

12. The Inner Witness

THE Bhaaratheeya Vidhya Bhavan is endeavouring to spread the knowledge of Indian Culture and to inspire more and more persons to practise the disciplines recommended by that culture. The truths on which this culture is based have to be explained to the people of this country as well as to a growing number of outsiders who are eager to benefit by the wisdom, distilled by the sages of India through years of asceticism and inquiry. What is needed today is a band of sincere *saadhaks* (spiritual seekers) who long to experience the bliss promised at the end of the spiritual journey; as well as all along the pilgrim road!--a band of aspirants who are eager to test the validity of what they are taught to believe, on the touchstone of experience. This is the time when the thirst is deepest among youth and therefore, the fountain of clear knowledge has to be kept in full flow.

What is *Bhaaratheeya Vidhya*---the Wisdom of India? This building or Bhavan is the body; but, the spirit within it, the thing for which it has been built, for which it has to be sustained, is the principle propagated and practised here. So too, India or Bharath is the building; the *Aathma Vidhya*---the Science of Self-control, of realisation of the Reality---of which the world of duality is an appearance, an efflorescence, is the inner spirit. Here, you are. providing the seeker the wisdom of Bharath, as revealed to the sages and as expressed by them in books which enshrine their thoughts and their prescriptions. Here you provide also the congenial atmosphere, the *Sathsang*, which can nourish and protect the sapling of faith and reverence.

Discover the streak of lightning in the blue sky

Love is the seed, courage is the blossom and peace is the fruit, that the sages grew in the garden of their hearts. They toiled for identifying themselves with the Truth, not for painting falsehood with the authenticity of Truth and parading as if they accomplished the mission on which they had come to earth. They achieved such success that Bharath was for centuries the Preceptor of Humanity, but now the preceptor has started taking lessons from the least intelligent of the pupils and rearing the head in pride when the pupil congratulates him! It is now the responsibility of the Bhaaratheeya Vidhya Bhavan and kindred organisations to uphold the validity of *Bhaaratheeya Vidhya* or *Aathma Vidhya* (knowledge of all pervading one Reality), in the context of the world crisis and demonstrate, by precept and example, the lasting benefits it can confer on the individual and on society.

Churn the sacred texts and text books on *Yoga* and Religion and collect the nutritious butter for gifting it to the world. The best prescription for living in undiminished *Aanandha* (bliss) is to develop genuine sincerity, and speak what you think, and act what you speak. For a thousand who speak and praise, perhaps one puts this prescription into daily use. A bunch of horses start from the crease for the race, but only one or two are acclaimed as winners!

The individual is Arjuna; the Universal which inspires him is Krishna. Led by the Universal, the individual has to oppose the attractions and delusions of the Manifested, the *Maayaa*, the *Prakrithi*, that is, the Kaurava Hordes. The battle depicted in the epic is the inner battle, between the temporary and the eternal, the particular and the universal, the sensual and the super-sensual, the seen and the seer. The *Aathma* is described as a streak of lightning in the blue cloud; it is a *geetha* ('streak,' in Thelugu!). Discover that *geetha*, then the purpose of Geetha study is fulfilled!

Fill every moment with constructive activity

The craving is now for the easy life, the smooth life, the life with less and less of physical hardship; but health, can only come through a keen appetite and strong limbs and deep hunger and strenuous work. Make your thoughts nobler and engage in some hard work. The more idle time you have at your disposal, the greater opportunities you have to stray away from thoughts of *seva*, of *saadhana* and of the Inner Truth. Fill every moment with some constructive, beneficial activity, dedicating it to God, the Master who directs the activity, invisibly but inevitably!

After reading a few verses of Bhagavad Geetha or a few pages of any sacred book, you must spend some time in *manana*---*contemplating* on it and concentrating on its meanings. Then, you can draw out its full significance and taste it fully, and benefit from it, without any loss. An expression like *Sarvabhootha antharaathma* (the indwelling Self of all beings) will repay long hours of *manana*. *Manana* (deep contemplation) will confirm the fact of God being in every being, bird, beast, tree and, when this awareness is established, you will not be tempted to hate or ridicule or envy any other being in creation. For, you are He and He is you, fundamentally. Until you come to this stage, you are only a partial devotee, still a long way to go.

Since God is in every heart, the Inner Voice is the signal that *Dharma* (righteousness) gives while approving or disapproving any line of action. The *Dharma* that you have to follow is indicated by that Voice. That is the *Swadharma* for you. It is the Inner Witness that is the real I, which illumines the eye, the ear, the taste and the touch. When Sri. R.R. Diwakar says that he didn't notice a thing or hear a statement made in his presence, it means that though the sight passed before him and the statement was made in his hearing, he was so engrossed in problems concerning his paper that the mind was not 'connected' with the thing or the statement.

Be reverent towards the old and the sacred

The body is the torch, which contains the cells (mind) and when the bulb (eye) is fixed and the switch (intelligence) is on, then the object is illumined and becomes cognised. The cells are activated by the reflection of (the energy of) the *Aathma*. This is the lesson that the Vidhya Bhavan has to propagate and instill in the minds of the youth of the world.

I was telling the villagers of Kalkunte this morning that the teacher has a tremendous responsibility, for, what he teaches he has to practise himself; or else, he will only be encouraging hypocrisy. I was inaugurating the building for a High School there and I told them of the story of Raamakrishna, who refused to advise a child not to eat jaggery until he himself had, after some rigorous days of control, stopped eating that stuff with relish!

The ego makes man behave most ridiculously

Each one of the workers of the Bhavan must become a perfect picture of the advantages of *Bhaaratheeya Vidhya*---*that* is to say, he must be tolerant towards all faiths, patient in the face of odds, reverent towards the old, the sacred and the historic, and humble in spite of the urge to display and declaim one's superiority and excellences.

It is indeed ludicrous to find people competing for position and status when God alone is the entity deserving power and position and status. How transient is human status? How flimsy the bases of authority? How tawdry the signs and symbols of power? Truly, the ego plays all sorts of tricks with man and makes him behave most ridiculously and often most dangerously!

Munshi has been doing this great service to the *Bhaaratheeya Vidhya*, making the people respect it, while recognising it and persuading the youth to value it and follow it. I am sure tomorrow when Raamakrishna tells him about my being here, he will be overcome by joy. I wish all those who honour the *Aathma Vidhya* of Indian sages will give this Bhavan their fullest co-operation and strength.

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