

21. The Ganga and the sea

ALL around is to be seen living beings who drag out their existence in misery, in spite of age-long effort to earn *Aanandha* (bliss), through many a life. lived in the past. They have not so far succeeded in winning *Aanandha*, because it is only the knowledge of the *Aathma* as their inner core that can confer lasting Bliss. When sensual desire tarnishes the mind, it cannot have untarnished Bliss. Through virtuous and truthful life, the mind has to be purified, so that the knowledge of the immanence of *Aathma* in all, is evident for it. It is only when you see yourself in all and all selves in you that Bliss is possible.

The Grace of God cannot be earned by mere recitation of the glories of God. The Name has to be uttered with its halo of meaning clear in the mind's eye. There must be *bhaava*, *raaga* and *thaala* (feeling, melody and correct timing) while singing the Name of God.

These Americans who sang *bhajans* now, paid attention to melody and time, and their *keerthan* came from the heart. So, they are true Bhaaratha children, for *bhaa*, *ra* and *tha* signalise *bhaava*, *maga* and *thaala*! The culture of Bhaaratha emphasises the *rathi* (attachment) towards *Bhagavaan* (God).

God does not inquire whether you lived in caves or ate roots and fruits only; He seeks purity of heart, achieved by service and surrender---service to man and surrender to His Will. You derive exaltation by worshipping the sculptor-carved stone idol in the man-made temple; how much more blissful you should be, worshipping the very God, resident in the temple of the human bodies around you!

God is the seed of this manifested Universe

Adore the God that is resident in all beings, motivating them and prompting their every activity. Ekanaatha, the Mahaaraashtra saint, had that vision. He was going on pilgrimage to Raameshwaram, in the extreme south of India, from Vaaraanasi, in the North, carrying the sacred Ganga in a pot, to be poured ceremonially on the Raamalingeshwara idol at that place. His disciples were with him. On the way, he saw a donkey dying of thirst, in great agony. Ekanaatha felt that the Raamalingeshwara in the donkey was calling out for the holy Ganga that he was carrying on his shoulder; in spite of the protests of his followers, he poured the precious Ganga down the throat of the dying animal and saved it. His joy knew no bounds.

God is the seed of all this manifested Universe. *Beejam Maam Sarvabhoothaanaam*, says Krishna in the Geetha: "I am the seed of all elements and all beings." The root, the trunk, the branch, the leaf, the flower, the bark, the fruit, have each a different texture, taste, smell, colour, use and function; but, they have all arisen out of one single tiny seed! So too all this Universe has but One Primal Cause, God. Man must seek to know the Cause, not the Effect, which is but a facet of the Cause.

Devotees are all play-actors

Then, man will know his reality, too. This can be known only after a long course of discipline which curbs and controls the senses as well as the passions and impulses which operate them. This discipline will establish you in Love, Universal Love, Love that needs no requital. It is said, that aspirants are avidly searching for God; this may or may not be true; but this at least is true: God is avidly searching for a sincere aspirant---and He has not yet found one! Devotees are all play-actors; their devotion breaks down at the first touch of disappointment or distress. Or, they

are only part-time devotees! A few minutes or hours for God and the rest for themselves and the free play of their sensual likes and dislikes! Speak what you feel, act what you speak---then, thought word and deed will confirm and complement each other and contribute to your spiritual success.

People answer the question, "Where is God to be found?" in different ways. They say, in Thirupathi, Badhri Kedhaar, Amarnaath, Bhadhraachalam, Puttaparthi. But, that is not the answer you should accept or give. Tell them that God dwells where His devotees gather and sing His Glory. That is the reason why I am advising you so insistently to do *Naamasmaran* and *Nagarasankeerthan* (public chanting and singing Lord's glory).

The very moment you step on to the *Saadhana* path, Grace will be upon you. The Ganga rises in the Himaalayam ranges, and reaches the sea after a long journey of more than a thousand miles. True, but, do not imagine, that it is only at the point where the waters merge into the sea that the sea is in touch with it! When there is contact in one place, there is contact all along the flow, all along the line, throughout the thousand miles, from the sea to the summit. The tingle and the thrill will be felt from the pool where it originates to the estuary where it meets the sea.

Prashaanthi Nilayam, 19.7.1970

The service of man is more valuable than what you call "service to God." God has no need of your service. Please man; you please God.

The Purusha Suuktha sings of God as having a thousand heads, a thousand eyes and a thousand feet. That is to say, all beings are He, all who have heads, hands and eyes. They are not separate.

Note that it is not mentioned that He has a thousand hearts. There is only one heart. The same blood circulates through all hands and heads.

Each being is a limb. When you tend the limb, you tend the individual.

When you serve man, you serve God.

Sathya Sai Baaba