

## 16. A rare opportunity

MAN'S life is like a garland, with birth at one end and death at the other. Between the two ends are strung together flowers of all kinds--troubles, worries, joys, sorrows and dreams. Few men are aware of the string that runs through all the flowers. Without the string there can be no garland. Only the person who recognises the string can become a real man. This string is called *Sutra* or *Brahma-Sutra* (The Divine String). The Divine *Atma* principle is the string which is found in all human beings and which is the source of all the potencies in them.

Bharat, which was the home of spirituality and a treasure-house of supreme wisdom, is today in the grip of demonic forces revelling in falsehood, chicanery, violence and wickedness. Out of the conviction that, in this crisis, only students can help to bring about peace, integrity and goodwill, we established educational institutions.

Students! You must realise 'that those whom you regard as eiders, leaders, persons holding positions and people worthy of respect, were once students like yourselves. Today's students will be tomorrow's citizens, administrators and respected leaders. Having regard to your future role, you must use the present opportunity after assessing the merits and defects of the older generation.

### **Spirituality and morality are like two eyes**

You make intense efforts to acquire your degrees. You should make much greater efforts to develop your character and integrity. Human life will be meaningless without morality and goodness. You students should remember that *Sai-Matha* (Bhagavan) feels a thousand times more distressed when you fall back in spirituality and morality than what: your parents feel when you do not fare well in your academic and scientific studies. Look upon spirituality and morality as the two eyes of human existence.

Despite the striking progress in the fields of science and technology, there has been deterioration in morals and social behaviour because of the growth of selfishness. Self-interest is predominant in every action. If one's entire life is governed by selfishness, what happens to society? Every individual has a responsibility to society, from which he derives so many benefits. Society is based on the principle of mutual give and take. Your primary duty is to show your gratitude to your parents, your kith and kin, your friends, teachers and others who have helped you in various ways to make you what you are.

You must also realise that the source of true joy is within yourself and not in the objects of the external world. When Sita was a prisoner in Ravana's Asoka Vana, none of the beautiful things in the garden could give here any joy. But the sight of Hanuman, as a messenger from her Lord Rama, gave her great joy because all her thoughts were centered on Rama and Hanuman sang the glories of Rama and described how he came to adore Rama.

This shows that man cannot derive joy merely from things that are beautiful or from individuals who are beautiful. Man derives joy from the objects he loves and not from other things. It is the love that lends beauty to the object. Hence joy is equated with beauty and the sweetness of honey. Anyone who seeks joy should not go after things of beauty. The fountain-source of joy is within himself. To bring forth that joy man should cultivate the inward vision.

### **Manifest the divine power within**

Students! There is a divine power that is inherent in every human being. You must strive to manifest it. Recognise that: all the knowledge you have been able to acquire is because of this divine power within you. You must cherish and foster that power. Most people make use of this power for selfish purposes to promote the well-being of themselves and their families. It should really be utilised for the good of the whole world. You should live upto the Gita ideal: "*Saravaloaka hithe ratah*" ("Rejoicing in the well-being of all"). Recognise the divinity in you and share that experience with all. Use the divine power in you to cultivate virtues, which constitute the essence of education. Lead a life which will earn for you the love of the people more than their respect.

*Discourse in the Prashaanthi Mandir on 24-6-1989.*

*Reduce the luggage you carry about, when on the journey of life. Remember, all that is not 'you' is luggage! You are not the body. So, the body is an item of luggage. The mind, the senses, the intelligence, the imagination, the desires, the plans, the prejudices, the discontent, the distress all, all are items of luggage. Jettison them, soon, to make your travel lighter, safer and more comfortable. Learn this lesson watching the great, who are humble and simple. They are the elders whom you should admire and follow. They are the people who bring forth your tears when they pass away; there are others who bring forth your tears, when they pass your way!*

*They are to be avoided.*

*BABA*