

12. Restoration of Moral Values

Knowledge enhances man's status;

it is a Hidden Treasure.

Knowledge confers Joy, Fame and Happiness;

it is the teacher of teachers,

It is one's kinsman in travels abroad;

it is a third Eye for Man.

Even kings adore Knowledge' and not Wealth;

without Knowledge one is an animal.

(Sanskrit Shloka)

STUDENTS! Teachers and lovers of education! In this work-a-day world, knowledge is the adornment for man. It is hidden wealth. It is the basis of fame, happiness and comforts. It is a teacher for teachers. It serves as a relation when one goes abroad. It is like a third eye for a man. Such sacred knowledge qualifies the person for honour at the courts of kings. It is more precious than riches. A man without such sacred knowledge is verily like an animal.

Embodiments of love! Just as when a child is born, he is able to recognise his mother, likewise every student should recognise his motherland and its history and culture. The Motherland is the land of his birth. The nation's culture is like one's father. Without understanding the country's culture one cannot understand the true state of the nation.

Bhaarath's culture is unexcelled. Bhaaratheeyas were known for their adherence to Truth and *Dharma*. Justice was their life breath.

Bhaarath's culture represents the eternal verities which are unaffected by the ravages of time or the vicissitudes of history. Students should realise that if they cherish Truth and Righteousness, the nation will get automatically protected. Success seeks Truth and Righteousness and not wealth or possessions.

Decline in human values

Students acquire human values, in addition to their scholastic, intellectual and other attainments. It is the decline in human values that accounts for the degradation of human-beings in the country today.

Technology has made great strides in modern times. The advances in other fields need no mention. The revolutionary advances in technology have brought about many changes in national life. The most important change is the decay of morals. All spiritual and ethical values have been undermined. Moral standards have collapsed.

Hence, students today should be more concerned about good qualities than about knowledge. Society can progress only through men of virtue. Every student should have the welfare of society in view and have service as the ideal.

What is education? It is not mere acquaintance with books. Can mere ability to read and write be regarded as education or even the acquisition of degrees? True education is associated with the

ideal goals of life. Today all ideals have been perverted. "Qualities like compassion and goodness have been replaced by unrighteous conduct. The ancient teachings have been given up. Education has gone astray," says a Kannada poem.

India gave the message of peace to the world in ancient times because of its spiritual leadership. Then, as well as now, the Bhaaratheeya message has been "Let all the people everywhere be happy."

Who are to blame for failure of educational system?

Who are responsible for the failure of the educational system? The parents at home, the teachers in schools and colleges, the leaders of society have failed to set the right examples and hence the students have gone astray. The parents at home tell the children one thing and act differently themselves. Teachers likewise teach one thing and act differently themselves. Leaders also preach one thing and practise another. Students are intelligently observing these double standards. They are induced to take to wrong courses by this divorce between words and deeds. Obviously, the elders are setting a bad example. The parents are not anxious to see that their children develop good qualities and lead ideal lives. Their affection for children is natural but it should not be, as in the case of Dhritharaashtra, such as to encourage the children in evil ways. It is only if children are corrected and punished for their misconduct that they will learn to behave properly in society.

Every student today wants to lead a comfortable life. But they have no idea what comfort really means. They argue that comfort consists in eating, drinking and leading a free and easy life. But spending one's time in this manner is unworthy of a human being. The preciousness of human life has to be realised. To lead an animal existence is unbecoming for any student or anyone else. The first need is self-restraint and control of the senses. Only then can true bliss be secured. This alone will confer true freedom.

Freedom emanates from Spirit

Freedom does not mean living as you please. *Sva-Thanthra* (True freedom) emanates from the Spirit. The goal of self-realisation can be attained only through selfcontrol. Knowledge of the Self, control of the senses and Self-realisation constitute true freedom.

Bhaaratheeyas got freedom (from foreign rule) but have not achieved national unity. Unity is essential for achieving anything, as has been declared in the *Vedhik* saying' "Let us live together, strive together, impart to others what we have learnt and lead a life of harmony and unity."

India has never lacked, from ancient times, people of knowledge, ability, heroism and courage. But, because of absence of unity among them the country became a prey to foreign conquerors. Students should therefore learn the lesson of unity. The Nation's progress and good name are dependent on the behaviour of the students. Hence, their conduct should be exemplary. Today's students are the future leaders of the country. From now on, you should develop good qualities and cherish ideals of service to the nation. Become heroes in action and plunge into society for service, with self-confidence.

Today, people talk about egalitarianism, a new social order and so on. There is no need for a new social system. We need only boys and girls of high character. Only they can save the country and not those who indulge in subversive activities. Humanity is one. If you strive to serve the country unitedly, Bhaarith will make enviable progress. If all the ninety crores of people in Bhaarith act as one, Bhaarith will stand forth as an ideal nation.

The ancient virtues

There are many things about Bhaarath's achievements in the past which you should know. What did humanness mean in the ancient times?

*Forbearance was esteemed as
the highest quality.*

*Adherence to truth was
the strictest form of penance.*

*Maternal love was deemed
the sweetest feeling.*

*Charity was esteemed greater
than life itself.*

(Telugu poem).

All these have been forgotten, alas, under the regime of our rulers today. Bhaaratheeyas are unaware of their own past greatness and strength.

