

9. The true tablet

WHAT a great fortune to be born in Bhaarath, which is redolent with the fragrance of God, echoing through ages the voices calling humanity to proceed along the path of God. The saints and sages from this land have been teaching the people of East and West manifold ways to lift the veil of ignorance, that hides God from Man. One such "means" is the worship of '*idols*,' symbolising God. This method has been grossly misinterpreted by many fanatics with one-track minds. The significance of the idol is simple and can be easily understood. When you desire to drink something, say, milk, you need a cup! The milk then fills the cup and takes the form of the cup. When you have the *Linga* as the idol, you feel it is filled with Divine effulgence, glory and grace. When you worship the Krishna idol, you have a more ornate cup wherein you fill the same Divine essence, so that you may quaff it and slake your thirst.

The seeker elevates the stone image into a replica of God, he does not reduce God into a stone. The idol is just a container, prompter, a base, a reminder, a residence which God is invited to occupy. The Supreme is not squeezed into the small; the small is recognised as symbolic of the Supreme. Through the seen to the unseen, from the drop to the sea, from the patent to the latent--that is how idol-worship helps the aspirant. In fact, no one can conceive of the Almighty without picturing It as Power, Light, Mercy, Wisdom, Energy, Intelligence, Purity. And, these qualities can enter the consciousness only through some concrete experience, as the Sun, the Lotus, the Sky, the Ocean and the Wave etc. The name is a vocal image, the image is a visual base. The seed contains the tree; the *Linga* contains the manifestable and the manifested Universe, including the Creator whose Will it is.

Aspire now, adore now, achieve now

When the name is pronounced by the tongue, and the image is adored by the mind, these should not degenerate into mechanical routine; the meaning of the Name and the content of the Form must, at the same time, inspire and illumine the consciousness. Escape the routine; involve yourselves in the attitude of worship deeply and sincerely. That is the way to earn peace and content, for which all human activity ought to be dedicated and directed. Planting the sapling of the cotton-tree, how can you hope for the mango?

Do it now! That is the urgency of this problem of all problems, of winning peace and contentment. If you feel hungry now, you cannot have your meals tomorrow; you do not eat your meals now, fearing that you will be hungry tomorrow. Eat when you are hungry--not before or after. Aspire now, adore now, achieve now.

A king once ordered a contractor to build a palace for him; he wanted him to use wood that will be smooth and without knots, the whole length. The contractor searched all over the region and could not get wood that was straight, smooth and knot-less. At last, he saw a few banana trees and found that their trunks were of the description the king had given. He cut the trees and carried them to the king. The king said, "Of course, the thing is smooth and nice, but, they have not got the requisite strength. You cannot use them for the building!"

It is not the outer quality that matters; it is the inner strength that imparts value and significance. The heart has to be pure. Constant recollection of the glory and majesty of God, who is the Indweller, through the instrumentality of the Name, helps to purify the heart. That is the B12 vitamin that promotes spiritual health. There is no need for any other tablet.

Man thirsts for God and cannot live without Him

Life is a pilgrimage, where man drags his feet along the rough and thorny road. With the Name of God on his lips, he will have no thirst; with the Form of God in his heart, he will feel no exhaustion. The company of the holy will inspire him to travel in hope and faith. The assurance that God is within call, that He is ever near, will lend strength to his limbs and courage to his eye.

Remember that with every step, you are nearing God; and God too, takes ten steps towards you when you take one step towards Him. There is no stopping place in this pilgrimage; it is one continuous journey, through day and night; through valley and desert; through tears and smiles; through death and birth, through tomb and womb.

When the road ends, and the Goal is gained, the pilgrim finds that he has travelled only from himself to himself, that the way was long and lonesome, but the God that led him unto it was all the while in him, around him, with him, and beside him! He himself was always Divine. His yearning to merge in God was but the sea calling to the Ocean! Man loves, because He is Love! He craves for melody and harmony, because He is melody and harmony. He seeks Joy, for He is Joy. He thirsts for God, for he is composed of God, and he cannot exist without Him.

This is God's world and all beings are His

God is to be recognised in all that exists, all that is charming, or suffering, blooming or drooping. He is Intelligence in the insect, Faithfulness in the dog, Latent Energy in the rock! Vivekaanandha announced at Chicago that Hindhuism uncovered the *upaadhi* (body encasement) and sought the inner core of the Divine in all things, animate and inanimate. A gentleman may wear morning dress, evening dress, dinner coat or luncheon slacks; he is the same inside all these dresses, isn't he?

If you know the road and the goal, then you can discover whether you are progressing or not; otherwise how can you? The goal is to enlarge your vision, your sympathy, your love to the extent that God has spread His Love, His Compassion and His Grace. So, be ever watchful to see that you strive to take in more and more of God into you. Blood has to circulate from head to foot; Love has to circulate from high to low; then only can health and happiness be ensured, for the individual and for the community. This is God's world; all beings are His. He loves them all, as the Moon sheds coolness on all.

Do not get attached to wordly things and pursuits. Be in the world but, do not let the world be in you. Work disinterestedly, content to do your duty as best as you can. Have no desires to place before God, for, whatever He does with you, however He treats you, is the gift He likes best to give you!

Practise the *Upanishaths* that you study. They are the discoveries of practical men and women, who set upon the task of conquering the alternating calamity of joy and grief, and of attaining perfect equanimity and balance. Practice alone makes man perfect.

Each life is like a day's march in the pilgrimage; make the fullest use of your talents and march forward to pitch the tent nearer the goal when darkness falls. Do not waste a single moment, in idling or loose living. Live in the Presence, in fear and humility, in love and service.

Prashaanthi Vidhwanmahaasabha, Hyderabad, 5-3-1968

Attachment causes pain and detachment results in joy. But, you cannot easily detach yourself from activity; the mind clings to some thing or other.

Make it cling to God, let it do all things [for God and leave the success or failure of the thing done to God, the loss and the profit, the elation or the dejection.

Then, you have the secret of shaanthy and contentment.

Shri Sathya Sai