

38. The Lord and the devotee

Why do you search for God hither and thither?

Is He not present in your heart?

Offer service and receive the love of God.

This is the way to realise the Divine.

STUDENTS! Humility is the hall-mark of education. Humility calls for actions free from egoism and self-importance.

The inherent goodness in man is covered by the ashes of attachment and hatred. Remove the ashes and the goodness will manifest itself.

There are three ways of recognising the Self. One is to consider yourself as the *Dhehaathma*. This is the dualism. The second is: "I am *Jeevaathma*." This is *Vishishta-Adhvaitha* (Qualified non-dualism). *Aham Paramaathma* (I am the Supreme Self). This is *Adhvaitha* (non-dualism). It will be seen that in all the three concepts, the common entity is *Aathma*. The *Deham* (body), *Jeeva* (Individual) and *Param* (the Absolute) are separate. All the three are present in the same person as is clear from the *Gaayathri Manthra*. *Bhur-Bhuvas-Suvah* represent *Bhu* (the body), *Bhuvah* (the Life-Force) and *Suvah* (the *Aathma*). The body is inert matter. The Life-Force animates the body and is vibrant in every cell.

The power of the spirit is exemplified by the life of Kabeer. He was a poor weaver, who used to help the poor out of his earnings. While plying his loom, he constantly chanted the name of Raama. The clothes woven in such a devotional spirit were prized high. But he used to sell his cloth at fair prices and often gave it free to those who could not afford the cost.

Greek devotees: *Bhakthi*

In this context, I wish to refer to a current incident. Here are some 25 Greek devotees. They landed at Bangalore by plane. They strapped their baggage to their backs, carried water bottles in their hands and started walking all the way to Prashaanthi Nilayam. Such is their devotion! At every step they recited the manthra: "Om Shri Sathya Sai Baabaya Namah!" and reached Prashaanthi Nilayam. I went towards them and received them on arrival at the Mandhir. I asked them: "Do you feel pain in the legs?" They said: "Oh Lord! Not at all. We are ready to walk another ten miles if necessary, chanting all the way. If we had come by car, we could not have remembered the Lord's name.

Kabeer was in the habit of uttering "Raam! Raam!" at each step as he walked. The greatness of his devotion spread to all parts of the country. A ruler of that time also came to know about it. Realising Kabeer's poverty and helplessness, the king sent various presents to Kabeer in a palanquin. Kabeer saw the palanquin nearing his house while returning from a bath in the river. Astonished at the sight, Kabeer asked the four bearers of the palanquin: "What is all this? In our house, there are only two of us. For whose sake did four of you bring the palanquin? Both of us are quite hale." Kabeer hinted that only a dead body is carried on the bier by four persons. "Please inform the king that we are quite well," said Kabeer.

The palanquin-bearers said: "We have brought in the palanquin clothes, provisions and other gifts from the king who sympathizes with your plight. The king has ordered us to offer them to you because he considers you *anaatha* (an orphan).

How Kabeer delved into the meaning of *Anaatha*

Kabeer said: "Oh! Did the king say so? But, I am not *anathaa*. Bhagavaan is my overlord. I am not without a protecting master. Raama is the only one who is an *anaatha*--there is no Lord above Him. You better offer all these things to Raama."

See how Kabeer has delved into the meaning of the word *anaatha*. No one in the world is an *anaatha* (without a master). God alone is *anaatha*, as there is no *naatha* (master) above Him. Everyone has a master. God alone has no one above Him.

Some people come to Svaami and say: "Svaami! Don't make us *anaatha*. I used to tell them: "It is not you who are *anaathas*. I am the *anaatha*(*Master-less*). Never consider yourself *anaatha* (helpless).

Many people feel miserable and forlorn because they do not understand the ways of God. To those who firmly believe in God, there can be nothing lacking.

First of all, you have to get rid of attachment and hatred. Develop love.

Bhagavaan's example for egolessness

Get rid of ego and possessiveness Here is a small example. Bhagavaan sets the best ideal for you. How? You are all seated where you are. I Myself walk towards you, bending my back, stretching my hand, to receive your letters. If I had chosen to sit and ask you to come and hand over the letters, what would be wrong? Still, with no sense of ego, I am going to each of you, to set an example. This is Sai's ideal.

So many who have come so far at such. expense, will they shrink from walking a few feet towards Svaami? But to demonstrate that I am free from ego, I am acting in this manner to teach a lesson to you. I have no feeling of attachment to any one to treat some as mine and others as not mine. All are mine and I am yours. Every student and devotee should recognise this truth. This is what the Geetha declares: "I am the indwelling spirit in all beings."

You may ask: "Why, then, is God not visible? Why are some near to God and others remote?" God is not to blame. People are immersed in worldly concerns.

Modern youth are all crazy over their games and pastimes. With the result that they sing ridiculous songs, indulge in silly games and revel in meaningless talk. They are not eager to take part in bhajans or interest themselves in devotional activities. Some listen to discourses with one ear and expel them out of the other. Very few listen and take to heart what they have learnt. Some merely repeat parrot-like what they have heard.

Treat sensuous pleasures with contempt

Unfortunately today there are no good teachers and very few earnestly interested speakers. Students must develop real interest in the teachings. They must convert all work into worship. (Svaami sang Thyaagaraaja's song to illustrate how the Lord should be worshipped as omnipresent). God does not judge anyone by his external appearance. This was the lesson which Ashtaavakra taught to the pandits at the court of king Janaka when they laughed on seeing the

crooked body of Ashtaavakra. The latter laughed at them and told them: "I thought you were great scholars. I find you are only a set of cobblers. You judge a person by the skin on his body."

Students should have firm faith in God and minimise their desires. You must treat with contempt sensuous pleasures. Whenever any worldly desires arise in the mind, treat them as garbage that should be thrown only. By this means, students will enter on the path of purity. Then the Divine will welcome you and fill you with bliss. There is no greater goal, no higher destiny.

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