41. As He Wills

I HAVE selected you from among the assembled in order to shape you into *Sevaks* (volunteers) during the Birthday Festival that begins tomorrow. I have spoken many times before, about the discipline that I would like you to submit yourself to. You can examine yourself and decide how far you have succeeded in observing those rules of conduct.

The world today is torn by factions and fear and it is imperative that the good are assured of peace and the general level of living is raised to a higher moral standard by the propagation of *Dharma.* People must become proficient in S*athya, Dharma, Shaanthi, Prema* and *Ahimsa,* weapons that can overwhelm the passions that have turned heart into a den of wickedness. This chance to become a *Sevak* here is but the first step in training in the proper use of these weapons.

Do not imagine that this is a temporary responsibility, which you shoulder today and lay down in a few days. This is a form of worship into which you are initiated so that your hearts may be cleansed and God reflected therein. This training as a volunteer will lead you to see the bliss of *Aathmaanandha* and the Light of Reality. It will induce you to search for your own inner truth, your *swa-swaruupa* (own natural form). All the acts you perform must be directed towards one end: drawing down on you the Grace of God. All the provisions stocked in the store-room in your house are there to meet one purpose: appease your hunger. So too all Karma is for attaining God.

Getting fixed in Faith is genuine education

But, caught in the darkness of *Ajnaana* (spiritual ignorance), man mistakes the purpose. He imagines that he can be happy, if he caters to his senses; this is only self-deception. The ego is not the cause of this; the real culprit is the darkness produced by ignorance of the goal of life. Believe that God resides in every one as the *Aathma,* which illumines his senses and the vision. Then, the darkness will disappear and Light will prevail. Learning the process of getting fixed in that faith is the genuine education. The others are lamps that have no flame, that cannot dispel darkness. They may be designated so, but that name is misnomer.

When you call yourself a Sevak, offering service to another, have also reverence in your mind that the person whom you serve is the Lord Himself in that form. This attitude is very helpful for the *Saadhak. Maanava seva* is *Maadhava* seva---the service of man is service of God. But, when? When we feel in the depth of heart that the person whom you serve is a wave of the same sea from which you derive your individuality, your taste, your name and form. I have called you in today and I am naming you as "Volunteers" in order to give you an opportunity to practise this Saadhana of *Maadhava seva* through *Maanava seva.*

Do not therefore take this as a new authority conferred on you, or as a burden landed on your shoulders. Acceptance of the Will of God has its own advantage; it yields rich fruits. Hanumaan did not become conceited when Raama selected him for the crucial southward search and when Raama gave into his custody the Ring to be given to Seetha (assuring him in the process that he would certainly succeed in discovering her); nor was he affected by fear, at the tremendous responsibility that was heaped on him. He just accepted what was given; he was neither happy nor unhappy. He felt that Raama the Lord knows all and so his duty was only to obey.

God's tests are for giving you greater Grace

You must cultivate the same attitude towards my commands and instructions. Be convinced that

if you obey them strictly, you will attain victory. One evening Krishna took Arjuna far out of Dwaraka City and while they were alone together, He pointed at a bird flying over their heard and asked him "Arjuna, isn't that a dove?" Arjuna agreed; he said it was a dove. Suddenly, Krishna turned towards him and said, "No, it is a crow." Arjuna concurred and said, "I am sorry, it certainly is a crow." Immediately, Krishna asked him, "A crow, no, it must beazkite. Is it not so?" and Arjuna promptly agreed. "Yes. It is a kite." At this, Krishna smiled and asked Arjuna, "Are you in your senses? What exactly do you see? Why you say, of the same bird, it is a dove, it must be a crow and it is a kite?" Arjuna said, "Who am I to dispute your statement? You can make it a crow even if it is not one, or, change it into a kite. I have found that the safest thing is to agree with you, in full faith. I know of no other course." It was only after this test, for unflinching faith that Krishna assured himself of the credentials of Arjuna to receive the Geetha advice.

The inquiry about the identity of the bird was a test. God tests man so; you must welcome tests. Tests are only for giving you greater grace. They are not to be treated as punishments. It promotes your confidence. You enter a house and decide to live there, only after you are assured that the foundation is secure, is it not? When your faith is fixed, your life too will flow in peace.

Wishes can never win peace

All who come to Prashaanthi Nilayam are your kith and kin, remember. Respect them, serve them with that attitude. To have such attitude you must have deep patience. Praise or blame, appreciation or criticism, you must bear all with fortitude. Never yield to anger or dispiritedness. The command is pre-emminent; have your mind fixed on that. The rest is but incidental. The *Dharma shaasthras* lay down that women, the sick, those who are burdened with loads, and the aged have to be helped and given first preference. Even if the sick man is a decrepit low-born man, the Emperor has to give him the right of way and allow him to be served first; else, he invites punishment from the Gods. The aged have accumulated much more experience than you; they are filled with sweetness, like ripe fruits. The wise men or *Jnaanis* have also to be served and revered. What is the sweetness, in these? It is the quality of *Shaantham,* of being unruffled at the ups and downs of life.

The asceticism that you have to adopt is just this: Obey the *Aajna,* the order of the Lord. You have no need to fast and torture the body: can you kill the snake by beating the mound, which has it in its hole? Can torment teach you the truth? Control thoughts; divert feelings; canalise the currents of the impulses. The pendulum will stop its swing only when you stop winding the clock with its key. Stop winding; then the pendulum will remain at one point; the mind will remain at the Feet of God.

Wishes can never win peace; a wish is tiny seed from out of which a huge tree emanates, the tree in its turn scatters a crore of seeds, which sprout into crores of trees. Fry the seed and it will not sprout again. When wishes multiply quick and fast, concentration is impossible; when water is poured on a height, it flows along the inclines, down into the hollows. Concentration is the reverse process: rolling a rock uphill. This requires unintermittent effort, unbroken attention, and ceaseless striving. Allow confidence to slacken but a moment---the rock will come rolling down.

