

28. The day they got the light

I AM surprised that you read out a Welcome Address to Me and extolled Me as *jnaana swaruupa*, *Prema swaruupa* (embodiment of Supreme Knowledge and of Love), etc. I must tell you that I am no stranger and therefore need no welcome. I am no stranger anywhere, much less here, of all places where I took birth. I belong to you, I am very near to you. Besides, I do not like this praise, for praise places you at some distance, whereas I take delight in being with you, beside you, around you. No father likes his sons to praise him! No son approaches the father with a Welcome Address, in which his scholarship, wealth, strength, virtues are listed and extolled. Kinship evokes kindliness; there is no need or chance for formal ceremonial behaviour.

Now, you have asked Me to switch on these street lights and you have mentioned that this is a supreme moment---for, the village is to be free from darkness and full of light, hereafter! Let Me tell you, this village is not getting light, today! it got the Light, the Day this *Shakthi* took birth in this place! For, what is this little light that illumines just a few yards around each pole when compared with the Light that illumines the heart and spreads joy and peace.

Light from Puttaparthi is widening over the world

From that day, when this light appeared, you have been witnessing how the Light is widening over the country, attracting the attention of the entire world to this tiny hamlet nestling among these hills away from the flow of the turbid currents of civilisation. Now, you have buses and lorries coming along the newly laid roads. Just today the decision has been made to improve the roads around this village to the standard of tarred roads; you have at the Prashanthi Nilayam an up-to-date Hospital, you have a fine school building for your children, and this and the neighbouring villages have the benefit of this very useful electric current, which you can now direct for various purposes at home as well as in the fields.

You gave Me this garland of flowers when I came; but, I would have been glad if you, every one of you, had become a fragrant flower, free from insect pests of vice and wickedness, strung on the thread of devotion to God. That means, you must be united and of one mind, free from hatred and spite, factionalism and greed. Villagers are being ruined everywhere by elements that promote faction, and sow the thorny seeds of hatred, in fields where useful crops have to be grown.

Here, many feel that 'you are not attending *Bhajana* or frequenting the 'Nilayam as much as they do. They say among themselves that the inhabitants of Puttaparthi, the village where Sathya ' Sai Baaba was born, have no *Bhakthi*! But, I know, that you are every moment thinking about Me, watching for Me, talking about Me, pointing Me out to visitors, expecting Me to return soon when I have gone out of this place, etc. If this is not *smarana* (constant remembrance), what is it?

Injurious attitude is being perpetuated

You must have seen women carrying a number of water pots one over the other on their heads; they may have babies on their hips, and children which they lead along; but, all the while, their thought will be about the hearth in their kitchens and the food that is being cooked there for they are anxious that it should not be spoiled.

The strength-giving, peace-creating culture of Bhaarith has been submerged by the flashy, glittering ideals introduced from the West during centuries of foreign rule The attention of the

people of this land is drawn from the heights, to the lowly needs of the senses and the stomach. Even after Indians have regained the power to shape their own future, the situation has not improved, for the same injurious attitude is being perpetuated. The beliefs and practices of the past are condemned as superstitions by the inheritors of that very heritage! I won't agree with people who dismiss them as superstitions; for, they gave those who believed and acted according to the belief, the most precious treasure of *Aanandha* and *Shaanthi*. They helped to pull out the poisonous fangs of *karma*, fangs which inject greed, egoism and hate.

They taught man to do *karma* (action) as a sacred duty and leave the result to Gods thus avoiding two evils- the evil of pride and the evil of frustration---pride that the act was a success, frustration when it did not succeed. It also contributed some positive good; the *karma* was done well, as well as the individual can execute it, for all *karma* was transformed into worship of the Supreme. Man was saved by this emphasis of *Nishkaama Karma* (Selfless action), from unending desire and inexplicable sorrow. Now like water, man flows ever downward, and at the least disappointment, he breaks into bits and drops.

Faith in the Divinity of man has to be restored

Once again, that attitude must be implanted in Man. He has acted the role of clown or servant or an extra much too long; it is time he took on the role of a Hero for which he is destined, and equipped. So like the garland maker who selects flowers of various hues, sizes and fragrances for preparing a garland, the Prashanthi Vidhwan-mahaasabha too has selected these *Pandiths* and prepared a Garland. The purpose of this Sabha is to remind every one of the role of the Hero he has to play. Of course, I am the sustainer of the flowers, not the garland maker! The heroism of the wise man has gone from this land; and the weakness of the ignorant has overwhelmed the people. This has to be corrected. Sloth has taken the place of earnestness; hesitation has halted courage. Even in other lands, the sense of values has to be restored and faith in the Divinity of Man has to be restored. That is the task for which I have come.

Even the *Pandiths* who have great scholarship have no happiness; the scriptures that they have mastered are designed to confer peace of mind, contentment and unshakable joy, but, the repositories of that scholarship are a very discontented group today. They have the umbrella in their hands, no doubt, but it does not protect them against rain or shine! So, even they have to be made aware of the excellence of the knowledge they are carrying, and its curative property. Know thyself---not the Sun and Moon---is the specific for man's ills.

Act up to your professed declarations

Watch the mind, just as you watch the cable through which the current flows. Do not establish contact with the mind; it is as bad as contacting the cable. Watch it from a distance; then only can you derive *Aanandham*; search for the cause of *Ajnaanam* (ignorance) just where it resides. Then you will find that the Mind in association with *vishaya* (sense objects) is the cause. Cut it off from the vision of *vishaya* and *jnaana* (wisdom) dawns.

There was a person who proclaimed himself a *Sthithaprajna* (established in super-consciousness) and an adept in *Yoga*. He went into *Samaadhi* in a trice and sent his *Kundalini Shakthi* (inner cosmic energy) to the *Brahmarandhra* (crown of the head) ! Then he got himself buried in the river bed; but he rose after a few days and started asking for Cash contributions from onlookers! It was a descent from the sublime to the ridiculous. You must guard against that. Be consistent; act up to your professed declarations. The members of the Prashanthi Vidhwanmahaasabha

have to share their learning and their experience and their joy with the people, that is their elementary duty. For this, they are not to receive any monetary benefits, for they are only doing their duty, increasing their own joy, sharing their own enthusiasm.

I am sure this Sabha will move from victory to victory, for it is contributory to My Work. This huge auditorium was erected, would you believe it, in 15 days! It was all done by the *Bhakthas*; not a single cooly was employed. The Chithravathi river helped a good deal, for it supplied the sand with which the place was filled. No Government, no force of authority could have achieved this so soon; only devotion can inspire this consistent *shraddha* (firm faith). It is all the effect of *Sankalpa* (Will). The *Sankalpa* is there and so, the Mahaasabha also will carry on its great task, unhindered.

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The body is the cart and the mind is the horse that drags it. No food is given to the horse, which is really the more valuable of the two. Give the mind and its culture the importance it deserves; then only is life worth living.

Sathya Sai Baba