

29. A Righteous emperor and Virtuous subjects

Anapekshah Shuchir-Dhakshah

Udhaaseeno Gathavyathah

Sarvaarambha Parithyaagee

Yo Madhbhaktah Sa Me Priyah.

ANAPEKSHAH means one who is free from any kind of *Apeksha* (desire or expectation). Is it possible in this vast world for any man to be free from *Apeksha*? This is not possible. Some things may be attractive to some persons and some high aims may interest others. The objects that are desired are sensual pleasures and comforts and things of the world. The *Sreshtha* (higher aims) relate to the non-sensual, non-physical and ultramundane. Almost all desires fall into one or other of these two categories. How, then, is it possible to be rid of both kinds of desires? This is possible.

In the Bhagavath Geetha, the Lord has declared that he is present in all righteous actions. Therefore, those who perform righteous actions can develop *anapeksha* (desirelessness). This means that when a man performs all actions as offerings to the Lord, they become *anapeksha* (desireless actions). The Lord is one who, from within, makes a person act, speak, listen, see and do many other actions. He is the doer and the enjoyer. If a person performs all actions with the conviction that the Indwelling Lord is the real Doer, then his actions become desireless. Hence every *saadhak* should regard his actions as offerings to the Divine.

Shuchih: This means purity. This term does not merely refer to the external cleanliness of the physical body. *Saadhakas* need internal purity also. What are the implications of inner purity? All the actions a man does issue from internal impulses and not from external forces. They are a reflection of his inner being. It is only when man has pure feelings within him that his actions can be pure. When he is polluted within, all his actions will be impure.

How is purity in speech achieved?

How are the internal impulses to be purified? These relate to the mind, speech and the body. Of the three, speech is the most important. How is purity in speech to be achieved? "*Anudhvegakaram Vaakyam Sathyam priyahitham cha yath,*" says the Geetha. Every word you utter should be free from *Anudhvegakaram* (causing excitement or agitation). It should be *Sathyam* (true) and *priyam* (pleasing). There are four factors which account for the pollution of the tongue. One is, uttering falsehood; two, excessive talking; three, carrying tales against others; four, abuse or criticism of others. The tongue is prone to indulge in these four types of offences in speech. Unfortunately, in this *Kali* age, all these four are rampant. Untruth has become ubiquitous. People freely indulge in slandering others. Tale-bearing goes on. Indulgence in loquacity is widespread. It is only when one gets rid of these four evil tendencies can his speech become pure and unpolluted. Hence, the first task is to purify one's speech.

How to purify the mind and body

Next comes the mind. The mind is polluted by wrong thoughts and bad feelings. Man should strive to keep away all bad thoughts from invading his mind. When a man is ceaselessly filled with bad thoughts, he can only reap bad consequences. To purify the mind, all bad thoughts have

to be expelled. No room should be given to them. Bad feelings should be banished from the mind. Only then the mind will get totally purified.

Then comes purity of the body. One must have a body that is free from the taint of *Himsa* (violence or harm). Men commit many acts of violence and many sinful acts with their hands. The body has been given to man primarily for practising *Dharma* (righteousness). Such a sacred gift should be used only for rendering service to others and doing Godly actions. This is the way to purify the body. Therefore, when speech, mind and the body are purified, internal purity is ensured. *Shuchi*, thus, calls for internal purity as well as external cleanliness.

Dhakshah: This means that one should have firm determination in performing actions. The determination should be confined to actions that are pure, helpful to others and sublimate man. No man can refrain from action of some kind or other even for a moment. In no circumstance should one engage himself in an impure act. This is the way to achieve purity through firm determination. Only such a person can be called a *Dhakshah* (a resolute person).

Udhaaseenah: This means freedom from attachment to anything. It means remaining serene and unruffled by fame or blame, peace or sorrow, loss or gain, pleasure or pain, not elated by prosperity or depressed by failure. One should not succumb to calumny. Nor should one exult over fame. Fame and censure are like passing clouds. One should look upon them as a mere witness. They should be treated with *Udhaaseenah* (equanimous feeling). To treat them seriously is to give rise to agitations in the mind, which may lead to demonic tendencies.

Be free from worries

Gathavyathah: *Vyathah* represents the greatest weakness in man today. Man ignores the duties he has to perform in the present. He broods over what has happened in the distant past. He is constantly speculating over what is likely to happen in the future. Why worry about the future or about dead past? The past is beyond recall or remedy. Forget the past. The future is uncertain. No one can be sure about what is likely to happen the next day. Don't think about the future, as you cannot be sure about it. Concern yourself with the present, which is the child of the past and the parent of the future. This attitude is represented by the term *Gathavyathah*. Brooding over the past and speculating about the future, man is failing in his duties in the present. This is the cause of his misery. Make right use of the present and a good future is assured. The aspirant should bear this truth in mind and concentrate his attention on the present. Mental worry about the past or the future is a *Raajasik* quality. It should be got rid of.

