

40. Unfurl it on your consciousness

AT Prashanthi Nilayam, every day is a Festival Day; every day is a holy day. As the saying goes, it is "*Nithya' kalyaanam, Pachha thoranam*"---"*Perpetual joy, perpetually green.*" Following the customary habits of people, feeling that the external signs of auspiciousness have their own value in educating and sublimating the inner emotions, the *Navaraathri* (festival of nine holy nights) is celebrated here also. For that reason, you need not wait for *Navaraathri* here or at home to instal Durga or Saraswathi in your heart; the day you feel the urge, that day is the auspicious day. Do not delay or postpone.

I have been saying more or less the same things every time the Flag is hoisted on this Nilayam. But just as you have to eat the same items of food every day, just as you have to wash your face every now and then, the washed face being washed again, so the spoken message has to be spoken again and again. This is needed for those who have heard it from Me already; it is even more needed by those who have come for the first time.

This Nilayam is "*Prashanthi*" Nilayam (abode of tranquillity). It is the abode of the highest form of *Shaanthi*, *Prashanthi* (absolute peace). In fact, you are, each one of you, the Nilayam of *Prashanthi*. That is why I very often address you as '*Shaanthi swaruupulaara*' (embodiments of peace)! My object is to remind you that your real nature is *Shaanthi*, equanimity, peace, unruffledness, non-attachment. You cannot draw out from within you that which is not there, is it not? Therefore, *Shaanthi* must be there, deep down, as the very core of your being. It is the ripeness of the fruit, the sweetness filling the ripened fruit.

Shaanthi is an ennobling, elevating experience

Shaanthi is not just an external polish, which can be put on or brushed off. It is not the same as fortitude, like that which young Yudhishtira had when he bore without a tear or a gasp the hundred blows with a cane administered to test his stamina. It is not resignation which comes of frustrated ambition or satisfied desire. It is an ennobling, elevating experience which comes when one attains the merger with the very source of one's being. It is the stilling of the waves; the calming of mental activities and agitations. Every one who has attained it has hoisted the *Prashanthi* Flag; in fact, each one of you should strive to unfurl it on your own hearts.

You must all become an army of *dhaarmic* workers, equipped with the weapons of *sathya*, *dharma*, *shaanthy* and *prema*, to revive humanity and rid it of all the ills with which it is now stricken. I have told you often that this flag hoisting is not a mere formality; it is a meaningful rite in the inauguration and training of that army. I never do any act which is devoid of significance or speak a word devoid of purpose. The symbol on the Flag is also full of significance.

Concrete representation of the symbol on flag

This Prashanthi Nilayam has no compound wall, as you have noticed. It is, as it should be; people can come to the Lord from any direction, without let or hindrance. But we have gates! The persons who walk along that road, which takes a turn when it approaches the Nilayam are, like all else, burdened with inherited imputes and earned dents and bents in their personality make-up. They are moved on by desire and urged by the six-thonged whip of passion. They enter the gate only when they are no longer overwhelmed by *thamoguna* (quality of inertia and indolence); that is, when they have the curtain of delusion drawn aside a little. From there they

move on towards the Nilayam and pass through that second gate, where they are attracted by the imposing building, the portico, the statue in front---all appealing to the comparatively superior *rajoguna* (quality of passionate activity). Even this falls off when they enter the Hall, where *sathwaguna* (quality of serenity and poise) overpowers the mind---what with the pictures, images, the *bhajana*, the *Naamaavalis* (singing of Lord's Name), etc.

This circle in front of the Nilayam--this is a concrete representation of the symbol on the Flag; you should all be told about this and you should in turn educate others about it. The first circle within the brick outline is as you can see strewn with sand. That is *kaama* (desire), mere waste land, where nothing can grow, from which no sustenance can be procured. The next one is the circle of *krodha* (anger), enemy number two of man. It is represented here as a hardy tuber plant with many leaves, which though cut often beyond recognition, sprouts at the next fall of rain. Anger is like that; you feel you have uprooted it, but let your pride be injured or your wish opposed, it sprouts again. Its roots are tentacles difficult to escape from.

Every *Navaraathri* (the nine-day festival), the thousands of devotees who walk about here trample the plants and leave no trace. But when the Birthday Festival comes a month or two later the sprouts come again and grow into a sizeable height. That is the way anger grips a man. It grows into hatred and vengeance, the two red steps that you see as the next two concentric circles. When some one stands across your path, you hate him; when some one refuses to be your accomplice, you hate him. Acts of commission as well as omission cause hatred. That is why we have two steps here.

Make the symbol alive in your consciousness

Crossing the sands of greed and lust, the wilds of anger, climbing the heights of hatred and vengefulness, the spiritual aspirant comes to the green meadow of *prema*. You can see that circle of broad green grass, attractively embellished with good thoughts and virtues, which refresh and satisfy. Beyond that, we have the broad expanse of *Shaanthi* (quiet), where all agitations cease and the mind is at rest in its own silence. Now is the chance: establish yourself in *yoga*---the *saadhana* of spiritual union with the Universal Power, the Absolute Wisdom, the Eternal Verity. The consciousness ascends through the six centres, marked on the *Yogadhandha* (*yogic staff*) in the centre of the circle, and then, watch what happens. The Lotus of the Heart blooms, the petals unfold, the fragrance permeates the Universe, the rays of the Sun are inhaled, and as you see represented here, the *Aathmajyothi* (the splendour of the *Aathma*, the unsullied effulgence), illumines you and everything else in One All-embracing flame.

Contemplate on this symbol; make it alive in your consciousness; that is what I mean when I say, hoist the flag on your mind. You will find it highly beneficial. When this flag waves happily with the wind on the Nilayam, it must also wave happily on your consciousness, calling you to further effort and further spiritual effort.

It is not mere *bhakthi* (intense devotion) that I want, I want action motivated by *bhakthi*. Throw off all your present responsibilities and take up this new responsibility of saving yourself; then you will have discharged your duty smoothly and to your satisfaction.

Prashaanthi Nilayam, 29-9-1962.

*Know that the basic reality is God, Omnipotent, Omniscient,
Omnipresent. Become aware of it and stay in that awareness*

always. Whatever the stress and the storm, do not waver from that Faith.

Or you can earn that awareness by reminding yourselves of it with every breath of yours.

How can you so remind yourselves, you may ask.

By means of any one of His Names, any Name that is fragrant with Divine Pre-fume, any Name that is reminiscent of His Beauty His Grace and His Power.

Sathya Sai Baaba