

29. The day that wrought the great change

THE NAME of Prashaanthi Nilayam has spread to all parts of the globe. People from all countries are coming here. Prashaanthi Nilayam has become a mini-world. What has been accomplished here in fifty years could not have been achieved in five hundred years. The Supreme Power of attracting so many from all parts of the world can only belong to the Divine.

There is nothing greater or more magnificent than *Jyothi* (Light). No other object has the power of light. Light alone has the power to dispel darkness. Light has yet another power. Light (or flame) always moves upwards. Even if you keep a lamp in a pit, the light will only spread upwards. The two important characteristics of light are to dispel darkness and go upwards.

However, if the light has to shine without intermission as *Akhanda Jyothi* it needs a proper basis. First of all, the light (lamp) needs a container. There must be a wick (to light the flame). There must be oil in the wick and in the container. These three are not enough to make the light burn. A match-stick is needed to light the lamp. Can you make a light burn merely with a container, a wick and oil? Can you make jewels if you have only gold and gems? Can you have a garland with a needle, thread and flowers alone? You need someone to make the garland out of them. You need a goldsmith to make the jewels from gold and gems. Similarly, there is need for some one to light the lamp, even when you have the other four materials. He is God. It is when you seek God-realisation that human nature is transformed into divinity.

Light the lamp of love

Embodiments of Divine Love/Regard your heart as the container (of the lamp). Your mind is the wick. Your devotion is the oil. *Vairagya* (detachment) is the match-stick. Love is the flame that shines when the lamp is lit. Without this light of Love, man is submerged in the darkness of ignorance. Hence, Love is fundamental for every being. That was why the *gopikas* appealed to Krishna to light the lamp of love in their hearts by playing on His divine flute.

Today man should plant the seeds of love in his heart. Love is God. No quarter should be given to attachments and hatreds. Men should cultivate purity and harmony in thought, word and deed.

It was the 20th of October (1940)--a Monday. This is what I declared on that day:

Know I am verily Sai

Give up your attachments and attempts;

The old relationships are at an end.

No one, however eminent, can alter My resolve.

When I made this declaration, the families of Thammiraju, Hanumantha Rao, Bhojaraju and Seshmaraju, all themselves declared with one voice against my leaving (the home).

This happened at Uravakonda. When the awareness of the human body and of the presence of Divine exists in one, a certain amount of dispassion and renunciation is required to manifest this state of mind.

Municipal Chairman's adoration

While I was in Uravakonda, the Municipal Chairman of Bellary, Ramaraju, came to see Swami, who was then familiarly called "Raju." Seeing Swami he told Seshamaraju: "We shall take this

boy to Bellary and keep him with us during the holidays." He added: "Seshamaraju! You are regarding this lad as an ordinary boy. That is not so. The effulgence on his face and his purity have moved my heart. There is a Divine effulgence within him. Do not be deluded. You may also come with him and stay with us."

From there, the Municipal Chairman took us to Hampi. Do not consider what I am going to say now as something boastful or fanciful or exaggerated. The entire party went into the Virupaksha temple. If I had said I would not come with them into the temple, others might feel angry or offended. I said I was having stomach ache and did not wish to go into the temple. All the members of the party including Thammiraju, went in. They were about 50 or 60 persons. Ramaraju was thinking only of God and nothing else. He entreated me repeatedly to come with him. I was a very small boy then. He held both my hands and pleaded, "Please, please, come." But seeing my firm resolve, he did not press me further.

Raju as Virupaksha

Inside the temple, *harathi* was being offered to the deity, but Virupaksha was not there! Only Raju was in the sanctum! Seshamaraju got angry. He felt that having refused to enter the temple, Raju had somehow got in and stood in the sanctum. This, he felt, was gross sacrilege. He could not contain his anger. But Ramaraju did not think in that manner. He felt that "Raju is Virupaksha and Virupaksha is Raju."

Seshamaraju came out of the temple and found me sitting under a tree. He was always very suspicious. He sent someone inside to find out whether Raju was there, while he himself stayed outside to keep a watch over Raju under the tree. Raju was inside the temple as well as under the tree! Seshamaraju felt very happy internally, but he did not speak to me about it, treating it as a unique experience for himself.