Sarvaarambha parithyaagi: This quality calls for the renunciation of *Ahamkaara* (egoism) in any form. The ego is rooted in the *Mamakaara* (possessive instinct). When egoism and possessiveness come together in a man, he is utterly ruined. Hence, one should be free from egoism and attachment.

The aforesaid six qualities are sacred virtues. The opening stanza declares that a devotee with these six qualities is dear to the Lord.

The six enemies of man

Apart from these six good qualities, man has six vices: *Kaama* (lust), *Krodha* (anger), *Lobha* (greed), *Moha* (delusion), *Madha* (conceit) and *Maathsarya* (envy). These six enemies of man have to be got rid of and the six good qualities should be cultivated. Only then human life can be made meaningful.

Emperor Bali was one who was endowed with these noble qualities. For this reason, the Lord came down to the earth and sought a gift from Bali. There are many philanthropists in the world. There are persons who make gifts of land, or of cows, or food, or clothes, or gold, but few can be found who are prepared to make an offering of themselves. Emperor Bali was one who was ready to give himself away as a gift. "I am offering to Thee, Oh Lord, everything that is mine, my wealth, and family. Only the *Aathma* remains. Save me, who is taking refuge in Thee," explains a *shloka*. "I gave my word to you. I am giving my kingdom to you. At this instant, I am offering my body to you." Declaring thus, Emperor Bali bowed before Vaamana.

In ancient times, there were many such noble and high-minded rulers. Bali was wedded to Truth. He cared only for the welfare of his people. He was a protector of Truth. He practised *Dharma*.

Such a ruler was reigning over Kerala at that time. He derived all his multifarious virtues from his grand-father, Prahlaadha. However, Bali's father, Virochana, was engaged in wicked thoughts and bad deeds like Hiranyakashipu, Prahlaadha's father. All three belonged to the same clan. Virochana attempted to make Bali pursue wrong paths. But, good and bad ways cannot be imposed on others. The marks of good behaviour of persons reflect their inherent goodness.

Prahlaadha was an impartial and fair judge

Once, there was a contest between Virochana, the son of Prahlaadha, and Sudhanva, the son of the Sage Angeerasa. It was agreed that whoever lost the contest should forfeit his life to the winner. Both of them prayed to Prahlaadha to act as the judge for the contest, being convinced that he would be totally impartial and fair. Prahlaadha agreed to act as judge because he was pledged to uphold truth, without any other consideration. After watching the contest, Prahlaadha declared Sudhanva as the winner and his own son, Virochana, as the loser.

Unable to control his joy over the verdict, Sudhanva embraced Prahlaadha and said: "Prahlaadha! It is because of unflinching upholders of Truth like you that the world shines in all its glory. If there were no meritorious people on earth, how can there be light in the world? Prahlaadha! Because of your adherence to truth you gave the verdict against your own son." Prahlaadha knew that whoever lost the contest should pay forfeit with his life. But that did not deter him from pronouncing the verdict against his son. There is no greater *Dharma* than *Truth--"Sathyaanaasthi Paro Dharmah."* Prahlaadha was not swayed by any sense of paternal love. He shed no tears. He watched the outcome of his judgment with a sense of fulfillment.

Recognising the utter dedication of Prahlaadha to Truth and Righteousness, Sudhanva declared: "Prahlaadha! your devotion to Truth will restore the life of your son. I am not claiming his life as the reward for my victory. I am giving back your son's life to you.

***Dharma* protects its protector**

"Dharma eva Adharmo hanthi. Dharmo Rakshathi Rakshithah" (*Dharma* destroys the one who harms it. *Dharma* protects its protector). "Prahlaadha! You have stood by *Dharma*. Thereby you have saved your son." In this manner Sudhanva praised Prahlaadha.

Prahlaadha's life exemplified innumerable virtues and ideals. Because of such great and virtuous rulers in those days, the world was blessed with peace and prosperity. Today everywhere disorder, discontent, distrust, injustice, indifference to what is good and indulgence in what is bad, excessive attachment to sensuous pleasures, selfishness and self-centredness, are rampant among people. It is unfortunate that Bhaarath, which was once famous for its morality and

righteousness, its dedication to Truth and *Dharma*, should have degenerated to this level today. This is a blot not only on the country but a matter of shame for the people of Bharath. If we have a look at the state of the society, we find that all activities in society are related to self-praise, abusing others and duplicity in speech. These triple vices are now ubiquitous. Bharatheeya society, which was once so glorious, is now plunged in darkness, enveloped in discord, agitation and pollution.

