

1. Close the windows and save the lamp

The Mukkoti Ekaadhashi, which happens today, is also known as *Vaikuntha Ekaadhashi* (day sacred to Lord Vishnu). The two speakers who addressed you described the traditional legend of the *Samudramanthana* (churning of the ocean), with all the details found in the Bhaagavatha of the *Ksheerasaagara* (ocean of milk), the *Kurma avathaara* (Vishnu's incarnation as tortoise), the Mandara mountain, *Vaasuki* (venomous serpent), the *asuras* and *suras* (demons and celestials) and the various articles and things that appeared from the ocean, culminating in the *amritha* (nectar that gives immortality)! That legend has great value for you, because you too have to churn the ocean of your heart and win the nectar for yourself. The legend is only a reminder, a cue, a call.

The heart full of *sathwaguna* (quality of purity and poise) is the ocean of milk. The steady contemplation of the Divine, either as your own reality or as the ideal to be reached, is the Mandara mountain plated in it as the churning rod. *Vaasuki*, the serpent that was wound round the churning rod as a rope, is the group of the senses, emitting poisonous fumes during the process of churning and nearly frightening the *Asuras* who held the head. The rope is held by the good and the bad impulses and both struggle with the churning process; eager for the results which each has set its heart on.

The lesson of the legend

The Grace of God is the Tortoise incarnation, for the Lord Himself comes to the rescue, once He knows that you are earnestly seeking the secret of Immortality: He comes, silently and unobserved, as the tortoise did, holding the *manana* (reflection) process unimpaired and serving as the steady base of all spiritual practice. Many things emerge from the mind, when churned, but the wise wait patiently for the appearance of the guarantor of Immortality, and seize upon it with avidity. That is the lesson of the legend. It is a summary of *Aathmavidya* (science of the Self).

The song that the Doctor sang at the beginning of this meeting, *Bhajagopaalam* (be attached to Krishna, the Divine cowherd), carries the same message, perhaps in a simpler and easier form. Remembrance of the Lord's name is the method of crossing over the ocean of the worldly life for this age; remembering the Lord by means of His Name is enough to save man. The Lord is *Aanandamaya* (of the nature of Bliss); He is also *Aananda* (divine bliss), which is to be tasted through the Name. It is *Sath-Chith-Aananda* (Being-Awareness-Bliss Absolute). You may doubt whether such a small word like Raama or Sai or Krishna can take you across the boundless sea of worldly life. People cross vast oceans on a tiny raft; they are able to walk through dark jungles with a tiny lamp in their hands. The Name, even the *Pranava (Om)* which is smaller, has vast potentialities. The raft need not be as big as the sea.

The recitation of the Name is like the operation of boring, to tap underground water; it is like the chisel-stroke that will release the image of God imprisoned in the marble. Break the encasement and the Lord will appear; cleave the pillar, as Prahladh (Lord Vishnu's devotee) asked his father to do, and the Lord who is ever there will manifest Himself. Churn and you bring the butter, latent in the milk, into view. That is the experience of every mother that every daughter learns; in the spiritual field, you learn that spiritual practice from *yogis*, who have gained and offered that *navaneetham* (fresh butter) to Krishna.

Curing the infection of Samsaara

There are many who ridicule these *yogis* (God-centred men) and scoff at them. They call them selfish, anti-social, self-centred idlers who run away from their obligations and seek asylum in solitude and silence. But, being near does not ensure usefulness. Being far does not imply hatred or fear of company or uselessness. Viruses enter the very blood stream and surely, nothing can be nearer to you; yet, they are mortal enemies. Members of the same family are envious and suspicious of one another; those born as brothers or sisters fight in courts of law and fill the pockets of lawyers. Even twins seldom love each other. It is not being near that counts.

These *yogis* moved out into lonely spots and sought teachers of the inner path, much as young technicians do today, going to Japan or America or Russia in order to learn skills that will help to build a better India. They do not give up kith and kin and all chances to make a fortune, because they are afraid of facing the hard realities of life; they do not flee from loss or defeat. They go, to seek the secret of eternal joy; they win it for themselves; and, by their lives, they inspire others to win the precious secret, by treading the path they have found useful.

