathri* confers the material and spiritual needs of man.

Every man is burdened with one body and four births! He is born a *Sudra*; for, as a child he has no sense of cleanliness or definite ideas of right and wrong. By the rite of initiation into spiritual life, that is to say, when he is taken as a pupil by a *guru*, who takes up the responsibility of leading him to the Goal of Human Life, he becomes *dwija*, twice-born, entering into the second chapter of his human career. When he has finished the spiritual disciplines and studied the scriptures, he becomes a *Vipra* (the wise); at last, when as a result of those practices and experiences, he visualises *Brahman* as immanent in all, he is a *Braahmana*. A *Vipra* attains *Brahmajnaanam* and becomes a *Braahmana*. This is therefore the first step, but the most important step, in the process of self-realisation.

Aim of all human effort

The parents endow you with the material body, the *deha*; the *Guru* points out to you the Dweller within the Body, the *dehi*. So, he is entitled to be honoured as a God, say the *Vedhas*. *Maathru Devo bhava, Pithru Devo bhava; Aachaarya Devo bhava* (Honour mother, father, teacher, each as God). To make gold more amenable to the operations attendant on ornament making, it is alloyed by the addition of a little silver or copper; so too in order to manifest the multiple variety of Nature, the *Brahmathathwam* (essential nature of *Brahman*) is converted into an alloy, with the addition of a little egoism or *Mamakaaram*; the *Guru* teaches you to regain the pure unalloyed *Brahmam* by the processes of *sravanam*, *mananam*, and *nididhyaasa* (listening to, recapitulating and concentrating on God's glories) in the crucible of the intellect. The *jeevathathwam* and the *Brahmathathwam* (essential nature of the self and *Brahman*) are then clearly understood as facets of the same entity.

The aim of all human effort is to achieve this One (*Ekam*), that lies behind all this plurality. Without achieving it, man can have no peace, within or without. No amount of repetition of the *shaanthy manthra* is capable of granting him that. The *Guru* reveals to the disciple the invisible current that activates the many seemingly distinct instruments, like the bulb, the mike, the fan, the refrigerator, the tape-recorder, the stove, etc. He deserves your gratitude. He is like the stranger who entered the cottage of a poor man and announced that underneath the floor of that hovel, there lies hidden a precious treasure which he can take and own, by a few minutes of digging! The sage Vishwaamithra devised the *Gaayathri manthra* as a fine drug for the spiritual aspirant; he is also to be revered, for the drug awakens your *buddhi* and confers upon you *viveka*,

vichakshana and *vairaagya*---(wisdom, discrimination, and non-attachment)---the three distinguishing marks of humans, elevating them far above other animals.

Subtle power of Gaayathri mantra

Samskaara involves double actions, removing dirt and applying paint, when the word is used with reference to a house. This *Gaayathri* has the subtle power of removing evil tendencies and implanting virtuous habits, and so, the *Upayanam* is a unique *samskaara*. Man is Divine; he has the Lord dwelling in his heart, but yet he is bound, miserable, limited, weak, agitated. Why? He is ignorant of his reality. He imagines himself weak, limited, bound and he is so shaped by the mind, which is the source of that imagination. How then can you be freed? How are you to overcome this *bhrama* or delusion? If you desire to overtake a train, you must speed in a car or board a plane. No vehicle slower than the train will help. So too, if you intend to overcome the delusion, you must establish yourself in God; the delusion of *Maanasakthi* (man-power) can be overcome only by the attainment of *Daivasakthi* (God-power). The *Gaayathri* promotes the acquisition of *Daivasakthi*.

Gaayathri means 'that which saves, when repeated'! It is the torch of *jnaana*, given into the hands of these lads venturing into the regions of intellectual inquiry and sensory restrictions. As paddy is treated to a process of pestling and winnowing and cleaning in order to get rice that can be cooked and eaten, these boys have to de-husk the individual, discover the *Aathma* hiding inside the five sheaths of physical matter, vital energy, mind, intelligence and bliss (*Annamaya*, *Praanamaya*, *Manomaya*, *Vijnaanamaya* and *Aanandamaya Kosas*). The *Sandhyaavandana* rite they are enjoined to do, three times a day, from this very day, is part of this process of de-husking. Time must be found, time can be found, provided they have the will and they get encouragement from the elders. Supplying the calories for the spirit is as necessary a process for happy living as supplying calories for the body; breakfast, lunch and dinner, *Praathas sandhyaa* (morning worship), *Maadhyaahnika* (noon worship), and *Saayamsandhyaa* (evening worship), all six are equally essential. You miss any one of the six at your peril.

