

16. Labels are libels

GURU POORNIMA is sacred for many reasons: this day, the seeker who suffers from the delusion that the objective world is as real as himself is guided into the Truth; this day, those who have not felt the urge to explore the Reality are inspired to seek the spring of Bliss inside them; this day, disciples offer gratitude at the feet of the preceptor for the gift of light; this day, pilgrims to the Lotus Feet of God study the guide books and the maps. When the Sun rises, the world is blessed with heat and light. When the *Guru* blesses, the pupil gets peace and joy. *Guru Poornima* is not over when it becomes tomorrow. It is not a date marked in the calendar. It is all days when the Mind of Man, whose presiding deity is the Moon, is *Poorna* (Full), with cool refreshing rays, which it receives, in the first instance, from the Sun (Intelligence). The mind must derive illumination from the intellect, the discriminative faculty, and not from the senses, which are the deluding forces. When sensual desire tarnishes the Mind, it cannot earn peace and joy.

Do not cultivate too much attachment to things of the world, which appeal to carnal desires and sensual thirsts. A moment comes when you have to depart empty handed, leaving all that you have laboriously collected. and proudly called your own. Persons who live in the Prashaanthi Nilayam as well as those who come here for short stay have dozens of bags, boxes and bundles, vessels of various sizes in plenty---in fact, a truck load of pots and pans. But, look at the American *saadhaks* who are here. They have come across the oceans or the continents, thousands of miles, with a bag, a rug and a can. You spend most of your time worrying about the goods you pile around yourself.

The five points of spiritual discipline

I am insisting on five points of discipline for the permanent residents of Prashaanthi Nilayam. I shall tell you about them, for your homes and your villages have to be transformed into Prashaanthi Nilayams. They are:

- (1) *Silence*. This is the first step in *saadhana*; it makes the other steps easy. It promotes self-control; it lessens chances of anger, hate, malice, greed, pride. Besides, you can hear His Footsteps, only when silence reigns in the mind.
- (2) *Cleanliness*: It is the doorway to Godliness. Inner and outer cleanliness are essential, if you desire to install God in your heart.
- (3) *Service*: Service saves you from the agony you get when another suffers; it broadens your vision, widens your awareness, deepens your compassion. All waves are on the same sea, from the same sea, merge in the same sea. *Seva* teaches you to be firm in this knowledge.
- (4) *Love*: Do not calculate or weigh the reaction, result or reward. Love calls; love responds. Love is God, live in Love.
- (5) *Hatelessness*: *Adhweshtaa Sarva Bhoothanaam*--No being is to be looked down upon as secondary, inferior, unimportant, or expendable. Each has its allotted role in the drama designed by the Almighty. Do not slight, insult or injure any being; for, He is in every being and your slight becomes a sacrilege.

You are deriving exaltation, while worshipping a carved stone idol in the temple. How much more exalted you should be, while worshipping the self-same God, residing in the temple-hearts

of the men and women around you! And, not merely in the human frames; in every bird, beast, tree, pebble and speck of dust! Eknaath, the Maharaashtra Saint, had that Vision.

Riches are hindrances to realise the Truth

The Grace of God cannot be won by mere repetition of His glories; utter the name of God, with its halo of meaning clear in the mind and soaking into your acts and feelings. The Americans who sang *bhajans* now paid attention to the *raaga* and *thaala* (the tune and the time); they have also learnt the meaning of each song and they sing from the heart. So they respect the *bhaava* also. Thus *bhaa(va)*, *raa(ga)*, *thaa(la)*---*Bhaaratha*---entitles them to be called *Bhaaratheeyas!* The culture of Bhaaratha is built on *rathi* (attachment) to Bhagavaan; they have that too, and so, their claims are stronger.

The *Guru* reminds the pupil of the inevitability of death and the transitory nature of existence upon the earth. When *Yaajnavalkya* resolved to go into the forest for a life of asceticism, he called his two wives before him and proposed to divide the riches he had earned between them. Before accepting her share, Maithreyi asked her husband whether the riches will help her to realise the Truth and achieve Immortality. When she was told that they were hindrances and not helps, she refused to be burdened. Nachikethas refused the gift of empire, affluence, and years of healthy life. Prahlada taught the same lesson to his playmates. Buddha sought to solve the mystery of suffering; renunciation of attachment was the first step in the *saadhana* he undertook.

Showing off your devotion demeans Divinity

They had implicit faith in the existence of God; their lives revolved on the axis of that faith. But, now, people flaunt their faithlessness; they shout that there is no God, for, they have not found Him during their search. Now, the word God gained currency, because of the existence of God. A word emerges from the tongues of people in order to indicate an object or an idea, which they have cognised. A non-existent entity will not have a label to identify it! Words indicating non-existing things like 'sky-flower,' 'barren mother,' 'hare-horn,' are only compound words. The words sky and flower are separate and the absurdity arises only when they are compounded together so too the words, barren and mother, and the words, hare and horn.

Every word expresses an experience; every experience is the consequence of a desire; every desire is the progeny of the impact of an object on the senses; the objective world is the superimposition of diversity on the One; this superimposition is *maayaa*; *maayaa* is owned and acknowledged as 'mine'---' *mama, maya*'---by the Lord. It is a manifestation of *Leela* (Divine Sport, Artfulness), the expression of the upsurge of ego in the Absolute! The *Guru* teaches you this and tells you how to rend the veil of *maayaa*.

Man, who is basically akin to the beasts, can roam in either of two jungles: the *non-Vedhic* and the *Vedhic*. In the *non-Vedhic*, life is nourished by the living; wildness is rampant; the teachers are enmeshed in tawdry tangles; they are keen to put their long hands in your purse, rather than watch your heart or mind; they are interested more in your fortune than in your fate. In the *Vedhic* jungle, calm and quiet prevail. Leonine majesty in the form of realised souls resides joyously therein. The silence filters into the heart and all mysteries are clear.

Be simple and sincere. It is sheer waste of money to burden the pictures and idols in the shrines and altars of your homes with a weight of garlands, and to parade costly utensils and vessels and offerings, to show off your devotion. This is deception; it demeans Divinity, imputing to it the desire for pomp and publicity. I ask only for purity of heart, to shower Grace. Do not posit

distance between you and Me; do not interpose the formalities of the *Guru-sishya* (Preceptor-disciple) relationship, or even the altitudinal distinctions of the God-Devotee relationship, between you and Me. I am neither *Guru* nor God; I am You; You are I; that is the Truth. There is no distinction. That which appears so is the delusion. You are waves; I am the Ocean. Know this and be free, be Divine.

Guru Poornima Festival, Prashanthi Nilayam, 19-7-1970

A strong Will is the best tonic, the will becomes strong when you know that you are a child of immortality or a person who has earned the Grace of the Lord.

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