

17. Why this ashaanthi?

LIFE as a human being is granted to living beings as the crown of their achievement during many lives. But that life is very unsteady; Death is always stalking a living being and nobody knows when it will snatch a man away. Therefore there should be no delay in fixing upon the goal of life and deciding on the best means of reaching it. One has to turn from the outer environment and its attractions to the inner levels of consciousness. This journey will be rewarded very well because there are precious treasures of ecstasy available. The sea shatters on the shore only shells and foam. But if one dares to dive into the depths he will be rewarded by coral and pearls. This is the real mission of man. If he misses it he is born and dies as an animal which has no knowledge of its inner springs of joy. He who has discovered this inner spring will be *Aathmaa Raama*, happy and content, peaceful and loving.

All the fear, anxiety, cruelty and injustice that is injuring the world today is caused by the wrong type of material education which lays emphasis more on the many than on the One. Even those who promise to cure the disease of the body treat it as if its different parts are fit subjects for a separate study and treatment. All nature is the body of God and must be looked upon as One. Spiritual education draws attention to the One behind all these apparent multiplicity.

***Uttharaayana* teaches us great lessons**

Today is the Pongal festival in Thamil Nadu. It is the day of *Uttharaayana* when the Sun turns daily more and more towards the north for a six-month period which is considered holier than the other six months. Pongal means bolling over, spilling over of milk, that is to say, the heart must spill over with delight at the great lessons that the *Uttharaayana* teaches us. The Sun is the presiding deity of the eye as well as the intellect and when the Sun turns north we must also decide to turn towards the holy path of God realisation. When Arjuna and Dhuryodhana were together with Sri Krishna to seek his help during the Kurukshethra war Arjuna chose the path of God while Dhuryodhana preferred the path of material power. If one has God on one side what can he not achieve.

The more riches you accumulate the more bound you become, the more worry, anxiety and fear you get into. There can be no peace of mind for a person burdened by riches. People seek this *Ashaanthi* (restlessness) since they do not know where *Shaanthi* (peace) can be acquired. An educated man must have as his first qualification the virtue, of *Shaanthi*, that is to say, not being affected by praise or blame, failure or success. It is the ego that makes one feel glad or sad. Therefore control the ego by extending love to every living being. Self or ego is lovelessness. No person who is afflicted with ego can feel happy when others are happy and feel miserable when others are miserable or can take positive step to share the happiness and misery of others. Without this deep love, a person however highly educated, is only a danger to the community.

Today you have dusted and cleaned your houses and their surroundings, painted and whitewashed the walls; you have drawn auspicious designs on the floor; you have tied up festoons and floral wreaths over your doors. All this is simply outer decoration. Decide to remove the evils of egotism, greed, hatred and jealousy and become aware in the new light that will dawn in the *Aathma* (Supreme soul) in all its glory.

Madras, 15-1-1979

Silence has to be started with oneself; that is to say, one must talk less, and think more deliberately, more discriminatingly. One must try to empty the mind of impulses, prejudices and preferences. Thus, man must strive to reach down to his real nature or dharma, which is Divine, Dharma swaruupa (righteousness personified).

Sri Sathya Sai