

11. With prathyaksha to paroksha

YOU are all waiting to hear from Me about the journey to Badhri and what happened there. These people went to Badhri and returned *bhadram* (safe)! That is the story in a nutshell.

For danger lurked all the time from fire, water, wind, sky and earth---all the five elements in fact. Every moment these people felt the Lord's Grace; for about 150 persons, mostly old and in indifferent health, to accomplish this *yaathra* (pilgrimage) without a single moment of even headache was due to Swaami. Swaami also went to Badhri because the *Nethralingam* which is the central source of Holiness there had to be revived with spiritual efficacy. Shankaraachaarya brought five lingams from Kailaas and installed one each at Dwaaraka, Sringeri, Badhri and Puri and the fifth he placed at Chidambaram. Of these, the one at Badhri has the Naaraayana *amsam* (orientation) and that had to be consecrated afresh. That was My task and these people who came with Me saw Me doing it.

Atheism is not rampant in this land

I had to accomplish it this year itself, for this is the 35th year after this *Avathaar* took birth and this is also the year when the 35th successor to the Shankaraachaarya *Peeta* is at Shringeri. This year is therefore important for charging the battery of spiritual wealth, known as Badharikaashrama. The *Nethra Lingam*, laid by Shankaraachaarya underneath the idol there, was "taken" out by Me and *abhisheka* (consecration by pouring holy water) was done with Gangothri water which I fetched by a wave of the hand. It was worshipped with golden *Bilva* leaves and *Thumme* flowers, both created by Me on the spot, and sent back to its original place. The *Lingam* was placed on a Golden Lotus, with three layers of petals, each having two smaller layers of 16 smaller petals---the entire *Kamala* (lotus) representing the *Hridhaya* (heart) where the *Lingam* has to be installed for worship.

When you see the enthusiasm of the pilgrims who trudged along the Badhri Road in thousands, you will be silenced with wonder; you will no more lament that atheism has become rampant in this land. With faith as their only support, people from all parts of India, men, women and children, old and young, stalwarts and decrepits, rich and poor, move on towards Badhri. There are many things which you can learn from their steady march towards the goal; that is the advantage in going on pilgrimage. You can develop your *bhakthi* (devotion), your *shraddha* (faith) and your *saadhana* (spiritual discipline) when you are surrounded by kindred aspirants. That is the greatness of that Naaraayana Muurthi at Badhri.

Yes; the spiritual change must come about. That is the reason for the belief, "a mere sight of the pilgrim who has returned from Badhri gives much merit." Of course, for undergoing that change you need not go so far; you have Badhrinaaraayana here itself! Badhri is the place where the *Nara-Naaraayana* bond is established and commemorated. That you can establish here itself. If you get rid of delusion, you become *Naaraayana* (God); if you are sunk in delusion, you continue to be *Nara* (human); that is all. There is no place to which I have not gone; there is no place without Me therein. So, the *Bhakthas* who came with Me were journeying to the Abstract with the Concrete, with the *Prathyaksha* to the *Paroksha*! That was their good fortune.

Pilgrims, should maintain silence during yaathra

Those of you who were here and could not join need not feel sorry, for all these days you were thinking of Swaami and Swaami alone and so your *saadhana* was greater. After all, pilgrimage is

for softening the heart, widening the outlook, expanding the circle of sympathy; not for collecting curios or pictures or *prasaadham* packets or idols and images. It is more a matter for the *nethra* (eye) than for the *paathra* (vessel). Pilgrimages should be as silent as the eye-lids dropping on the eye. Why should people wag their tongues and shout and wrangle when they are God-ward bound? Truly, all *Kshethras* (places of pilgrimage) and all *Yaathras* (pilgrimages) are in yourself. You are ever on a pilgrimage, though you might not have taken a step forward towards Badhri or Kaashi. Do not feel sad that you did not get the *Abhisheka Theertha* (holy water used for consecrating the idol) from Gangothri which was used for the *Nethra Lingam*. I can see that all of you are desirous of getting it ever since you heard from others about the event at Badri. I shall get you the Gangothri *Theertham* here itself and give you, do not worry.

People may say that pilgrimages are a waste of time and money; but let Me tell you that it is the best way of spending time and money, provided one has real devotion. *Bhakthi* is no sign of weakness; it is a sign of courage, of wisdom, of discrimination; it alone can give *soukhyam* and *shaanthi* (happiness and peace). Every one has one day or other to fall in line with you, for every one is terribly anxious to get these two. They try, in their ignorance or excitement, various other remedies, but this remedy alone can cure them.

Prashaanthi Nilayam, 4-7-1961

Your consciousness is a lamp. Pour into it the oil of Grace; trim the wick of self-control. Keep in position the chimney of Naamasmarana, so that the gusts of Joy and Grief may not put out the flame.

Light the lamp with a Mahaa-vaakya (Vedhic dictum) like "Aham Brahmaasmi" (I am the Absolute Reality). Then you will see Light and you will shed Light.

Sathya Sai Baba