

God Protects Those Who Protect Sathya And Dharma

No visit to any pilgrim centre, no penance, no Yogic practice, no study of sacred texts nor charitable acts will help you in crossing over the ocean of Samsara, but the service rendered to the noble. (Sanskrit sloka)

Embodiments of Love!

YOU would have read in sacred texts that Ravana was a master of four *Vedas* and six *Sastras*. Having learnt these sacred texts, was there any transformation in him? No. Instead of developing *daivatva* (divine qualities), he developed *danavatva* (demonic qualities).

Practise What You Preach

The ten heads of Ravana symbolised four *Vedas* and six *Sastras*. In the decisive battle, Rama severed Ravana's heads since he did not put into practice the knowledge he had acquired. Mere learning of sacred texts and chanting of *Vedas* will not bring about any transformation. In order to drive home this message, Rama cut off with his arrows Ravana's ten heads. It is only right at the end. Just before his spirit left his body Ravana did recognise his faults and repented for them and became sacred thereby. All that God preaches is for the benefit and welfare of humanity. Therefore, it is enough if one puts into practice at least one of the teachings of the *Vedas*. It should be a natural trait for everyone to put into practice the divine teachings.

In Prasanthi Nilayam, you find that even the Primary school children join the senior students in chanting *Vedas*. They know all *Vedas*, but they do not have the required knowledge to put them into practice. Mere recitation of the *Vedas* is of little use.

Only God exists everywhere and at all times. The world is but an illusion. The sacred teaching that God exists everywhere should be propagated to everyone. You find many *sadhakas* (spiritual aspirants) chanting and teaching the *Vedas*. Consider this example: a cassette tape or a disc merely plays, but does not experience the melody. It would be fruitless if one does not practise what he preaches. So, one should recognise, understand

and practise the sacred teachings. Lord Krishna put into practice what He propagated and also insisted that everyone should follow suit. You find many elders in the *Mahabharata* who were great scholars themselves, but, failed to put into practice the knowledge they acquired. The same is the position today. God has no preferences or dislikes whatsoever. All are equal for Him. But, He watches to see how much a person puts into practice what he has learnt. Many people study sacred texts, go on pilgrimage, perform penance, repeat God's name, but what is the use? Many ask Me for a *japamala* (rosary). Is it to adorn your neck for publicity or is it for spiritual experience? One hand is enough for one who wants to practise this *sadhana*. (At this point, Swami demonstrated with His hand as to how one should do *namasmarana*.) The five fingers of the hand contain nine *aksharas* (letters) which are further divided into twelve *Brahmas* and this makes up to hundred and eight beads of the rosary. Chanting the name of Rama nine times twelve will make up to one hundred and eight. This *sadhana* requires neither a *japamala* nor a fixed place. It can be done while walking or even while lying down till you go to sleep. When there are such easy and sacred paths, why should one go for strenuous *sadhanas* foregoing sleep?

Droupadi is known for her chastity. She has protected her husbands in many ways. After the gruesome massacre of the young Pandava children, Arjuna tracked down Aswatthama, the perpetrator of

the atrocity, and dragged him before Droupadi. Instead of cursing the evildoer and pronouncing punishment for him, she fell at the feet of Aswatthama, the son of her husbands' most revered *Guru*, and said:

It is at the feet of your father, Dronacharya that my husbands have learnt all that they know. Being the son of Dronacharya, was it proper to kill my children. How could you have the heart to kill them who were unarmed, young, quietly asleep, were not having any grudge against you, and were not contemplating any harm to you?

(Telugu poem)

When Droupadi was praying like this, Bhima could not bear to see this. Exploding in anger, Bhima roared:

This Droupadi is a stupid woman, for she pleads for this wretch's freedom. She feels no anger against this murderer of her sons.

(Telugu poem)

Practise Forbearance

When Arjuna was about to kill Aswatthama, Droupadi fell at his feet and reasoned with him thus: "Arjuna! Will my sons be revived by killing Aswatthama? His mother too would experience the same kind of sorrow that I am undergoing at the loss of my sons. Having studied the *Vedas* and *Sastras*, how is it that you are not able to maintain your tranquillity?"

The body is made up of five elements and is bound to perish sooner or later, but the Indweller has neither birth nor death. The Indweller has no attachment whatsoever and is the Eternal Witness. Truly speaking, the Indweller who is in the form of the Atma is verily God Himself.

(Telugu poem)

Thus, Droupadi pleaded with Arjuna to forgive Aswatthama for his heinous act. Arjuna replied, "You are preventing me from keeping up my vow." To this Droupadi said, "Tonsuring his head and removing the crown jewel from his head is equivalent to killing him." Arjuna paid heed to Droupadi's advice and as a token punishment shaved Aswatthama's head, took his crown jewel and sent him away.