No one calls the man who has gone abroad to equip himself better, as an engineer or doctor, selfish; why then should the man who undergoes greater deprivations to equip himself better as an engineer of the mind, utilising its undoubted powers, not for bondage, but, for liberation, be tarred as ego-centric? This only shows ignorance of true values. There are isolation hospitals where patients suffering from chronic infectious diseases are treated and cured. The hermitages in the forests are such hospitals, where people who want to be cured of the infection of worldly life can undergo the treatment and come out free in order to serve other patients.

Ajnaani sees the same Self in all

Today is the Day when during the *Saagaramathana* (churning of the ocean), *Amritha* (nectar) emerged and was distributed to the Gods. The Gods had slid into the calamity of losing their immortality! Man too is the child of immortality; that is the reason why he cannot force himself into the conviction that he would die. He sees his neighbour die, but believes that he would somehow escape it. The man of realisation (*jnaani*), however, is ever ready to east off this encumbrance and escape from the prison of name and form. Emperor Janaka was such a person of realisation. He never lost the consciousness of the Oneness.

Once, Sulabha, the celebrated woman dialectician, visited his court and during the discussion, she challenged Janaka to treat her also as his queen, for, "as a *jnaani*, you should make no difference between persons," as men of realisation see the 'same self in all. But, Janaka retorted, "As a *jnaani*, you should recognise Oneness; there is no validity in talking of men and women as distinct." Thus he taught her *real jnaana*, the highest wisdom.

Mere drinking the Nectar which I create will not confer immortality on you. Everything that is born must die; everything that is constructed will disintegrate. But you can escape death, by not being born again. When you know that you are the limitless *aathman* (self or the soul which is the infinite consciousness), then you are no longer subjected to the limitation of birth. That is the secret. How to know that? It is the result of a long process of sharpening the intellect and purifying the emotions and the impulses. You may do the most rigorous *japa* (repetition of holy name or symbols) or practise the direst, of austerities, but if you are not virtuous, all of it is sheer waste.

You are the limitless Aathman

You may have the best of vegetables, you may be the most capable cook, but, if the copper vessel in which you prepare the vegetable soup is not tinned, the concoction you cook will be highly poisonous! So "tin" your heart with *sathya*, *dharma*, *shaanthi* and *prema* (truth, right conduct, peace and divine love), it will then become a vessel fit for repeating holy name or symbols, meditation, religious vows, pilgrimage, ritualistic worship and the other dishes that you prepare in it.

It is an uphill task: to reform one's tendencies and character. A man may study all the text-books of spiritual practice, all the scriptures, and he may even lecture for hours on them; but he will slip into error when temptation confronts him. Like land that is parched, the heart may appear to be free from any crop of evil; but when the first showers fall, the seeds and roots underneath the soil change the waste into a carpet of green.

There was a wandering mendicant once who refused to reveal his caste or creed, origin or destination. A shrewd housewife discovered it quite easily; she fed him well and when he lay fast asleep snoring, she applied a red-hot rod on the sole and the man shrieked "Allah" The real core can never be altered, or hidden, or suppressed.

But, what is the real core ? It is not the particular religious belief or the name or the language that one has learned from the mother's lap. It is the Absolute Reality which you are. You know in the very depths of your being that 'you are and will be,' that is the characteristic of *Sath* (Existence Being). All beings have it. You are also eager to 'know', 'to expand by knowledge,' 'to reach out.' All beings have it, this urge for expression. That is the characteristic of *Chith* (Awareness). You seek 'joy'; all beings do so. That is the characteristic of *Aananda* (Divine Bliss). The *aananda* in you seeks its kin everywhere, in everything. That is why it is said, *sath-chith-aananda* is the link between *Thath* and *thwam*, the particular and the universal. Everything is *asthi* (exists), for, it is *sath*; it is *bhaathi* (expressing itself), because it is *chith*; it is *priya* (pleasant), because it is *aananda*.

