

The meaning of peace

Many people are not aware of even the meaning of the phrase supreme peace (*prasanthi*). It is the backbone of an individual and, for, the spiritual aspirant (*sadhaka*), the very breath. The word is taken by each to mean something different. Many feel they have peace when some worldly desire that was vexing them is satisfied! But that is not real peace; it is only a temporary short-lived interval between one worry and another. The syllable *pra* in *prasanthi* means expanding, enlarging (*vikasa*), so *prasanthi* means that type of peace (*santhi*), that is to say, the absence of desire, anger, greed, and hatred.

Supreme peace means success in the elimination of the qualities grouped under desire (*kama*) and anger (*krodha*). This process of elimination, called “developing equanimity (*sama*)”, is very essential for all. The spiritual aspirant must be constantly engaged in practising it. What does the aspirant strive for? Fulfilment, is it not? In other words, the aspirant strives for peace.

Now, this peace is the innate nature of humanity. It is the force that comes to the aid of those who try to develop discrimination (*viveka*), renunciation or detachment (*vairagya*), and keenness of intellect (*vichakshana*). It is but a phase of the *Atma* itself. Just like the *Atma*, it has no beginning or end; no blemish can mar it; it is equaled only by itself; it cannot be compared with any other.

Peace must be manifested in feeling, word, posture, and deed (*manas, vaak, kaya, karma*) in the same uniform, equal, measure. Then, peace (*santhi*) becomes the real peace (*prasanthi*). Bereft of such peace, one cannot hope to get either worldly, other worldly, or trans-worldly bliss. Peace is the nursery of all happiness and all joy. Thyagaraja knew this, for he sang, “No peace, no happiness”. All men need it, whoever they are, be they self-restrained men or *vedanthins*, ascetics or scholars, pious men or philosophers.

But people are unable to stand still even for a moment! Absence of mere anger cannot be taken as peace. The winning of a desired object and the satisfaction one then gets should not be confused with peace. The peace that has pervaded the heart must not be shaken subsequently for any reason; only that type of peace (*santhi*) deserves to be called supreme peace (*prasanthi*). Supreme peace has no ups and downs; it cannot be partial in adversity and complete in prosperity. It cannot be one thing today and another tomorrow. Always maintaining the same even flow of bliss (*ananda*), that is supreme peace.

This “Stream of Supreme Peace” (*Prasanthi Vahini*) tells you what supreme peace is and makes you understand how to earn it, how it can be utilized, and what its attributes are. Every single aspirant has the legitimate right to earn this supreme peace but must learn the path by which it can be earned.