

9. The flowers that God loves

It is in the experience and practice of the citizens of Bhaarath that they generally worship God with flowers, offer *puuja* (ritual adoration) and make obeisance to God. But there is something which is more sacred than this. There is a distinctive type of devotion by which you worship God with a good, clean mind and good conduct. This has been given the name of *Paraa Bhakthi*. By worshiping God always with *puuja* and flowers, the *saadhaka* (spiritual aspirant) will remain stationary in his place. This is good in a way but to remain in one place all the time and failing to rise to a higher position is not good. It is a superior type of worship---to worship God through good qualities, good conduct, good thoughts and good company. The *Shruthis* (scriptures) have described this kind of worship as worship through good qualities. By offering what kind of good qualities can we please God?

The first flower with which we can worship God is *ahimsa*---non-violence. The second flower is *dhama* (control of senses). The third flower is *dhaya* (compassion to all living beings). The fourth one is *kshama* (forbearance). The fifth flower is *shaanthy* (peace). The sixth flower is *thapas* (penance). The seventh one is the flower of *Dhyaana* (meditation). The eighth is the flower of *Sathya* (Truth). The inner meaning of this statement is that God will shower grace on you if you worship him through these eight flowers.

The flowers in nature fade always, drop down, lose fragrance and also develop an odour which is not pleasant. Instead of worshipping with such worldly flowers, which are impermanent, and receiving impermanent rewards from God, we should worship Him with what is truthful and thereby attain a stage which is higher.

The true meaning of *ahimsa*

The flowers which you are using for worship have not been created by you. You are bringing flowers which have been created by the *sankalpa* (Will) of God on some tree or in some garden and are offering them back to the Creator Himself. What is the greatness in using the flowers created by God and giving them back to God Himself? Many people bathe in the Ganges, take the water from the Ganges into their palms and offer it back to the Ganges itself. This is not what you have created. This is not what you have the right to offer.

From the tree of your life, to pick out such fruits which you have protected and which you have grown in the form of good qualities and offering them to God, there is some distinctiveness in that. In order to promote good qualities, you have to undergo several troubles. So, it is through these good qualities that your mind can also acquire a divine concentration. Without good qualities and without good thoughts, how can you fix your mind in meditation?

The first flower is *ahimsa pushpam*. We regard the word *ahimsa* to mean not causing harm and hurt to other living things. The true meaning of the word is not to cause hurt and harm to any other living being either through your thought, word or deed. Cleansing and purifying these three---thought, word and deed---has been called a *Thriputi* in spiritual parlance. This kind of flower of *ahimsa* has been described as *Thrigunam*, *Thriputi*, *Ekabilvam*. All of them should be harmonised and brought together to one unit of flower.

Use the sensory organs along the right path

The second flower is the control of sensory organs. Our senses run without any control. If running horses or animals are not controlled, they pose a danger.

God has created each organ of the human body for a specific purpose. It is only when we use these sensory organs along the right path for which they have been created we will be entitled to God's grace. God has given us a nose. We should make an attempt to breathe in and breathe out through the nose and only accept fragrance through the nose. If we use such a nose to take snuff into it, the purpose will become useless. In the same manner, He has given us the mouth and a tongue in order that we may take *saathwik* (pure) food. If we use the mouth to take in unholy food, intoxicating drinks, then we will be using the mouth for a wrong purpose.

In the same manner, we should understand under what conditions and in what times and in what manner we should use each of these organs and put them under control. Our inner strength will become less and less on account of excitement or unnecessary sorrow. The body will become ill by mental agitations and distractions. Man ages very quickly through excitement and sorrow. The reason for your not preserving this sacred instrument in sound condition is lack of control over these sensory organs. The second flower of sensory control should be used for worshipping God.

The third flower is compassion to all living *things*---*Sarvabhuthe Dhaya Pushpam*. Looking merely and superficially at human nature, which had diverse aspects, we are forgetting God in this field.

From the seed of divinity the tree of creation has grown. In this tree of creation the fruits are the human beings which are the *Jeevaathmas*. In each of these human fruits, there is divinity in the form of seed. That is why in the Bhagavad Geetha, Krishna has said, "*Beejam Maam Sarvabhuthaanaam*" (I am the seed in all the living beings in the form of *Aathma*). Recognising the truth that God is present in the form of *Aathma* in all living beings, we say compassion to all living beings is the next flower.

