

17. Lakshya Worship

Though there is no particular reason for this evening's gathering, Kompella Subbaraya Sastry tried to discover one, and he concluded his speech with a reference to the *Varalakshmi* worship that is generally done in Hindu homes today! This search for 'causes' is another of the delusions that pester people; people are out to seek the cause of everything, and in that confusion, they forget to derive the full benefit of the result that is before them.

Sastry quoted from the *Soundharyalahari* to explain the meaning of Siva-Sakthi, probably moved by the incidents of the last Guru Purnami Day. Siva-Sakthi is the conjunction of insentient or inert (*jada*) and awareness (*chit*), the conjunction of the wire with the current, which activates all the instruments —fan, stove, bulb, and radio. Siva-Sakthi is in all, not only in Me; there is only the difference in power and capacity to manifest. The firefly has some power of illumination; it also emits light. We have oil lamp, the electric bulb, the petromax lamp, the moon, the sun —all emanate light; that is the common quality.

Like that, both good and evil have the right to exist. The evil has to be used for the purpose for which it is suited. The skin of the orange is not sweet, but it helps to protect the sweetness within. The bitter green skin of the unripe orange protects the fruit during the ripening period. The skin also gradually takes on some of the sweetness and flavour of the ripening orange; so too, evil has to be slowly transformed into good by the subtle influence of association.

Purpose and rationale of nature around us

The senses may be used for the purpose of increasing spiritual bliss (*anandam*). When fruit juice is poured into a cup, the cup does not know its taste; if you hold it in the palm, you do not get the taste. You have to drink it with the straw, the senses; then the tongue, the intellect (*buddhi*), experiences the sweetness. The fruit juice is nature (*prakriti*) around us. Taste its sweetness, namely, the Divinity that is immanent in it; that is the purpose and rationale. Nature is just the divine play (*leela*) of the Lord set before you so that you may become aware of His glory, His splendour.

If the mind obeys the dictates of intellect, the individual gains. If the orders from Delhi are obeyed by every state, then the country gains in strength and unity. But if the mind becomes the slave of the senses, then woe be to the individual. When the mind thus follows the outward bound senses and forgets the Reality, when the individual revels in the dream world of false fantasy, this divine mother pats the child and wakes it. There is then no more need to tell them anything else. When awake, the truth will stand revealed.

Your right is to realize cosmic nature, so don't play about forever in the thought of the body, the consciousness that you are just this five-foot body. Transcend the attachment to the family, the home, the village, the community, the district, the state, the nation. You must acquire not the independence denoted by the political fact of self rule (*swarajya*) but the freedom of the spirit called *swaa-rajya* (dominion over oneself).

All different conceptions of God are valid

The cry of equality now being used as a slogan is a vain and meaningless cry, for how can people, inheriting a multiplicity of impulses, skills, qualities, tendencies, attitudes, and even diseases from their ancestors and from

their past be all of the same stamp? And in spite of all this advertisement for supposed equality, you find more misunderstandings and factions now than at any previous period of history. Those who promote inequality are those who most loudly proclaim this modern doctrine of equality.

Each person has a different conception of God and of goodness, according to their upbringing and the state of purification of their impulses. All such conceptions are valid. When water is let into the fields, you will find sheets of different shapes —circular, rectangular, oval, square, according to the shape of the fields. The fertility or the quantity of the crops harvested do not vary according to the geometrical correctness of the shapes. How far, how fast you have established attachment to the Lord, that is the test. The rest does not matter.

Steady love of the Lord is like a mosquito curtain; it will keep out the disease-carrying delusion and pride, lust and anger, greed and jealousy. Develop faith so that you may love without doubt. The “illness” that ended on Guru Purnami first shook the faith of many, but, later, confirmed the shaken faith. That is not as good as keeping faith unshaken, whatever may happen. How can the nose that falls down when you merely cough be firm when you sneeze?

Sankara harmonised the various schools and sects. I had to do My *dharmā* (divine duty), and every act of Mine has its significance, which you cannot understand. You are in the dark, so you fear more. You cannot notice the heaps of earth and the pits on the road. You cannot even know that the road is smooth and fine. There is no fault or partiality in creation —be confirmed in that. Then you will waver no more in your faith. If God’s creation itself were faulty, all would have suffered equally! Now, each person has a different version to give, if you ask whether they are happy and why. The same person speaks differently at different times about the acts of the Lord. So the fault lies in you, the excellence that you praise is in you. You see yourself in the outside world; what you like or dislike is your own self!

Wealth accrues by fair means as well as foul

Sankaracharya declared, “Brahman alone is real; the world is false (*Brahma sathyam; jagath mithya*).” But he did not therefore discard the world as beneath notice. He continued the work of Kumarila Bhatta, harmonised the various schools and sects of those days, established missions for the propagation of the non-dual (*adwaitha*) doctrine in the four corners of India —Badrinath, Sringeri, Puri, and Dwaraka— and then left.

“Brahman alone is real; the world is false” is the essence of the holy scriptures (*sruthi*). That truth can be cognised by minds trained through dualistic worship of the personal God and qualified non-dualistic (*visishtha-adwaitha*) emphasis of the individual (*jiva*) as the limb of the Absolute. One batch of students should be passing out of a college while another batch is joining the first year class. So too, more and more people must take up devotional activity and slowly ascend to the stage of full knowledge of the Supreme; then only can humanity achieve the Goal. With this idea, Sankara established the missions.

A man lost in the jungle was asked to move on in a certain direction, and after some time, he saw a village. Now, that village did not emerge for his sake just then. He saw what was already there, that is all. So also, non-dualism shows you the way to something that is already there but that you did not recognise so far —namely, your being the unlimited, illimitable Brahman.

Well, just a word about the *Varalakshmi* worship, which Subbaraya Sastry mentioned. Let Me tell you frankly, I do not like this Lakshmi worship, which people do, expecting to grow rich and accumulate wealth.

They even speak of Dhanalakshmi and have special sacred prayers to propitiate Her. Wealth (*lakshmi*) accrues by fair means as well as foul; money is earned by gambling, by various forms of deceit, by highway robbery itself, by high and low, by all and sundry. Worship the goal (*lakshya*), I shall appreciate you! Keep the goal (*lakshya*) of expanding your love till it embraces all beings, till it sees every being as your own self —keep it ever steady before your mind's eye. Then, Lakshmi will, of her own accord, favour you to the extent necessary for realising the goal. Never doubt that. Never falter.

Prasanthi Nilayam, 1963-08-02

Life is a battlefield, a *dharmakshetra* (field of righteousness), where duties and desires are always in conflict. Smother the fiery fumes of desire, of hatred and anger, that rise up in your hearts; it is sheer cowardice to yield to these enemies that turn you into beasts. When obstacles come, meet them with courage. They harden you, make you tough.

Sathya Sai Baba