

57. The call and the response

An aspirant after spiritual realisation went off into a jungle and was plodding across the infested region, through the thick undergrowth, when he heard the angry roar of a lion; he climbed a tree to escape from the beast, but the lion saw him among the branches and roamed round and round the trunk in terrific rage. On the tree, he was attacked by a bear and so, he slid down the roots that descended from one of the branches of that banyan tree. Luckily, there were two roots hanging from the branch, so that he could hang on in mid air clinging to them, one in each hand. Just then, he saw two rats, one white and the other black which were gnawing at the base of the roots, endangering his life with every bite. While in this perilous state, a honeycomb which was full of sweet nectar situated on one of the top branches leaked a few drops which fell his way; so, the unfortunate man put out his tongue to catch a drop so that he may taste the delicious honey, But, no drop reached his tongue. In despair and terror, he called on his *Guru*, "O *Guruji* come and save me." The *Guru* who was passing by heard his appeal. He sped to the rescue; he brought bow and arrows and slew the lion and bear, frightened off the rats and saved the disciple from the fear of death. Then, he led the man to his own *Aashram* and taught him the path of liberation.

The Guru appears when you call out in all sincerity

This is the story of every one of you. This world is the jungle in which you roam; fear is the lion, which drives you up the tree of *samsaara*---*worldly* activities. Anxiety is the bear that terrifies you and dogs your steps *in samsaara*; so, you slide down into attachments and binding deeds, through the twin roots of hope and despair. The two rats are day and night, which eat away the span of life. Meanwhile, you try to snatch a little joy from the sweet drops of egoism and 'mine-feeling'. Finding at last that the drops are trivial and out of reach, you shout in the agony of the renunciation, calling on the *Guru*; the *Guru* appears, whether from within or without, and saves you from fear and anxiety.

When you call out in all sincerity, the response will certainly come. Give up all low desire and call from the anguished heart. Do not pray from the lips, as you do now, from the puja room which is but a corner of the kitchen. You worship the Lord with an eye on the dishes cooking on the oven, with a nose inhaling hungrily the smells of boiling curries. Your thoughts of God are vitiated by *vishaya-vaasana*---*the* attachment to sensory objects. There is a vast gap between what you say and what you do, what you are capable of and what you accomplish. You have heard of Uttharakumaara, who was a poltroon, in fact, but who boasted that he could overwhelm the enemy forces in a trice. He could hold forth for hours on the theory of battles, but, as to practice he had no iota of it.

The inner motive which prompts the deed---that is what the Lord seeks to weigh. Abdullah was sleeping in a corner of a mosque in Mecca, when he was awakened by the conversation of two angels above his head. They were preparing a list of the Blessed and one angel was telling the other that a certain Mahbub of Sikandar city deserved to be ranked first, even though he had not come on pilgrimage to the Holy City. Hearing this, Abdullah went to Sikander City and found that he was a cobbler, repairing the shoes of people. He was famished and poor, for his earnings barely sufficed to keep flesh and bones together. He had by severe sacrifice piled up a few coppers during the course of years; one day, he spent the entire treasure to prepare a special dish which he proposed to place before his pregnant wife as a surprise gift. When he was proceeding home with the gift he heard the cry of a starving beggar who seemed to be in the throes of extreme hunger. Mahbub could not proceed any further; he gave the pot containing the costly

delicacy to the man and sat by his side, enjoying the blossoming of satisfaction on his haggard face. That act gave him a place of honour in the register of the Blessed, a place which pilgrims to Mecca who spent millions of dinars in charity could not secure. The Lord cares for the feeling behind the act, not the fanfare and the fuss.

The Lord cares for the feeling behind the act

There was a small temple of Shrinath in the town of Govardhana, some centuries ago. A poor Brahmin of that place had an only son, a little boy of six, who was always exulting in the stories and legends of Krishna and who delighted only in listening to the *leelas* of the Lord. One day, he went out into the meadows with the cattle and when he saw the temple and the image of Krishna inside the shrine, he took it to be the Lord himself. He called out very piteously asking Krishna to come out and play with him in the moonlight. Though the doors were locked by the priest as he went out at noon, the Lord came and, hand in hand, the two walked along the fields in the cool silver light. Krishna had the flute and He sat on a boulder and played on it to the extreme delight of the Brahmin lad. After a few hours, He returned with the friend, whom He called 'brother' and, quite unnoticed, He disappeared into the temple shrine, where the idol could be seen through a slit in the door.

The boy could not bear the pangs of separation from his Divine playmate; he spent the night and the morning crying outside the door and he was discovered there by his parents and the priest. The parents beat the boy for giving them so much trouble, but the priest found the idol bleeding as a result of the blow. If you call on him as a little brother, He responds and becomes rollicking playmate for you. Call on him as a *Guru*; He will instruct and inspire. He never fails those who call on Him sincerely and in faith.

Prashaanthi Nilayam: Birthday Festival, 24-11-1965

*Women are makers of the home,
the nation and the world.
You are the mothers
who shape the generation.
So you must enshrine in your heart
the spiritual urge toward
Light and Love,
Wisdom and Bliss.
SHRI SATHYA SAI*