

### ***36. Gift of spiritual knowledge***

EVEN in this holy place of Shrishailam, such a jubilant and auspicious celebration has not taken place since years. In this land where *thapas* (penance) alone is valued as significant, in this *Karma bhuumi* (land of spiritual activity), there is no reason why *ashaanthi* (confusion and turmoil) must spread; it is all due to the multiplication of wants and desire for sensual pleasure, instead of spiritual contentment. Even the starting of a *Nithya Annapoorna Annadhaana Sathram* (Place for gift of food to the poor)) here by the Akhila Bhaaratha Aarya Vyshya Sangham today, is a sign of the decline of faith and strength. There should not be any need to feed; the cry of "give" "give" ("*dehi! dehi!*") should not be heard in this land of *Annapoorna*, of plenty and prosperity. This place of must be approached in the hue spirit of humility and prayer. Picnic parties and tourists have no place here.

There are many legends regarding the temple at Shrishailam. Mallikhaarjuna is the white, fragrant, *Nirmala* (pure) God, the Grace-showering Shiva, who bends in mercy at the slightest yearning of the devotee. *Bhramaraamba* (the consort), is the Bee, hovering on the fragrant *mallika* (jasmine), drawn by the *makarandha* (honey) of the flower, the true representative of the *bhaktha* (devotee).

#### **Legends the fore-fathers have treasured**

Do not laugh at the legends that your fore-fathers have gathered and treasured. They have invested the place with sanctity and elevated the thoughts and fancies of generations of men. This shrine has consoled and comforted thousands and thousands of pious persons, year after year. Shankaraachaarya was here and he sang of the holiness of this place and the calm he enjoyed here. He has installed a *chakra* (sanctified holy symbol) which, I may tell you, is in a small cave by the side of Paathaala Ganga.

The desire to do service to the poor and the hungry is good; but, it is taking a turn towards building up institutions and collecting funds and seeking donations. While this is being done, egoism increases; envy spreads; feelings of inferiority and superiority spring up; the mental peace one had is spent while one is caught in this affair. All the struggle falls on one man, though there may be a committee. And, when the institution is finally built, a sense of possession develops and though all institutions are the Lord's and nothing can rise or exist without Him, people forget it and claim all the credit.

There are certain dire possibilities which I want all social workers to guard against. First, cleanse your own minds and then start advising others. Earn mental peace and strength for yourself and then try to secure them for others. Learn the secret of lasting happiness yourself and then, endeavour to make others happy. Seek the real limb, not the artificial limb. Get the doctor who would assure, "here-after your will not fall ill" and not the doctor who gives some relief to the present attack.

The atmosphere of holy places should improve. The nature of *Sanyaasis* (monks) requires drastic correction. Too many of them are involved in householder functions; too many of them are after worldly fame and riches. All this will be done by Me as part of *Dharmasthaapana*. The Prashaanthi Vidhwanmahaasabha about which Veerabhadhra Shaasthry spoke is one of the instruments for this revival of *dharma*.

### **Man needs food more for the Spirit**

More than food for the stomach, man needs food for the spirit. The "anna" (food) that *Annapoornadhevi* (Goddess of Nourishment) gives is the not food, rice and curry. The *bhiksha* (alms) that She is asked to give is *Jnaana bhiksha*, not the handful of rice that you think it means. It is *Jnaana bhiksha*, *Prema bhiksha*, *Bhakthi bhiksha*, *Anugraha bhiksha* (alms of spiritual knowledge, love, devotion and grace). Seek Her Grace to get more *jnaana*, more *prema*, more *bhakthi* and more of Grace. Do not lower the standard of service when serving pilgrims in this holy place; place emphasis here on *bhakthi*, *vairaagyam* and *jnaana*. Do not encourage pomp and insincerity here, of all places. If some one, out of sincere devotion, gives a naya paisa, accept it as if it is a crore, do not accept a crore if it is given with a view to parade wealth or advertise detachment.

I am laying the foundation stone of the new block of this *Sathram* (pilgrims rest-house), and I bless that you may so act that the significance of the name *Annapoorna* is not neglected. You have My Blessings in full measure; join hands, all of you in this task and make it a success soon. Do not feed indiscriminately, and make this an asylum for idlers. Feed only those who come with yearning to spend some days in this holy atmosphere; then only will people be grateful. Feed those who come here for doing *saadhana*, for living their lives in the Presence of God; feed those who are living examples of the joy that comes from spiritual effort.

*Shrishailam, 5-12-1963*

*The sages of ancient times divided karma into vikarma (that is intentionally done) and akarma (that is done without any intention to gain the consequence). Follow the latter and you will save yourselves from suffering.*

*All other activities---the earning of wealth, of reputation, of fame and publicity---result in suffering.*

*Sathya Sat Baaba*