What glory was there in the past! What spirit of sacrifice! What sense of justice! What devotion to *Dharma*! All this is forgotten today. Why? Because of limitless selfishness. Only when selfishness and hatred are given up can we enjoy peace. Humanness calls for harmony in thought, word and deed. Today this harmony is totally lacking.

Pursue studies with welfare of society in view

The educational process should aim at developing character and not merely intellectual abilities. Of what use is it to get a Doctorate without character? Education should have a practical bias which will make the student useful for himself and society. *Students!* Pursue your studies with the welfare of society in view. Develop love towards the Motherland, realising that the mother and the Motherland are greater than heaven itself. You owe so much to Bhaarath. Do your duty to Bhaarath.

Bhaaratha-Maatha (Mother Bhaarath) is greatly concerned about the state of her children. You must be good and become ideal students. You must win fame for the country. You must share in the prosperity of the nation with all others. To whatever country you may belong, cherish 'love for your country. "All are one. Be alike to everyone." Don't give room for differences of race, creed or nation. There is only one race, the race of humanity. There is only one caste, the caste of spirituality. There is only one language, the language of the heart. There is only one God, the Supreme Divinity, that is present in all beings and permeates the entire cosmos. The Divine is present in every atom. Everything in the world is composed of energy and matter. Einstein called it "Supreme Power." Bhaaratheeyas described it as *Dhivya-Shakthi* (Divine Energy).

In every human being this divine energy is present. It is this which makes man live and survive.

Students! There are many here who have come to study science. Scientists have invented many new kinds of machinery and instruments. But the scientists have not recognized that there is one machine which exceeds all other machines put together. The scientists have produced satellites which go round the earth and spacecraft that can land on the moon. They are harnessing solar

energy. They have made atom bombs and hydrogen bombs. There is one machine that is more powerful than all these. That is the human body. Man is the maker of all these machines. The marvellous powers of the human body are not fully recognized by any one. You should examine your own potentialities. It is man's potent power that has created all the wonderful machines. All the powers in the world are within you. The outside world is a reflection of your inner being. Students should recognise this truth. Various scientists are being praised. But all powers are within you, electrical power, magnetic power, the power of light and fire and radiation. Every human being is a computer. Every individual is mini-generator. Every person is a lamp and a radio station.

Tension and temper destroy humanness

Our ancients knew the secret of enjoying peace. Today even a tiny tot suffers from "tension." Where there is tension there is temper. Tension and temper are jointly destroying humanness. How can peace be found? Peace has to be found within each of us. You are the embodiment of peace and truth, You are the embodiment of love. Instead of realising the truth about themselves students are engaged in studying various subjects, thereby missing the main object of education. Just as the most complicated and expensive machine cannot work without electric power, the human machine cannot work without divine energy.

Students! You have a powerful machine in your body. Activate it with Divine energy. You have all the power you need within yourself. Being unaware of it, you misuse it You should not waste time, which once lost cannot be recalled. Utilise all your learning for the service of society. Experience the life Divine, by putting into practice a fraction of what you learn from the Geetha. Practise any one of the human values. *Prema* is the basis for all -the values. Action with love is right conduct. Speak with love and it becomes-truth. Thinking with love results in peace. Understanding with love leads to non-violence. For everything love is primary. Where there is love there is no place for hatred.

Cultivate humility and discipline

Make right use of the period of youth. Banish conceit. Respect your parents and elders. Cultivate humility and discipline. A boy is judged by his behaviour and a man by his manners. A devotee is judged by his discipline. In these summer classes you must try to understand how to realise Divinity, how to lead a spiritual life in the work-a-day world, and how to render service in the best way possible and how to lead an ideal life.

The poet Eliot defined culture as "a way of life." But Bhaaratheeya Culture has far wider connotations. Life itself is culture. What is done from moment to moment is an expression of culture. Having been 'born in this sacred land of Bhaarith you should learn to behave in such a way that you please Bhaarithmaatha. Mother Bhaarith is deeply distressed not only over the conduct of students but all others in this nation. No section of the people is behaving properly. Even in the field of spirituality, the Motherland has cause for grief. The garb is changed, but not the qualities. Treat the Motherland as the mother and our culture as the father. Students today have no patriotism. Students must be prepared to give even their lives to protect the integrity and honour of the motherland.

We are unaware of the significance of being Hindus. What does Hindu mean?

H for Humanity

I for Individuality

N for Nationality

D for Divinity

U for Unity

It is when all the five qualities are present, we have a real Hindu. Of these humanity is most important.

Students! Make best use of the next ten days and try to practise what you learn. You have listened today to the addresses of the Chief Minister and the Education Minister of Karnaataka. You must try to imbibe the ideals they have set forth before you and live upto them. The Chief Minister has been deeply concerned about the state of the nation and of Karnaataka for many years. Even now he is keen to do some lasting good to the country. Well-meaning persons are always confronted with obstacles. Those troubles only serve to ennoble them, just as a diamond gets added value from more cuts.

Students should face all the challenges of life and serve the country well.

Discourse at the Inauguration of the Summer Course in Indian Culture and Spirituality in the Brindhaavan Campus Auditorium on 20-5-1995.