What is *papa* (sin)? Hurting, abusing and killing others is sin. What is *punya* (merit)? Helping others is merit. Therefore, one should not retaliate to an evil act with an evil act. Instead, one should be magnanimous in forgiving the offender. There are many such sacred teachings in the *Mahabharata*.

There are many such noble women like Droupadi. She stands as an ideal for all women. Why are we forgetting the teachings of such great women? Today, women are treated as mere puppets. But they are full of courage, valour, sacrifice, determination and righteousness. Have you ever cared to recognise the power latent in women? Men do not possess such valour

and courage of women. It is because of such great women that our *Bharatiya* culture is held in high esteem. Otherwise, it would have declined long ago. Did you ever recognise the fact that women are endowed with such great powers as courage, valour, determination and righteousness? These qualities are not to be easily found in men. Why? Most of them are afflicted with the disease of anger, which is ruining them.

One with anger will not be successful in any of his endeavours. He will commit sins and will be derided by one and all. (Telugu poem)

It is possible that women may also succumb to anger and indulge in sinful deeds, now and then. Such people should be pardoned and encouraged to make amends, not denounced and condemned. The quality of patience and perseverance in women is great. In fact, it is the quality of equanimity in times of difficulty that was characteristic of Droupadi, which saved the Pandavas. There are several such women even in present times. The bad qualities of anger, passion, jealousy, envy and pride are more prominent in men. Women are able to control such evil qualities from overtaking them. Under the circumstances is it not our duty to encourage and honour such women who preserve and promote peace and harmony? On the contrary, women are belittled and slighted. No, no, this should not happen. Such women with noble qualities deserve to be encouraged and upheld.

A few days ago, you had witnessed a function in this Hall, where the glory of womanhood was highlighted. A playlet was put up in this Hall by Chethana, in which the greatness of mother Sita, as the ideal woman, was presented. Sita and Droupadi were great *pathivrathas* (women of chastity). Such efforts to highlight the greatness of women need to be encouraged.

Protect Sathya And Dharma At All Cost

Sathya and *Dharma* (truth and righteousness) are the greatest characteristics of Indian culture. If these two are protected, the country can be saved from degeneration. If you want to protect your country, you need not join the army and fight a battle. If truth and righteousness that are inherent in you are protected, they themselves will protect the country. It is not great to kill the enemies in a war. First and foremost, protect truth and righteousness in you. The country will automatically be protected. Indian culture exhorts *Sathyam Vada* (speak truth) and *Dharmam chara* (practise righteousness). When you do this with perseverance, you will become a great hero. When you protect *Sathya* and *Dharma*, God will, in turn, protect you. Instead of trying to worship God and obtain His grace, if you protect truth and righteousness, God will protect not only your country, but the whole world. Truth is your very life-breath. Righteousness is your armour. Therefore, protect truth; foster righteousness. That is enough. Truth and righteousness are inseparable. One cannot exist without the other.

They are the very life-breath for the universe. Droupadi was assiduously observing and propagating these two.

*Sathya Dharmamu Santhi Premalatho
Nee nithya jeevana yathra saginchu.*

(Oh man! Carry on your life's journey with the help of Truth, Righteousness, Peace, and Love). You must hold on to these principles, come what may. God will always protect such people. History is replete with several examples wherein people held steadfastly to the principles of *Sathya* and *Dharma*, and were constantly protected by God. One such example is that of Pandavas and their chaste wife, Droupadi. You may argue, "Where is *Sathya* and *Dharma* in the present-day world? Whom are they protecting?" This is a totally wrong argument. If you protect *Sathya* and *Dharma*, they will, in turn, stand before you and protect you. They are the very embodiments of divinity. Unfortunately, today, instead of *Sathyam vada* (speak truth) and *Dharmam chara* (practise righteousness), people are following the distorted version *Sathyam vadha* (kill truth) and *Dharmam chera* (imprison righteousness). This is utter perversion. You should lead your lives based on *Sathya* and *Dharma* and consider them as more important than your lives.

When Droupadi was pleading with Aswatthama who killed her sons, Bhima was furious with uncontrollable anger. He clenched his fist and proceeded towards

Aswatthama to kill him. In that uncontrollable rage, he argued with Droupadi, "Are you mad? Why are you trying to save this man who mercilessly slit the throat of your five sons? I will break the head of this child-killer into pieces with my fist. Do not come in my way." At that moment Droupadi fell at the feet of Bhima and pleaded with him to spare the life of Aswatthama. She prayed for regaining his composure. People around, who were witnessing this scene, were wonderstruck. They were wondering whether Droupadi was really mad! In fact, the world will be better if everyone is afflicted with such madness. Thus, when Droupadi pleaded with her husbands for saving the life of Aswatthama, he prayed for forgiveness. Droupadi was happy at the change of heart in Aswatthama and advised him, "Brother! You need not beg for my forgiveness. Instead, you pay your respect and do service to your mother. Do not drown her in sorrow. Never cause her anguish; take good care of her." Even the loss of five sons did not make Droupadi shed tears of sorrow.

