

Love and surrender

*The Vedas, sacred texts, and other scriptures
Cannot help man to cut off the curtain of illusion.
While man is in front of the curtain, God is behind it.
The cause is behind and the
Effect is in front of the curtain.*

[Telugu Poem]

Embodiments of Love!

From ancient times, Bharat (India) has treasured the spiritual wealth and spread the message of *Loka samastha sukhino bhavanthu* all over the world, praying that all people in the world should be happy. Today, man has attained considerable progress in science and technology, but moral values and righteous conduct are on the decline. He has become the slave of selfishness. Whatever one thinks, speaks, or does is based only on self-interest. Human quality has become rare among men, and animal quality is predominant.

Value of discipline

Human life is extremely sacred, and it is a matter of shame that man is not living up to his ideals. Man today lives as he likes without following any discipline. Discipline is needed in every aspect to maintain the right course of life: “*Na sreya niyamam vina.*” A river has two banks. Without the banks, the river may flow in all directions, flooding the fields and villages and causing untold hardship and disaster. If it has banks to regulate the course of flow, it will be useful for irrigation.

In the similar manner, the river of life has to be contained between the two banks of eight-lettered axioms. One is “*Sraddhavan labhate jnanam*” and the other is “*Samsayatma vinasyathi*”. Both declarations are made by Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita. The first one means, “it is only by faith that one attains wisdom,” and the second one means, “one who doubts will perish.” As long as one has doubt, one cannot achieve anything. He who has no doubt and has full faith can achieve anything. The river of human life flowing between these two banks reaches the goal successfully.

A tree that needs water is provided water only at the root. Though the root cannot be visible to your eyes because it is buried under the earth, it is the basis for the tree to thrive. If the root is dry, the tree becomes dead. So, you have to safeguard the root.

Similarly, you have to safeguard the root of life, i.e. you need firm faith in the Self. Therefore, these two eight-lettered axioms are the essential needs of life. “*Samsayatma vinasyathi*” is comparable to the root, and “*Sraddhavan labhate Jnanam*” is comparable to the tree of life. You have branches, leaves, and components of a tree. The purpose of planting a sapling is to get fruit from the tree. The goal of human life is *purna jnana* (perfect knowledge). Total faith is needed to achieve this goal.

Three aspects of Divinity

One should expand the broad feelings of the heart to foster the tree of life to grow and retain its vitality. That is why ancient teachers used to pray, “*Annam Brahma, Raso Vishnu, Vak Maheswara.*” This was the prayer chanted by the ancient seers before taking food. Food maintains the energy of the body by its essence getting distributed to all parts of the body.

To safeguard the functions of all the limbs and sense organs, the mind has to be in fine fettle. For this *vak* (speech) should be truthful and purposeful. Therefore, these three important requisites for human life, i.e. body, mind and speech (*mano-vak-kyam*) are treated as the three aspects of divinity Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara.

Vishnu is all pervasive; so also mind is all-pervasive. It is said “*Manomoolam idam jagath*”. Maheswara represents *sabda* or *vak* (sound). That is why God is described first as *Sabda Brahmamayi*, then *Characharamayi*, *Jyothirmayi*, *Vangmayi*, *Nithyanandamayi*, *Parathparamayi*, *Mayamayi*, and *Srimayi*. By expansion of love, we acquire all eight types of divinity. Everyone should realize the divinity within. Only then may they be considered to lead a true life.

The body is not just the physical one consisting of all the limbs and organs. God has gifted this body to man to discharge his *dharmic* duties. The mind creates the *bhavam* (feeling or thought), which is expressed through the tongue in words and done by the limbs in action. Human life is a combination of the functions of thought, speech, and action. The Divine is manifest in man, though many do not realize this.

