

33. Faults and failures

PEOPLE may say that the *Vedhas* are only a collection of sounds, of series of letters, but they are much more. *Vedha* is Wisdom; Wisdom is God. The culture of Bhaarath built on the *Vedha* elaborates this Truth and enjoins its practice. This Truth has now to be lived in daily life so that the dire problems affecting the individual and society can be solved.

Many practices and patterns of behaviour have been added to this Culture in the course of history. It is necessary to discard these and purify the outlook. This is one of the main tasks of this Organisation. Economic development and five-year plans may raise the standard of living, but unless, along with these, the fundamental Wisdom enshrined in the *Vedha* is assimilated by the people, such progress will end in disaster.

Morality, a virtuous character, is the very foundation of progress, the very basic need. It grows in the realm of the Spirit. But, today, the Spirit is neglected. Physical and animal needs are catered for, they are accepted as the ends of living; all efforts are directed to these.

In the *Kritha yuga*, *Dharma* (righteousness) was accepted and sought after as the very base of life. In the *Thretha Yuga*, the next Age, God who was installed in the heart was accepted and sought. In the *Dwaapara Yuga*, developing contacts and attachment with kinsmen and friends was considered enough to keep one safe and happy. In the *Kali Yuga*, the modern age, food and sustenance are taken as the very essentials of Life.

Developing Love is the way to deserve leadership

People have now more faith in medicine (which has taken the place of good food) than in *Maadhava* (God). Life is built on capsules and tablets. Pills (*maathra*) supply the power for this pilgrimage (*yaathra*), to God knows where! Examine the contents of the pocket of any one going to office; you will not find there the picture of God or a copy of the Bhagavath Geetha; but you are certain to find some Aspirin or Saridon tablets! It is the same in the case of boys going to school or fathers going to the cinema! Even the vanity bags of ladies contain tablets and capsules. Though you may dine on the best of foods, pills are certain to ruin health. You should-not make these temporary make-shifts a permanent habit.

Even great personages who claim to be Masters of Spiritual Learning and Teachers of Spiritual Discipline are upset when the habits that have mastered them are disturbed. Their *japa* or *dhyaana* cannot proceed unimpaired when the morning cup of coffee is delayed for a few minutes! See how weak they are! What can such men achieve? How can they realise the *Aathma* (all-pervading Self) as their Reality? They care more for the body they live in, than for themselves! They have no faith in the *Aathma* which they yearn to visualise. They have no genuine yearning for Wisdom. They are only imitating the ways and words of others who have gone before. Develop Love, demonstrate Love, draw Love from your surrounding--that is the way to deserve leadership.

Spiritual attainments shun publicity

There are many who go about the country, preaching about *japa* and *dhyaana*, pretending to be highly advanced experts. They claim to be masters, so that they can collect huge audiences and show off their skills. But, such exhibition of talent is not a sign of spiritual attainment. Spiritual attainments shun publicity. Spiritual practice is to be done in silence, away from public gaze. The name and form of God are extolled by Meera as Precious Gems;" precious gems are not brought

out as wares to the market place; only vegetables are so exhibited for all to see. The Units of our Organisation should not encourage pomp or show---for they are alien to the Spiritual Path.

The Sai Organisation is set up to develop and foster Love; it is not set up through compulsion; it arose from the heart and it expands the heart. The inner desire to achieve Love and expand Love has taken outer shape as this Organisation.

Our thoughts are the cotton, the desires which they mould are the threads, and the intermingling and the interaction of these desires is the cloth, made out of warp and woof. When the threads (desires) are removed one by one, the cloth (mind) disappears. It is best to have as few desires as possible. "Less luggage, more comfort, make travel a pleasure," as the Railways remind you. If you have to lessen your luggage for a short railway journey, how urgent it is to lessen the luggage when you are on the much longer journey of Life! This process of lessening luggage is called, in spiritual language, *Vairaagya* (detachment).

The *Aathma*, the Formless Absolute, when it is reflected through the *Saathwik* (pure, unagitated) medium, reveals itself as Ishwara or God. When it is revealed in a *Raajasik* (active, passionate) medium it is *jeeva* or the individual person. When it is revealed in a *Thaamasik* (dull, inert) medium, it is matter. All is *Aathma*, only cognised through different media. The *Aathma* is the only Reality, the *Adhwaitha*, the One without a Second.