One's love should encompass all living beings

The fourth one is *Kshama pushpam*. *Kshama* or forbearance truly is the highest quality of a human being. But in human life because he develops narrow ideas, man wants to live in a constricted place. He thinks 'I' and 'my family' are what matter, others are all different from 'me'. It is not possible for us to develop the flower of forbearance as long as these ideas are in us. It is only when we love that we can have patience and forbearance. One's love should encompass all living beings That will fructify as forbearance.

There is a small example. In our home there are our children. Along with our children, there is also a servant. In the house, a son may be pilfering something or the other and developing bad habits. In many ways we will try and control that son by beating, by scolding, and persuading him to return to good ways but we will never take him and hand him over to the police. In the same house, if the servant boy steals a small spoon, at once we will take him and hand him over to the police. What is the inner meaning of the situation in which we do not punish a son, even if he steals day after day, but we hand over a servant boy immediately to the police when he steals even a small thing? The reason for this is the narrow idea 'that this boy is my son.' Because the servant does not belong to you, there is no place for forbearance and patience. So you see that

when you have the broad idea 'that everyone is mine' there is room for patience and forbearance. It is only then that our love will also grow.

With truthful thoughts man will have peace

The fifth is the flower of *Shaanthi*---*shaanthy pushpam*. This flower of peace should not be interpreted to mean that you should be silent whosoever is attacking you, or whosoever is blaming you. It is not that. If you are unmoved and unperturbed in spite of anyone finding faults in you, this can be called real *shaanthy*. If you can fill your heart with love, then peace will come into you from outside. Through bad qualities, to some extent, we lose peace. With truthful thoughts, a man will have peace. With untruthful thoughts, a man will not have peace. If you can get rid of all thoughts, you will become a saint. It is only when you can be free from all thoughts that you can have peace. Your own bad thoughts are responsible for all your pain and sorrow. By good thoughts and by good ideas, you will become a *saadhu*. *Saadhu* does not mean one who merely wears an orange robe, shaves the head and wears *Rudhraakshas* (holy beads). He who has good thoughts and good ideas is a *saadhu*. A *saadhu* is one who is a *Sathya Sankalpa Swaruupa* (embodiment of truthful thoughts).

In the state of peace, human nature will be like the unruffled water surface. If there is water in a vessel, you will find 'there are ripples on account of the wind. Your reflection also will be disturbed on the surface of the water. On an impure surface, our reflection is also impure. On a clear surface of water, our reflection is also clear. In the same manner, although the basic truth is only one, whenever reflection takes place in a mind which is full of *Thamo guna*, (materialism) you will find there is impurity in the image. If the reflection takes place in a mind of *Rajo guna* (egoism), that will be called *avidhya* (lack of knowledge). On the other hand, if the reflection takes place in a *Saathwik* (balanced) mind, that will be called *Maaya* (mere appearance). *Ishwara* (God) has *maaya* as His robe. The reflection in *Rajo guna* is individual and that in *Thamo guna* is creation. While the basic truth is one, yet the three reflections, creation, *jeeva* and *maaya* are not different from the basic truth. We should make an attempt to recognise the nature of the basic truth. We take a fruit. Even if it be a neem fruit, when it is fully ripe, it becomes sweet. When you attain the totality of peace, then only you find the sweetness of it.

The flowers of penance and meditation

The sixth one is the flower of *Thapas*---*Thapas pushpam*. *Thapas* (penance) is not to give up your wife and children, go to a forest, put your head up and feet down; that is not *thapas*. When we think of real *thapas* we should abandon bad thoughts from our minds. The co-ordination of thought, word and deed is *thapas*. Whatever thoughts sprout in your mind, to utter them as word and to put them in practice as your work that is *thapas*. It is in this context that it is said---*Manas Ekam, Vachas Ekam, Karmanyekam Mahaathmaanaam*---that one is a *Mahaathma* (great soul) who can co-ordinate his thought with his word and his word with his deed. Giving up bad thoughts from your mind will become sacrifice. That sacrifice will *become yoga*. But giving up one's property and one's wife and going to the forest is not *yoga*.

