

12. Offering poison

The only ray of hope in the enveloping gloom of fear, violence, and cruelty of enforced conformity, of hatred and persecution, is the Peace that one can win through self-control and *saadhana*. That Peace will pervade and purify the inner consciousness as well as the outer atmosphere. *Saadhana* is the life-breath of man; struggle for power, self and self is but the breath of poison. Poor silly man craves for the air that will destroy him, the food that will torment him and the drink that will defile him! He revels in ruining his nature and denying his excellence! That is the tragedy of civilisation.

He denies the innate excellence of the world around him too. He refuses to see in it the handiwork of God, evident in beauty, harmony, melody, truth, goodness, love, sympathy, law and learning, in everything that strikes the eye and fills the mind. He prides himself in his blindness and raises it into a philosophy called atheism!

He dismisses the grapes as sour, before even leaping to reach the bunch; he declares the sea as shallow, before wading into it! Searching for the truth, which is *God*, is too hard a task for his feeble wings. No wonder that man is overwhelmed by fear and frailty! He cannot escape them so long as he creeps in the slush and does not soar into the light.

Poison is man's daily food to-day

People say that all this is the subtle effect of time. Well, what exactly is time? Time is but the deepening of the root, the ripening of the fruit, the mellowing of a habit into a tradition. Without these, time is but a turn of the wheel. Time has endowed India with a precious heritage: *sahana* (tolerance of diversity); *sathyam* (adherence to truth); *maathrubhaavam* (reverence towards the Mother, as the real educator and as gratitude for the gift of birth); *dharma* (the fundamental prop of stable society, like integrity, service, compassion, etc). But this heritage is locked up in books, and spread out on platform; it is not utilised in daily life.

Poison is man's daily food today. His eye delights in poison; his mouth spouts poison; his ears wag when poison is proclaimed; his feet carry him to dens of poison; his mind cogitates plans to poison other's mind! God alone can swallow the poison and rid the world from the holocaust, as Shiva did when the *Haalahaala* (the dreadful poison that emanated from churning the Primal Ocean) threatened to destroy the world. Meditate on Shiva, the God whose throat is blue as a result of the poison he drank; poison will then be powerless to harm you. I call upon you to bring and offer to Me all the poison in you; take from Me health, happiness, Heaven itself.

The *Kalpavriksha* (Wish-fulfilling tree of Heaven) in the human heart is being suffocated by wild greenery and bushy briars. Remove this stifling undergrowth and the tree will grow and yield fruit.

Every minute must mark a forward step

See God in every one you meet; see God in everything you handle. His Mystery is immanent in all that is material and non-material; as a matter of fact, it has been discovered that there is no matter or material. It is all God, an expression of His Mystery! Derive joy from the springs of joy within you and without you; advance, do not stand still or recede. Every minute must mark a forward step. Rejoice that it is given to you to recognise God in all and welcome all chances to sing His Glory, to hear His chronicle, to share His presence with others. God has His hands in all handiworks; His feet on all attitudes, His eyes beyond all horizons, His face before every face.

That is what the Bhagavathgeetha declares; you who read the Geetha can vouch for the accuracy of that statement, if only you have faith in it and live in its light.

I shall now light the lamp, which will bum while you offer *bhajan*, continuously for twelve hours. Venkataavaadhani said that the lamp will burn clear and bright when you pour any one of the three *oils*---*bhakthi* (devotion), *jnaana* (spiritual wisdom) or *vairaagyam* (detachment). No. You must have all three; they are all components of one lamp only. They are like the plate, the oil, and the wick. Devotion is the plate, detachment the oil, and spiritual wisdom, the wick, which can be lit by striking the match, *shraddha* (steady faith).

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