

### 33. The Hundredth and the next

THIS Conference where devotees from all the States of India have come together is a good opportunity to exchange ideas and chalk out programmes of activity. You can also present difficulties and doubts and return with faith strengthened and hesitation cured. You must keep politics away from the associations, for, these are exclusively for spiritual development. Where the rough and tumble of politics and party factions are prevalent, no spiritual discipline can flourish. You have to seek unity, love and peace, and not promote differences, debates and disputes. They belong to politics, that is to say, competition and contests for places of authority in the Units have corroded some associations even in this Organisation, because individuals have not learnt to control their ego, their minds have not been cleansed of *Raajasik* tendencies. *Dhaya*, *Dhama*, *Dhaana*--these are the three qualities that have to be cultivated by man. *Dhaya*: Compassion to curb the *Asuric* tendencies; *Dhama*' Control to foster the *Daivic* qualities; *Dhaana*: Charity to hold in check the greed that is natural to man.

Ambition to earn fame in the world, to gain some position of authority over fellow-men, to lead luxurious life--this can never ensure Shaanthi (mental peace). Mental peace is the result of quite different attainments. Wealth cannot command it, nor authority commandeer it! It must be won the hard way, through meditation, naamasmara and the nine steps to the Presence of the Almighty. It must be won on the earth, to which man rightfully belongs; and, not on any other heavenly body towards which he may dare navigate.

#### **Know that *Thath* and *Thwam* are the same**

You multiply grief by recollecting the past and picturing a lurid future. You fill the present moment with dread, recapitulating the past and reflecting on coming events! The needle runs over the gramophone record and causes the music to play. The record is inert matter. When the mind (the needle) concerns itself with Nature, contacts Nature, the song of joy-grief is heard. The fault lies not in Nature, nor in the mind but in the contact! Keep aloof, be detached--then, there is no reaction at all. That is the path to earn mental peace.

The child has his tongue and the mother has hers. The mother keeps the child on her lap and pronounces the words so that the child may learn to speak. However busy the mother's tongue may be, the child has to speak through its own tongue. The mother cannot speak for the child and save herself all the bother! The *Guru too* is like that. He can only repeat, remind, inspire, instruct, persuade, plead; the activity, the disciple must himself initiate. He must jump over the stile himself. No one can hoist him over it!

*Thath* (That) is a word that refers to something in the distance. That, means something far away to which you point. *Thwam* (You) is yourself. It is the thing nearest to you, namely, you yourself. You know yourself most; what you have now to know is only this: that, "you" and "that," are the same! There is only One and no Two. It is spoken of as '*buddhi graahyam, atheendhriyam*'---*graspable* by the intelligence, beyond the grasp of the senses of touch, hearing, seeing, taste and smell!

The Lord Venkateshwara is celebrated as the Lord of the Seven Hills; His Temple is on the Seventh Hill and one has to traverse and go over six hills to reach Him. This is symbolic of the six obstacles of *Kava* (Lust), *Krodha* (Anger), *Lobha* (Greed), *Moha* (Attachment), *Madha* (Pride) and *Maathsarya* (jealousy). One has to go across these passions and cast them behind him before he can stand face to face with the Lord.

In the petrified stratum called the body, dig with the help of the pickaxe called intelligence until you excavate the Diamond, Jnaana, from the soil, the Mind. Once you secure the precious stone, it matters not whether you wear it embossed in gold, namely, Nature (*Prakrithi*). Use *Prakrithi* to brighten or show off the Wisdom! That is harmless pastime. But, do not fall a victim to Nature as such; revere it only as the vesture of God.

### **Office-bearers cannot claim exemption or privilege**

How can you climb the six hills and reach the seventh, if you hesitate even to ascend the first step? I laid down *Nagarasankeerthan* (group singing in the streets) as a spiritual discipline, even last year, at the World Conference at Bombay. But, today, at this Conference, I find the Sub-Committee recommends that Office-bearers must attend the *Nagarasankeerthan* at least six times in the year! Can you call this Saadhana? Office-bearers cannot claim any privilege or exemption. They must evince leadership; by their devotion and faith, they must inspire the waverers. That is their function.

But, now, they seek concessions! People crowd into film shows, rush towards social clubs, spend days together in playing cards---but, when they are asked to sing the Glory of God and purify themselves and the atmosphere, they clamour for concessions! When the heads hit against each other in anger, can the feet be steady and unaffected? They too will kick and trample as maliciously as they can. When the heads desire to opt out, the others too will lose enthusiasm and fade away. Realised souls, says the Geetha, act so that the world may be saved. While this is so, those eager to realise have to act, so that their progress may be unhampered.

I cannot accept the plea that people do not find time for going out on *Nagarasankeerthan*. If a hundred things can be done in the time now available, surely, the hundred and first thing can also be accommodated in the Time-Table. You can stop doing the hundred but this extra one is as the breath that sustains life itself. Do not join the group only when the cameraman is around; move with the party and feel the thrill. The Office-bearers must be one with the rest, in all the activities of the Unit. Be filled with joy that you have now got the lucky chance of listening to and carrying out the command! This chance comes rarely to man.

### **In Sai institutions minds must harmonise**

When leaders shirk the tasks that they themselves have prescribed for the followers, even the strongest organisations suffer disintegration. Two trees rub against each other and a forest fire is the consequence; two stalwarts struggle for power and the institution is caught in conflagration! Do not enforce the rules, without mercy or thoughtful consideration. If a person does not attend 60 percent of the meetings, the rules say that he is to be removed from office. Give him chances to reform, to be within the group, so that he may reform. If even this does not mend, remove the name, without any compunction.

Do not have any one in, who would much rather be outside the group of Sai Bhakthas, either on account of his habits or indifference towards religious matters, especially towards the directions given by Me. For, My honour is your honour, your honour is My honour. This is not your Unit, your Organisation; it is Mine. In My institution, minds must mutually harmonise. The hearts of all have to be ploughed by discipline, and sowed with the seeds of Love, so that they grow into the Trees of Dedication, and yield the Fruits of *Jnaana*.

Office-bearers and Members of Sathya Sai Institutions must have *Sahana* (tolerance of opinions different from one's own), *Sathya* (Truth), *Dhaya* (Compassion) and *Prema* (Love towards all).

They must revere their parents. They should not fall into the sin of preaching what they do not practise. Whoever neglects his parents, allows them to languish and suffer while he himself is enjoying a higher standard of life does not deserve to be a member, for I always stress the *Vedhic* injunction: *Maathru dhevo bhava* (consider mother as God), *Pithru devo bhava* (consider father as God). Those of you who are guilty of this malfeasance, take note, and be cured by this injunction. The Sathya Sai Family must have only men and women, who honour their family obligation of nourishing and nursing their parents.

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