

24. Faith in the goal

When each desire is fulfilled

God is loved, adored and thanked;

When no desire is fulfilled

God is denied, discarded and dismissed!

This *Kali Yuga* is praised in the scriptures as incomparably conducive to the salvation of man, for he can now attain the Highest through the mere thought of God and remembering His name. So, of all the *Yugas*, this *Yuga* is described as the most holy, the most beneficent. *Dhyaana* (meditation) was prescribed as the means of liberation for men in the *Kritha Yuga*, *thapas* (penance) as the means during the *Tretha Yuga* and *archana* (ritual worship) for the *Dhwaapara Yuga*. But, for people of this *Yuga*, the simple remedy prescribed is just *Naamasmarana*, the constant awareness of the Name. In spite of this, it is a pity that men do not care for this path and so render their lives barren wastes.

Unless you give up, you cannot acquire---that is the rule of life. Even trivial things cannot be won without parting with something. One has to pay to secure the most precious of all gifts, the gift of the awareness of the *Aathma!* To earn this, one has to give up sensual pleasures, but is this too big a price? In fact, what is renounced is not pleasure at all. It is fraught with pain too. Can you not give up grief to earn joy, evil to earn good, diversity to earn unity, many to earn one? One must strive for victory in the struggle against the whims and wiles of the senses. One must focus all one's physical and mental resources to earn success; one must fill oneself with Divine Grace by offering his strength and skill for Divine purposes.

Purpose gives taste to living

Every activity has a goal, an end in view. Proceeding to the market, going to school---each has a purpose. When such momentary and short-lived activities are motivated by goals, how can one pass 60 or 70 years of life on earth with no purpose guiding him and leading him on? Purpose gives taste to living. When *the pappu* (boiled lentles) on your plate lacks *uppu* (salt), you push it aside! But, you wade through years and years leading tasteless, insipid lives without *uppu* (God) added to *pappu* (Life).

When praised, man gets inflated, when blamed, he gets deflated. But for one who trusts in God, for the *Bhaktha*, these reactions are signs of weakness. Man must withstand both praise and blame, success and failure, pleasure and pain, like the Meru mountain peak. He must strive to be steadfast and unmoved. Once you collect desires, you become their slave; you will find no end to them. When they are attained, others assail you and still leave you discontented. Be aware of your innate Divinity and show these recurring desires their due place. *The Aathma* in you is unaffected by desire or defeat or victory. They are passing clouds. The Sun is not concerned with their comings and goings.

No one is unfamiliar with the Raamaayana. It describes the Dhandhaka forest, heavy with thick darkness and terrible with the resounding roar of wild beasts. It was infested with frightful gangs of *raakshasas* (demons). Suurpanakha was a demoness who roamed therein. Khara was a demon of the same nature. On some open patches of this jungle, *rishees* (sages) who were leading pure unselfish God-centred lives had their hermitages. And, into this forest came, as exiles, Prince

Raama, Lakshmana, his brother, and Seetha, Raama's consort. They spent some days with great sages like Agasthya and Sharabhanga. They found the ascetic Shabari also in her retreat. As a result, Raama destroyed the demons and restored peace in the region for the sages to perform their spiritual practices and rituals undisturbed.

Faith and surrender can ensure peace and joy

This is what the epic says. But, where exactly is the Dhandhaka forest? You need not look for it on any map or turn over the pages of history. It is the heart of every man. The evil feelings are the *raakshasas*; the good thoughts are the *rishis*. Raama is the personification of *viveka*, the discriminating faculty of the intellect. Seetha and Lakshmana are the higher levels of *consciousness*--*sujnaana* and *prajnaana*. Raama puts an end to evil feelings and promotes good thoughts. Raama is the Emperor of Ayodhya. That name means "Impregnable," "with no enemy," that is to say, no injurious or demeaning feeling or thought, can invade the heart when Raama is installed therein. Thyaagaraaja sang, "*Thelisi Raama chinthana cheyave manasa*" (Oh! Mind! Meditate on Raama with the full knowledge of what He represents).

When I speak, you hear the speech via the microphone through the loud speakers. You listen to the instrument, the loudspeaker, but I am the speaker. So, too, when your tongue utters the words, it is *the Aathma* that prompts and shapes the words. The owner sits in the car and travels. The car, your body, has four wheels on the ground (*dharma, artha, kaama, moksha*---the four human goals virtue, prosperity, desire fulfilment and liberation) and they are filled with air. Faith is the air which makes your travel smooth. It has to be uniform in all the four wheels. The steering-wheel inside the car directs the outer wheels. The wheel is the 'mind'. The food and drink you take is the petrol for the car and its 'horn' is the tongue. You are journeying along the road of ups and downs (*Samsaara*) in this car. Recognise that God is the person at the wheel. He will take you happily to the destination. Have faith in Him and be free from fear, anxiety and agitation. Surrender to Him. His grace can save you, His wisdom can enlighten you, His power can overcome all your obstacles. Faith and surrender are the manifestations of *bhakthi* (devotion). They can ensure peace and joy for you and all mankind.

Prashaanthi Nilayam, 3-10-1981.

At the present time, when we see all over the country confusion, fear and anxiety, each one must contribute his share of cool, calm Love to suppress the anger of fury. No Governmental authority can suppress it as effectively and as quickly as you can by love and brotherliness.

The world can be saved only by the power of the Aathma inherent in every one; this has to be tapped by individual Saadhana, and by the Grace of God which can be won only through Love, Purity and Service.

Sathya Sai Baaba