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Upananyanam

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18. Upanayanam

TODAY is Shankara Jayanthi---the day commemorating the advent of Shankaraacharya who came to restore *Dharma;* it is also the day on which *Brahmopadesam* (instruction about *Brahman)* was given here for the boys sitting on this dais, who have come from Bengal, Bombay Hyderabad and Bangalore. The Shankara Jayanthi Day was chosen by Me for their initiation into the higher *Aadhyaathmic* (Spiritual) Life, for Shankara is an inspiration even today for millions of spiritual aspirants all over the world, who seek to know the Reality of the Universe and its fundamental Unity. They had this lucky chance of getting initiated here in My Presence by Me, as a result of their own good fortune.

The ceremony of *Brahmopadesam* is *Upanayanam,* which means, "taking near," taking the young aspirant near *Brahman,* that is to say, introducing him to *Brahmajijnaasa* (desire to know *Brahman),* the path of *Brahman.* It is one of the *Samskaaras* (purificatory acts), rites which reconstruct the personality, reform the mind, purify it and re-build it. It makes the person receiving it *a Dwija* (a twice born)! The boy is born first into the world; now, he is born into the *Saadhaka* world. He becomes a *Brahma-chaari--a* person who walks towards *Brahman.* So, it is a very significant day in the lives of these people, a day they must long remember with joy and thankfulness. It is the day when their hearts were turned towards God; and they should try not to run away from God hereafter; that is a great responsibility.

Gaayathri manthra is Universal prayer

The initiation was done by the *Upadesham* (instruction) of the *Gaayathri manthram. The manthram* (sacred formula) is a universal prayer that can be used by men of all climes and creeds, for, it calls upon the Glorious Power that pervades the Sun and the three worlds to arouse, awaken and strengthen the Intelligence, so that it may lead to intense *Saadhana* and *Saadhana* may lead to success.

Every little moment or incident results in sound; only, you may not be able to hear, because the range of your ear is limited. The falling of an eyelid over the eye makes a sound, the dropping of dew on a petal makes a sound. Any little agitation disturbing the calm is bound to produce sound. The sound caused by the primal movement that resulted in the enveloping of *Brahman* by self-evolved illusion is the *Pranavasabdha* or *OM. The Gaayathri* is the elaboration of that *Pranava* and so, it is now held so venerable that initiation into spiritual life is achieved by its contemplation.

The sound of a *Manthra* is as valuable as its meaning. Even a poisonous cobra is quietened by music; *Naadham* (sound), has that allaying property. The child in the cradle stops wailing as soon as the lullaby is sung; it may not carry any meaning; it may be a nonsensical rhyme or just a jingle, but, it quietens, soothes the nerves and induces sleep. In the case of the *Gaayathri,* the meaning too is easy and profound. It does not ask for mercy or pardon; it asks for a dear intellect, so that the Truth may be reflected therein correctly, without any disfigurement.

Requisites of spiritual discipline

The *Brahmachaari* has vowed himself into a life of spiritual discipline. Now what are the requisites for the discipline?

First: Faith, that can stand the ridicule of the ignorant, the cavilling by the worldly, the laughter of the low-minded. When someone ridicules, you should argue like this within yourself: Is he ridiculing my body? Well, he is doing what I myself would wish to do; for, I too want to escape out of this attachment of this body. Is he ridiculing the *Aathma?* Well, he is doing the impossible, for, the *Aathma* is beyond the reach of words or thought; it is unaffected by praise or blame. Say to yourself, "My *Aathma thathwa* (Principle of the Self) is *Nischala* (immovable), it is *Nirmala* (pure)," and carry on.

Second: Do not worry about ups and downs, loss or gain, joy or grief. You are yourself the maker of the ups and downs. If you but care, it can all be one smooth level. You label something as loss and something else as gain. You crave for a thing and when you get it, you call it joy; when you don't, you call it grief. Cut the craving off, and there will be no more swinging from joy to grief.