If you are able to equip your mind with this consciousness you are a Person of Realisation. Else, you are a masquerader. There are three types of minds: (1) minds like ginned cotton, ready to receive the spark of highest wisdom and to give up in one instant blaze, the weakness and prejudices of ages, (2) minds--like dry wood, who succeed but only after some little time, and (3) minds, like green logs, which resist the onslaught of the fire *of jnaana* with all their might.

The little game that Lord plays

Herds of cattle run towards a mirage to slake their thirst, but you ought to be wiser. You have discrimination (*viveka*), and renunciation (*vairaagya*); you can detach yourselves consciously from pursuits which you discover as deleterious. Sit quiet for a few minutes and ponder over the fate of those who run towards the mirage. Are they happy? Have they the strength to bear distress and distinction, with equanimity? Have they a glimpse of the Beauty, the Truth, the Grandeur of the Universe, the Handiwork of God? Have they the vision of themselves as the centre of the Universe?

You have read that the Lord, melted and moved when one performed acute penance, comes and asks, softly and sweetly, "My dear child! What is it you need?" He has manifested Himself to give but, yet, consider the Grace which induces Him to ask, "What is it you need?" He wants you to express in words what you have yearned for and ask the Lord whom you have brought before

you through the exercise of silence. That is the little game He plays. And sometimes He wills that the question is answered in the way His plan demands! Raavana's brother Kumbhakarna was blessed with a timely twist of the tongue: so, he asked for *nidhra* (the power to sleep), instead of *nigraha* (the power to slaughter)!

The see-er should not attach himself to the seen; that is the way to get free. The contact of the senses with the object arouses desire and attachment; this leads to effort and either elation or despair; then, there is the fear of loss or grief at failure and the train of reactions lengthens. With many doors and windows kept open to all the winds that blow, how can the flame of the lamp within survive? That lamp is the mind, which must burn steadily unaffected by the dual demands of the world outside.

Complete surrender to the Lord is one way of closing the windows and doors, for, then, in that stance of *Sharanaagathi* (complete surrender to God), you are bereft of "ego" and so, you are not buffeted by joy or grief. Complete surrender makes you draw upon the Grace of the Lord for meeting all the crises in your career and so, it renders you heroic, more stalwart, better prepared for the battle.

Resolve on this auspicious day to enter upon the quest of Truth. Uththaraayana is *Uththama kaala* (the best time). For the morning of this day the great Bheeshma waited long on his bed of arrows, the morning when the Sun turns North, the direction of the Gods, where Shiva resides. The Sun is the deity that controls the eye, the vision of man, and so these six months, when the Sun is proceeding Shiva-ward, are very propitious for man too, to do likewise.

The real Heavenly Nectar

There are some dealers in timber in the East Godavari district here. They know that logs are floated down the Godavari during the high floods and they are retrieved from the waters after miles and miles of journey, at Rajahmundry or some such place. Railway sleepers are floated down from the Himalayan forests through the Ganga and caught at Haridwar in thousands. Join the flood, the flowing stream and the journey becomes easier. So too, if you practise spiritual discipline to attain the Lord, when the Deity of Vision is moving towards the Divine Region, you get the benefit of the momentum. Today, it is also *Vaikuntha Ekaadhashi*. Many of you expect Me to go to the Chithravathi riverbed and create nectar and give it to all. Well, on the road to the river, you meet herds of cattle that move to the river and return. You have earned this *Vaagamritham* (word-nectar), from this discourse, which you can treasure in your minds and act upon. This is the real Heavenly Nectar; know its worth, do not allow it to be wasted, garner it to become Godly.

Prashaanthi Nilayam, 13-1-1965

Supari is brown, paan is green, chunam is white

but when these are chewed together

the colour is red.

When the three gunas, Sathwa, Rajas and Thamas,

are equated in Saadhana

the result is Shaanthi.

SHRI SATHYA SAI