

37. Jnaana and Bhakthi

EVERYTHING in the cosmos is made up of the five basic elements, which are manifestations of the Divine. The Divine has no separate form. This truth is not realised by mankind. *Avathaars* come to dispel the ignorance of humanity.

Avathaars do not come in unique form. The reason is all the creatures in the world carry out their specific functions. Animals, birds, insects, ants and mosquitoes do not deviate from their respective roles in leading their lives. But, man alone has forgotten his duties. Birds obey "reason and season." Man alone behaves without regard to "reason and season." Hence *the Avathaar* has to come in human form to reform man who has gone astray. Thus it is declared that "*Dhaivam maannusharupena*" (God comes in human form). If God comes in any other form, say, a bird, it will be driven away. Man will take no notice of it. If the *Avathaar* comes in the form of a buffalo, it will be driven away with a stick.

There is nothing greater than devotion

In this context, two points have to be noted. There were two brothers, Jnaanadheva and Bhakthidheva. Both were going on a journey. On the way, they felt thirsty. Bhakthidheva asked Jnaanadheva, "I am thirsty but I cannot see water anywhere." Jnaanadheva said: "Let us see whether there is any well nearby." After going some distance, they noticed an old well with water deep at the bottom.

Jnaanadheva declared: "*Jnaanaath-eva-thu-kaivalyam*" (Through Wisdom anything can be accomplished).

He immediately assumed the form of a bird, flew down to the water in the well, quenched his thirst and came up. Jnaanadheva had the ability to assume any form because of the supreme knowledge of the Self.

Bhakthidheva could not get down into the well. He sat near the well and prayed to God with intense love. After sometime, the water in the well rose to the level of his feet. Noting the wetness of his feet, he opened his eyes and saw that the water in the well had overflowed.

Jnaana requires a change in one's form. *Bhakthi* needs no such change. Intense loving devotion will suffice. What the devotee needs will come running to him. There is nothing greater than devotion.

Bhakthidheva wrote a letter to Jnaanadheva. It was a blank piece of paper which he sent in a cover. When Jnaanadheva opened the letter, he found there was no writing on it. Jnaanadheva then started writing his reply in page after page. He could not come to the end of his writing. His entire life was spent on enquiry and investigation. There was no time for doing anything practical. The life of most scientists is spent this way: continuous experimentation, with no experience. This sort of endless pre-occupation with enquiry is of no use. Devotion is easier than *Jnaana maarga* (the path of Knowledge). Through devotion, constant chanting of the name and loving remembrance of God, anything can be accomplished.

Never forget God

Students! See that the love that is inherent in you is not diverted in wrong directions, in anti-social activities, or in ways opposed to the wishes of your parents. So far as love for God is concerned, you need not submit yourself to anyone.

When you love God with all your heart, the bliss you experience is unexcelled. This was the experience of the Gopikas. This has been described as the fifth *Purusha artha*, the experience of union with God *Paramab-hakthi*---*Supreme* devotion.

Students! Whatever you may do in life, never forget God. Whatever positions one may achieve, whether President or Prime Minister, if he forgets God he is nothing. Hero becomes zero if he forgets God. These officers come and go. You must never give up your faith in the supreme. That is the way to redeem human life.

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