

20. The Divine dispeller of darkness

*The human body, constituted by the five elements
is the combined product of the five elements.*

These five elements are derived from the Divine.

*But man to-day is not aware of the
truth about these elements.*

*Man can accomplish many things in this world:
he can be a great scholar, a great warrior,*

*A ruler of rulers, a great astronomer
or an astronaut on the moon,*

*But can he control his senses and
make his mind tranquil and steady?*

*Neither charity, nor yajna,
nor thapas, nor wisdom,*

*Nor the practice of ancient Dharma,
nor adherence to truth or any discipline*

Will be of any avail without self-control.

EMBODIMENTS of the Divine Aathma! Water is getting scarcer every day. What is the reason? because of the decline of morality among men water is getting scarce in the world. For human life morality is the life breath. Morality makes humanness blossom. Because morals have been lost, water is getting scarce.

Today people are propagating *Vedhaantha* (philosophy) in various ways. This propaganda is exciting the minds of the people. It is perturbing the hearts of people. Life is filled with doubts. Man today does not require a *siddhaantham* (ideology). He needs sense-control. Without control of the senses, a man cannot become spiritual. This was proclaimed by saint Thyaagaraaja in his song wherein he said that without peace of the Spirit there can be no happiness for any one, whether he is a *Vedhaanthik* scholar or an aspirant. Only through self-control can a man experience peace. But man is engaged in a futile search for something he does not know. The world is full of such aimless seekers. They are forgetting the Eternal reality in the concern for transient worldly objects.

Lead lives inspired by *sheelam* and *thyaaga*

Man today is dominated by selfishness. Insatiable desire fills his whole being. The numbers of such persons are growing without limit. How can they achieve anything great in life? Their daily round of activities consists of reading newspapers, watching video programmes and listening to the radio. Every moment their attachment to castes, creed and parochial interests is growing.

Men today must learn to lead lives inspired by *sheelam* and *thyaaga* (morality and sacrifice). Human relationships today are governed by friendship or enmity. The cause for either feeling is the mind. Hatred is bred by each one's thoughts. This may be seen from the hatred of Raavana towards Raama, of Shishupaala and Dhanthavakra towards Krishna and of Kauravas towards Dharmaja, who was an "*Ajaathashathru*," incapable of hating anybody. There is no need to worry about the enmity of others towards you. You develop your friendly attitude towards all. Ignore the abuses of others, because they serve only to diminish your sins and transfer them to the reviler. When a man praises another, the merits of the latter accrue to the former. Deem the critic as your friend, not the one who flatters you.

Accountability for actions

One's actions determine one's future. Actions are of three kinds, Thoughts are one kind. Giving expression to them is another. Acting according to one's words is the third. The mind is responsible for thoughts, the tongue for speech and the hands for actions. The combination of thought, word and deed represents the human state. These three account for man's pleasures and pain. Recognizing this, one should understand that he is accountable for his actions. No one can escape from the consequences of his deeds. But anything can be achieved through God's grace. Hence man should strive to win God's grace.

The results of one's actions are realised over different periods of time. In some cases, the results are immediate, as, for instance, when one slips and sustains a fall. In some cases, the results occur after a few minutes or hours. For example, the food you take in the morning is digested after two hours. When you sow a seed in the ground, it takes some months or years to grow into a tree and yield fruits. Some fools imagine that they can get away with bad deeds because the consequences are not immediate. But the consequences are bound to occur some time or other.

Three types of *Karmas*

There are three types of actions: *Sukarma*, *Vikarma* and *Akarma*. *Sukarma* relates to good actions which produce good results. *Vikarma* relates to bad actions which have bad consequences. *Akarma* relates to the fruits of actions in previous lives. The suffering of good people like Seetha, Harishchandhra and Nala and Dhamayanthi have no basis in their actions during their lives, but are the results of previous *karma*. People who may have done no actions of any kind in their present lives may still suffer from the consequences of their actions in previous lives.

The effects of past deeds can be mitigated by earning God's grace. The means of securing Divine grace is to cultivate qualities like truth, righteousness, love, compassion and forbearance. With these qualities life becomes a beautiful garden and a joy forever. For the man filled with bad thoughts and actions, life is like the dark and filthy Vaitharini river (called Styx in Greek mythology). Each one has to judge for himself the nature of his life. Each one is a witness unto himself. A bad man may pass off for a good man from his external appearances but he knows within himself his real nature.

