

O Students! Be Inquisitive!

(Excerpts from Satsang of Pujya Sant Shri Asaramji Bapu)

Inquisitiveness is the root of all discoveries, be they physical, mental, religious or metaphysical. Therefore, you must cultivate inquisitiveness to elevate yourself in life. Only those with inquisitiveness become great.

Thomas Alva Edison was a child like you. He was deaf as well. He used to sell newspapers and bottles of milk on trains. But solely by virtue of his inquisitiveness, he has more than 2500 inventions to his credit including that of the electric bulb. Necessity is the mother of inventions. A person with inquisitiveness can scale the pinnacles of success. Without inquisitiveness there can be no progress in life.

There was a boy named Hira who worked for a businessman. One day he questioned his master, 'I work round the clock for you. On the other hand the manager comes only for a couple of hours, engages in some worthless conversation with you and leaves. And yet my salary stands at 500 rupees whereas the manager gets 5000 rupees. On top of this, he gets so many other facilities as well. What is the reason behind this discrimination'

The master replied, 'If you want to know the difference between you and the manager, then go to the port and find out whether our steamer has arrived with the cargo.'

The servant went there and returned at night. He told the master,

'Masterji! One of our ships has arrived at the port.'

The master enquired, 'What does the ship carry in it'

The servant drew a blank. He went back again the next day and reported that almonds and black pepper had arrived.

The master enquired, 'Are there any other goods'

He had to make yet another trip and then reported, 'There are also cloves in the cargo.'

The master asked, 'Who gave you this information'

Hira said, 'Somebody told me that cloves have also come.'

The master asked, 'Who was the man who gave you this information' Was he a reliable person'

Hira replied, 'That I don't know.'

The master then instructed, 'Go and ask some reliable person as to which items have arrived with the ship and in what quantities.'

Hira went again to the docks and came back with a list of items along with their respective quantities. The master asked, 'Did you enquire at what rate the goods have been purchased and what are their present rates in the market'

Hira said, 'This I did not ask.'

The master scolded him, 'You stupid! In this way a whole month will pass by and we will get nowhere.'

Then he called the manager and said, 'Make a trip to the Ghogha docks.' The manager returned after two hours with the news, 'Masterji! There were almonds, black pepper, cloves and so and so items in so and so quantities. Our steamer had arrived early. The other steamers will arrive in a day or two and therefore the prices in the market are most likely to fall. So I thought that selling the goods right now would be beneficial to us. It would have taken time to travel back and forth for your approval. Therefore I went ahead and sold off the entire consignment without your permission. We made quite a hefty profit in the bargain and here is a cheque worth rupees two lakhs for you.'

The master told the servant, 'Do you see the difference' Had you been allowed to continue with your trips to the port there would have been a delay of 3 to 4 days; and I would have lost a sum of rupees five lakh in the process. The manager has converted the sure loss of five lakh rupees into a profit of rupees two lakh. Now if I pay him rupees 5000 it is less than his actual worth, but paying you rupees 500 is of course, on the higher side. Foolish chap! You have no inquisitiveness.'

A man without inquisitiveness becomes lazy and slothful, remains backward; whereas an inquisitive person is always alert and diligent. One who has inquisitiveness will discover great secrets from ordinary-looking things, but one with no inquisitiveness will fail to even see the secrets bared in front of his eyes. An inquisitive person is sharp-witted by nature. He observes every situation minutely and, through incessant and insightful search, finally unravels the mysteries as well.

A class may have some 50 students. The teacher, the syllabus and textbooks are the same for every student. But those who pay attention, listen carefully to the teacher and ask relevant questions out of inquisitiveness are the ones who progress and bring glory and fame to their school and their parents. And those students, who do not listen carefully to their teacher for want of inquisitiveness, end up with low marks and somehow pull along the cumbersome cart of their lives. They live unheard and die unsung. Therefore be inquisitive.

When the teacher is teaching, do assimilate the lessons with full concentration. If you are unable to comprehend in the first attempt, try on your own again. If you still fail then ask a fellow-student or the teacher. Increase your inquisitiveness in this way. One without inquisitiveness cannot benefit even if Lord Brahma Himself comes to preach him. A person can be successful only to the extent of his inquisitiveness and diligence.

Without inquisitiveness and diligence you will fall behind not only in your studies but also in your intellectual development and the path to salvation. But why should you fall behind at all? Be alert. Be inquisitive. Success is waiting for you. While being inquisitive in the worldly matters, at times, turn your inquisitiveness to fundamental questions like, 'Who am I? I exist even after the death of my body. If I am the soul, then what is the difference between the soul and the Supreme Soul? How does one realize God? What is That by the knowledge of which everything becomes known, and on its attainment nothing remains to be attained?' Let such queries arise in your mind. Increase your inquisitiveness for the Supreme Being and become liberated from the worldly bondage in this very life. All the requisite capabilities are inherently present in you. Bravo! Bravo!