

18. Cherish the sweetness of sacrifice

The cosmos is governed by the Divine;

The Divine is controlled by Truth;

That Truth is subject to noble beings;

The noble are Divinity itself

EMBODIMENTS of Divine Love! The entire Cosmos, consisting of animate and inanimate objects, is dependent on God. The Divine is governed by Truth, That Truth is governed by *Uthamaadheenam* (noble beings). The noblest being is Divine. Every human being is inherently noble. It is this nobility that constitutes his divinity. The Divine manifests Himself in human form. There is no need to search for the Divine as a distinct entity somewhere else. Man must strive to realise the Divinity within him.

From the earliest times, the sages looked upon human *life as madhuram* (sweet). This sweet life is associated with Maadhava, the Divine and not anything else. We must see that this Sweetness is properly cherished. Only when this sweetness is safeguarded will man be true to his human nature. Without this sweetness, man ceases to be human.

To experience this sweetness the spirit of sacrifice is essential. This nectarine sweetness is the outcome of *thyaaga* (sacrifice). As the *Vedhas* declare: "Not by deeds, or progeny, or wealth is immortality gained. It is realised only through sacrifice." Whatever good deeds one may do, whatever wealth one may acquire, without sacrifice the Divine cannot be experienced.

Bliss-filled sweetness pervades man from head to foot

It is out of the feeling of sacrifice that the nectarine sweetness arises in man. That sweetness is Divinity itself. Krishna is extolled as "*Madhuraadhipathe! madhuram! madhuram!*" (Lord of *Madhura*, who is all sweetness). When the Lord is described as the "Master of *Madhura*," what is this sweetness? The heart is sweet, the feeling is *sweetness*. The love (one feels) is sweet. The action (of the devotee) is sweet. The *aanandha* (bliss) is sweet. The *Aathma* is sweet. This bliss-filled sweetness pervades man from head to foot.

Unfortunately, man today makes no effort to recognise the sweetness that is in him. All his thoughts, feelings and desires are directed towards the external world. Not even a small fraction of it is turned towards the heart within.

Bhaaratheeya culture contains illustrations of this sweetness. There is nothing in the world sweeter than the love of a mother for the child. For the well-being of the child the mother is ready to sacrifice her all, including her life. Such nectarine sweetness is manifest only in the mother who is the embodiment of the Divine. Hence, the Upanishathic injunction: "*Maathru dhevo bhava!*" (Esteem the mother as God).

Likewise, the heart of the father who fosters the child, and develops his personality, is also sweet. The Upanishath, therefore, enjoins everyone to treat the father as God. Mother and father are equal to God.

Therefore, at the outset, one has to honour one's parents. The mother is the visible manifestation of God. If ignoring the divinity of the mother, who is visible and adorable, one seeks to worship what is invisible, it must be regarded as a sign of ignorance. God is subtle form. He is invisible

and is infinite and immeasurable. The mother is a visible and tangible proof of Divinity. When a child is born, the first person it beholds is the mother. The mother bears patiently many travails for the sake of the child. It is sweet to love such a mother. You may have love for God. But if you have no love for the mother who is physically present before you, how can you love the invisible Divine?

One's foremost obligation is to revere one's parents

People tend to worship stones, but do not revere living beings. Worship of inanimate idols has been in vogue from ancient times. But people are forgetting to revere their living parents. One's first and foremost obligation is to revere one's parents who are in flesh and blood, who are verily your life itself.

In the Raamaayana, there is the following illustration-Before leaving for the forest, Shri Raama approached his father, Dhasharatha, and said: "I am not sorry I have to go to the forest. Not does it pain me that you have given this command to me. I am to uphold your plighted word. Of what use is a son who does not uphold the word of his father? I derive the greatest sweetness from carrying out my father's word of honour."

It follows from this that children should respect and carry out the words of parents. That alone testifies to the true quality of a son.

Life acquires sweetness when parents are revered

Love is the primary source of sweetness for man. There is nothing greater in this world than love. Life acquires sweetness when one reveres one's father and mother. Here is another example from the Raamaayana.

Immediately after Raama broke Shiva's bow, Emperor Janaka declared that he would offer Seetha in marriage to Raama. Janaka brought Seetha to the assembly hall. Raama, however, without any hesitation, but in sweet firm words, declared that he would not agree to the wedding without the approval of his parents. Raama said that he owed his body to his parents and that he would abide by their wishes. He declared that till his parents arrived (in Mithila) he would not even set his eyes on Seetha. "I will consent to the marriage only after their approval." In this manner, Raama rejoiced in setting an example to the world of ideal conduct for all to follow at all times. Sage Vishvaamithra also waited for the arrival of Raama's parents.

In another episode in Raamaayana, sage Vashishttha accompanied Bharatha to meet Raama in the forest. Intervening in the argument between Bharatha and Raama (over the issue of Raama's return to Ayodhya to take over the kingdom), Vashishttha said: "*It is your right and duty to rule over the kingdom. You are the eldest son of Dhasharatha. You are endowed with all the talents. You are well versed in the scriptures relating to *Dharma* (the code of Right Conduct). You have won the affections of the people. You are committed to the well-being of the people.*" Vashishttha appealed in this manner to Raama to assume the reins of rulership.

Speaking sweetly, eschewing harshness of any kind, Raama replied; "Guruji! Without honouring the plighted word of the father, if I disobey the command of my deceased father, I will be rendering my life worthless. My primary duty is to carry out my father's injunctions. I may even transgress the command of the preceptor, but I will not go against the command of my father."