Then they brought me to Bellary. While staying there for a few days, the Municipal Chairman introduced me to various officers, speaking highly about me. I was not addressed as "Swami" in those days, but only as "Raju." Some of the officers seemed to feel that the Chairman was making much of a small boy like me and even tried to make fun of it. Before bringing me to Bellary the Municipal Chairman got made for me a shirt and a pair of knickers. I am so small even now. You can imagine how much shorter I was then. In those days, that is, fifty years ago, it was fashionable for young boys to have a pin for the shirt collar. The collar pin was a status symbol and a mark of affluence. The Municipal Chairman was wondering what else to give me besides the clothes. He went to a goldsmith and got a gold collar pin made for me in one hour. Pinning it on my shirt, he said: "Raju! You should be remembering me whenever you wear this pin."

Baba's attainment of freedom from *Maya*

We returned to Uravakonda by bus. Two days later the school reopened. I was going to school. On the way, the collar pin fell from the shirt. (It could not be found). The loss of the collar pin freed me from attachment (to worldly things). Then I sang a song:

October 20th was a Monday

Returning from Hampi Baba was going to school.

The collar pin was lost and could not be found.

*That clay was the day of transformation.
The loss of the pin was the cause of a big change.
The link with worldly ties have gone.
The pilgrimage to Hampi also served its purpose;
Freedom from Maya was attained.*

That day I left the home. Attachment to worldly objects is a kind of *Maya* (illusion). When these objects are given up, there is freedom from *Maya*.

The same day I went to the Excise Inspector Anjaneyulu's bungalow. He was one of those who on seeing Swami felt a kind of spiritual urge. His house was on the way to my house. He used to prepare some edibles and wait, together with his wife, for my arrival. They would send their children inside lest they should form some impressions about the parents. As soon as

I entered the house, both of them would hold my feet. I used to tell them often: "Sir, you are an elder. You should not touch my feet." He would reply: "Raju, we may appear elders in terms of the body. But in terms of wisdom, we are very small. You are verily Krishna himself." They used to describe me like this. They would do it in great privacy, lest others should scoff at them.

Emergence of Raju as Sathya Sai

On that October 20th, I did not go to the school. In the school I used to lead the prayers everyday. There was a platform with a few steps. In the prayer there was a song which ran as follow.

*Aharaha thava aahvaana prachaarita
shuni thava Udaara Vaani
Hindu Bauddha Sikha Jaina Paarasika
Mussalmaano Christaani.*

Even in those days there was the recognition of the oneness of all religions. Some of the teachers used to wonder how this boy was propagating the unity of all religions.

As I did not go to school that day, there was a commotion in the school, with everyone asking, "Where is Raju?" No boy was present at prayer-time. All the boys rushed to Anjaneyulu's house. I did not see any of them. I was just sitting on a rock. The boys were discussing among themselves: "Some change has come over Raju. What has happened to him? Could something have occurred in his home to upset him after his return from Hampi."

I declared then: "If you want to know who I am take a photograph of me". When the photo was taken, the picture of Shirdi Baba was in front of me. At that time no one knew who Sai Baba was. In the gathering here today, Anjanayya is present. He is now the Chairman of the Sathya Sai Organisation in Anantapur district. He knows about that photo.

I told the boys to go to the school and start the prayer. Meanwhile, Seshamaraju sent a telegram to Puttapparthi regarding the events in Uravakonda. The parents came hurriedly to Uravakonda to take me away to Puttapparthi. At that time, there was no bus service even upto Bukkapatnam. Buses plied only upto Penukonda. From there, people had to go by bullock cart. All the boys declared that they also wanted to go with Raju.

Tragedy strikes two classmates of Baba

At that time, a tragic incident occurred. In the school, three students used to sit together in each desk. In the desk where Swami sat, he had on one side the Sheristadar's son and on the other the Revenue Inspector's son. Both of them were fairly well to do. By their continuous association with me in the class, their hearts had been transformed. The day I left the school, both of them suffered a grievous mental shock. They cried "Raju! Raju" in great anguish. When they saw me boarding the bus, the Sheristadar's son lost his mind and fell into a well. "I cannot live without Raju" were his last words. The other boy was always wailing, "Raju! Raju!" and would not take any food or drink. This state of mental imbalance is *Unmatha*, a spiritual phenomenon. Many people think that this condition is related to the giving up of worldly objects.

In view of the tragic end of these two boys, their classroom in the school was locked up. Even today there is the desk, which has been named "Sathya Sai Baba Desk."