Pollution of heart is of great concern today

Man considers the air as polluted, water as impure and the sounds reaching him as intolerable. Even the food is polluted. The Government also considers the entire environment as polluted. Enormous sums are being spent on purifying the environment. It is not the environmental pollution about which we should be concerned. What is of concern is the pollution of *Hridhaya* (the heart). Man's mind is polluted. Man's heart is polluted. All his feelings are polluted. It is because of this basic pollution, all other things appear polluted.

The primary need today is to eradicate the pollution in the human mind. How is this to be accomplished? The mind today is immersed in worldly desires and pleasures. As a result, there is mental dissatisfaction as well as bitter frustration. The mind should be turned back to the source from which it came. A fish out of water has to be restored to the water for it to regain its life. Can it survive if it is placed on a couch and fed with coffee? It will regain peace and life only when it returns to its native home. Likewise, man's mind has to be restored to its original home in the *Aathma* (Self). Without doing this, how can peace be got? Thus, mental peace has to come from the *Aathma*. This calls for turning the mind towards the *Aathma* by the use of the conscience.

Follow the conscience with full self-confidence

Don't rely on the body. It is a water bubble. Don't rely on the mind, which is like a mad monkey. Follow the conscience. When you follow the conscience with full self-confidence, you can accomplish anything.

Emperor Bali was one who had such self-confidence. When his preceptor, Shukraacharya, wanted to dissuade Bali from making the gift which Vaamana asked, pointing out that the young lad was no ordinary *Brahmana* but the incarnation of Vishnu Himself, Bali declared: "If the young lad is Vishnu Himself, as you say, that is all the more reason for me to stand by the offer I have made when the supplicant is the supreme Lord. Is it not my great good fortune to be in the position of a giver to the Lord? All human beings seek favours from the Lord. When such a Divine approaches me with a request for three foot-lengths of land, how fortunate am I? This opportunity has come to me because of my good deeds in previous lives. I am ready to go against the injunctions of the preceptor, but I will not transgress the commands of the Lord. The plighted word stands. You may see two objects with the two eyes and listen to two different things with the two ears. But the tongue is one. The word that is given must be honoured. I cannot go back on it. The man who does not fulfill his promise is dubbed a sinner. I am determined to keep my pledge. God is the Supreme person and Lord of all beings. I will abide only by His words."

Emperor Bali was such a resolute ruler. Thereby, he secured a glorious opportunity. However, Bali had one special attachment for his subjects. The subjects also were equally attached to the emperor. The people bore devotion towards the ruler. The ruler was attached to his subjects. Their mutual relationship was intimate and indivisible. It was because of such a ruler and such subjects that the country was happy and prosperous.

Significance of Onam day

Unwilling to forsake his subjects and at the same time, unable to go back on his promise to the Lord, Bali gave a pledge to the people that he would visit them once a year. This Onam day is the auspicious day of Bali's annual visit to the earth. It is the sacred day on which Emperor Bali returns to bless his people. In the month of Shravana, when the moon is nearest to the constellation Shravana, Bali said he would make his appearance. Today that auspicious combination is present. As Sri Eradi said in his speech earlier, this is the twenty fifth year in which the Onam festival is celebrated in Bhagavaan's presence. What is the lesson to be learnt from this Silver Jubilee of Onam? Over the past twenty four years you have been listening to Bhagavaan's discourses experiencing His presence and enjoying the celebration. How far are you practising Svaami's teachings? Every human being has a heart. This heart is filled with love. With how many are you sharing the love in your hearts?. With none at all. What, then, is the use of that love if it is not shared? You must share with all the love in your hearts, not with humans alone, but with all beings in creation. Love, which is the gift of God, has to be shared with everyone in the world.

Share your love with one and all

All human troubles arise out of the failure to share this love with one and all because of selfishness. Everyone repeats the benediction: "*Lokaas-samasthaas-sukhino Bhavanthu!*" (Let all the people of the world be happy). To how many are you giving happiness? You are repeating the words mechanically, but are you praying from your hearts for the well-being of the world? No, not at all. You are concerned only with your selfish interests. The day you root out selfishness from within you, divinity will blossom in your heart.

