

12. Dharma and dharmashaala

Bhaarathavarsha (Indian subcontinent) knew that the secret of peace lay in service and love towards all beings. The culture of this land proclaimed that the best form of service is to foster the practitioners of the good life, the sages and spiritual aspirants. Do not decry the servants of God; do not obstruct the charity of the generous; do not discourage the study of the scriptures even if you cannot positively promote any of these; that is the lesson taught in this land.

Peace cannot be ensured by the piling up of atom bombs, the systematic amassing of weapons. Without removing hatred from the heart and planting love therein, mere terror and counter-terror cannot establish cordiality and harmony. "You purchase a bean and demand a gourd as an extra." Your effort is so microscopic: your expectation of fruit is gigantic. How can this wish for peace be realised? Little is done to cleanse the mind of hate, but every one expects international peace tomorrow at dawn.

At present, every one is after *sukha* (happiness). The hunt for comfortable jobs and positions of influence, the founding of banks and business houses, the growth of bungalows--all this is evidence of the eagerness to live in happiness. But, there is no eagerness to live in *shaanthy* (peace). *Sukha* (happiness) is confused with *shaanthy*; *sukha* is taken to be the same as *shaanthy*. No one of the rich or well placed or prosperous or powerful has peace. You can investigate and find out for yourselves the truth of this. Peace is not found in the pass book or many-roomed bungalow or godown or iron safe. Your whole attitude is topsy-turvy.

It is as absurd as putting the cart before the horse. The physical is subordinate to the spiritual. The body is the cart and the spirit, the horse. Of course, the cart should be kept

in good condition; vice ruins the body and makes it unfit for the journey of life. The mind is the horse and that is neglected and not groomed for the journey. It is starved. In this land where Meera, Jayadeva, Valmeeki, Thyaagaraaja, Raamadas and Tukaaraam, by their intense yearning and fortitude, showed the path of achieving lasting joy, precious years of life are thrown away in silly adventures.

"I am the holy" attitude breeds grief

The four *Mahaavaakyas* (great truths) which the *Vedhas* proclaim, announce that all this is *Brahmam*, one unitary uniform substance, appearing only to the diseased eye as many. *Aham Brahmaasmi*---"I am Brahman"---you must assert; then, you transmute yourself into sons of Immortality; (*Amrithasya Puthraah*); now, since you bleat *aham dehaasmi*---I am the body (the combination of five elements, that one day splits into those elements)---you degrade yourself into *Amrithasya Puthraah*---sons of Illusion. That attitude breeds grief; it is the root of discontent. People who stay in air-conditioned rooms have no coolness in their heart; people who resided in the caves of the forest had it. It is not external temperature that counts; it is the inner temper.

Here, the *Mahaasakthi* (Supreme Power) in the Name and Form of Chengalamma is established and evident. And, this foundation stone for a *dharmashaala* (choultry) for the pilgrims who come to adore Her is being laid by Me. It is significant, for I never do any casual act. Every single act has a deep significance. This temple and this *dharmashaala* are bound to serve mankind more and more. That is the meaning of *prathishtha*, the establishment of temples and the institutions of service related to them.

Dharma leads you to God

This building is named a *Dharmashaala*, a Hall of *Dharma*, a School of *Dharma*. It should not be merely a free lodging house for pilgrims. It should have an atmosphere of *dharmā*, which the pilgrims must inhale and get inspired thereby. The temple will *inspire Aathmadharma*, leading the pilgrim into himself, to search for the *Mahaasakthi* that is behind the *Icchaasakthi*, the *Kriyasakthi* and the *Jnaanasakthi* (power of the will, the work and the wisdom) that man is endowed with.

The *Dharmashaala* must inspire him to deepen faith in the *Vriththidharma*, (the moral code that regulates and enriches his profession), the *Varnadharmā*, (the restrictions and regulations that strive to canalise his impulses and instincts, into fields that are special to his place in society), *Aashramadharmā* (disciplines laid down for the blossoming of the spiritual consciousness during the four stages of life as student, as householder, as a recluse, and as ascetic), *Viseshadharmā* (code of conduct in special situations) and *Saamaanyadharmā* (code of conduct common to all). That will make the name *Dharmashaala* really appropriate. *Dharma* is the path by which the *Mahaasakthi* in the temple of your heart can be tapped, experienced and realised; without adherence to *dharmā*, it can never happen.

Dharma (virtuous conduct) purifies the mind and leads you to God. It creates a taste for the Name and the Form of God. When you love the Name and Form of Krishna, you will naturally respect and obey the command of Krishna, which is found in the Bhagavad Geetha. Have the Name on the tongue and the Form in the eye and the demon called *aasha* (unending desire), will fly from your mind, leaving joy and content therein. This kind of constant dwelling on the indwelling God will promote in you love for all beings. You will then see only good in others. You will strive only to do good to others.

Do your duties with God as the witness

Now, all things have gone up in value; man alone has become cheap. Endowed with the costly gems of Reason, Discrimination and Detachment, man has allowed them to slip away and he is beset with dire poverty, as a consequence. He has become cheaper than animals; he is slaughtered in millions without any qualm, because of the terrific growth of anger, hate and greed; he has forgotten his unity with all men, all beings, and all worlds. The contemplation of that unity alone can establish world peace, social peace and peace in the individual. All other efforts are like pouring sweet-scented rose water on a heap of ash, ineffective and foolish. I bless all efforts made by each of you to build *shaanthy* (peace), on this foundation of *Aathmajnaana*, knowledge of *Aathmic* unity.

Gatherings like this must be arranged to spread the message of the Prashaanthy Vidwanmahaasabha in order that you may know the truth about yourself and seek to experience it. As Kumaararaja said in the beginning, try to practise in your daily life at least one or two of the things. I spoke to you now. Do all daily duties, with God in your heart, as the witness. This gathering is like a flood that has come from all the four quarters; it gives an assurance that *Sanaathana Dharma* (Eternal Religion) will certainly rise in splendour in this land. It teaches man to investigate the truth about himself and the world. Is that not the most proper thing for man to do? What is wrong in prompting man to engage himself in the task? It is mere ignorance that keeps you away from this task. Start now, with the first step, *Naamasmarana*, (remembrance of the Name of the Lord, the Universal Indweller); that will lead you on to the further steps, until the goal is reached.

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*Whenever there is a vacuum in any heart,
love flows into it
and is glad that it can fill the emptiness.
It is never held back;
it is offered in abundance
without guile or deceit.
it does not wear the cloak of
falsehood, flattery or fear.
The tendrils of love
aspire to cling only to
the garments of God.
It senses that God resides
in His splendour, in every heart
to discover that the seat of God
is real devotion.*

SHRI SATHYA SAI