

42. Life's balance sheet

THE opening of this Shrinivasa cloth market is just an excuse for My coming to Kurnool and meeting all of you, including the two ministers, Dr. Lakshminarasiah and Alapathy Venkatarāamiah. Life itself is a market, where giving and taking, bargaining and speculating are part of the game. Life has its ups and downs, its profits and losses, its balance sheets and disappointments, its joys and sorrows. But the giving of *bhakti* (devotion to God) in exchange for *mukthi* (liberation) is the most profitable business of all; and I am interested in telling you about that only.

Bhakti is not simply the worship of the Lord; it is much more than that. Primarily it is the control of the senses; for, when life is offered as worship, the senses do not run after transient things. They can be thus controlled, for man is not a weak animal; he is endowed with mighty spiritual power and he can learn to use it; he can tap this power through prayer, which brings down Grace to fill the reservoir of his heart. Man tames the lion and the elephant to obey his call; can he not tame his emotions and passions? Make your strength evident in the face of hardships; when all goes well, you become soft, the blows of defeat toughen you into heroes. The difficulties that the organisers of this market encountered, as described to us in the report, show that they but deepened the determination of Raamalingiah and others to plod on, until they won through.

Alapathy Venkatarāamiah is the Minister in charge of temples in Andhra and the words of advice which he gave now are worthy of attention. He spoke of the culture of India and its excellence. It held up to mankind for reverence of not conquerors and millionaires but hermits and saints. He has also a great love for Sanskrit, the language of our scriptures, which give this land the inspiration to advance along the spiritual path of discrimination and non-attachment. The scriptures are so framed that they serve the highest needs of all classes of people, whatever their age, avocation or attainment. Like a loving mother the *Vedhas* guide and guard all her children, wherever they may be.

The body is worn by the *jeeva* to realise God

Venkatarāamiah also said that the attitude of *bhakti* is the important thing, not the name and form which has drawn it out. Yes; the Lord has a thousand names. In fact, all names are His; there is no name that is not His. Krishna, Shrinivasa, Sai Baaba---all are names of the same entity. The body is worn by the *jeeva* in order to realise God, the source from which the *jeeva* came. That is why it is said that it is very lucky for living beings to get equipped with the human physique. To be endowed with a desire for things of the spirit is the height of fortune.

A grandfather was fondling his grandson, a little lad of four; the boy asked him his age; the grandfather said he was seven; the lad refused to believe; how could a boy of four have a grandfather of seven? But, the old man said, "My dear boy! I do not care for all the sixty-three years I spent in the darkness; it is only seven years since I came under the influence of a *guru*, who opened my eyes and led me along the path to realisation. I have lived only seven years so far; the rest, I could as well ignore as wasted. I speak the truth always; this the truth."

That is the proper attitude. Do not admire and gape at the engineering achievements of countries that are able to shoot a rocket round the earth or over the moon or invent a bomb that can wipe out an entire city. That is the culmination of the strife for death and for mastery over other nations. That path leads only to misery, loss, hatred, and waste. The competition is about who

will earn more in less time. All this comes about because man mistakes himself to be just a bundle of the senses, packed into this body. Really speaking, he is a spark of divinity waiting to illumine the intelligence.

Man has to develop spiritual attitude

India has been announcing this Truth to the world since ages; this is the land where holy personages, divine personalities, saints and sages, *avathaars*, carrying the authentic stamp of God, have demonstrated that nothing else can give man the peace and joy that the contemplation of the Universal *Aathma* can give.

The poor ryot who throws a paisa into the river Godaavari when he passes over the bridge might appear to the half-educated boor, smoking in the corner, to have wasted a precious coin, which he could have put to better use, perhaps, buying a *bidi*! But, what he did is a spiritual act; he felt that the Godaavari was a living mother, who gave food to men and cattle, and his paisa is not just a coin, it is an attitude of mind, a token of gratefulness, a flower of worship. He has the *Aathma-bhaava* (spiritual attitude), while the critic who sneers at him is suffering from *anaathma-bhaava* (unspiritual attitude). *Hindhu dharma* teaches man to see and develop this *aathma-bhaava* not only with all mankind who are bound by the same tie of kinship, but, with all beings and all nature. Man is not isolated; he is one with all. All have to be served; all have to be known, for he is this all.

Kurnool, 4-12-1964

*As the carpenter shapes the wood, the blacksmith shapes the iron,
the goldsmith shapes the gold, so the Lord shapes in His own way,
as the fancy suits Him.*

*He created the Universe, the manifold, woven of space, time and
guna.*

Know the Lord is the basis; and lose all fear.

Shri Sathya Sai