All good acts lead to immortality

There are certain characteristics of human behaviour from which we can draw good lessons. When a man does a good deed, say, feeding the poor or building a temple, he feels an urge to share his joy with others. But, when he is prompted by a bad urge to do a bad act, he does not want to share the shame with others! Again, think of another trait of behaviour! When man proposes to do a good act, he is prone to postpone it; for something tells him that he will be alive the next day or a few days hence or a long time after. But when he decides on doing something bad, he does it the very moment. "I may not be alive tomorrow," he feels! All wrong acts lead to death, all good acts lead to immortality. That is the lesson you have to learn from these.

The morning shadow moves in front of you; however fast you run, you cannot catch it, on plain or mountain. Or, the shadow may pursue you and you cannot escape from it. This is the nature of desire. You may pursue it or it may pursue you---but, you cannot overcome it or match it. Desire is an unsubstantial shadow. But, turn desire inward, towards spiritual treasure; then, it yields substantial results. When you are engaged in the various activities of this Organisation, dedicate all desires to God, do everything as the command of the God, whom you have installed in your hearts.

Elevate the human into the Divine

Office-bearers of all Units are here; you are about to consider and approve various Rules and Regulations. But, you must first consider and make certain the answer to a basic question: Why are we in this Organisation? What is the purpose?

You must have the firm belief that the aim of this Organisation is to remove the obstacles that keep man away from God, that separate *maanavathwa* (humanity) from *Maadhavathwa* (Divinity). There can be no human; it is all Divine. This Organisation must elevate the human into the Divine.

There are certain persons in our Organisation who revel in factions and who dwell on differences; there are others who have no faith in it and its task, others have no enthusiasm for work, they are full of envy or malice. When you water a margosa tree, you cannot get the sweet mango from it. Pour the water of Devotion to the tree of *saadhana*; you will get the sweet fruit of Bliss.

Treat every one as the embodiment of the Divine which you worship; treat every word and deed of yours as an offering to the Lord whom you adore. Then, you can escape the taint of envy or malice, falsehood or greed, anger or egotism. These evil traits should not be found in any one in this Organisation.

If you take in as members only those whom you like and keep away anyone who has faith and devotion, you are committing sacrilege against God. This Organisation does not attach value to the likes and dislikes of any office-bearer. It is based on devotion and faith only. Whoever has these and loves the Organisation as his own life, all such have a place in it, have a right to be in it.

Base all your activities on *Dharma*

There is also another point. We are deciding it tomorrow but I shall give you some indication of it, even today. We have for every Unit a President, a Secretary, a Joint Secretary and a Treasurer. But I wonder why we should have a Treasurer, when we are not concerned with money! The name indicates that we have a treasure, which we have collected, which we guard, and on which we rely! We deal with something much more valuable than money, Love. Where money is collected and kept, misunderstanding grows, factions are rampant and love departs. Money and the ways in which men run after it, have caused chaos in the world. Base your activities on *Dharma*, fill your hearts with *Prema*---then I will shower Grace and be ever with you.

Where is the need for money for *Bhajan*, for *Dhyaan* and for *Nagarasankeerthan*? For *Nagarasankeerthan*, you require only legs to move, tongues to sing and hearts to receive the Name of God. For special purposes and on special occasions, funds are collected only from Members of the Samithi. This has been the rule from the very beginning; it is the very basis of this Organisation. For all other activities, you need no funds. You need only a loving heart, a pure heart, a wide heart.

There are some faults in some Units of this Organisation which I have to point out. I am mentioning this now, so that when I meet the Representatives from each State separately, you can make your representations to me in the proper spirit. If I warn you now, your attitude may become calmer and clearer.

Co-operation and tolerance should prevail

The selection of the District President or State President is done by me but I shall consult your wishes too. There must be an atmosphere of love and tolerance, not one of envy, excitement or aggrandizement, when names are considered. When once a person is selected in the atmosphere of peace and love, co-operation and tolerance should prevail and everyone must follow his directions and respect his guidance. It is only then that the Divine Grace will be conferred on you.

In some places, there are Units which do not carry on any activity. Or, if they do, the activities are quite contrary to the principles and practice of the Prashaanthi Nilayam or to the Rules laid

down for the Organisation. Wherever there are such Units, the State President or the District President must take steps immediately to remove them from the Organisation.