There was a Headmaster named Lakshmipathi (in the Uravakonda school). He used to summon me to his office as soon as I came to the school. This kind of feeling does not come to everyone. Only those who have been blessed by their good deeds in previous lives have such feelings. As soon as I went into his office, he would close the door. He would ask me to sit in his chair. He would sit on the floor and start massaging my feet. Innocently, I would tell him often: "Sir, you should not do such a thing." Lakshmipathi used to say: "You don't know these things. I know them. There is a great *sakthi* (power) in you."

In this manner, many things used to happen in Uravakonda in those days.

The remarkable change in Uravakonda

October 20 (1940) is the day that wrought a great transformation in Uravakonda. There was a remarkable change in all the students there. I shall give you a small example to illustrate what an amount of affection and love they had for me. The day after I left, another boy went up to the platform in the school for prayer. He started to pray, but broke down in tears. He remembered Swami and could not continue. When he started crying, everyone in the hall began to cry. The prayer turned into a lamentation. The headmaster said: "There is no need for a prayer. The cry itself is the prayer." From that day, the prayer room was locked up and was later converted into a sacred showroom.

The students of those days were full of purity. They were not prone to indulge in criticisms and speculations like students of today. Cleverness and intellectual abilities have increased among students today but good qualities have been on the decline. In those days, cleverness was less but goodness was greater.

Prashaanthi Nilayam is now a mini-world

The lights that have been lit to celebrate a memorable event is a symbol of how the Andhra people have imbibed and are spreading the message of Sai. Embodiments of Divine Love! Do not think that this is said to flatter you. Consider it as a declaration of truth.

What has been accomplished at Prashaanthi Nilayam in the past fifty years could not have been achieved even in five hundred years (cheers). Although many *avatars* have done great things, no *avatar* has achieved the stupendous things done here in fifty years. All this has been accomplished by this single hand. A splendid university has been established here. A planetarium has been set up. In a small village like this, even an aerodrome is being constructed.

The name of Prashaanthi Nilayam has spread to all parts of the globe. The whole world exists in miniature in Prashaanthi Nilayam. People from all countries are gathering here. Prashaanthi Nilayam is now a mini-world. You are going to witness many more things by November 23.

Will people from other countries come here even if they are invited? But no invitations or promotional literature have been sent to anyone. I am even advising many who wish to come not to do so. This supreme power of attracting so many from all parts of the world can only belong to the Divine (cheers). The fragrance emanating from a flower spreads all over. Does the flower invite the bee? No. But the bee rushes to the flower of its own accord to taste the nectarine honey in it. Does a bee ever go to a plastic flower? Where is Argentina? It is almost at one end of the globe. In Argentina *bhajans* are being held in every home (cheers). In Panama, some military officers campaigned against the government in power and called for a "Sathya Sai Government." These officers were arrested and kept in a mental asylum on the ground that they had gone crazy. All the military officers were able to convert the nurses and doctors in the hospital to Sai devotees. It is not easy to do this. Such changes can be effected only by a change of heart.

Devotion alone can protect the world

Embodiments of Love! If you have been able to carry these lamps, from house to house, it is not the result of something external. The light has come from your hearts. Hence, more than lighting the lamps outside, develop the *jyothis* within you and purify your hearts.

All Sathya Sai Organisations should be permeated with love. No room should be given to divisive forces. Differences of caste and creed should be totally eschewed. Character alone should be the hallmark of one's community. Love should become an article of faith. Morality determines the nature of a community. The answer to the question, "To which community do you belong?" should be: "I belong to the community of the moral." If any one asks for your religion, declare: "Love is my religion."

Develop devotion to God on this basis. Devotion alone protects the entire world and nothing else. No government, no bombs, no tanks can save the world.

Devotees alone are the protectors of the world. Developing devotion, having the well-being of the world in view, participate in *Nagarasankirtan* (going round one's village or town performing *bhajans*).

Historic discourse at Prashaanthi Nilayam on 20-10-1990 which marked the golden jubilee of Bhagavan's Avataric Annunciation at Uravakonda.

There is a tale told of old that Wisdom and Wealth once quarrelled loud and long, about their relative importance. Wealth argued that without it, the body will be weak, the brain hazy and wisdom a will-o-the-wisp. Wisdom retorted that, without it man cannot even distinguish wealth from non-wealth or know how to earn it or use it. The Soul intervened and told them that they were both equally important, but, only when properly used. Wealth without wisdom

*becomes an instrument of exploitation and tyranny; wisdom
without wealth becomes mere fantasy and a bundle of blueprint.
Use makes them worthwhile; misuse makes them disastrous.*

BABA