59. Everyone is a son of God

He who is known as Allah by Muslims,

As Jevovah by Christian aspirants,

As the Lotus-eyed Lord by the worshippers of

Vishnu, As Sambhu, by those who revere Shiva,

Howsoever He is worshipped, He gladly responds,

Grants the grace of fame and fortune,

And showers happiness and joy. He is the One,

The Supreme Self. Know Him as Param-Aathma.

Embodiments of Love! Nature confers, like heat and cold, joy and grief. In one seaSOn, cold is most welcome as a source of comfort. Another season, warmth is equally welcomed. Both give comfort to man when he needs it. Hence both heat and cold have to be welcomed by man. Both contribute to man's comfort and contentment. Time, space and circumstance decide their use and their value. This attitude of accepting the inescapable fact is what is proclaimed and praised as serenity, equanimity *Samathwam* in the Geetha. The Geetha says: *Samathwam Yogam* uchyathe. (Equanimity, equal-mindedness, steadiness, is *known as yoga).*

The Geetha also declares, *Yogah Karmasu Kousalam, "Yoga* is the quality of excellence that has to characterise every act." Happiness and misery, success and failure, obstacles and obstruction, defaming and denigration, praise and criticism, are intertwined; they can never be experienced singly. But man is elated by gain and depressed by loss. When praised, he is elated.; when blamed, he droops. But man has to keep in. mind that these are only phenomena like heat and cold.

Discrimination is the distinct feature of man

That is the prescription for mental peace and social serenity. Consider the reality of things---mountain peaks are only heaps of rocks; the ground on which we dwell is only a mound of soil; the body we carry about with us is but flesh and bone, composites of the five main elements---space, air, fire, water and earth. New forms and names are assigned to distinct patterns of the same forces and things which demonstrate distinct characteristics. Over millennia, Bhaarath has been proclaiming and propagating this holistic spiritual truth, and the consequential outlook of renunciation and serenity. "Through renunciation alone, can you attain immortality", declare the *Vedha!* This truth must be implanted in the mind by discriminating reason. That is why Shri Krishna says, "I am discrimination in the human being." That is the distinct feature of man.

In the *Bhaagavatha Puraana* it is said each living being has to journey back to the source from where it sprang. Real joy is available only there. A man may travel on business through many lands and stay in several towns in great comfort, but he does get rest and peace only when he reaches home. The earthly career is but a stage in his long journey, where he has camped for a while. The camp is not to be confused with the home, but many do and refuse to remember the home. All that concerns the *Aathma* is delight; all that concerns the self is misery. This is the *Upanishadhic* declaration. Man loses himself in fights and factions, greed and gain, and ignores the source, the substance which He is.

Be ever watchful of mind's machinations

The trouble starts with his habit of fixing his thoughts on some thing or person. The thought becomes a thorn, a theme, a trap and finally an enslaving desire. When the desire meets with obstacles, anger wells up and emotions are aroused, which might even overwhelm the humanness of the individual. The person loses the capacity to distinguish between right and wrong and slides into sin itself.

How can the mind that leads us along the path of desire, anger, passion, prejudice and sin be kept under control? The senses which tempt and tarnish the mind have first to be monitored and mastered. Cultivate the style of speech uncontaminated by falsehood, the bodily activity unpolluted by violence, and the mental process unsullied by attachment or hatred. Also, direct the senses along the path towards God. The mind robs you of the precious treasure of spiritual wealth. Be ever watchful of its machinations.

In the Bible, it is said that God seeks His own. Ponder over this. God is every where at all times. He need not be sought anywhere, any time. But, God has to seek those who seek Him and struggle to become aware of Him. Whom does God seek? He looks for a sincere, genuine, selfless, steady devotee. Besides, He seeks an ideal son who can be held before mankind as an example and an inspiration. Such persons have become extremely rare nowadays. They style themselves devotees but they weep and wail, when they ought to be really exulting; they exult when they have every reason to weep and wail! So, the Lord says,

I am searching, I am searching, still searching.

I searched in the past, I search, and search now,

For the man knowing and observing his Dharmatrue.

Christ announced Himself as the Messenger of God. He identified His body as having been given to Him for alleviating human misery and serving the helpless and the homeless. He denied the demand of the flesh and devoted His skills and strength to relieve agony and pain. Then when the consciousness rose to the level of the mind, He became aware that He was the Son of God. He strove hard to discover the distinction between Appearance and Reality, between Truth and Mental Image, and He became aware of the higher level of consciousness which transcends the vagaries of the mind. From that peak of intelligence, He became aware that "I and My Father are one." And both are one single manifestation Of the Divine Essence, the Holy Spirit.

Lessons that Jesus taught and symbolised

The birthday of every great person is celebrated by those who adore and follow him. This day being the birthday of Jesus is a holiday when offices and factories do not work. It is not sanctified as a holy day. People attend the church and join the rituals but return home to revel, drink and dance. The Cross is forgotten when the Christmas season is on. The day must be dedicated to the purification of one's passions and emotions through meditation on the virtues and values that Jesus held forth.