Inner cleanliness should be the first aim

Dear boys, you have today got the *Gaayathri*, the milk from the four teats called four *Vedhas* of the udder of the Cow that is Godhead; it has in it the sustenance that will make you shine with spiritual health. You must now carefully use it for your good; do not spill it or spoil it; boil it, make curds out of it, churn it and get the butter that is immanent in it. It will become curds by means of your contemplation on the Lord, (*Bhagavathchinthana*); with the churning-rod of discipline, collect the butter of *aananda* (bliss). You were initiated in this holy Presence, remember, the Presence that so many thousands covet; so, you have a special responsibility to fulfil your *Brahmacharya* (the path of celibacy and learning), that leads to *Brahmajnaana* (knowledge of the Supreme Being). The body is fundamentally unclean, but yet it craves to achieve both cleanliness and Godliness, because its nature is purity and holiness.

Inner cleanliness should be your first aim. Which do you cleanse more in a drinking vessel? The interior or the exterior? You may have fine vegetables, excellent tamarind juice, chillies, salt, dal; the cook may be a master of the art; the oven may be the perfect type; but, if the copper vessel is not tinned, the '*saambaar*' (*soup*) will be turned into dangerous stuff that cannot be taken. It will act as poison to those that eat it. *Sathkarma* (virtuous deeds) and *sadaachaara* (good habits) act to protect the *saambaar* from contact with copper.

For you the *Gaayathri* and the *Sandhyaa* rites, three times a day, will act as the 'tin' for the *Hridayapaathra* (the heart-vessel), where emotions, impulses and instincts are cooking. The discipline of *Sandhya* will tame all instincts even as the mahout's goad subdues the might of the elephant and trains it to perform tricks in the circus ring. Do not fail to make the best of this chance.

Efficacy of unseen merit

As many as 450 boys have had this chance today. Some persons at Prashaanthi Nilayam felt that, this being the examination season for school boys, many may not be able to come and get initiated in this sacred presence; but, see how, on account of strikes and consequent disturbances, schools were closed, examinations were postponed and almost all who had written about their desire to come are here before Me! This is another reminder of the efficacy of unseen merit; the rain falls on barren land and all the seeds hidden underneath the land sprout, making a green carpet to cover the area! No one knew, except Myself, that there were these seeds of earned merit awaiting the showers of Grace in the heritage of these boys.

For the revival of *Sanaathana Dharma* (Eternal Religion) these boys will be efficient instruments. They will replenish the glory of Bhaarathavarsha. They are today recruited into My army. I am achieving the re-establishment of *Dharma*, the restoration of the *Vedhas*, and it is with that in view that I am initiating in My Presence every year boys from all parts of India. This *samskaara* is fast losing its significance; the recital of the *Gaayathri* and the performance of the *Sandhya* rite are both being neglected; so, they have to be restored to their pristine glory. This is an important step. Until you see the *Akshara* (the Unchanging), you must practise the *kshara* (the changing), which helps you to transcend it. When once you are able to pronounce 'cat', you can give up reading the word as 'c-a-t'. The *Gaayathri* will help you to reach the *Akshara*; practise it, three times a day, in the *Sandhya* rite. The *Deha-maatha* (the mother who bore the body), the *Loka-maatha* (the Mother who sustains the Universe) and the *Gaayathri-maatha* (the Mother who saves you from bondage and ignorance)---all three deserve your devotion and worship.

Upanayanam Day, Prashaanthi Nilayam, 25-2-1965.

*Desire is a storm,
greed is a whirlpool,
pride is a precipice,
attachment is an avalanche,
egoism is a volcano.
Keep these away so that,
when you recite the name of God
or do meditation,
they do not disturb the equanimity.*

SHRI SATHYA SAI