

23. Love all : Serve all

EMBODIMENTS of Divine Love! The trees provide cool shade and sweet fruit equally to all, whether they have fostered them or harmed them. They teach man this lesson of equal mindedness. The mountains, by bearing heat and cold, wind and rain alike, teach man not to care too much for the body. The birds take no thought for the morrow and are content to live on what they can get. They teach man the lesson of contentment and indifference to the future.

The departed convey the message of the impermanence of life and its pleasures. Nature thus teaches man in many ways to give up ideas of "I" and "mine" and look upon God as the supreme preceptor. Although Nature has been teaching these lessons from the beginning of time, man has not learnt to give up the ideas of "my people" and "others" and to develop the sense of oneness and equality of mankind and realise his divinity.

Trees are foremost among teachers. By attachment to the body and developing self-conceit, man forgets the lessons of Nature and wallows in selfishness. The mountains, by their indifference to cold or heat, are teaching man that he should bear joy or grief with an equal mind and strive to realise God. Pleasure and pain relate only to the body. The *Atma* is unaffected. This is the lesson to be learnt from the mountains.

We are seeing people being born and people dying. In spite of all that is seen, or heard or experienced, man is unable to get rid of the delusions relating to the body. Hence he is caught up in the coils of bodily attachments. He does not learn the lesson of the impermanence and fleeting nature of physical existence.

The Cosmos is a University

Prakriti (Nature), which is constantly teaching these lessons, is the true preceptor. The cosmos is a University. God is the Cause. The cosmos is the result. God pervades the entire Universe. Nothing can exist in the world without the power of the Divine. The Universe is a manifestation of the Divine.

In the invocation to the *Guru*, he is described as Brahma, Vishnu, Maheswara and Parabrahma. Brahma who is hailed as the *Guru*, is the creator of the universe. The One who creates, sustains and dissolves the universe is the *Parabrahma* (the Omni-Will). The *Vedas* have described the Divine as the One enveloping the Cosmos and existing beyond it. Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara are aspects of the manifestation of Nature. Nature is made up of the three *gunas*--- *Satwa*, *Rajas*, *Tamas*--in their myriad combinations.

The three forms of Advaita

What we must seek to experience today is *Ekatvam* (unity in diversity). *Advaita* (Oneness) is expressed in three forms: *Bhaava-Advaita* (oneness in mental attitude); *Kriya-Advaita* (oneness expressed in action); *Padaartha-Advaita* (oneness as seen in all objects). Only when oneness is experienced in all these forms can Divinity be understood. In *Bhaava-Advaita*, the unity of the basic substance constituting the cosmos is perceived as the underlying Reality. In *Kriya-Advaita*, every action is regarded as an offering to the Divine and is thereby divinised. *Padaartha-Advaita* implies recognising that every being or every object in the universe is composed of the same five elements (ether, air, fire, water and earth) which are divine in their origin. In every *individual*, *Akasa* (ether) exists as *Sabda* (Sound). Breathing is based on air. The heat in the body is derived from the fire element. Sweat, urine and other fluids in the body indicate the presence of water.

The body itself is based on earthy matter. As every being is constituted by these five elements, all beings are essentially one, though having different forms and names. Human equality is based on the oneness of the Divine essence of all human beings.

The ancient sages indicated in the Upanishads and the *Brahma Sutras*, how this Oneness of the Divine is to be realised. Unfortunately, these texts came to be interpreted in contradictory and confusing terms, with the result that their basic truth has been forgotten.

Oneness must express itself in universal love. Those who speak about love do not practice it. It is the divorce between thought, word and deed which is at the root of all the troubles in the world today. It is also the cause of the rise of atheism in this sacred land of ours.

Harmony in thought, word and deed is the highest human value. *Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema* (Truth, Righteousness, Peace and Love) are not mere words. They are fundamental values to be practised in thought, word and deed as far as possible. Only then can divinity be realised.

It is not necessary to undertake all kinds of *sadhanas* (spiritual exercises) to recognise the Divine. If the happenings in daily life are properly enquired into, the *Atma* principle can be recognised easily. *Hethu* (cause) is one of the names of the Divine. This means He is the cause of creation. He is both the cause of and the means used in creation. Another name for God is *Vikshara* (Imperishable). All objects in creation are liable to decay and destruction. God alone is beyond change and decay.

Nature is like a clean mirror

God's love is unbounded. It knows no growth or diminution. Worldly love is momentary and fickle. Divine love is unchanging and eternal. God is the embodiment of love. His infinite love is offered to all in equal measure. Some may feel that they had experienced God's love for a time and had been deprived of it later. This reflects only their own feelings and not the attitude of the Lord.

Nature is like a clean mirror which reflects your feelings and attitudes. It is your own actions and thoughts, whether 'good or bad, which are reflected back to you. The Lord's love remains the same always.

Pleasure and sorrow are not inherent in the nature of man. They are products of the mind. Bliss is the true nature of man. But it can be realised only when the love of God is experienced. The sense of "my-ness" has to be totally eradicated. You must strive for the welfare of all. This is Bharat's message from times of yore. Fill your hearts with this sacred feeling. Banish from your minds all thoughts of hatred and envy.

Transform mind to attain the Lord

Once, to remove the doubts entertained by Dharmaja (eldest of the Pandavas), Krishna explained why He allowed the souls of the vile-minded Sisupala and Danthavakra to merge in Him after he had killed them. Krishna said: "Dharmaja! Your doubts are from your delusion. Praise or blame, good or bad, relate to the body and not to *the Atma*. Because of identification with the body one experiences troubles. As the body-consciousness grows, the *Atma-consciousness* declines. Only the mind is responsible for hatred and attachment, for joy and grief. If the mind is transformed, anyone (regardless of his past) can attain me."

