

32. Poorna minus poorna is poorna

Every being needs *prema* (Love), inhales and exhales *prema*. For *prema* is the basic breath; every one is the embodiment of *prema*. Love knows no fear and so, love needs no falsehood to support it. It is only fear that makes people warp the face of truth to make it pleasant for those whom they fear. Love also seeks no reward; love is its own reward. That is the sole gain, the joy of loving and being loved. When it is directed to God, it is called *bhakthi*. *Who* would not love God when once he is aware of His Glory, Majesty, Might and Mercy? Love removes all egoism; the self is forgotten, it is superseded, it is transcended. Any trace of greed for gain, *vishaya vaasana* as it is called, degrades *prema* into a bargain over the counter. Whatever the Loved One does or gives is satisfying to the Lover, the Adorer.

A child is all love; its smile is most innocent; it has not learnt to work for gain. It has no *vaasana*---*attachment* to the goods of the world. It plays with a doll for a while and throws it off the next moment. The love-full heart of the child hardens with age because greed breeds hatred and envy.

It is *only prema* that can successfully carry out schemes for service and uplift. Love creates sympathy; love will show the way where hatred can only confound. When a toddler is learning to walk, love will place no obstacle in the path; on the other hand, it will encourage; welcoming each forward step and overlooking each fall. The plans for the uplift of the villagers, which the Minister derailed just now, have to be executed with love and sympathy. Many a beneficial act in the country is rendered barren because of harsh criticism and wanton disparagement. *Bhakthi* alone can transform people's hearts into *Sathya* and *Dharma*.

Know the items of the spiritual menu

Take the ups and downs of life as natural; they are incidental to the world of compounds and components. A *sanyaasin* (ascetic) named Raamakrishnaswamy was informed by a disciple who rushed into his presence that his son had died. The Swamy sat unmoved; he only said, "Water flows; fire burns; the wind blows", meaning that the corn pound of five elements has some day to disintegrate. The Swamy laughed at the concern of others; he was brave because he knew. Those who know are called *guru*: heavy, weighted. They will not be moved by storms; the leaf on which no dish is served tends to rise up in the wind and fly, but when it is weighted by servings of food, it will remain unshaken. Virtues, faith, steady discipline, devotion, detachment, equanimity--these are items of the spiritual menu..

When you have attained true wisdom, you will find that good fortune should not be gloated over, nor bad fortune grieved over. The hero treats both with equal unconcern. They are breezes and storms that cannot affect the depths of the ocean of bliss in the heart of man.

The Minister spoke of gardeners who tie a weight at the end of snake-gourds, in order that they may grow long and straight. Done when quite young, the weight pulls the gourds and prevents them rolling into curves. Children too must be trained to grow straight by the parents, the teachers and the company into which they are led. In the old days, they were awakened from sleep at 4.00 a.m. The mother sang fine hymns and poems until dawn when she moved about in the house and the children imbibed the lesson of prayer automatically from her. Now, children get acquainted with the heroes and heroines of the *Puraanas* (epics) and of Raama, Krishna and the other manifestations of Divinity only through the films. They identify them by the names of the actors who assumed those roles. They miss the sublimity and the sweetness of the epics and

the mythological stories since they rely on modernised and mis-shaped rescensions for their acquaintance.

Words cannot describe God's glory

Parents do not encourage them to proceed to the Presence of the Great, to listen to the discourses of genuine teachers, to visit sacred places where the atmosphere is fragrant with *saadhana* and study. Arjuna was called Dhananjaya, not because he somehow managed to bring from various sources much wealth, but because he was rich in *viveka*, *vairaagya* and *vichakshana* (wisdom, detachment and discrimination). These are the riches one has to earn and accumulate.

When his son completed his education and came home, a father asked him various questions, eager to discover whether he had used his years of study to the best advantage. The son made him exceedingly glad by his answers. At last, he asked him to describe the glory of God. The boy sat silent and did not answer. In spite of hours of sweet persuasion, and even threats of drastic punishments, the boy was adamant; he did not open his mouth. The father lamented his fate in having a son, who though proficient in many branches of learning, had turned out to be an atheist. When he was on the point of bursting into tears at the calamity that had overtaken him, the son said that he was answering his question in the best manner possible---by silence; for how could words describe His Glory? That son was a remarkable son; the father too by his question and by his reaction to the silence of the son demonstrated that he was a remarkable father.

Feel that God is the Father of all beings

The Minister appreciated the discipline you maintain here, though I am yet not quite satisfied. The silence maintained here must be carried over to wherever you go; it is to be taken as an exercise in the control of the senses that are exterior oriented. The tongue should not talk evil; the eyes should not look out for evil; the ears should not seek evil. The presence of God in every being makes every one holy; thinking low of others amounts to thinking low of God. When you follow the convention of addressing others as *Sodara Sodarimanulaara*, ("Brothers and Sisters"), you must cultivate the feeling that God is the Father and that you are all brothers and sisters, each to the rest. This brotherhood is more real and binding than the blood brotherhood, for here the paternal property for which you struggle can be shared without the share of each being diminished in any way. When the *Poorna* (full) is subtracted from the *Poorna*, *Poorna* is found to be the balance. *

* Ishaavaasya Upanishad says: *Poomasya Poomamaadaaya Poomamevaavasishyate*: From the Full (*Brahman*) proceeds this Full (Universe). That (*Brahman*) remains Full, even though this (Universe) has come out of it.

The Minister said that he is anxious to be of some service, as Minister, to the thousands of pious people who come here from all the States of India and even from abroad; and so he is accepting the proposal to constitute this Prashaanthi Nilayam into a Township, so that you may solve the various special problems that arise as a result of the arrival and stay of these large numbers of pilgrims. I must say that I have no desire to keep away from any one place or village or people. Interested as I am in fostering and guiding countries across the seven seas, I am interested in associating with and fostering places that are near and neighbouring. The attitude of exclusion, of this being Mine and that being not Mine, can never arise in Me.

He also announced that he had decided on improving the road that leads to Prashaanthi Nilayam. I am not too enthusiastic about this amenity because, when you improve the means of access and

make them easy and quick, the really earnest seekers will be swamped by others who are actuated more by curiosity or the urge for a new type of week-end. When pilgrims had to ascend the steps up the Seven Hills to have the *darshan* (audience) of Lord Shrinivasa they pinned their faith on God; they called out 'Govinda, Govinda' so that they may have strength and stamina added to them by His Grace. Now, when cars and buses go up in a matter of minutes, the Hills do not resound to the name of God. The mind is not cleansed by that discipline of physical endurance before the pilgrim stands in front of the shrine to offer his heart to the Lord. But I do not stand in the way. Provide only such facilities as will complement the atmosphere of this place---that is My suggestion.

Dashara, 19-10-1966