

9. Deathless though dead

Shivaraathri is the day on which Maheshwara takes up the *Linga* form for the benefit of spiritual seekers; what they have to seek from Maheshwara is *Jnaana* (spiritual wisdom). "*Jnaanam Maheswaraa dhichched.*"--- *It is jnaanam that makes manifest the Divinity latent in man. It is the final achievement of all thapas (penance), all yoga and yaaga. You cannot get that joy or even a fraction of that joy, pursuing earthly pleasure. To cure you of the bite of a cobra in a dream, you have to be awakened, that is all. 'Waking' is the acquisition of jnaana. That jnaana (knowledge) is got by ceaseless dhyaana (meditation) of the glory and potence of the Almighty.*

Two things are essential for happy life. *Dhaanya* and *Dhyaana*. *Dhaanya* (grains) for the sustenance of the Body and *dhyaana* (contemplation) for entering the temple of the Lord and merging in His Glory. It was said by Shastri that sages retired into the silence of the forest and by means of hard mental toil won for mankind the great treasure of spiritual experience and inspiration. He gave many examples of such seers; but, there are some who condemn this retirement from the jostling crowds and call these heroes, cowards afraid to face the stern demands of life! They label them as selfish, desirous of their own salvation, regardless of the rest.

The real reason for their taking refuge in lonely places is to learn the secret of liberation for the benefit of humanity. It is like the young man who goes abroad now for higher technical training; you cannot condemn him as a coward or socially useless individual, when the very purpose is to sharpen and deepen experience and become more useful! The purpose of the sages is only to keep the senses away from things that delight and deviate, to escape the infection that will damage the springs of joy.

Passions are only apparent

The *Aathmavidya* that they specialise in when they are in the *ashramas* and *thapovans* (hermitages) of the forest brings salvation to all those who later come in contact with them. Their calmness and joy will inspire others too. You find fault with them for leaving you; but what good does the man who stays, achieve? People behave in the same family, though living together, as snakes and scorpions to each other. Many a home reminds you of a menagerie rather than a cosy abode of joy and peace!

This morning, I spoke of anger, hatred, envy and pride as flames of fire consuming the mind. Now, the Shastri from Delhi said that such passions are only apparent and that the real You are not bothered by them! This reminds Me of a story. A boy offered to label the names of the articles contained in tins and cans and pots in the kitchen of his house and his mother agreed; he wrote and pasted correctly on all except the sugar tin. Upon that he placed the label, RED CHILLIES! When reprimanded, the boy said it was only to deceive the ants, which will not swarm over a red chillies tin! Superficial *Vedhaantha* (*Vedhic* philosophy) will not keep the fire away.

Of course these qualities are useful sometimes like the hiss of the cobra to keep the disturbers away. Anger and hatred can be used to ward off the evil that stalks the *saadhaka* (aspirant); be angry at things that hamper you; hate the habits that brutalise you. Cultivate *jnaana* (Supreme Knowledge) and visualise the Lord in things and activities. That makes this human birth worth while, Do not seek faults in others; for the others are but manifestations of the Lord you are seeking to realise. It is your own fault that you see in others. There are only two things in this

world, one apparent, the other, real; the *kshethra* and the *kshethrajna*. The *kshethra* is the *deha* (body) and the *Kshethrajna* is the *Dehi* (Self). The *loka* (world) is the Form of the *Lokesh* (Lord of the world); the World is the Body of God.

Make death a sublime act of liberation

You are awake when you feel that you have full knowledge; but, when awake, you are aware only of the many, not of the One. It is only when you are in deep sleep that all the multiplicity vanishes; then you are not aware of the world and of your deluded picture of it. Examine even while awake the stages of dream and deep sleep and realise that wakefulness is a handicap to the seeker of Truth; the senses are deceptive; they are inefficient instruments. Ramakrishna Paramahansa once shocked everyone by slapping Rani Rasmani on the cheek, while she was praying before the shrine at Dakshineswar, for he knew that she was asking the Mother not liberation, but bondage! Make use of the chance given to set yourself free; do not foolishly let it go.

Perhaps, when you return to your village, you too will tell people, "There were thousands and thousands of people from all parts of India and even some from foreign countries, at Puttaparthi. There was a big rush to have Baba's *darshan* (sight), etc." That is not what you should take back from here. There was a lady once who attended the musical recitation of a *Puranic* story; she sat through all the long hours; she described the gathering, the noise, the lights, the mike, the loudspeakers, but, what the story was which the reciter expounded, she had no idea at all! Learn from here the value of silence, of *naamasmarana*, of *bhajana*, of *japa*, of *dhyaan*, of single-minded remembrance of the Lord, of the association with spiritually kin. These will stand you in good stead, when distress assails you.

The master of the house was dying and when the wife and children pestered him with their anxiety, "What is to happen to us, when you leave us?" the dying man turned to them in equal despair; "What is to happen to me, when I leave you?" he asked and died. Do not move helplessly on to that doom of despair. Do not die in spirit, though the body may fall away. Know that the real "You" is deathless; make death a sublime act of liberation.

The three Nishthas of spiritual pursuit

Such knowledge can come only through a life devoted to *Dharmanishtha* (steady pursuit of the moral code) and *Karmanishtha* (steady devotion to the duties of one's stage of life). These two must end in the evolution of a third *Nishtha* like fire and Water producing steam to haul the train of wagons, or, like oil and air producing gas in the engine to haul the car. The third *Nishtha* is *Brahmanishtha*---the steady contemplation of the One Basis of all this seeming multiplicity, namely, *Brahmam*. The *Nishtha* becomes steady by practice that your separate individual existence is merged in the great Deluge of Wisdom, which merges you in Him, restores you to Him, rather.

Many thousands have come today to this Prashanthi Nilayam and joined this unique *satsanga* (holy gathering). Many who were coming regularly for all Shivarathris to witness and be elevated by the sight of the *Aathmalin-godbhavam* (Oval shaped Form of Self) have not come today; many who have not come so far have had the good fortune to be present. It is not mere chance. In the spiritual field, why, in all fields, there is no chance at all. Such fortune is due either to Grace or spiritual practice. Enter into prayerful silence and be blessed by the Great Vision of the Emergence of the *Aathmalinga*.

Prashaanthi Nilayam Mahashivaraathri, 1-3-1965

*Mind does not have any powers.
The only power is Aathma Shakthi,
the power of Aathma.
Mind has no form.
Mind can be said to be woven of desires.
The Aathma shines on the heart,
whether the heart be pure or impure.
If the heart is purified
and if the strongest desire is for God,
that is the best.*