Thus, carrying out the commands of his father, Raama spent fourteen years in exile and demonstrated to the world the joy and fulfilment to be derived from such an exemplary life.

Qualities that constitute sweetness in man

Human life should be sweetened by honouring one's pledged word. Sweetness in life consists in setting an example in righteous living to those around one. There is sweetness in doing a good turn to one who has done you a good turn. Gratitude is sweet. These qualities constitute *the maadhuryam* (sweetness) in man.

You should be grateful all your life to one who has helped you. You are the big man that you are today because of all the love and care bestowed on you in your early years by your parents. Therefore, to experience the love of your parents you should show your gratitude to them. This is a debt you owe to them.

Alas! in this Kali age children show no regard for the parents. This is the disastrous sign of modern times. In any circumstance you have to show respect and love your parents. You owe everything to them, from your flesh and blood, to the food you consume and the garments you wear. To remember with gratitude the parents who are no more is an act of sacrifice.

It is a pity that people today are not aware of the supreme greatness of sacrifice. There is sacrifice in every aspect of life. The joy to be derived from sacrifice is incalculable. One has to learn the supreme value of sacrifice from one's own parents who sacrifice so much for the sake of their children. It is your duty to keep your parents happy as long as they live.

The four types of human beings

People today become scholars and acquire great wealth. But all that they achieve as a result is conceit--the arrogance of study and riches. People cherish the sweetness of wealth and not the sweetness of love. Love alone constitutes true wealth. There are no riches above love. Through love you must develop the spirit of sacrifice. Fill everyone of your actions with love. Human life should be filled with love and sweetness, which are shared with others. Otherwise, it ceases to be human.

There are four types of human beings: the Divine in the human, the demonic human, the human man and the animal man. The four qualities of the divine, the demonic, the human and the animal are present in human beings in varying degrees.

"Brahmaratho Dhaivah" (The man who is installed in human is divine). This implies that the man who is wedded to truth, who performs righteous actions, who renders help to others, who thinks about the well-being of others, who indulges in acts of charity and beneficence, is filled with Divine qualities. He is immersed in the knowledge of the *Brahman*.

"Sathyadharmaparo marthyah" (He is a human being who adheres to Truth and Righteousness). A true human being should uphold truth and right conduct. If truth and righteousness are safeguarded, the nation will be safe and secure. It is not the army or bombs that will protect the nation. Only Truth and Righteousness will protect the nation.

"Madhya paana ratho dushtah" (The demonic human being revels in intoxicating drinks). Eating meat and drinking liquor are demonic vices. Those indulging in drink lose all sense of propriety, have no compassion or love and become demons.

A selfish man manifests his animal nature

"Jnaanena shuunyah pashubhis samaanah" (One who lacks wisdom is equal to an animal). *Jnaana* is the capacity to discriminate between right and wrong, the permanent and the transient.

Animality in man is indicated by the absence of this *jnaana*. A real human being has to have this power of discrimination. He should know what to say, when and to whom, and he should know how to behave towards elders, towards friends and different kinds of people. A person who is ignorant in these matters is only an animal. *Jnaana*, in its deeper sense, means

Aathma-Jnaana (knowledge of the Self). This is absent in modern man. One who is selfish and self-centred is manifesting his animal nature. Only when self-interest is coupled with concern for others can one be truly human. Without manners one cannot be a man. Without good behaviour one is not a boy. Without discipline one cannot be a devotee.

A previous speaker had said that the hand-kerchief lent beauty to Bhagavaan Baba. This is absurd. The true nature of beauty was described by the poet Mallamma in Kannada. She said that to a pond the lotus lends beauty. The moon imparts beauty to the sky. For a devotee, the vibhuuthi on his forehead confers beauty. Without virtue, life ceases to be beautiful. Virtue implies conduct which evokes the approbation of others. It must be exemplary and confer delight on others. It should not cause harm to others or appear ludicrous. It should bring a good name.

Let your speech be always sweet

People should ponder over what is their aim in life, whither they are going and what they should achieve before embarking on any activity. In this context, the Raamaayana furnishes a lesson for all. Dhasharatha, without any concern for the future, granted two unconditional boons to Kaikeyi in return for the help which she rendered to him. Out of thoughtless love for her, he gave two boons saying that she could have what she wanted, whenever she might choose to ask. She chose the time and the boons she wanted. She asked for the exile of Raama and the crowning of Bharatha. The lesson to be learnt from this is that when you give your word, you must be aware of all its implications. Promises made thoughtlessly lead to grievous situations. One has to stand by one's word.

Truth endows one's life with sweetness. Loving words sweeten life. Let your speech be always sweet, whatever be the circumstances. Just as sugarcane has to go through crushing and other processes before you can get candy from it, the body has to go through certain ordeals to manifest its sweet nature. These are termed: *Samskaara*---the good thoughts, good feelings and good actions which bring about refinement. Love is essential for their refinement. Hence, love is the means to realise the nectarine sweetness of life.

Discourse in the Sai Ramesh Hall, Brindhaavan, on 3-7-1994.

No one who has trodden spiritual path, and engaged himself in the spiritual process has escaped calumny and cruelty. Mohammed, who sought to establish the primary of the One Formless Absolute, had a large share of persecution, defamation, and privation; Jesus, who attempted to rebuild mankind on the basis of Love, was crucified by little men who feared that their tiny towers of hate and greed will be toppled by his teaching. Harishchandhra, who had resolved never to waver from Truth, was submitted to ordeal after ordeal each more terrifying than the previous one.

BABA