The seventh flower is one of *meditation*---*Dhyaana pushpam*. Today, meditation is taking many forms. Many types of meditation that people are adopting today are against the culture and tradition of Bharath. To sit in *padmaasana* (lotus posture) and to make the *Kundalini shakthi* rise from *Moolaadhaara* (basal plexus) to *Sahasraara* (the cranium) is *not dhyaana*. True *Dhyaana* consists in recognising the presence of God in all types of work. God is

Sarvantaryaami, Sarvabhutaantharaathma and is *Sarvavyaapi (the indweller of all)*. To make an attempt in your *dhyaana* to confine Him (God) to one place which you choose, cannot be *Dhyaana*.

The flower of truth is the form of divinity

When you are driving a car, the car is your God. When you are doing business in a market, the market is your God. According to the culture of Bhaarath, we first make obeisance to the work which we have to do. Before we undertake to do any work, we should regard that work as God. *Thasmai Namaha Karmane---* that is what the *Upanishads* are teaching us: "The work I have to do, I regard as God and make obeisance to God in that form". Let us see the person who plays on the *tabla*. Before he begins to play on it, he pays obeisance to the *tabla*. The harmonium player will make obeisance to the harmonium before he starts. A dancer before she begins her dance will make obeisance to her *gungroo*. Even a driver who is going to drive a lifeless car, before he holds the steering wheel, makes *namaskaar* to the steering wheel. You do not have to go so far. While driving, if the car hits another person, immediately we make *namaskaar* to that person. The significance of all this is the faith and belief that God is present in all things. Thus to regard the entire creation as the form of God and to perform your duty in that spirit is meditation.

The next flower is *Sathya* (Truth). If you simply speak what you feel and tell what you have done, this can be called *loukika sathyam---*worldly truth. This cannot be called truth. Truth is that which does not change at any time. What you have seen is truth at that moment. At the next moment, it becomes untruth. All material things which you see in this creation are things which will decay, which are bound to change. In this transient changing world, how can what you see and what you hear become truth? Truth is God. This truth is the eighth flower. This truth is the form of divinity. In the world, we experience truths of a relative nature.

Let us take Chemistry as an example. You take some chemicals and mix them together. They change and you get some other chemical. If you mix turmeric in lime, you get red colour. This is chemistry. You take Physics. If you take a 3-inch needle and put it in fire, it will become a longer needle. This is the truth of physics. How long do these truths of chemistry and physics remain? These are temporary, worldly, scientific truths. But spiritual truths are such that they will remain unchanged whatever you may do to them, whatever fire you may use on and howsoever you may change the circumstances. So, whatever does not at all change is truth. Cruelty and harshness are predominant in the world today because we are not attempting to promote such sacred qualities. Today, among believers, non-believers and the believing, the same kind of attitude is developing. That day when we can promote such good qualities in the minds of the believers, the non-believers will disappear from this world.

Recognise Society as a form of God

We must try to rise to higher stages from natural devotion through *Paraa Bhakthi*. Although 12 years have elapsed since the establishment of Dharmakshethra, with having the chance of rising higher and higher in the manner now described, remaining stationary in the same position, you are feeling much disappointed. Perform your *bhajans*, perform your *puujas*, but when you enter society, recognise society as a form of God, recognise what exists as omnipresence in society and thereby acquire good qualities in serving society. Forget the agitations in the world. Then you can have peace and enjoy bliss. If you develop an idea that God, who is omnipresent and is

in the entire creation and the universe, is confined in a picture which is three inches by four inches, you are narrowing your conception of God.

Broadening your heart and making it bigger and bigger, you should make it as big as God Himself. If you look at a balloon, in the initial stage, it is flat. If you go on blowing air into it, it will go on bigger and bigger and at one stage it will burst. Though beginning with the ideas of 'I' and 'mine', if you ultimately move on to the place that "all are mine", "all are one," gradually you will become broader in your vision and you burst and merge into God who is omnipresent. You should recognise the truth that man's life should consist of making the journey from the position of 'I' to the position of 'We'. If all the time you simply stay, sit in the place of 'I', you will remain where you are. This creation is like the bridge which connects man with God. 'I' is one hill. 'God' is another hill. The bridge between the two is the aspect of creation. If you break and destroy the bridge, you can never reach the destination. I am hoping that you plunge into society and do service to society and thereby use the bridge to reach God.

Dharmakshethra, 12-5-1981

You may say that progress is possible only through My Grace, but though My Heart is soft as butter, it melts only when there is some warmth in your prayer.

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