*Can you limit the One, who created the universe,
within a frame of picture?
When even demi-gods cannot understand Him,
how can a mere mortal understand?
What name can you give the One,
who manifests in all names and forms?
What can you offer to the supreme power
who has the universe as His stomach?
One whose effulgence is equal to crores of suns,
what light can you use for illuminating Him?*

The entire world is a combination of 'seer' and 'seen'

We cannot worship such a supreme power in narrow ways. Even though He is so vast, you can still comprehend Him in the human heart just as you see the outside world in a small mirror. He is *Hridayavasi*. Who are you? Who is He? If you enquire, 'I', the inner self, is the seer and all this is the seen.

The entire world is a combination of seer and seen. Many people are sitting in this Hall. 'I' am the seer. All the people are seen and My body itself is seen by Me. So, 'I' the seer is different from the body that is seen. 'I' is the eternal witness. Let us not be carried away by the 'seen'.

We must make efforts to perceive the 'seer'. We cannot do this with physical eyes. We have to develop the 'wisdom eye' (*Jnana Chakshu*) in order to see the 'seer'. It is only through inner vision that you can attain liberation and not by your physical vision. The *Chaithanya* (Awareness Principle) is prevalent all over the world. But we ignore the *Chaithanya* and visualize *jada* (inert).

To understand the truth of spirituality, you may take the example of the animals, which get sanctity and become objects of worship when they are associated with the Divine. The snake, when it is around the neck of Lord Siva, is worshipped by all. When it is encountered elsewhere, people do not hesi-

tate to kill it. Similarly, the mouse, which is the vehicle of Vinayaka, is an object of worship when it is with Vinayaka, but when it is seen in your house, you trap it and try to do away with it. When we see the bull made of stone in a Siva temple, we worship it. But when we see a bull in daily life, we do not hesitate even to beat it. This teaches the lesson that when we are in the company of God, we are held in high esteem.

Develop strong faith that all forms are His

Sahasraseersha Purushaha sahasraksha sahasrapad (just as the limbs are a part of our body, we are all the limbs of the body of cosmic form). The cosmic form is of thousands of heads, feet, hands, and eyes. All forms are His. If we develop strong faith in this, we can understand divinity in its true spirit.

*Is it possible to describe You
with the limited human intellect?
You are minuter than atom and
mightier than the macrocosm.
You are present in a subtle form
in all the 84-lakh species.
You are pervading everywhere.
Who can describe You?*

There is no question of your searching for truth. It is everywhere and in everyone. When you have light in your own house, where is the need for going to your neighbor to borrow a lamp? Develop the infinite light of love within yourself.

The light of life is shining with effulgence within you. In order to see a light, you do not need another light. In order to see the moon, you do not need a torch. Similarly, there is no need for any other light to realize the self-effulgent *Atma* within. The light of life is divinity. God says you are a fragment of His Eternal Self. Every individual is the spark of the Divine.

The three aspects of Saranagathi

Sachithanandam, who spoke earlier, mentioned about *saranagathi* (surrender). Surrender involves three entities: one is the person who surrenders the other the one to whom he surrenders, and the third is the act of surrender. If we analyze carefully in the spiritual sense, you have a person, mirror, and reflection. When you remove the mirror, the reflection is automatically gone. So, you find three minus one becomes one only. It is the person only that remains.

Similarly, *prakriti* (world) is the mirror, and *jeeva* (individual) is the reflection of the Divine. When *prakriti*, the mirror, is removed, what remains is only one, that is, the Divine. The individual is only a reflection. When your vision is towards *prakriti* (world), you have duality. When your vision is turned inward; you are One, that is, God and nothing else. Even *Prakriti* is the creation of God. When everything is divine, there is no second.

This divine is nothing but love, which is in all beings. Love is God, live in love. It has no beginning and no end. It is infinite; you cannot fragment it. All spiritual paths are paths of love. The goal is also love. It is that which always exists in this world. Never give up love at any time.

