

28. Be a care taker

TODAY this *Saptaaha* (seven-day discourse) celebrates its *Samaapthi* (conclusion). That word means, according to most people, the final function; but it has a profounder meaning too. *Samaapthi* means, the attainment (*Aapthi*) of *Samam* (*Brahman*). That is the final fruit of *sravana*, *manana* and *nididhyaasana* (hearing, recapitulation and contention) of spiritual lessons and discourses. In the worldly sense, it means the conclusion of a period of time; in the spiritual sense, it means transcending time!

What is the sum and substance of all these discourses? It is that man has to give up his pursuit of sensory objects if he seeks lasting peace and joy. Material wealth brings along with it, not only joy but grief as well. Accumulation of riches, multiplication of wants--these lead only to alternation between joy and grief. Attachment is the root of both joy and grief; detachment is the Saviour. *Aashakthi* (attachment) is *maaraka* (death); *anaashakthi* (non-attachment) is *thaaraka* (saviour).

A millionaire pays income-tax with tears in his eyes; a headmaster joyfully gives up the furniture and laboratory appliances of his school when he is transferred to some other place. Why? Because the headmaster knows that he is only the caretaker, not the owner. He is not attached to these articles; he knows that they belong to the government. So, too, feel that your family, your house, your fields your car, are all the Lord's property and that you are only the trustee; be rely to give them up without a murmur at a moment's notice.

The sacred literature of our country, the *Vedas*, the *Shaasthras*, the *Ithihaasas*, the *Manusmrithi* and the *Puraanas* contain the drugs to cure attachment and endow you with the strength of detachment. Drugs available at other places though they may be more pleasant, cost time and money and do not assuage pain. *Thyaaga* (*sacrifice*) does not mean that you should not value things; you may, even care for them. But, remember always that they are transient, that the joy they give is trivial and temporary. That is to say, do not develop *moha* towards them. Know their real worth; do not over-estimate them.

Subject yourself to vigilant scrutiny

A thirsty passenger asked the water-carrier at an up-country railway station whether his leather bag was clean. The reply he got was, "As regards cleanliness, all I can say is that the bag which pours is cleaner than the bag which takes in." You must care more for the cleanliness of your mind and intellect than for the external body. Instead of criticising others and finding faults with the actions of others, subject yourself to vigilant scrutiny, understand yourself well, and correct your own faults; do not be like the dancer who blamed the drummer for her wrong steps.

This objective world is as ageless as God. Who knows when God resolved upon the Universe? It is as *anaadhi* (beginningless) as God; we cannot determine when it came into being but we can determine when it will end, at least for each of us. When you look into the well, your reflection is always there; so far as you are concerned, your reflection can be removed from the well moment you decide you will no more seek the well, or pay attention to it.

The Shaasthri who discoursed today gave a very learned and convincing disquisition on the concepts of *Aarya* and *Anaarya* as depicted in the *Raamaayana*; but, you must now concentrate on the illness from which you are suffering and on its cure. Foolishness, egoism and sheer ignorance are the causes of the misery of man today. The eye, the ear and the tongue lead man to

anxiety and malice, instead of making him the messenger of peace and harmony. Intellect is the root of pride and envy. Vishnu is *Jagannaatha* at Puri; at Kaashi, Shiva is *Vishweshwara* (both Lords of the Universe); where, then, is there any room for rivalry between those who worship at Puri and those who worship at Kaashi? Vishnu is *Gopaal* (protector of cows) and Shiva is *Pashupathi* (master of cows). Still, the innate urge to fight comes up in the heart of man and he uses the names of the Lord as excuses for provoking the fighting he relishes.

Limit the desires to your capacity

It is difficult to put into practice even the truths of which you are intellectually convinced. Look at Dhrona on the battle-field. When he heard that Ashwattama had been killed, he was so overcome with sorrow that he did not pause to consider where he was and for what end; even if the news were true he should not have laid down arms, forgetting the task upon which he had come to the field. Delusion (*moha*) induced him to do so; that was the reason for his discomfiture and death.

There are many thousands of people here today, the final day, as there were all these days and so, I would like to tell you that it is not what you hear that is beneficial, but what you put into daily practice. Develop renunciation about your own needs and wishes. Examine each on the touchstone of essentiality. When you pile up things in your apartments, you only promote darkness and dust; so also, do not collect and store too many materials in your mind. Travel light. Have just enough to sustain life and maintain health. The pappu (dhal) must have only enough *uppu* (salt) to make it relishing; that is to say, do not spoil the 'dhal' by adding too much salt. Life becomes too difficult to bear if you put into it too much of "desire." Limit your desires to your capacity and even among them, have only those that will grant lasting joy. Do not run after fashion and public approval and strain your resources, beyond repair. Also, keep to your own dharma and the code of rules that regulate life or the stage you have reached.