Third: Reason out and get convinced of the truth, *Sarvam Brahmamayam* (All is *Brahman).* You know there are five elements or *bhuuthas,* which constitute, by their permutations and combinations, the world called *Prapancham,* the "Five-constituted." *Prithivi* or the Earth-element has five qualities, the maximum, and so, it is the grossest. It has its own special characteristic of *gandha* (smell), as well as the characteristic of the other four, namely, *sparsha, rasa, ruupa and sabdha* (touch, taste, form and sound). The next one J*ala,* the water-element has only four, its own special one---taste and touch, form So it is subtler than the Earth-element. *Agni* is subtler still, because apart from its special characteristics of form, it has only two others, sound and touch. V*aagu,* the Air-element has touch as its special and one more quality, sound. Finally the lightest and subtlest of all the five, *Aakaasha,* the Sky-element, has only one characteristic, its own, namely, *sabdha.* Now, God is subtler than even *Aakaasha* and so He is all-pervading, even more than ether or anything more pervasive than that. His nature is beyond all human vocabulary, beyond all human mathematics. Have this conviction well stabilised in your intellect.

Establishment of *Dharma* by Adhi Shankara

Fourth: Be steady in spiritual practice, and never hesitate once you have decided on it. When the bus is moving on, the dust will be floating behind as a cloud: it is only when it stops with a jerk that the dust will envelop the faces of the passengers. So, keep steadily engaged in the practice. Then, the cloudy dust of the objective world will not cover your face.

Shankaraacharya came to this world for the work of *Dharmasthaapana* (establishment of righteousness), but he did not wage a war against the narrow sectarians or the wild theologians who opposed him or the critics who condemned him as a pseudo-Buddhist. He won them over by argument, persuasion and preaching. He spoke softly, but, with conviction. He gave his opponents fair chances to present their cases to the best of their ability and sometimes he even helped them to clarify their own points of view. Through *Bodha* (knowledge) alone can *Dharma* be saved in the modern *Kali-age.* That is why I am engaged in *bodha* (imparting knowledge), in this task of re-constructing through *upadesha* (instruction).

When you scatter seeds on the surface of the soil, they do not germinate. You have to keep them inside the soil. So too, *bodha,* if it is scattered on the surface, it will not germinate, grow into the tree of knowledge and yield the fruit of wisdom. Plant it in the heart, water the plant with divine love, manure it with Faith and Courage, keep off pests with insecticides of *bhajana* (group singing of holy names) and *sathsangha* (company of the holy), so that you can benefit in the end.

You have not yet got started in *saadhana;* still you demand *shaanthi;* you demand Grace. How is it ever possible? Start! Then, everything will be added unto you.

Ask for the right things

God gives you whatever you pray for; so, take care. Ask for the right things. There was a man who had four wives; he happened to go to Bombay on some work connected with his business. From there, he wrote to all of them that he was prepared to bring home whatever each of them wanted. So, they all wrote to him giving a list of things they wanted. The first wife asked for some nice tonics for her health, and rugs and woollen clothing, to be of service whenever she fell ill. The second wife wanted some sails of the latest style, choli pieces, jewellery of the Bombay type and such other sundry decorative stuff. The third asked him to select for her some religious books, the *Jnaaneshwari, abhangs, Bhakthi-vijaya,* etc., available in Bombay book-shops, as well as pictures of Pandarinath, Bhavaani, Sai Baaba, etc. The fourth wife had no list at all; she simply wrote, "If you return soon and safe, that is enough for me." She got nothing but his love. The others got big packets containing whatever they had written for. So think well, discriminate clearly before you ask, before you pray.

I know how systematic you are all in eating and drinking. You take pretty good care of the body. I do not condemn it; I only want that you should take equally good care of the needs of the spirit also. Take a dose of *Dhyaanam* (meditation) and J*apam* (silent repetition of holy Names) as the morning breakfast; *Puuja* and *Archana* (ritual worship) as Lunch at noon; some *Sath-sangha* (holy company) or *Sath-chinthana* (thinking 'holy thoughts) or *Sath-grantha paaraayana* (reading of holy books) or Naama *likhitha* (writing of holy Names) as afternoon tea and snacks; an hour of *bhajana* (devotional singing) as Dinner; and a small ten-minute manana (reflection) as the cup of milk before going to bed. That dietary is enough to keep your inner being happy and healthy. That is My advice to you today.

Prashaanthi Nilayam, 16-5-1964

> *There is in this world no austerity higher than fortitude, no happiness greater than contentment, no punya (good deed) holier than mercy, no weapon more effective than patience.*
>
> *SHRI SATHYA SAI*