

3. Ask for Me

TODAY, you had the nectar of Raamaayana from these two *Pandiths*. They spoke with genuine joy when they dilated on the incidents of the Raamaayana. One of them selected today the hospitality shown to Bharatha and his retinue by the sage Bharadhwaaja and how Bharatha reacted to it. The other Shaasthry who generally talks on other topics, was persuaded this evening to select Naaradha's description of the qualities of Raama to Vaalmeeki as the theme of his talk. *Raamanaama* is so sweet that I could see all of you relishing these talks. If a man talks about Raama, without himself being inspired by the glory of the Lord it sounds hollow; it is of no benefit; it is like the image of a table heavy with edible dishes seen inside a mirror; the dishes in the mirror will fill no hungry stomach. No language can picture the actual bliss that the Name can confer; words can at best delineate only an atom of that joy.

Man comes into the world burdened with *maaya* and its instrument, the mind. The mind expresses itself through attraction and repulsion, *raaga and dhweshha* (affection and hatred), towards the external world. *Raaga* is *raajasik* (passionate) in its effect; it can be used for one's uplift, as Naaradha used it to fix attention on the Lord. *Dhweshha* is *Thaamasik* (negativistic), as Dhurvaasa expressed it in his dealings with Ambareesha and others. Without *Raaga and Dhweshha*, the mind cannot function at all. If these two are removed, there can be no mind and no *maaya*, and you get fixed in *jnaana*. Let *raaga and dhweshha* go and let Raama enter; then there will be no *manas* or *maayaa* (mind or illusion).

Have aversion towards evil, pride and egoism

The *Thaitthireeya Upanishath* analyses the mind and its behaviour very well. It gives directions to merge the mind in God; the weapons with which you can foil the tactics of *raaga and dhweshha*. Use them for positive purposes, as Naaradha and Dhurvaasa did. Have attachment to the Lord and aversion towards evil, pride, egoism. Water and fire are incompatible; fire is put out by water. But, by means of fire, you can convert water into steam and use it to haul long lines of heavy wagons.

How to overcome *raaga and dhweshha*? By discrimination, by inquiry, by reasoning. Arrive at the truth by this means. Dhuryodhana, though he stuck to falsehood, greed and envy had, according to the Mahaabhaaratha, a swell time, flags flying,

festoons swinging, banquets everyday; but, Yudhishtira, the eldest of the Paandavas, had, as reward for his high morality, exile, poverty and privation. This does not mean that Vyaasa who wrote all this is a cheat or a fool.

Dharma (righteousness) stood firm in spite of hardships; *shraddha* (faith) was steadied and strengthened. In the case of Dhuryodhana, prosperity did not induce caution, humility or discrimination. So you revere Yudhishtira and execrate Dhuryodhana today, centuries after they died. Vaalmeeki also pictured Raama as wandering forlorn in the forests; but, He never for a moment wavered in the path of *Dharma*. So, He is revered even today as the embodiment of *Dharma*.

Ask to be examined and your progress recorded

The *Guru-sishya* (teacher-disciple) relationship which has been established between these boys and those who initiated them into the *Gaayathri* has also a *special*. *Dharma* (spiritual quality) which directs the *sishya* to learn with gratitude and the *Guru* to teach with love. There are cases

when the *sishya* was made to forget all that he had learnt when the Guru was displeased with his behaviour.

India has been *Yogabhuumi*, *Thyaagabhuumi*, *Vedhabhuumi*---the land of Divine Communion of renunciation, of spiritual intuition. It spoke of *Samaa-dhee*, the wisdom that sees all as equal repositories of Divinity. *Samathwa* is just a matter of origin and essence; water in lakes, pits, wells and rivers is rain water, though the taste, colour, name and form are different, based on where the rain has fallen and how pure is the container. Divine grace is like rain, pure, pellucid, falling on all. How it is received and used depends on the heart of man.

The Lord does not test a man just for fun; He does not pile calamity on calamity because He enjoys it. Examinations are held, to measure achievement and award marks and honours. You must ask to be examined, so that your progress may be recorded.

