

2. Revolutions, resolutions

CALENDAR makers calculate the years and declare that this Day is New Year Day, and that it is 5078 years after the *Kali* Era began! But, the lapse of time is to be calculated in proportion to the work accomplished, rather than the revolution of our earth around the sun. For each individual, there is a New Year Day, a day which marks the completion of his revolution round the Sun, that is to say, the awakened effulgent Intelligence, capable of conferring on him discrimination and detachment. Ardent seekers have sought the key to all knowledge, the One thing that, if known, all else is known, namely the Divine, that is latent in every atom of the Universe; they have described It as something that is beyond words, beyond the ken of human imagination and understanding. It is best, they have themselves admitted, that the Divine is pictured in the human form, so that man can easily comprehend It and approach It and derive Bliss out of that contemplation. Man can conceive only human qualities and human attainments, though he can multiply them to the maximum and allow the resultant quantum to fill and overflow his heart.

Indian culture will be alive and active

In other countries and other human communities, we have only one faith, one path, one object of adoration, one form of worship, that has sent down roots and borne fruits. This faith may be indigenous or imported, but, the people have learnt to assimilate it and are allergic to others. In India, on the other hand, there are, since ages, many faiths and many paths, reflecting all the urges of man which lead him inward and upward. Hence, there are manifold alternatives from which man can choose the one that suits his stage of spiritual growth and with his feet firm on that step, he can raise himself up to greater heights. Indian Culture is as the ocean, which has in it the waters of all the rivers, from all the lands, from clouds that roam across all the continents. The ocean that is the source and goal of all the rivers is the bed on which Vishnu rests! That is why Vishnu is the God that symbolises the universal aspect of the Divine Principle in the Universe as well as beyond It.

Rtham, rhythm or righteousness is the very breath of Vishnu, for, it sustains the stars, it stabilises society, it ensures advance. Vishnu is that aspect of the Trinity that is concerned with sustaining, fostering, stabilising, strengthening. So, Vishnu has to incarnate often in order to save and salvage the world. He has to re-establish *rtham* (right or righteousness, morality), so that the world may sail on an even keel and reach the harbour of Liberation, so that the world may be transformed into a Prashaanthi Nilayam.

India has the Himaalayas, as her shield, as her armour as her crown. The range is the sign of majesty, of calm, of cool exhilaration, the call to the heights which man must climb. From the Himaalayas have flowed over the land the Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswathi, the trinity of (1) spiritual search (Ganga), (2) mental purification (Yamuna), and (3) intellectual clarity (Saraswathi). The Ganga never runs dry; it is pure, full, capable of destroying all the bacteria that bring disease. Indian culture will be alive and active, so long as the Ganga flows over the land; it can never run dry. It will slake the thirst of generations; it will confer the boon of immortality on those who crave for it.

Krishna is the humanisation of the Universal

Indian culture has laid down many limitations on conduct, many channels through which passion has to be directed, emotions to be diverted, impulses to be held in check. These serve to intensify the personality and free it from the slough of the senses. They regulate food, sleep, recreation,

dress, conversation and the company one should seek. They ramify into every aspect of life, every stage of life, and every group of human society. The purpose is to broaden, enlarge and deepen sympathy until one's love reaches the outermost bounds of Creation.

It is only when the principle of cohesion and community reigns and resides in the Universe that it can be termed Human. Krishna is the Humanisation of this Universal Eternal. When we picture Him in the midst of the cowherd comrades, sharing and eating His breakfast with them, laughing and joking, playing pranks and spreading joy all around, we feel the pang of kinship, which ultimately lifts us into the beyond. Where this comradeship is evident, there we have a spark of Divine Love. Wherever such thrill is evident, there one has taken a step over the frontiers of our individuality: One step at a time, correct and consolidated---that is the way this pilgrimage should progress.

Arjuna prayed that Krishna should appear to him as a friend and comrade rather than as the Immanent Director, the Transcendent Sovereign, the Innate Substance of all that is, was and will be! He longed for the joy of kinship rather than the Bliss of Mergence. To conceive of the Divine as the inner core and the outer shell of every atom and planet, every speck of dust and every system of nebulae, as well as of oneself is an exercise that overwhelms individuality and so, Raamakrishna Paramahansa and others have prayed for the role of the adorer, rather than the abolition of roles!

Cleanse your hearts through pure habits

You sit before the idol and offer praise, the incense of worship, but you do not now try to grasp the significance of the Divine that you see in the idol. Inquire into the Will of God, discover the Commands of God, guess what will please Him most, and regulate your life accordingly. Let this be your New Year Resolution. Do not get caught in the sticky tangles of outer Nature. Do not harden your heart through greed and hate. Soften it with Love. Cleanse it through pure habits of living and thinking. Use it as the shrine, wherein you instal your God.

Be happy that you have within you the source of power, wisdom and joy. Announce that you are unconquerable and free, that you cannot be tempted or frightened into wrong. So long as a trace of 'I-am-the-body' consciousness persists in you, you have yourself to search for God; you have to approach the mirror, the mirror will not proceed towards you, to show you, as you really are. Open the twin doors of lust and anger, remove the bolt of greed, then, you can enter the sacred precincts of *Moksha* (Liberation)!

Greed is the monstrous evil that drags man down. When Raavana lay dying, Raama directed His brother, Lakshmana, to go to him and learn from him the secrets of successful statecraft! Raavana taught him that the king eager to win glory must suppress greed as soon as it lifts its head, and welcome the smallest chance to do good to others, without the slightest procrastination! He had learnt the lesson through bitter experience! Greed arises from attachment to the senses and catering to them. Put them in their proper place; they are windows for knowledge, not channels of contamination.

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The Law of Karma holds out hope for you, as the karma, so the consequence. Do not bind yourself further by seeking the fruit of karma, offer the karma at the Feet of God; let it glorify Him; let it

further His splendour. Be unconcerned with the success or failure of the endeavour. Then, death can have no noose to bind you with. Death will come as a liberator, not a jailor.

Sathya Sai Baaba