

35. The Gospel of hard work

SCIENCE and technology have advanced so much that man is able to explore space and dive into the deep ocean. But he has not learnt how to live like a human being on earth. It is more important for man to learn how to lead a good life on the earth than explore space. Man's life is based on the earth.

Man's primary aim should be to recognise the unity that underlies the diversity in the phenomenal world. To break up what is one into many pieces is easy. But it is difficult to bring them together into a meaningful unit. It is in the unifying process that the utility of things can be understood. The role of both diversity and unity in life has to be properly understood.

When a tailor has to stitch a bush coat out of a piece of cloth, he has first to cut it into various pieces and then stitch them together to make a bush coat. The scissors are used to cut the cloth. The needle is used to stitch the different pieces. Today human beings trend to behave like the scissors rather than as the needle. With the result that all man's intelligence is being used to divide society rather than unify it.

Beyond birth and death

There is a family of three, father, mother and the son. When the father brought home his earnings the mother felt happy. Whenever he came home empty-handed the mother used to get angry. The son watched the alternation of happiness and sorrow in the home. Unable to bear the troubles at home, the father went to a temple of Kaali. He prayed: "Oh Dhevi! I cannot bear these troubles. I cannot live with my wife. Please see that her life is ended soon." "Be it so!" declared the Goddess. The wife died.

Watching this, the son went to the Kaali temple. He prayed intensely to the Goddess. She appeared before him and asked what he wanted. "Please restore the life of my mother," he pleaded. "So be it!" declared the Goddess.

The father desired the death of the mother. The son desired her revival. Their prayers revolved around death and life. Have such prayers any meaning? How much more sensible would it have been if they had prayed for the gift of goodness. The father surely could have asked the Goddess, "Oh Dhevi! Confer good sense on my wife." The prayers of the father and son only brought about death and birth.

(Svaami sang the Bhaja Govindam song in which Aadhi Shankara deplors the human condition which is caught up in the cycle of birth and death and Govinda is the only redeemer).

What folly is it to be caught up in the endless cycle of birth and death? What is the purpose of life? It is to live for some ideals. The Vice-Chancellor (who had spoken earlier) said that there is the practice of performing annual ceremonies for one's departed ancestors. The Vice-Chancellor said that while performing these ceremonies the young people should remember the departed ones with gratitude and love. The children should show their gratitude first and foremost to their parents because they owe their life and all that they enjoy to their parents. The anniversary of their passing should be remembered with grateful tears.

Students should recognise the supreme importance of time. Most of them are wasting three-fourths of the time they have at their disposal. They indulge in useless gossip and scandal. Abusing others amounts to abusing God.

Why borrow from others?

Bhaarath would be a land of plenty if people worked hard instead of being lazy and idle. Bhaarath is well endowed with land, rivers and other natural resources. Bhaarath has become dependent on other nations because the people do not work hard enough. We are borrowing from so many countries. Why? Let us use our resources well. We can then easily feed our people. The people should work hard It is good for their health and happiness.

People today waste a lot of time and energy on meaningless arguments and controversies.

Students! Realise that what I think, say and do are in perfect harmony. Hence there is no loss of memory or weakness of any kind. Look at the young people in their teens. They have castor oil faces and look worn out. They should look happy and cheerful.

A lesson from history

Recall how a small nation like the British ruled over a vast country like India before we got our freedom. The British could do it because Indians betrayed the nation for selfish interests.

Every student should realise his potential strength. All of it is derived from the Divine. (Svaami sang songs from Thyaagaraaja to point out the power of devotion to achieve the impossible).

Students should cultivate moral values. It is the decline in moral values that is responsible for the deplorable state of the country. Three things are most essential today. Fear of sin, love of God and morality in society.

Discourse in Sai Kulwant Mandap on 18-8-1996.

Egoism is a thorny bush, which when planted and fostered, makes us suffer. It makes enemies even of close friends and does not allow men to work together. Grief follows ego like a shadow.

Baba