

17. Significance of worship at the Lord's Feet

GOD is immanent in the entire cosmos like oil in sesame seed and butter in milk. Just as the seeds have to be crushed to get the oil and the milk has to be curdled and churned for getting butter, *saadhana* has to be done to realise God. Nine forms of devotion have been indicated in the Bhaagavatham. If one follows any of these paths, he can experience the Divine.

Prior to the commencement of this meeting, the *Jyothi* (sacred lamp) was lit by Svaami. No other thing signifies divinity as this sacred effulgent flame. It always goes upward. It can be kept anywhere. Everywhere it is lit it dispels darkness. Since ancient times the people of Bharath have been observing the sacred custom of lighting a lamp at the commencement of any auspicious ceremony. They have been worshipping the *jyothi* as it dispels darkness and is a symbol of the effulgence of wisdom. Such a sacred custom, which is immemorial part of Indian culture, is ignored today. People indulge in practices which are contrary to such traditions. If you understand the significance of this custom and the spirit behind the lighting of the lamp, you can understand Divinity.

In order to light the *jyothi* you need four things - a container, oil, wick and a match-stick (fire) to light it. For dispelling the darkness outside, you need these four. Similarly for dispelling the darkness within you, you need the *Jyothi* of Wisdom. Raavana was a highly learned person, who had mastered all the *Vedhas and Vedhaangas* (ancient sacred texts). In spite of such erudition his heart was in pitch darkness (plunged in lust). This brought about his downfall. His son, Indrajit, was also very powerful and was noted for his valour and his capacity to wield missiles charged with the power of *Manthras*. But these were of no avail against the power of the Divine. Likewise, Hiranyakashipu, who had mastery over the elements, was a victim of his ego.

Inner purity is the greatest wealth

Only by the light of the Divine lamp inside can you blossom as a worthwhile person. Inner purity is the greatest wealth that one can acquire. The inner purity is the wick in the container of the heart. Devotion is the oil and Divine Grace is the fire with which the lamp of wisdom can be lit. The prime requisite for achieving Divine Grace is to have harmony in thought, word and deed. The Lord has inscrutable ways when He wishes to protect His devotees. An incident in the Mahaabhaaratha can be described to prove this, in which Krishna made Dhraupadhi fall at the feet of Bheeshma and secure his blessings for saving the Paandavas from the pledge Bheeshma had taken to kill the Paandavas or die in battle the next day. Bheeshma lost the fight stricken by Arjuna's arrows.

One cannot apprehend the ways of Divinity. It is only by unsullied devotion and adherence to Truth that one can realise God, who is embodiment of Love and Truth. If you follow truth you can sanctify your life.

To earn the grace of the Divine, the easy way is surrendering at the Feet of the Lord. The feet, which were washed by Brahma, the creator, the feet which were worshipped by Bharatha through Raama's sandals, which ruled the kingdom of Ayodhya for 14 years, should be your object of worship.

Real significance of the feet

There is so much power in the feet of the Lord which you cannot understand. The feet form the basis for not only the physical frame of the body; but also for spiritual and ethical purposes. The

significance of each limb of the body is explained in *Vedhaantha*. The five senses of the body represent the five elements (sound is ether, touch is air, vision is fire, taste is water and smell is earth). In the *Purusha Shuktha* the body of the Divine is described in detail. The four *varnas* in society are represented by four parts of the Cosmic Person Brahmanas, Kshathriyas, Vaishyas and Shuudhras (the working class). It is the feet that support the entire body, comprising the other three classes. So the feet are an important part of the body. The real significance of the feet is not properly understood by all. The *Vedhas* proclaim the unity of all classes of people by describing them as limb of one body. The *Vedhas* declare that "*Ekaathma Sarvabhootha antharaathma*" (same *Aathma* is present in all beings).

The Vedhas proclaim the importance of the feet. Even in ordinary life we advise a person who has harmed another to fall at the latter's feet and beg his pardon to escape legal action. There is a close link between the different parts of the body. When one walks on the road if the eye sees a thorn, the legs avoid trading on it. When the foot is injured, the eye sheds tears. There is such close co-ordination in the physical body. Similarly in the body of the Divine, the Brahmanas, Kshathriyas, Vaishyas and Shuudhras form an integral part. If a Shuudhra is in trouble, the Brahmana should be concerned. When such feelings develop in the world, there will be peace and harmony in society. Everyone should realise this and foster unity.

Do all *saadhanas* with purity of heart

Embodiments of love! The *Prema thathva* (Love Principle) is within you. What you are practising now as love is not real love. It is only affection out of *Anuraaga* (attachment to the body). Real love is unchanging. The feeling of love to the Divine is real devotion 'emanating from the heart.

You are doing a lot of *saadhana*. You should do this with purity of heart. The greatest *saadhana* will be chanting the Name of the Lord and doing service to one's fellow beings, who are the embodiments of the same *Aathma* that is in you. Whatever you do, do it as an offering to the Divine. What is the use of sending thousands of rupees and carrying the *Paadhukas* (divine sandals) if you do not understand their inner significance and have purity of heart? The external objects serve as symbols for beginners, just as a child learns words with the help of pictures. After understanding the significance, you must concentrate on Divinity without external aids such as these *Paadhukas*.

Worship the *Paadhukas* thinking all the while of the Lord's Form. Develop Love of God and share it with all.

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We are flowers of the same creepers. Our minds are the flowers that grow on the creeper of the heart. The flowers may be different but the creeper is the same. We are the children of the same race! We all belong to the race of humanity but not to the race of birds and beasts. Since we belong to the illustrious race of humanity, we must conduct ourselves in a sublime manner; we are waves, born in the ocean of Sathchithaanandha. Since we are born of the same

*race, we should radiate the oneness of humanity without
harbouring hatred against any one.*

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