Each volunteer should become a centre of inspiration

You have another great responsibility, too. This land, Bhaarath, has to guide others in selfless service, in the development of an attitude of detached devotion to duty. From ancient times, India

is famous as the land of dedicated Karma, of holy living and thinking, of incessant subduing of the harmful passions surging in the mind, of the tireless pursuit of the goal of Peace. But, latterly, Indians too have been infected by the diseases prevalent in other parts of the world; they have started spuming holy company, sacred books and spiritual discipline. This is a tragedy; once again, the ancient modes of life have to be revived; the ancient attitudes have to be appreciated and adopted. That faith in the imperishable *Aathman* (which is the reality of both the individual and the Universe) has once again to vitalise activities.

Being *Sevaks* and volunteers, you must adhere to Truth, first and foremost. Whatever be the temptation, do not slide away from Truth. In fact, after wearing this badge as the sign of your dedication to service, you must not deviate from *Sathya, Dharma, Shaanthi* and Prema. When a man takes up the role of Harischandra on the stage, he has to adhere to Truth so long at least as he is on the stage. So also, so long as you wear this badge, stick to these four qualities. Then, when you find how happy you feel, how well you are able to move with your fellow beings, you will yourself appreciate the path and stick to it. It is not only during a *Navaraathri* or a *Shivaraathri* or a *Deepaavali* Festival, not only at Prashaanthi Nilayam for a few days---but, always and everywhere, you must stick to these virtues. Each one of you will then be a centre of inspiration in your villages. Factions and fear will cease; all will be like brothers and sisters, through your silent influence and example.

Each little act of self-control is Saadhana

These badges must curb your conceit, not fan them into harmful pride. They are not symbols of authority; they are but pointers indicating that the wearer is a trustworthy friend, an efficient worker, a smiling kinsman, a devoted guide, an inspiration. Most of the people who come here are in distress, physical or mental. As mentioned in the Geetha, "A*nithyam asukham lokam imam praapya bhajaswa maam". "*Having come to this world, which is transitory add full of travail, worship Me, pray to Me." So they come seeking peace, joy and courage, hope, vitality and confidence. They must be welcomed with reverence and sympathy, love and consideration. Try to know that type of behaviour, which line of conduct, which attitude of service will please Me; then, follow that type, that line, that attitude. Then, your service too will be fruitful. I do not like people smoking and so, give up smoking; I do not like harsh language, loud noise, wild behaviour, demeaning conversation on low topics---so, avoid them. I like sweet soft low talk; so, practise that. Do not push or drag; do not just order about! Tell every one the reason why certain rules and disciplines have been laid down; try to convince and win the co-operation of people. Here, everything is part of *saadhana* and so, each little act of self-control helps advancement. Don't rush forward yourselves, into vantage positions near the dais; wherever you are you can win Grace, doing the duty allotted to you. By neglecting the duty and rushing forward, be warned that you are only denying yourself the Grace. I see all things everywhere; so, there is no need for you to push and rush to catch My eye.

What you feel, that you become

The Lord values the mental attitude behind each act. *Yad bhaavam, thad bhaavathi---what* you feel, that you become. Transmute every act into an item of *puuja,* of worship; then, derive maximum joy. Sai in every being; so, do not slight any. Revere and serve all, to the best of your ability. When some one calls out for water to slake his thirst and you offer him a cup, feel that you are offering it to Me; then, the act purifies you more and cleanses you. It is not the man in need that you serve; you are serving God, that is in you and him.

Karma is the flower and *Jnaana* is the fruit. The flower becomes the fruit, in the fullness of time. Only, one has to guard it and keep it free from pests. Charcoal is wood that has undergone but a part of the baptism of fire; let it undergo that baptism to the full; it becomes white, light ash that flies with the wind into the four quarters. The purification of mind from the passions have to be taken up through the fire of *Jnaana* until success is gained. In saadhana, there is no half-way house, no resting place.

Your installation on the throne of Aathma-realisation, as the monarch of your own inner consciousness, is the consummation of *saadhana* of life itself. One can sacrifice everything for the sublime success. The Paandavas gave up the empire for which they struggled long and sacrificed four million lives on the battlefield, so that they may get enthroned as such monarch. They sought the peace of the Himalayas in the later phase of their life. Only by "giving up" can that status be won. The *Upanishadhs* say that immortality can be achieved, not by sacred acts, nor by virtuous progeny, nor by accumulated wealth, but only by "giving up," *Thyaaga.* You have to give up all attachment to food and recreation, to I and Mine when you yearn for the Lord.

Voice of God can be heard in the silence alone

A picture printed on paper cannot be peeled off it; it becomes inherent in it. The Lord's name and form must be so imprinted on your heart. You wear the badge with this portrait on your chest; the original of the portrait must be worn on the heart, imprinted on the heart.

The *Gopees* had done that. Prahlaadha too had achieved it. That is the reason why he did not wail or protest, when he was subjected to torture and torment; he saw, he heard, he felt, he knew only Maaraayana, the Lord. Try to develop that deep faith and devotion.

One other point: In this Prashaanthi Nilayam, you should see that *Prashaanthi* is preserved. Emphasise this step in *saadhana* before all. In the silence alone, can the Voice of God be heard. Serve the thousands who are arriving here, in this spirit and with these objects in view; that is the way to obey the Will, the *Aajna. The aajna* (command) is the boat that will take you across the Sea of Change, into the Eternal and the Absolute.

Prashaanthi Nilayam, 22.11.1967