Several women come to Me with a heavy heart and tell Me "Swami! My husband's death has caused me deep sorrow and anguish. How do I bear this calamity?" Then I would respond saying, "Oh! Your husband died? Very happy." They feel very unhappy with My attitude and question Me, "What is this Swami? Are You so happy on hearing the news of my husband's death?" What am I to say? I am always happy. I do not know what sorrow is. I always discharge My duty.

God is the only person who protects everybody. Therefore, pray to God always. Forgetting God and depending on the mercy of human beings! What madness! You must depend on God, for everything in your life. That is real *thapas* (penance).

Respect And Honour Women

Since ancient times, women have been the very life-breath and foundation for Bharat. They are the very embodiment of truth and righteousness. How much respect and reverence we must show towards such noble women? On the contrary, there are several people today, who put them to untold suffering. Due to bad habits and bad company, people lose their sense of discrimination and torture the women. No woman should be put to mental and physical torture, whatever be their nature. They must be revered and respected and protected in all ways. Women in Bharat have always been held in high esteem. There are several chaste and noble women in Bharat and still *Bharatiyas* are undergoing difficulties. What is the reason? Whose fault is this? It is only because the *Bharatiyas* are not giving proper respect and place to women in society. The fault lies squarely on the men.

Forbearance is the real beauty in this sacred land of Bharat. Of all the rituals, adherence to truth is the greatest penance. (Telugu poem)

The truthful character of women is really their *tapas* (penance). Therefore, such noble women must

be encouraged and honoured. If you can put this one great principle into practice, your life will be sanctified. Those who ill-treat their wives can never be happy and prosperous. If men cannot protect their women who are prepared to sacrifice even their lives for the sake of their husbands, what for is their existence? Women are really the presiding deities of their homes. Our primary duty is to protect them. Never let your women shed tears. If women shed tears, such homes will be ruined in no time. Women are ideals to the society. Never cause them distress.

Men should lead a life of truth and righteousness. Only then can they protect the country and become worthy of being called real men. Otherwise, how can they become heroic men? Several people go to temples. When they visit a temple, they must make a vow that they would respect and protect the women. Only then will they be protected. It is only when the women are safe, the whole world will be happy. Therefore, if you wish to protect *Dharma* in the world, you must first protect your *Dharma* towards women.

Embodiments of Love!

Imagine a situation wherein you are in the role of women and some men torture you. How miserable and helpless you would feel! Women are prepared to sacrifice even their lives for the sake of their husbands. But, men do not have such spirit of sacrifice. Men should also cultivate such a spirit of sacrifice, like women. Only

then will you be fit to be called men. Otherwise, you will be men only in form, but lacking in masculinity. You consider women as *abala* (weak). But, the truth is they are *Sakthi swarupas* (embodiments of strength and power). Only, I know the plight of women who lost their husbands. It is our duty to protect such women. If you can discharge this duty properly, you will be happy throughout your life.

Embodiments of Love!

You must follow truth even in small matters. There are three letters “*Sa*”, “*Tha*” and “*Ya*” in the word “*Sathya*”. If you reverse the order, it will become “*Ya*” “*Tha*” and “*Sa*”. This means when you do *thapas* with austerities like *yama* (control of the inner senses) and *niyama* (control of the outer senses), you will have the divine vision of Sathyaswarupa (embodiment of Truth). You have to thus recognise the inner meaning of every word and follow them meticulously.

King Janaka, a great renunciant king, used to propagate truth and righteousness among his subjects by his own example. His daughter, Sita, also led a pious life based on truth and righteousness. You are not studying the life history of such ideal women. Instead, you are reading trash. No. No. This is unbecoming of you. You should study the ancient history of Bharat, which is so sacred. The character and morality of women in Bharat are very sacred. You will become worthy of being called men only when you undertake to protect such great

women. By mere sporting a moustache or growing a beard, will you become men? Moustache and beard are not the real signs of masculinity. You must protect ladies and uphold the dignity of the family. Only then can you become great heroes and men of character.

Embodiments of Love!

Consider women as embodiments of truth. Even if some minor faults are noticed in them, do not give credence to them. Respect and revere them. Do not use even a single word that would offend them. If they really wish, they can achieve any great task. You should be even prepared to lay down your lives for the sake of protecting and fostering women. At least from today, all of you should come forward to protect the honour and dignity of women in the world. Women also should undertake a vow to contribute their mite in this great task of protection of *Sthri Dharma*. As regards men, there is nothing great or new in trying to protect women. That is your duty. Her duty is to foster and maintain the entire family as a unit. If women are protected, they in turn will protect the entire world. Never belittle women and treat them as mere playthings. I hope all of you men will, at least in future, undertake to protect the dignity and honour of women and thereby protect your own dignity and honour. I conclude My discourse blessing you all.

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