People talk about *Saakshaathkaaram*. What is it? It is not something external. *Saakshaathkaara* is contemplation of the Divine at all times and in all states within one's self. "*Sarvadhaa, sarvakaaleshu sarvathra Hari Chinthanam*" (Thinking of God at all times, in all places continuously). People do recite the name of Raama incessantly. But will liberation be got by this repetition? To gain liberation, to win Rama's grace, it is not enough to repeat His name, you have to act upto Rama's principles. Raama sacrificed everything for the sake of *Dharma*. You have to make a similar sacrifice. Keep *Dharma* as your ideal. Engage yourself in righteous activities. Only then will Raama shower His grace on you. If, on the contrary, you perform no *Dhaarmik* acts but only repeat Rama's name, it is tantamount to abusing Raama.

Likewise, there is no meaning in repeating Krishna's name. What the devotee should do is to experience the ecstasy of Krishna Consciousness. Nor is that all. You should develop the equal-mindedness of Krishna. Krishna maintained the same serenity of mind whether he was in a *Yoga-Bhumi*, or a *Yuddha-Bhumi* (battlefield) or *Smashaaana-Bhumi* (a cemetery). He was always in a state of bliss. You should aspire to experience such bliss. Only then can you be said to experience Krishna consciousness. Whatever deity you may worship, you should experience the lessons of the deity within you.

Experience Sai truths by filling yourselves with love

Svaami's main teaching is *Prema thathva* (the Love principle). You are all experiencing this love. With how many are you sharing it? All around there is only hatred. Only egoism is present all the time. Equally ostentation is displayed all the time. How then, can you be deemed to have

experienced the Sai truths? Whoever has imbibed those truths must be filled with love. That is the true mark of devotion.

Emperor Bali was one who was filled with the sense of justice, with forbearance, compassion, Truth, *Dharma*, and devotion to the people. Are you cultivating at least one of these good qualities? Bali gave his promise to the people to appear before them every year because his people had all these qualities. The people of today are different. How can anyone know whether Emperor Bali is appearing? People celebrate Bali's visit as a festival but Bali is not coming. Why? Because the qualities of the people of those days are not present today. Doubtless, Bali loves his people. But the people today must have the power to draw him to visit them.

They should be like a powerful magnet which can attract a heavy block of iron. They will then be able to move and melt the heart of the Divine. You are doubtless magnets. But you have to purify yourselves to increase your magnetic power. That purity consists in the triple purity of mind, speech and body.

Reasons for merger of the wicked in the Lord

Whatever anyone may do, there can be no deficiency in the Divine. Whether you praise or blame God, neither affects Him. In the Mahaabhaaratha once Dharmaja watched with anguish the abuses levelled against Krishna by Sishupaala and which Krishna tolerated for quite sometime. Then he hurled a plate at Sishupaala which severed his head. Dharmaja saw the blood from Sishupaala's body flowing towards Krishna and a divine flame from his body merging in Krishna.

Dharmaja asked Naaradha how the soul of a wicked person like Sishupaala could merge in Krishna. Narada explained that good and bad, fame and blame relate only to the body and not to the *Aathma*. The merger in the Divine of devotees who have worshipped the Lord in many ways takes place after a long period of trials and tribulations, but it lasts eternally. In the case of the wicked, who remember the Lord constantly out of hatred, the merger takes place quickly but remains only for a short spell. The merger of soul in the Divine takes place for different reasons. In the case of Kamsa it was fear of Krishna, which made him always remember Krishna; hatred in the case of Sishupaala and Dhanthavakra, maternal affection in the case of Yashodha, who merged in Krishna through love. The *Gopikas* merged in the Lord through single-pointed devotion and Radha merged in the Lord owing to *Bkaathma bhaava* (sense of spiritual oneness). All attained merger. But in each case, it was up to a specific level.

Cultivate the spirit of sacrifice

Do not follow the body. Follow the mind and the *Aathma*. The one who follows the *Aathma* is the real spiritual seeker.

Contemplating on God with all your heart, chanting his name and surrendering to him, redeem your lives. The name and fame of God are not derived from outside. They are not the creations of newspapers and pamphlets. They do not change because of any circumstance. The Lord's name and fame grow out of their sacredness and love. Therefore, do not bother about anything. Develop your love. Promote your divine nature. Cultivate the spirit of sacrifice.

Discourse in the Sai Ramesh Mandap on 30-8-1993.

The tongue is liable to four big errors; uttering falsehood, scandalising, finding fault with others and excessive articulation. These have to be avoided if there has to be Shaanthy for the individual as well as for the society.

BABA