In earthly parlance, jealousy, pride, etc. are evil attributes. But if you see them all with love, you will never have hatred. There is no question of hatred when there is only one and not two. The current of *Atma* is flowing in all beings as love; you have to develop the spirit of love and expand it.

You should not care about names and forms. See only the unity in the diverse forms and names. You will realize the Divine. Just as the *bhramara* (humming butterfly) injects the humming sound in the insect and turns it into its own form, you should concentrate on the Divine and become divine.

Significance of offering bilva leaf to Lord Siva

You are Brahma, Vishnu, Maheswara, as already said. Parents have given you the physical body and name. But the heart (spiritual) is given by God. No one else can give this. To have a compassionate heart is the attribute of human nature. It is giving and forgiving. It is not at all keen on getting anything.

Develop oneness with love. People do several types of *sadhana* (spiritual exercise) like turning the *japamala* (rosary beads) and meditation. While the body may be still, the mind goes about wandering all over! Even a little mosquito disturbs you and you strive to kill it while engaged in *dhyana* (meditation).

You should cast off the attachment to the body. Body is the temple of God. But God is the indweller. This truth you should never lose sight of. Nature is also a manifestation of God.

The ancients saw the truth that food is Brahma, mind is Vishnu, and *vak* (sound) is Maheswara. Man is a combination of these three. That is why when we pray to Siva we say we offer the three-fold body to Him just as we offer the *bilva* leaf with three parts. This is the principle of surrender (*saranagathi*).

Lakshmana is a superb example of the attitude of surrender. When Rama, Sita, and Lakshmana went to the forest and reached Chitrakoot, Rama told Lakshmana, "I am feeling tired and Sita is also tired. It is better we stay here for some time. So, I would like you to put up a cottage in which we can stay for a longer duration, if necessary for the whole period of 10 years. You can put up the cottage in any place of your choice."

Hearing these words, Lakshmana felt hurt and bent down his head with grief. Noting this, Sita asked Lakshmana, "Why are you perturbed, Lakshmana? Your brother did not speak anything harsh. Why do you feel so?"

Lakshmana said, “Have I ever had any choice of my own? I left my mother; wife, and all comforts of life and accompanied you both to serve. I have surrendered myself to Rama. Where is the question of my choice? The command of Rama is what I want to carry out. While so, how can I withstand the impact of Rama asking me to put up the cottage at a place of my choice?”

Rama realized the sacred feelings of Lakshmana and the true attitude of his surrender and pointed out the site himself.

Shun bad places haunted by bad people

Such an ardent devotee of Rama, with the attitude of complete surrender, once suddenly turned hostile and said, “Rama, I am leaving You and returning to Ayodhya. Why should I come with You? Only you were asked to go to forest. I shall go back to Ayodhya to join my wife and mother.”

Rama was surprised at this unexpected turn in the mind of Lakshmana and asked him to wait for a while. Walking away some distance, he halted under a tree for shelter. Then Lakshmana repented for his lapse and said, “I am sorry, I don't want to leave You and go. I do not know why I got such an unnatural attitude all of a sudden!”

Rama said, “You were then in the region of Surpanakha, the demoness. So, your mind wavered. Now we have come out of her territory and you are normal.”

This is a lesson to show that even a great devotee like Lakshmana could be upset by traversing the region of a demonic person. Rama saw that Chitrakoot was the seat of *rishis* (sages) and so decided to stay there.

That is why you should shun bad company and bad places haunted by bad people. Discriminate between what is good and what is bad, that which gives permanent joy and which is transient. Do good deeds. If you surrender to the *Atma* and be con-

stantly in touch with it, God will be with you, around you, above you and below you.

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My mission is to raise the consciousness of man to a level at which he neither rejoices nor mourns over anything. In that supreme state, one is going through rebirth and death each moment, for these acts are on and the same, emerging from the formless into form and merging from the form into the formless. Then, there is no success of adversity, no joy or pain. When the devotee attains this Oneness, his journey toward Me ceases. For he will be with Me endlessly.