It is the inevitable destiny of everything ultimately to go back to the source from which it came. The body, arising from matter, goes back to matter. The *Atma* (Spirit) issuing the Divine, goes

back to the Divine. The Spirit is pure Consciousness. It ever remains as Consciousness. It is embodiment of Love and Light.

Embodiments of Love! Do not make any distinctions between one person and another on the basis of caste or colour. All are children of one God. Do the trees make any distinction between one or another seeking their shade? Man behaves worse than trees today. Everyone should realise that the Divine is equally present in all.

The Sai name is proclaimed by trees when they wave their heads. The birds in their chirping call upon men to remember Sai's name. The flowers in spreading their fragrance declare the glory of Sai. The bees when they hum announce the bliss in Sai's name. "Sai!" is the sound that reverberates from the sky and earth. Sai can be experienced everywhere. "Sai" is not one's name. "Sai" is the Indweller reclining in the heart of everyone.

Today is *Vyasapurnima* day. Vyasa was a great *rishi*. He is described as an incarnation of Lord Narayana. He set down in writing the *Vedas* which previously were known only in the form of sound. He was the great-grandson of Arundhati (the wife of Vasishtha). He codified the *Vedas*. As he was born on the full moon day in the month of *Aashada*, this day is celebrated as *Vyasapurnima*. Vyasa glorified the Divinity that is equally present in all human beings and propagated this truth to the world. After writing the 18 *puranas*, he summed up their message in one line: "*Paropakaarah punyaaya; paapaaya parapeedanam*". (Helping others is meritorious; harming others is sinful). "Help ever; hurt never.

God is the Supreme *Guru*

Vyasa was the great teacher who gave many profound and sacred truths to man-kind. Hence his birthday is celebrated as *Gurupurnima* (the Full moon day dedicated to the preceptor). *Guru* is one who dispels the darkness of ignorance. Those who teach mundane subjects can only be called teachers or scholars, but they cannot be called *gurus*. Even those who profess to impart *Upadesa* (spiritual messages) cannot be regarded as *gurus*. God is the Supreme *Guru--the Guru* of *gurus*.

To offer fruits, *dakshina* and other things to a teacher on *Gurupurnima* day is not the right way of worshipping *the guru*. Those who accept such gifts are worldly preceptors. Real *gurus* are to be worshipped by *pradakshina*, by revering them with heart and soul. The only true *guru* is God. He manifests Himself in Nature, which serves as the Cosmic teacher. Nature is the best teacher.

Recognise the Divinity that is manifested in the cosmos. All things in Nature observe their laws with undeviating regularity. The sun, the moon, the seasons observe their respective laws. Man alone violates the laws of his being. Animals obey their instincts and have their seasons for regulating their lives. Man is the exception. He needs to be taught the rules of right living. He has to cultivate morality and integrity. There is only one way by which this can be done. It is by pursuing the spiritual path. Without: spirituality man cannot discover the Light within him.

It is sin to ignore one's duties

The most important thing to be noted today is that the body has been given to man for the performance of right action. Every person has to discharge his duties in life. It is a sin to ignore one's duties.

When everyone performs his duties, the nation will prosper. Perform your duties, without regard to what others say or do. Engage yourselves in service activity. Consider social service as service

to God. To earn the love of God, this is the easiest way. The best way to love God is to love all and serve all. Your entire life will be sanctified thereby. A large number of people are coming to Prashaanthi Nilayam regularly. No one should remain idle here. Each one should render whatever service he or she can. This is not a place for mere eating and sleeping. Those who are not active in service have no place here.

From this *Gurupurnima*, you have to dedicate yourselves to service. There is so much to be done by way of service to the people. It is through service life can be made meaningful. The nation is in the doldrums today because men who have not learnt how to serve are in the seats of power. Only through service can one qualify oneself for leadership.

The spirit of service eradicates egoism

One should not feel proud about the position one occupies. The strength derived from wealth or position is undependable. Morality and purity alone can confer real strength. To develop these qualities, one has to take up selfless service. The spirit of service eradicates egoism and selfishness. In the process, not only is your life sublimated, but the nation also gains through the example of a dedicated servant of the public.

Remember that you must live up to whatever you say. You must practise what advice you give to others. This is what I am doing. Hence I have the right to advise others. I call upon devotees to show love towards all. I love all. I am always engaged in work from morning to night. You cannot know how blissful I am always. Happiness is My form. I am always happy. I do not worry about anything because I have no desires. That is the reason for My happiness. As your desires increase, your happiness diminishes.

Embodiments of Divine Love! Realising that the Atma in everyone is the same, extend your love to all. It does not matter if you do not practise any sadhana. Your love to others will raise you to the highest level of spirituality. Bear no ill-will towards anyone. When you harm anyone, realise you are doing harm to God. When you develop this kind of universal love, it will be the basis for unity.

In whatever you do, remember the name of God. It is a panacea for all human ills. Do not waste time, because Time is Divine. With faith in God, consecrate your life.

Discourse in the Poornachandra Auditorium on 18- 7-1989.

Be simple and sincere. It is sheer waste of money to burden the pictures and idols in the shrines and altars of your homes with the weight of garlands and to parade costly utensils and vessels and offerings to show off your devotion. This is deception; it demeans Divinity, imputing to it the desire for pomp and publicity. I ask only for purity of heart to shower Grace.

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