55. Pilgrimage to the throne

The search for truth must become your daily spiritual discipline; every moment must be used for this primary duty. Truth can reflect itself in your intelligence only when it is cleaned by *thapas. Thapas* means all acts undertaken with higher motives; all acts indicating yearning for the spirit; repenting for past blunders; staunch determination to adhere to virtue, self-control; unyielding adherence to equanimity in the face of success or failure. Thaapam means heat, burning, intensity, earnestness of endeavour. It is *thapas* (penance or religious austerity) that fosters renunciation and discipline.

This discipline is essential when, as at present, the temptations to deviate are so many. In this iron age, when darkness is enveloping the mind of man, any little lamp that can light the steps is most welcome. That is why I advise you to resort to *sath-karma, sad-aachaara* and *sath-pravarthana* (good deeds, good conduct and good attitudes and outlook), so that you may be established in the constant presence of the Lord. You must also strive to "hear" *(shravana)* elevating words, to ruminate on these promptings of the spirit *(manana)* and then, when the validity is recognised, to meditate on it in profound reverence *(nididhyaasana). All* other activity is secondary; this alone is edifying, this alone is beneficial.

This day, there is a Solar eclipse and many people wondered whether the Birthday festival will be celebrated or postponed. The shadow of the moon falling upon the sun is not the calamity that people should fear; the shadow of *maaya* falling upon the intelligence is the eclipse that has to be treated as a bad omen, as inauspicious. The mind is the moon, the intelligence is the sun; see that they do not suffer from eclipse. Then, you are safe. Do not worry when something happens in the outer sky; worry when the shadow of some dark desire, some foul passion, some monstrous emotion, some fell intention casts its evil gloom over your inner sky. See that the splendour of the Lord, the cool rays of His Grace are not dimmed in the recesses of your heart.

The emblem of Prashaanthi Nilayam

I find that some one has upset the usual seating arrangements; the women are on the left and the men on the right. That is to say, the women have most of the scorching sun and the men are under the shade of the tree. So, I shall not keep you longer. I shall unfurl the flag, which is the symbol of Prashaanthi, the higher equanimity when all dualities are superceded and man gains the supreme joy of calm balance, unaffected by ups and downs, pain or pleasure, when the waves are stilled and the storms rage no more. The flag contains the picture of the emblem that is represented in concrete shape in front of the porch here; it is the summary of the progress of the pilgrim to the throne of the Lord in the altar of his heart.

The pilgrim must traverse and overstep the vast wastes of worldly desires *(kaama)* and overcome the thick slushy growths of anger and hate *(krodha)* and negotiate the cliffs of hatred and malice *(dwesha),* so that he might relax on the green pastures of concord and love *(prema).* Having thus become master of his inner foes, he has to rest in the silence of his own heart, as a *Yogi,* with all the agitations of his inner realm stilled. That is the meaning of the six-ringed pillar in the centre of the circle here; the six rings are the six *chakras* (centres of energy) of yogic discipline in the central spinal *naadi* (nerve current) of man.

Fixed in the undisturbed calm of his deepest consciousness, man finds that the lotus of the heart blooms into a thousand petals and then, the flame of awakening into the truth lights itself, as *Prashaanthi.* That moment, the seeker knows that he and all else are One, that the One is

Brahmam. This progress that every one has to make, today or tomorrow, in this life or in the next, is outlined as a clear picture in the symbol on the flag; so, when it flutters above this Prashaanthi Nilayam, resolve to hoist it on your heart too. Take the first step today, in this long pilgrimage. Give up, in order to gain; restrain, in order to receive; become blind (to the external view), in order to see more clearly (the inner vision).

Prashaanthi Nilayam: Birthday Festival, 23-11-1965

Anger, malice, greed and envy---all these are obstacles in the path of love and co-operation. They lower man from the Divine to the animal level.

***SHRI SATHYA** SAI*