

15. Bhagavaan Baba's exhortation to students

*Brahma Vidhya is the means by which
One learns the way to achieve world peace
And live in harmony with all,
Eschewing narrow ideas, and cultivating unity.*

EMBODIMENTS of love! Dear Students! Boys and Girls! The main aim of a student should be to mould himself in such a way that he leads a purposeful and useful life in society. Unfortunately in the educational system today, there is no strength of purpose, no unity and no love. Whether one learns anything or not, whether one leads a meaningful life or otherwise, one's span of life melts away like a block of ice. Students should recognise this truth. Students today are not aware of what is the primary goal of life. They do not seem even to be worried about this. One in a million seems to be concerned about knowing the primary purpose of life. This concern is the first step in the ascent towards the goal.

Most students and the common people in general think that food, clothes, shelter and sleep, having a wife and children and enjoying material comforts of various kinds constitute the goals of life. However, these are not the primary purpose of life. Without knowing this, life becomes a saga of misery. With the awareness of this purpose, man can get rid of that misery.

Transcend beyond negative impulses

In this context, it is necessary to know the proper meaning of *Vedha*. *Vedha* is described as higher *Vijnaana* (knowledge), as effulgence or knowledge of one's transcendental reality -- *Uniki*. It is only when these three are known that one can get rid of sorrow and experience the bliss of *Vedha*.

What is the effulgence that is meant here? Is it the effulgence of the sun or the moon or the light of a lamp? No. It is the effulgence of the heart that is implied.

What, again, is meant by the term *Vijnaana*? Is it the science of physics or worldly knowledge? No. *Vijnaana* refers to knowledge about the functioning of the heart.

What is meant by "*Uniki*?" It is recognition of one's true nature. Are you the body? Are you the mind? Are you the senses or any other substance? No. Man has to realise that he transcends all these physical characteristics which are negative in nature, How can he realise his true transcendental positive nature if he fills himself with negative tendencies? What he can experience will be confined to the reactions and reflections of these negative factors and not that which is beyond them.

The first requisite, therefore, is the eradication of the negative impulses. One should investigate the truth about the divinity inherent in humanness.

Need for gratitude

What is it that one should do in this mundane, transient phenomenal world? The students should realise what everyone owes by way of gratitude to every person that has helped him in one way or another. For instance, if a doctor has cured a patient of a serious ailment, he should not forget what he owes to the doctor by way of gratitude. He should not think that after all the doctor has

done his duty. Likewise, when a mother bears the child in the womb for nine months and rears the child with love and concern, the child when he grows up should not merely consider that the mother has simply, done her duty. He should be ever grateful for all the travails the mother has gone through and for all the love and care she has bestowed on the child.

You have to show towards the mother the same love and spirit of sacrifice with which she has brought you up. Similarly you have to be grateful to one who enables you to earn a living when you are without the means of livelihood.

In the love of a mother for the child or the affection of a preceptor to the pupil, there may be an element of self-interest. But there is no selfishness in the bounties which the divine showers on mankind. God has no self-interest or selfish purpose to be-achieved. He expects no return from anyone. God is conferring on mankind countless benefits which no human being can offer. Can all the man-made lamps in the world equal the light coming from the sun? Can all the pumps you may install produce the amount of water that came down in last night's downpour? 'Who has given you the life-giving air that pervades everywhere?

Various benefits conferred by God on mankind

Thus, innumerable superhuman benefits are conferred by God on mankind. Even electricity is an expression of the Divine. From magnetism to electricity, heat and light, all these various forms of energy are considered as different forms of matter. This is not so. God is the source of all energy. If this is not realised, we will be failing to appreciate the true source of the air we breathe, the light we enjoy and the heat that sustains life.

For the power we consume or the water we use, charges have to be paid for their supply. That being the case, do not we owe gratitude to the Divine who has provided the world with air, water and light free? As the beneficiaries of the benefits provided by the five basic elements (ether, air, fire, water and earth), we should show our gratitude to them as manifestations of the Divine. The five elements are the source of five qualities experienced by the five senses: Sound, Touch, Vision, Taste, and Smell. Man makes use of these five elements but shows no gratitude to them. Gratitude should be an essential quality in man.

Unfortunately this is not very evident in man today. Everything is treated lightly. The result is disorder and discontent in the nation.

Every action has its reaction

Students should understand the relationships between cause and effect. Every action has its reaction. Every word has its resound. Every thought has its reflection in one's conduct. No one can avoid the consequences of one's actions.

Man is a reservoir of all potencies. The eternal principle of divinity is present in man, but he is not able to recognise it as he is deluded by the external world. A man produces a brilliant diamond out of piece of rugged rock, but more value is given to the diamond than to the man who fashioned it.

The educational system today has failed to bring out the spiritual effulgence in man. This really means that man is oblivious to his own real nature. Students have not learnt to use their faculties in the right way. They rely on others for forming their opinions. This is a kind of blindness. Of what use can such persons be to the society? Students should equip themselves to serve society and to promote its well-being.

Students might know about some of the great intellectuals of Bengal like Bipin Chandra Paal, Rabindranath Tagore, Aurobindo Ghosh and others. But very few remember them today except through books. But the name of an almost illiterate person like Svaami Raamakrishna Paramahansa is remembered and cherished by millions because of his spiritual eminence.

Education which is not based on ethics, morality and spirituality is utterly worthless. All education, all wealth, all ritualistic worship or penances are of no value without genuine devotion to God. Devotion can elevate the lowly to the highest level. Without faith in God, even an eminent person gets degraded.

The culture of Bharath lays stress upon ethics, righteousness and spirituality. True culture consists in the recognition of the unity that underlies the diversity in mankind. The basis of that culture is love, which is essentially divine. Love is a much abused word today. What is called love is only attachment of different kinds based on relationships.

Culture and spirituality are not different

Love of the Divine is the only pure, unsullied, unchanging, enduring love. It is free from the taint of selfishness and self-interest. This is the love that is glorified in Bharatheeya culture. There should be no unfair comparisons between different cultures. All of them essentially are one. What is important is people should learn to live and strive in harmony for achieving things in common and sharing their benefits equally. This is the attitude that should be promoted among students in educational institutions.

Students should also develop steadfast faith in God so that they can face with fortitude any of the vicissitudes of life. Prahlada is a supreme example of such faith. He bore with calmness and faith in the Lord all the persecutions to which he was subjected.

Culture and spirituality are not different from each other. *Ekaatma bhaava* (Oneness of spirit) is culture. Students should combine spiritual education with academic studies. Moreover, cultivation of good conduct is equally important.

Good behaviour should be maintained even after leaving college. Students of the Sai Institute should bear the stamp of morality and good behaviour wherever they go. They should act according to their conscience. Students should prove themselves exemplary citizens.

The Vice-Chancellor has requested that from this evening I should give discourses on the Raamaayana during this summer course. Every syllable in the Raamaayana is relevant for us today. It is pregnant with moral and spiritual teachings. Humanity will be redeemed when the lessons of the Raamaayana are learnt and put into practice.

Discourse to the Summer Course in Indian Culture and Spirituality on the morning on 20-5-1996, in the Institute Auditorium, Brindhaavan Campus.

Develop Prema (Love) towards the Lord, the Parama-Prema (Highest Love) of which He is the embodiment. Never give room for doubts and hesitations, for questions, to test the Lord's Prema.

Baba