Dheekshith spoke of Bharadhwaaja setting up a Dhurbaar (regal audience) Hall, with a bejewelled throne and all other paraphernalia, for the reception of Bharatha. Bharatha mentally installed Raama therein and stood behind, framing his brother. Bharatha was applauded for this act of genuine detachment by the sage. He was glad the citizens came to know the real nature of Bharatha by this means.

The Avathaar has no blemish, no trace of Guna

Bharatha did not partake of the rich banquet that the sage had prepared; he was too grieved over the turn of events to think of food, drink and sleep. He did not even take a drop of water, before he could speak to Raama. The thought of Raama was so intense in him that people saw Raama in the form of Bharatha. Ceaseless contemplation had made him an exact replica. That is the depth of the *bhakthi* which is fruitful. But, you praise Me when all goes well and you call Me stony-hearted when grief assails you. Grief or joy, whatever the Lord hands out, you must welcome with equal calmness.

It was declared that Raama was born of the *paayasam* which was brought by the deity from out of the sacrificial fire. No *Avathaar* is born flesh and blood, including this *Avathaar*. The body of the *Avathaar* is *chith* (awarenessful) substance; it is not *jada* (inert) like other materials. The embryo of ordinary mortals is *jalodhakashaayi* (enveloped in watery stuff); the embryo of the *Avathaar* is encased in *Ksheerodakashaayi* (the pure white milk of holiness). That is why in the make-up of the *Avathaar*, there is no blemish, there is no trace of *Guna*.

Raama's insistence on His vow of hermit-hood

Dhasharatha wept, for he had no sons to offer ritual food when he moves out into the next world. When all are of the form of God and of the substance of God, who is son and who is father, who is to offer food to whom, when that high stage of wisdom is reached? *Kshamaa* (fortitude) is the father, *Shaantham* (peace) is the mother, *Vairaagya* (renunciation) is the wife, and the Lord is the son, the centre of affection. Dhasharatha desired the lower type of son, the male issue, to save him from perdition. This desire brought his 'spirit' again before Raama, when Seetha was about to enter the fire in Lanka.

Raavana was killed and Raama asked Sugreeva and Lakshmana to crown Vibheeshana as Emperor of Lanka; he pleaded that Raama Himself should bless him on that auspicious occasion, but Raama insisted that His vow of hermit-hood prevented Him from entering an inhabited city. Then, Raama sent Hanumaan to Seetha and requested him to bring Seetha to the camp in a palanquin. Vibheeshana had not thought of that; he was too immersed in other affairs Hanumaan

bowed before Seetha and got a vision of Lakshmi rising out of the waves of the ocean of milk. He felt that, that Vision was enough compensation for all the births he had to undergo. While the palanquin neared the camp, there spread everywhere a sublime splendour from it, which astonished the *vaanara* (sub-human or monkey) hordes. Raama sent word that Seetha may alight and walk the remaining distance, so that they may fill their eyes with her glory. This is not mentioned in the books.

Two purposes of Seetha's fire ordeal

When Seetha was about ten yards away, Raama, who is butter when He melts and steel when He hardens, said, "Stop, I can accept you only after you pass through Fire." Lakshmana swooned at this thunderbolt; the monkeys who had to bring the fuel for the Fire bent under the weight of even twigs. The Fire Ordeal served two purposes- to scorch the slanderous tongues, which haunt the tracks of *Avathaars* (Divine Incarnations) at an times; and, to retrieve from the Fire the real Seetha who had entered into it, prior to abduction by Raavana.

Dhasharatha also came there, to assure Raama that Seetha was Purity itself; and also, to satisfy his parental craving to see his son. He appreciated the steadfastness of Raama in the respect he had for his father's wish; he also saw the *vaanaras* rise again from the battlefield and gather around Raama. The *Raakshasas* (demonic persons) had already attained liberation for they had the vision of God when they drew their last breaths. "The *vaanaras* came down to be My instruments and so they have no death, neither are they born, except at My Command," said Raama.

