

## 16. Protection Of Devotees

Yesterday, when I came into the hall, I could see the agony you all felt. That was because you identified Me with this body, which was having the illness. If you had known My truth, you would not have been sad. In fact, if you had known *your* Truth, that would be enough. The illness came and went; I was its master throughout. One day, when it reached its climax, I was watching its behaviour and directing it to finish its *dharma*. For I had taken it on Myself, so I must allow it to do its *dharma*!

All kinds of silly stories were circulated when I was ill! Some people feared that when I went to the south recently, some black magic was inflicted upon Me, and that the stroke was the consequence. Let Me tell you that nothing evil can affect Me. Nothing can harm Me. I am the Master, the Power (*Sakthi*) that overpowers everything else.

I knew that short explanation: some people were saying that I was in silence or a state of concentration (*mounam* or *samadhi*). Now why should I keep the vow of silence? If I am silent, how can I carry out My task of reforming you and making you all realise the aim of life? And why should I seek *samadhi*, I who am the Embodiment of Bliss and of Love (*Ananda-swarupa* and *Prema-swarupa*) Myself. It is the wavering doubter, the ignorant dabbler, who will lend their ear to such talk. The true devotee will discard all such news. For the devotees here, the 8 days were days of intense penance; they had no other thought than of Swami.

### To think low or mean is also egoism

Once, Krishna also pretended to be suffering from headache, an intense, unbearable headache! He acted that role quite as realistically as I did last week. He wound warm clothes around His head and rolled restlessly in bed. His eyes were red, and He was in evident distress. The face also appeared swollen and pale. Rukmini, Sathyabama, and the other queens rushed about with all kinds of remedies and palliatives, but they were ineffective. At last, they consulted Narada, and he went into the sick room to consult Krishna Himself and find out which drug would cure Him.

Krishna directed him to bring —what do you think the drug was?— the dust of the feet of a true devotee! In a trice, Narada manifested himself in the presence of some celebrated devotees of the Lord, but they were too humble to offer the dust of their feet to be used by their Lord as a drug!

That is also a kind of egoism. “I am low, mean, small, useless, poor, sinful, inferior” —such feelings also are egoistic. When the ego goes, you do not feel either superior or inferior. No one would give the dust wanted by the Lord; they were too worthless, they declared. Narada came back disappointed to the sickbed. Krishna asked him, “Did you try Brindavana, where the cowherd maids (*gopis*) live?” The queens laughed at the suggestion, and even Narada asked in dismay, “What do they know of devotion?” Still, the sage had to hurry thither.

When the *gopis* heard Krishna was ill and that the dust of their feet might cure Him, without a second thought they shook the dust off their feet and filled his hands with the same. By the time Narada reached Dwaraka, the headache had gone. It was just a five-day drama to teach that self-condemnation is also egoism and that the Lord’s command must be obeyed without demur, by all devotees.

When I said that I had taken on the illness that was destined for someone who could not have suffered it or

survived it, many of you felt, “Why should Swami, for the sake of a single person, plunge so many of us in grief?” Well! Didn’t Rama proceed to the forest though all Ayodhya wept? My *dharma* of protection of devotees must be carried out; the *dharma* of the disease must also be worked out. Krishna could have stopped the rains, however powerful Indra was, but Indra had to do his *dharma*, and by lifting Govardhana hill to protect the cows and cowherds, Krishna manifested His Divinity!

In this case also, it is the same divine sportive act (*leela*). Using the chance to demonstrate to a doubting world the Divinity inherent in this human form. I told you yesterday that even this lucky devotee was just an instrument to work out the promise made in the past to the Sage Bharadwaja; it served to announce My real nature to you all. You are indeed fortunate that you could witness on the sacred Guru Purnami Day this magnificent proof of My Divinity.

### **Karma of a higher order leads to wisdom**

There is no truth (*sathyam*) without goodness (*sivam*); there is no goodness without beauty (*sundaram*). Truth alone can confer auspiciousness, and auspiciousness alone is the real beauty. Truth is beauty; joy is beauty. Falsehood and grief are ugly because they are unnatural. The intellect, subconscious mind, and heart (*buddhi*, *chittham*, and *hridayam*) —these are the three centres in the individual where spiritual wisdom, action, and devotion (*jnana*, *karma*, and *bhakthi*) reside. The effulgence of Truth will reveal Goodness; do *karma* that is approved by the higher wisdom, not *karma* that is born of ignorance. Then, all *karma* will be auspicious, beneficial, and blessed. The experience of that goodness (*sivam*) is what is called beauty (*sundaram*); for it confers real bliss (*ananda*). That is My Reality. That is why My life is named “*Sathyam Sivam Sundaram*”.

Do *karma* based on spiritual wisdom, the wisdom that all is One. Let the *karma* be suffused with devotion, that is to say, with humility, love, compassion, and nonviolence. Let devotion be filled with spiritual wisdom; otherwise, it will be as light as a balloon, which drifts along any current of air or gust of wind. Mere wisdom will make the heart dry; devotion makes it soft with sympathy, and *karma* gives the hands something to do, something that will sanctify every one of the minutes that have fallen to your lot to live here.

This is why devotion is referred to as *upasana* —dwelling near, feeling the Presence, sharing the sweetness of Divinity. The yearning for *upasana* prompts you to go on pilgrimages, to construct and renovate temples, to consecrate images. The sixteen items of honouring with which the Lord is worshipped satisfy the mind, which craves for personal contact with the Supreme. All this is *karma* of a high order; they lead to spiritual wisdom. First, you start with the idea, “I am in the Light.” Then the feeling, “The light is in me,” becomes established. This leads to the conviction, “I am the Light.” That is the supreme wisdom.

See yourself in all; love all as yourself. A dog caught in a room whose walls are mirrors sees in all the myriad reflections —not itself but rivals, competitors, other dogs that must be barked at. So, it tires itself out by jumping on this reflection and that, and when the images also jump, it becomes mad with fury. The wise man, however, sees himself everywhere and is at peace: he is happy that there are so many reflections of himself all around him. That is the attitude you must learn to possess, that will save you from needless bother.

Prasanthi Nilayam, 1963-07-07