God is beyond all praise or criticism. He is *Sath-Chith-Aanandha* (Being-Awareness-Bliss). He blesses even the one who derides Him. When Kamsa, who ceaselessly hated Krishna, died at the Lord's hands, his blood flowed towards the feet of Krishna. Likewise, Shishupaala, who used the vilest abusive epithets against Krishna, was slain by Krishna, but his spirit merged in the Lord because he remembered the Lord always out of his hatred. (Svaami recited poems from the Bhaagavatham to illustrate the language in which Shishupaala reviled Krishna).

Fools who indulge in flippant remarks about Sri Krishna know nothing about the inscrutable ways of the Lord. Everyone has to face the consequences of his actions, though he may not know how, when or where these consequences may occur. Man can reverse the consequences of bad actions by performing good deeds and invoking God's help.

The *guru* is in the heart

Today is *Gurupuurnima*. The real significance of *Gurupuurnima* does not consist in worshipping the *guru* (preceptor) with some offerings, but getting rid of the darkness of ignorance. *Puurnima* refers to the full moon, but the full moon symbolises the mind filled with delight. There is close association between the mind and the moon. *Gurupuurnima* signifies the elimination of all darkness and evil from the mind. The true *Guru* is in our heart. Purify the heart to let the Divine dwell in it.

Do not forget God. What you should forget is the mundane world. God is omnipresent in all forms, everywhere, as declared in the Purusha Shuktha. It is foolish to search for God, who is within you and outside you. When Raamakrishna Paramahansa was asked whether he had seen God and could show Him to them, he replied- "I have seen God. But how can you see God if you don't pine for him in the same manner in which you pine for your wife and children and wealth? Pray to Him, yearn for Him and be prepared to sacrifice everything for Him. Then you will experience the vision of God."

God cannot be perceived by the spiritually blind, just as a blind man cannot understand what is meant by the whiteness of milk. God is infinite bliss. He is formless, but He can assume any form He wills. How can anyone attempt to describe the nature of God?

Contemplate on God with a pure heart. There is no greater spiritual exercise. But, as long as men are attached to worldly objects they can make no progress in the spiritual field. Once Radha and other Gopikas wanted to go down in a boat from Mathura to Brindhaavan. They rowed the boat all through the night, but found to their astonishment that the boat had remained where it had been. They then discovered that they had not untied the rope which kept the boat bound to a post on the bank.

Develop detachment and spirit of sacrifice

The first need is to develop the spirit of sacrifice and get rid of attachment and possessiveness. Then, the yearning for God grows. All are entitled to receive God's grace according to their merits. It is like drawing upon a bank according to what you have deposited with it. There are three ways of getting money from a bank. One is drawing on your deposit. In spiritual terms, this means realising the fruits of your past actions. The second means is raising a loan on the security of your assets. This corresponds to the grace you get by your current good deeds. The third means to get money from a bank is to have a good surety to the loan you wish to raise from the bank. Spiritually, this corresponds to securing God's grace through the medium of a *guru* (preceptor). Who is the *guru*? He is the Divine dispeller of the darkness within you. The Divine Trinity (Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshvara) have been described as *gurus*. This implies that the Divine should be regarded as the supreme preceptor, who can destroy the darkness of ignorance.

Install God in your heart

Forgetting this basic truth, people run after men wearing the ochre robe who profess to impart a *manthra* and stretch their palm for money. This is not what is meant by *Guru*. Install God in your

heart. The vibrations that emanate from the heart will elevate you spiritually and confer divine wisdom. This wisdom has been defined as *Prajnaana* (Constant Integrated Awareness). To acquire such wisdom you have to keep your mind pure as a mirror, using *shraddha* (earnestness) as a cloth, dipping it in the water of *Prema* (Love) and wiping the dust on the mirror (in the form of bad qualities). This wisdom cannot be acquired from books. It has to be got through self-examination and self-correction.

Gurupurnima is an occasion for cleansing the mind to make it absolutely pure. It is not enough to praise God. You have to love Him. You have to become love itself so that you can love the entire Universe. I address all of you as "Embodiments of love." When you become embodiments of love, you can love all.

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