

27. The human adventure

*Through meritorious deeds And acts of sacrifice,
Developing love in the heart,
Suppressing demonic traits,
Fostering devotion to God,
Lead your daily life, Oh Man!*

*In boyhood man is immersed in sport;
In youth he is lost in sensual pleasures;
In old age, unaware of the Divine Lord,
He pursues one thing or another;
Unable to give up evil tendencies.
Incapable of taking to the path of Devotion
He wallows in the cesspool of Karma
And makes human life a clod of earth. (Telugu Poem)*

Man intelligent being, but does not know how to utilise his intelligence. Some persons, even though they know how to use it, pursue wrong paths. If they are asked, why they behave like this, they glibly answer that the whole thing is Maaya, an illusion. Maaya is only called by the name illusion, but it has no existence in reality. People imagine that it is Maaya which produces the phenomenal world and makes it appear as real in all its varied forms. Scholars have described *Maaya* as a *Narthaki* (dancer). This *Maaya* is said to make every man dance. How is *Maaya* to be controlled? Read the word *Narthaki* in reverse and you have the answer *Keerthana*. This is proclaimed as the path of devotion.

Misconceptions about Saadhana

There are several misconceptions about *Saadhana* (spiritual exercise) for Self Realisation. For instance, some women devotees feel sad when they are unable to attend Bhagavaan's discourses because of their preoccupation with domestic duties and attending to their spouses and children. What is the service they render by taking part in a *Sathsang* or a discourse? To attend to one's household duties, look after the children and attend to the needs of the husband and others at home constitute the right type of *saadhana*. Even the preparation of meals in the home is a great *saadhana*. To remove the stones from the rice before it is cooked is one kind of *yoga---gunathraya vibhaaga* yoga--the *yoga* of division of the three qualities. Every stage in the cooking of vegetables may be deemed a spiritual exercise. Likewise every household chore can be sanctified without a sense of regret that you are missing a bhajan or a discourse. Even the sweeping of the house may be considered as a process of purifying the heart. All such thoughts are spiritually exalting. Such actions are better than listening indifferently to a discourse and forgetting the teachings thereafter. Doing one's duty is the highest spiritual endeavour.

Giving up bad qualities is true renunciation

There are many ochre-robed persons going about flaunting their so called renunciation while they are full of pride and possessiveness. During an encounter between a renunciant and Ubhaya-bhaarathi, wife of the scholar Mandana Mishra, she made the renunciant realise how he was filled with attachment and egoism in spite of his having renounced everything. The ascetic fell at the feet of Ubhayabhaarathi and sought her forgiveness. He assured her that thereafter he would practise renunciation in the true sense of the term.

Thyaaga (Renunciation) does not mean giving up hearth and home but giving up bad qualities. That alone is true sacrifice and real *yoga*. It is enough if man gives up *raaga* (attachment) and *dhvesha* (hatred). If everyone adheres to his *Aashrama-Dharma* (the code of conduct pertaining to one's stage in life), devotes his time to meditation on God, he will be redeeming his life.

There is no need to go in search of Divinity elsewhere. The Divine is the Indweller in every heart like sugar at the bottom of a tumbler filled with water. If the water is stirred with the spoon of *Buddhi* (the intellect), Divinity will be experienced in the heart.

Have the conviction that God is within you and in every being. Hence bear no ill-will towards any-body. Show your love and esteem for everyone.

Sai is the Mother for the motherless

Let me refer to something, which I am not anxious to reveal. A young boy who gave his word to me years ago continues to stand by it to this day. The student who spoke first this afternoon is a boy from Shimla. I am seeing him today. Ten years ago he came as a small boy. He was studying in the primary school. A younger brother of his (who was in the Mandap) is also studying in the primary school. Their mother was brought in a stretcher from Himaachal Pradesh to Brindhaavan. I drew both the boys close to me and told the mother: "They are my children. Don't worry about them. Have no worry on their account." The mother gave her word to Svaami. "I am entrusting my children to you, Sai Maatha!" Uttering these words, she closed her eyes.