Today, man runs after desires; he does not pursue ideals. He yearns for long life, not for a life lived in God. He does not recognise or follow the footprints of the great. Man has reduced himself to the position of a servant of the household who has no means of knowing where the master has treasured his most precious gems. If he is the master, he ought to know. But having failed to rise to that status, he is unaware of the treasure he can command. Each one has to

examine for himself whether he is clinging to trinkets or conserving gems. A lamp kept on mound illumines the area; if kept in a pit, it is as if it were not. A virtue that is practised is a lamp that shines for all; good thoughts and good deeds have a way of influencing others. The gems of wisdom, the light of intuitive experience should not be kept away from fellow-men. They have to be shared, even at the cost of one's life. That was the lesson Jesus taught and symbolised.

Love binds one heart to another

Derision and denunciation follow the footsteps of the great in all ages. They haunt them like the shadow which cannot be avoided. His own disciples turned against Jesus, even those who adored him and hung on his words. They did evil to him who did them good. But, Jesus wished well for those who insulted and injured him. This is a lesson badly needed today. No one should count the harm inflicted on him and plan revenge. He must on the other hand return love for hatred, fraternity for enmity. To behave otherwise is a sign of weakness, of want of courage, of lack of faith in human goodness. Jesus won in this holy struggle. On this day, we must cultivate in ourselves that conviction and that courage.

Far more beneficial than honouring the great is the practice of loving them. Praise, glorification and eulogy raise them on to an unreachable pedestal. Love binds one heart to another. Gratitude for the inspiration and instruction received must bind the hearts in love. The celebration of Christmas should not conclude with some carols, tableaux and made-up trees and Santa Claus. It must be soaked in the resolution to practise at least a few of the lessons Jesus taught us. The very first need is faith in God and in our own Divine Nature.

Where there is Faith, there is Love,

Where there is Love, there is Peace,

Where there is Peace, there is Truth,

Where there is Truth, there is Bliss,

Where there is Bliss, there is God.

The yearning for Bliss is the best proof of our holy nature. Man is Bliss; he seeks Bliss; Bliss is. Blessedness for him. Since God is Bliss, happiness is union with' God. Nothing else can award that joy, which is unaffected by whatever happens or does not happen. The heart of Jesus was pure and calm. Hence, it is honoured as sacred. We must make our hearts sacred so that either we merge in Jesus or Jesus merges in. us. When we merge, it is called *Bhakthi;* to have Jesus awakened in us is the path *of Jnaana.* Jesus was a messenger of God; but note this also' all of you are messengers of God. Jesus was not the only Son of God; you are all His children. Jesus and His Father are one. You and God are also one and you can be aware of it.

You are with God, but not aware of the fortune

Today, people from many lands have gathered at Prashaanthi Nilayam. Having come from such long distances, undergone so much troubles on the way, and stayed here, you have to take with you from here at least a few subline, sustaining lessons for spiritual progress. Instead of going round India, as tourists do, and collecting impressions of places as thus and thus, imbibe the sacred and the holy and transform your lives on more worthwhile lines.

You must pay attention to one slight fact. Indians are not eager to identify and benefit from the lessons of their divine culture! Right under the lamp that is lit there is bound to be a patch of

darkness. If one spends all the twenty four hours in an air-conditioned room, he cannot appreciate or evaluate its blessing. But if he has to walk through the hot sun for an hour, he will surely be grateful and gratified. There are thousands in this Nilayam who keep on exclaiming, "Swaami! Swaami !" but who have not recognised the immense boon they have secured.

When a baby gulps down the first morsel of cooked rice that is ceremonially placed in its mouth, every one is happy; the parents are pleased and the child is admired. When the child grows and consumes plates of rice, no one expresses wonder, pride or admiration. Why? The person is the same, the thing eaten is the same. The eating has become routine, repetitive, mechanical, a kind of compulsive habit.

You too, like every one else, are with God, in God. But, you are not aware of that fortune. You are struck with strange wonder and joy when you see God during meditation; you are overcome with ecstasy. You have been looking at me for such a long time now here in front of you. Yet, believe me, when you go back to your rooms and when I give you *Darshan* (audience) even for a second while you sit for *Dhyan,* you are beside yourself with joy: "O! Swaami gave me *Darshan*!" The fact is that it is only something beyond the natural, above the ordinary, that arouses interest. So, one must overcome this failing. Spiritual joy, wonder, appreciation, the *Darshan* of God must become the life, the natural breath of life, the very *raison d'etre* of existence in the body. This is what Jesus taught by precept and example to mankind, the *Aathmic* principle which is the eternal source of Bliss.

Embodiments of Love! whatever activity you may be engaged in, wherever you may be, however you may fare, be convinced that you are ever in God, that all is Divine, that all acts are offerings to the glory of God and thus make your lives full and fruitful.

Christmas Day, Prashaanthi Nilayam, 25-1-1982