

27. The quest for peace

THE world has to be brought back to the rails. Only love and peace can achieve this. Fill your thoughts, speech and actions with love, truth and peace and engage yourselves in service actions.

We aspire for peace and comfort all the time, but where can we find it? Is it to be found in the material world around us? Experience shows that the peace or happiness got from external objects is not enduring. It is like a mirage, which cannot quench the thirst of the deluded animal that runs towards it. The real source of peace is within every individual and it is this inner peace that can confer real joy. Saint Thyagaraja proclaimed to the world in his song that there can be no happiness without peace. Such a peace can be got only through achieving equal-mindedness on all occasions, whether one is subjected to pleasure or pain, praise or blame, gain or loss. One should not be affected by criticism arising out of ill-will, envy or hatred. Reacting to such criticism in a like manner will destroy one's peace of mind. We should rectify ourselves if the criticism is justified. We should ignore baseless criticisms motivated by ill-will or jealousy. We should be true to our own good nature and maintain our equanimity.

***Sadhaka* should radiate happiness all around**

What every *sadhaka* needs to secure and should strive for is this *Shanthi* (peace). It is the fragrant flower which is born out of pure Love. It is the fragrance which is delved as a result of one's good deeds. This noble and fragrant quality of peace, if you lose it, then you have lost everything in life! Right from ancient times, in this country, there have been rishis and sages who have striven to proclaim the greatness' of this *Shanthi* (peace). They were criticised, ridiculed and deeded and they were subjected to untold ordeals, but they never lost hold of this Peace of theirs.

You must be like the sandalwood tree which transmits its fragrance even to the axe that is used to cut it. When an incense-stick is lighted, it is burning itself away, but it radiates its perfume all around. In the same manner, a true *Sadhaka*, a true devotee, should see to it that he keeps his peace intact under all circumstances. He should radiate happiness all around. THIS IS THE PRIMARY SADHANA. Through *Sadhana*, try to get that peace. Peace cannot be obtained in the world outside. Our kith and kin, our material possessions or name or fame will not give us peace. Peace is something which swells from within you. It is not something which is gathered from outside.

We desire peace, but we keep doing things, which, far from giving peace, cause anxiety and worry. Trifles are allowed to upset one's peace of mind. The true sadhak should remain unaffected by what others say about him.

Threefold *Shanthi*

The word *Shanthi* is pronounced three times at the end of every prayer, ritual or offering. What is the meaning behind this? The first *Shanthi* means: "May we enjoy peace for the body." It means that the body should not get heated by feelings of jealousy, hatred, attachments and the like. Whatever news you receive about any event, you should receive it with calmness and serenity. The second *Shanthi* pertains to the mind. You should not get worked up when someone says something about you which is not true. You must simply dismiss it as something which does not concern you. If you get angry or irritated, you are losing your peace of mind. You should say to yourself: "Why should I lose my peace of mind just because someone says something about me

which is not true?" You resolve to stick to your truth and be true to your own nature. The third *Shanthi* refers to peace of the soul. This peace has to be realised through love.

This world has to be brought back on to the rails and it is love and peace alone which can achieve this. Fill your thoughts, actions, emotions with love, truth and peace. There may be people who may hate us but love them too.

Workers in the Sathya Sai Organization should be filled with this spirit of love and peace and take to service activities. There should be no room for ego or hatred. Whatever the difficulties, we should not become despondent or dejected. You must be bold and courageous and plunge yourselves in the service of society. This is what Sai would like everyone to do. This is the ideal before you. Develop forbearance, patience, peace and love and carry on your work. This is your true *Sadhana*.

The nine different types of bhakti have two essential elements: love and peace. The great Mahabharata hero, Bhishma, was a supreme example of *Shanthi Bhakti*. For 56 days he lay calmly on a bed of arrows bearing all the pain with patience and peace, waiting for the propitious moment to come to surrender his soul to the Divine.

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The best Guru is the divine in you; yearn for hearing His voice, His Upadesh. If you seek worldly Gurus, you will have to run from one to another, like a rat caught inside a drum, which flees to the right when the drummer beats on the left, and to the left when the drummer beats the right.

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