Cow: symbol of selfless service

Do not place your needs first, your joy first. Consider the needs of others, the *aanandha* of others, as even more important. Respect elders and cultivate cordiality between brothers and sisters, teachers and students, employers and employees, etc.

Tend the cow, for, the cow is the symbol of selfless service of Dharma. That is why when a newly built house is ceremonially entered, the owner first takes into the house a cow. Once a *rishi* was taking a ritual bath at the Thriveni Sangham at the confluence of the Yamuna, Ganga and Saraswathi. While he was submerged in the holy water some fishermen threw the net and he was dragged ashore by them as a rare catch. He was claimed by the fishermen and the *rishi* told the king, who was in a fix, that they should be paid the price of the catch before he could order them to release him. Now, what was the price of the "*rishi-fish*?" A thousand *varaahas*? The *rishi* protested that he was not so cheap. Five thousand? it was too small, the *rishi* remarked. Then a yogi who was at the palace suggested a fair solution. He said "Give a cow, that is enough" and the cow was considered fair compensation for the *rishi*. That is the measure of the value of a cow.

Observe the rules laid down in the *Shaasthras*, respect the culture of your land and bring honour to the land of your birth. Belief in providence is native to an Indian and fear of sin is inherent in him. Nourish your aged parents; revere them. If you honour your mother, the mother of the Universe will guard you against harm. If you honour your father, the Father of all beings will

guard you. This is as true as the fact that if you honour your parents, your children will honour you.

Distinctions of different Incarnations

While speaking of God as guarding you, I am reminded of a note that some one has sent Me from this gathering. The note wants Me to explain why I have not mentioned Sai Baaba in any of my discourses so far, though I bear the name as the *avathaara* of Sai Baaba. Evidently, the writer of the note had in mind the people who engage themselves in publicity work of Raama or Krishna or Sai Baaba.

For those who know, Sai Raama, Krishna Vishnu, all are One; the distinction is only in the *Upaadhi* (the form and the name). The power, the glory, the mission, the message are all the same, though the particular achievements may be different, according to the needs and purposes of the age. That is why, though you believe that Raama and Krishna are the same, you do not approve when some one says that Raama lifted the Govardhanagiri or that Krishna broke the *Shivadhamus* (Shiva's bow). I do not appreciate in the least, the distinction between the various appearances of Godhead, Sai, Raama, Krishna, etc. I do not proclaim that this is more important or that the other is less important.

There are many attempts to construct *mandhirs* (temples) for Me, and people go about collecting donations for the same. I do not like this enthusiasm. Worship in any temple, any form, under any name. You neglect the ancient temples of your town, and start building new ones. And, very soon, the new ones too will be neglected, when you discover reasons for building newer ones. People who plan the new mandhirs, and form committees, and go about collecting contributions, help only to spread atheism, for they are urged by egoism, greed and malice, rather than genuine devotion and spirit of service.

Be an example to others

Dhana (money) is the currency of the world; Saadhana is the currency of the spirit. When these self-styled bhakthas come to you with their lists and books, do not give even a paisa. Why do you need a hall to do *naamasmarana* or *japa* or *dhyaana*? The presence of others will more often be a hindrance rather than help; make your house itself a *mandhir*, meditate in your own shrine-room. Sing *bhajans* in your own home; above all, be an example to others by means of sweet speech, humility, reverence to elders, truthfulness, faith and steadfastness. That way you will bring more into the fold of theism than by establishing societies, collecting donations and running *mandhirs*.

The Lord looks for sincerity, simplicity and steady joy in the contemplation of His name and form. If you keep awake throughout the twelve hours on *Shivaraathri* (festival of Lord Shiva), because of illness, the vigil will not win His favour. If you quarrel with the wife and desist from food for one full day, it will not be recorded in the book of God as a fast. If you lose yourself in the depths of unconsciousness after a bout of drink, you will not be counted as a person who has achieved *Samaadhi*. No *bhuktha* (enjoyed) can be a bhaktha (devotee); that is to say, he who has an eye on the profit he can derive from service to God, cannot be a true devotee. They praise Raama to the skies one day and decry Him the next, if their fortune gets dry. Those who declare that Sai Baaba is great and others are small, do not know the elements of spiritual discipline. They are unfit for entering the field of spiritual service. I want to warn you against a set of

people who have emerged nowadays using My name for such personal purposes. Be careful about these and treat them as they deserve.

Treasure in your hearts the *Amrithavaakyas* (death-destroying message) that you have heard during these seven days; ponder over them in the silence of your *dhyaana*; and, endeavour to realise the precious Goal of this invaluable 'Human birth.' I bless you all.

Madras, 19-8-1964

Past Is past, It won't come.

Future, you are not sure of.

The given moment is now (Present).

This Present is Omnipresent.

Shri Sathya Sai