Man too must become His instrument in order to escape death and birth. He has come, imprisoned in the ego, and he has to liberate himself. This can be done only by making him aware of the Universal (*Aadhaara*) basis, like a man sunk in poverty, dwelling in a hut that is raised over a vast underground treasure, man is suffering, with a spring of joy inside him, of which he is unaware. I have come to give you the key of that treasure, to tell you how to tap that spring, for you have forgotten the way to blessedness. If you waste this chance of saving yourselves, it is just your fate.

Do not hunger for comfort or riches

You have come, most of you, to get from Me tinsel and trash, petty little cures and promotions, joys and comforts; very few of you desire to get from Me the thing I have come to give, viz., Liberation itself; and even among these few, those who stick to the path of *saadhana* and succeed are a handful.

Many are drawn away by the outer signs of sainthood, the long gown, the beard, the rosaries, the matted hair; they keep track of many such who move about in this land and follow them into the wilderness. It is very difficult to demarcate clearly the manifestation of the Lord and so, I am announcing Myself and Myself describing My mission, the task, the characteristics, the qualities which mark out the *avathaar* from the rest. Do not hunger for comfort or riches; hunger for *Aanandha*.

If you have faith and if you keep the name of Raama as constant companion, you are in Vaikuntha or Kailash or heaven, all the time. These are not distant regions that have to be reached by tortuous travel; they are springs of tranquillity that are in your own heart. You cannot have this chance of the nearness of the greatest of all sources of joy in any other place. Here it is

so near, so easy to attain, so full of grace. If you fall back, you will seldom get the chance again. Ask and get what will save you, not what will bind you.

You ask from Me a thousand things of the world, but rarely do you ask for "Me" That is why I seldom address you as *bhakthas* (devotees); I usually address you as *Divyaathma swaruupulaara* (embodiments of the Divine), for that is your real *swaruupa*, *this Divyathwam* (Divinity). Though you do not know it, it is a fact. Therefore, I Call address you so with confidence. I can even call you *Divya-divya swaruupulaara*, but, as for *bhakthi*, since it is a quality that will make you desire the Lord and nothing else. I find you cannot lay claim to it.

Methods to curb Raavana tendency

Some of you claim to be *Sat bhakthas* or *Raama bhakthas* or *Krishna bhakthas*. No, unless you are perfect instruments in His hand, you do not deserve that name. For example, Bharatha can call himself a *Raama bhaktha*. He lived with *Raama naama* in every breath; he was with Raama in the forest and on the battlefield; he suffered as much as Raama; he was as much an anchorite as his brother; so, he too became *Shyaama* (dark skinned) like Raama.

Shravan, *manan*, and *nidhidhyasan* (listening, Contemplating on what has been listened to and practising what is dictated by the mind so transfused), these are the methods by which *Raavanathwa* (the Raavana tendency) has to be curbed. What is that tendency? It is *kaama*---lust, greed, inordinate desire for things of the sensory world, egoism, and the rest of the fatal brood.

When the pot of milk on the hearth boils over, you pour cold water on it and it settles down in the vessel itself, is it not? Dhurvaasa is the example of the pot boiling over; and Naaradha, of the pot of milk that does not. Naaradha had the name of the Lord always on his tongue and so, the senses did not establish mastery. If you too keep your senses and your wishes in check, you will gain by listening to these talks and by this visit; and, I will be happy that you have taken to the path that will give you real strength and joy.

Prashaanthi Nilayam, 4-2-1963

No one can liberate you, for no one has bound you. You hold on to the nettie of worldly pleasure and you weep for pain.

The kite is pursued by crows so long as it carries the fish in its beak; it twists and turns in the sky trying to dodge the crows who seek to snatch the fish; tired at last, it drops the fish. That moment it is free.

So give up the attachment to the senses, then grief and worry can harass you no more. The kite sits on a tree, preening its wings, enjoying its happiness.

You too can be so happy, provided you drop the fish you have in your beak.

Sathya Sai Baaba