I brought the two boys from Brindhaavan to Prashanthi Nilayam. They were very young at the time. The elder boy said at that time: "My mother is Mother Sai". The father also affirmed the son's words.

From that moment these two boys have not shed a single tear. These children at that tender age held fast to their words. In life once a promise has been made to the Lord there will be no room for grief. That is the meaning of *Sharanaagathi* (surrender to the Lord).

The mother was no more. Even the father appeared rarely. The children were left totally in the care of Svaami. Morning and evening I used to speak to the boys and enquire about their welfare. Their tender hearts were filled with total faith in Bhagavaan. Today the elder boy spoke well about faith. He is full of that faith. They did not feel at any time the loss of their mother.

One day the warden brought the boy to me from the primary school, saying that he was feeling the absence of his mother. She told Svaami that the boy is not taking food and is weeping incessantly. He was five years old at that time. He was in the first standard. I took him inside the interview room, gave him a ring and spoke pleasantly to him and made him forget his loss. From that moment he has always been smiling and laughing.

What is needed is total faith

The hearts of the children are so pure. Today elders are unable to understand such pure love. Love is so sacred. It confers limitless courage and forbearance. What would have been the plight of these children in any other place? They could get on here because they were with Svaami. Svaami takes care of them with the love of a thousand mothers. This truth is not being understood even by many renunciants. They perform *Japa* and sit in meditation. But to what end? They are immersed in their egoism and attachment.

What is needed is total faith; in a simple word: Love. Abide by it and lead a worthy life. Love will confer every kind of strength you need to sustain you in life. If you recognise the Divine in all, you will be blessed with everything.

Svaami's boundless love

Students should understand that I take interest in the welfare of every child. I constantly enquire about all of them with the warden. Students who are not aware of Bhagavaan's boundless love, feel depressed when they think Svaami does not speak to them. But I am having my eyes on all of them. The boy who spoke earlier said that he had lost one mother but found a thousand mothers. How many will make such a declaration? He began his speech with an appeal to Mother Sai. It is this faith which is sustaining them and making them overcome all problems.

Hence, develop this Love Principle. Moreover, you have also got to develop discipline. In recent months, there appears to be a falling off in discipline in Prashaanthi Nilayam. As soon as the bhats are over, the devotees get up and make a lot of noise. Similarly, when the people called for interview, go into the interview room, the people in the *Mandhir* verandah and outside get up after the door is closed and indulge in noisy talk as in a market-place. After Bhagavaan's discourse is over, devotees should ruminate over *Svaami's* speech and not indulge in idle talk. It is all one cacophony from both the men's and women's wings of the Mandap. There should be no such talking, not only in Prashaanthi Nilayam but outside also, in the bazaars. Discipline is like a shadow. It should follow you wherever you may go. Bhagavaan desires from all of you only discipline. Hence, when the discourse is over or when the *bhajans* end, you should go out in silence. When you get back to your apartments you may discuss your private affairs. But as a rule observe restraint in speech everywhere. It helps to conserve energy. Excessive talk affects the nerves. You are liable to forget what you have heard.

Moreover, elders set a bad example to students by talking in front of them. You should realise that the voice of the Divine is heard in the depths of silence.

Restraint in speech also calls for the avoidance of harsh words. Speaking lovingly and ever thinking of God, you will be oblivious to all worldly things.

Discourse in Sai Kulwant Mandap on 4-7-1996.

The very first lesson of the Primer of the spiritual text is Control of Speech. The speech is the armament of man; other animals have fleetness of foot, sharpness of clam, fang, horn, tusk, beak and talon. But man has sweetness of speech which can disarm opposition and defeat all the designs of hatred. Sweetness makes

*you Pashupathi -- Divine; harshness makes you Pashu bestial.
Mere outward politeness or sweetness is hypocrisy; sincere speech
must flow from real sweetness of heart, a heart full of love.*

Baba