

17. Lakshya puuja

THOUGH there is no particular reason for this evening's gathering, Kompella Subbaraaya Shaasthry tried to discover one and he concluded his speech with a reference to the *Varalakshmi Puuja* that is generally done in Hindu homes today! This search for 'causes' is another of the delusions that pester man; he is out to seek the cause of every thing and in that confusion, he forgets to derive the full benefit of the result which is before him.

Shaasthry quoted from the *Soundharyalahari* to explain the meaning of *Shiva-Shakthi*, probably moved by the incidents of the last *Guru Pournami* Day. *Shiva-Shakthi* is the conjunction of *jada* (insentient or inert) and *chith* (awareness), the conjunction of the wire with the current, which activates all the instruments---fan, stove, bulb and radio. *Shiva-Shakthi* is in all, not only in Me; there is only the difference in power and capacity to manifest. The fire-fly has some power of illumination; it also emits light. We have oil lamp, the electric bulb, the petromax lamp, the Moon, the Sun--all emanate light; that is the common quality.

Like that, both good and evil have the right to exist. The evil has to be used for the purpose for which it is suited. The skin of the orange is not sweet; but it helps to protect the sweetness within. The bitter green skin of the unripe orange protects the fruits during the ripening period. The skin too gradually takes on some of the sweetness and flavour of the ripening orange; so too, evil has to be slowly transformed into good by the subtle influence of association.

Purpose and rationale of Nature around us

The *indhriyas* may be used for the purpose of increasing spiritual *Aanandham* (bliss). When fruit-juice is poured into a cup, the cup does not know its taste; if you hold it in the palm, you do not get the taste. You have to drink it with the straw, the senses; then *buddhi* (intellect); then the tongue experiences the sweetness. The fruit juice is *prakrithi* (the Nature) around us. Taste its sweetness, namely, the Divinity that is immanent in it; that is the purpose and rationale. *Prakrithi* is just the *leela* of the Lord, set before you so that you may become aware of his Glory, His splendour.

If the mind obeys the dictates of *buddhi*, then, the individual gains. If the orders from Delhi are obeyed by every State, then the country gains in strength and unity. But, if the mind becomes the slave of the senses, then woe be to the individual. When the mind thus follows the outwardbound senses and forgets the Reality, when the individual revels in the dream-world of false fantasy, this *Shivathaayi* (Divine mother) pats the child and wakes it. There is then no more need to tell them anything else. When awake, the truth will stand revealed.

Your right is to realize *Vishwaswaruupa* (cosmic nature); so, don't play about forever in the *dehabhaava* (thought of the body), the consciousness that you are just this five-foot body; transcend the attachment to the family, the home, the village, the community, the district, the state, the nation. You must acquire not the independence denoted by the political fact of *Swaraajya*, but the freedom of the spirit called *Swaraajya* (dominion over oneself).

All different conceptions of God are valid

The cry of equality now being used as a slogan is a vain and meaningless cry; for, how can men, inheriting a multiplicity of impulses, skills, quail-ties, tendencies, attitudes, and even diseases from their ancestors and from their past be all of the same stamp? And in spite of all this advertisement for the supposed equality, you find more misunderstandings and factions now than

at any previous period of history. Those who promote inequality are those who most loudly proclaim this modern doctrine of equality.

Each person has a different conception of God and of goodness, according to his upbringing and the state of purification of his impulses. All such conceptions are valid; when water is let into the fields, you will find sheets of different shapes---circular, rectangular, oval, square, according to the shape of the fields. The fertility or the quantity of the crops harvested do not vary according to the geometrical correctness of the shapes. How far, how fast you have established attachment to the Lord, that is the test. The rest does not matter.

Bhagavath prema (steady Love of the Lord) is like a mosquito curtain; it will keep out the disease-carrying *moha* and *madha* (delusion and pride), *kaama* and *krodha* (lust and anger), *lobha* and *maathsarya* (greed and jealousy). Develop faith, so that you may love without doubt. The "illness" that ended on *Guru Pournami* first shook the faith of many, but, later, confirmed the shaken faith. That is not as good as keeping faith unshaken, whatever may happen. How can the nose that falls down when you merely cough, be firm when you sneeze?

Shankara harmonised the various schools and sects I had to do My *Dharma* (divine duty), and every act of Mine has its significance, which you cannot understand. You are in the dark and so, you fear more. You cannot notice the heaps of earth and the pits on the road. You cannot even know that the road is smooth and fine. There is no fault or partiality in creation-be confirmed in that. Then you will no more waver in your faith. If God's Creation itself was faulty, all would have suffered equally! Now, each person has a different version to give, if you ask him whether he is happy and why. The same person speaks differently at different times about the acts of the Lord. So, the fault lies in you, the excellence that you praise is in you. You see yourself in the outside world; what you like or dislike is your own self!.

Wealth accrues by fair means as well as foul

Shankaraacharya declared, "*Brahma Sathyam; Jagath mithya*"---*Brahman* alone is Real; the world is false. But he did not therefore discard the world as beneath notice. He continued the work of Kumarila Bhatta, harmonised the various schools and sects of those days, established *Mutts* (Missions) for the propagation of the *Adhwaitha* (non-dual) doctrine in the four corners of India, Bhadrinath, Sringeri, Puri and Dwaaraka and then left. "*Brahma Sathyam, Jagath mithya*" is the essence of the *Shruthis* (holy scriptures). That truth can be cognised by minds trained through *Dwaithic* (dualistic) worship of the personal God, and *Visishtadhwaithik* emphasis of the *jeevi* as the limb of the Absolute. One batch of students after while should be passing out of a college while batch after batch is joining the first year class. So too more and more people must take up *Bhakthi-Karma* (devotional activity) and slowly ascend to the stage of full *Jnaana* (knowledge of the Supreme); then only can humanity achieve the Goal. With this idea Shankara established the *Mutts*.

A man lost in the jungle was asked to move on in a certain direction; then, after some time, he saw a village; now, that village did not emerge for his sake, just then. He saw what was already there, that is all. So also, *Adhwaitha* shows you the way to something that is already there, but which you did not recognise so far---namely, your being the unlimited, illimitable *Brahman*.

Well; just a word about the *Varalakshmi Vratam*, which Subbaraaya Shaasthry mentioned. Let Me tell you frankly, I do not like this *Lakshmi Puuja*, which people do, expecting to grow rich and accumulate wealth. They even speak of *Dhanalakshmi* and have special *Sthothrams* (sacred

prayers) to propitiate Her. *Lakshmi* (wealth) accrues by fair means as well as foul; money is earned by gambling, by various forms of deceit, by highway robbery itself, by high and low, by all and sundry. Worship *Lakshya*, I shall appreciate you! Keep the *lakshya* (the Goal) of expanding your love till it embraces all beings, till it sees every being as your own self--keep it ever steady before your mind's eye; then, *Lakshmi* will, of her own accord, favour you to the extent necessary for realising the Goal. Never doubt that. Never falter.

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Life is a battlefield, a Dharmak-sethra, where duties and desires are always in conflict. Smother the fiery fumes of desire, of hatred and anger that rise up in your hearts, it is sheer cowardice to yield to these enemies that turn you into beasts. When obstacles come, meet them with courage. They harden you, make you tough.

Sathya Sai Baba