In some *Samithis*, members do not attend meetings, even 50 per cent of them. They are absent for 100 per cent of the meetings. Some *Samithis* do not hold meetings at all, so that no one can calculate the percentage of attendance. It is for such Units that Rules and Regulations are imperative. If rules are not observed as laid down, the Organisation will come down in confusion.

This is the opportunity to tell you of some other faults too. Some Units are established with the sole purpose of earning money for the promoters. When a certain name or person is known all over the world and revered by all, such men are tempted to utilise that name for filling their own pockets or for earning name and fame for themselves by associating their activities with that name. This is natural strategem. A number of such persons are found to emerge everywhere. When this happens, the Organisation gets a bad name.

Everyone in distress deserves help

It is also laid down strictly that those who are in our Organisation should not have any connection with other Organisations of spiritual or religious character. Of course, so far as service is concerned, members should help and serve all, without distinction. Every one in distress deserves help. But no member of the *Samithi* should have any connection with other such institutions or societies.

For example, there may be a Sai Samaaj (Sai society) in your locality. "Sai is Sathya Sai; Sathya Sai is Sai." I have declared often and you know it and have realised its truth. Why then, you may ask, is the Sai Samaaj distinct from the Sathya Sai Samaaj? Well, this body with the name Sathya Sai, has full authority over all institutions established under this Name. For the Sai Samaaj, there is no Body with that Name to hold and exercise authority and so, if funds are collected, used or misused, this Body has no control over the Sai Samaajs in a tangible manner. So, it is best to keep the two distinct and allow those Societies to go their own way. There are a number of other institutions also started and run by Swaamis of various types. If we have any who associates with these, I ask the District and State President to remove them immediately. Though people can revere and worship whomsoever they like, we should not have in the Organisation men with dual loyalties. Only those with faith and devotion to this Name and Form can carry out its objectives with zest and enthusiasm.

Of course, every person is Divine but there are degrees in the manifestation of that Divinity. The fire at the end of a lighted scent-stick or cigarette, is incapable of igniting even a dry stick of wood. But, a forest fire can consume in its conflagration even the greenest tree. There is difference in the degree of the manifestation of the Divine element---in the voltage of the bulb which turns the current into light. Some persons may claim to be superior or supreme, but though they have reached heights, their eyes are roaming, like those of vultures, searching the plains for food. Their forms and names are those of advanced Masters but their thoughts are low. Do not associate with such people, however high their positions, if their vision is low. Save yourselves by your own effort; acquire discrimination and realise the Truth. Then, you can move out, to help others to realise.

Do not give room for personal misunderstanding

There will be State-wise Meetings in the Prayer Hall. When I come there, you can suggest to Me without any emotion or factional spirit, the names of District Presidents and State Presidents whom you would like to have, in Districts and States where there is no President so far. Even in places where we have them already, you can suggest changes, if you feel like having changes. But do it after mutual consultation and agreement. Avoid personal animosity and do not give room for personal misunderstandings. Remember that the essential qualifications for members are faith and devotion. Remember also that the development of this Organisation will bring Peace and Tranquillity to the World torn by chaos. The World can be bettered and saved only through spiritual progress, by the efforts of spiritual organisations.

People may claim that they are engaged in social service, that they are directing or sharing in Government activities which promote the welfare of the Community. But, whatever is done as a job, without inspiration or renunciation and heart-felt Love, cannot be "Service." I have come for *Lokhasangraha* (promotion of the welfare and happiness of the world) and so, when you spread Concord and Love, throughout the world by means of this Organisation, your activity will certainly please Me. We can have Peace and Prosperity in the land if all Units work in Love and tolerance and mutually co-operate in service.

Give ear to things that give tranquillity

Some State Presidents and District Presidents have written to Me that they are being misunderstood and maligned and that they receive letters-attacking their bonafides. To be agitated by these letters is a sign of weakness in a *Saadhaka*. Beware of losing peace by giving ear to such maligning. Give ear to truth, things that give tranquillity. Then, your *saadhana* will succeed. Even I am not free from calumny. You can see how my hair covers my ears. Reports come to Me from devotees, also from those who want to malign others or talk ill of others and spread false fears. The hair "filters" these reports and only the reports that are true or that give joy, can enter my ears!

I have been rather harsh today talking about faults and failures; I shall compensate for this tomorrow by giving you directions about the best ways of using your skills and capabilities for spiritual advancement.

All-India Conference, Prashaanthi Nilayam, 21-11-1970