

31. The ray of God

THE Upanishaths say that the human is a spark of Divine Love, encased in five sheaths: the *Anna* (Gross, material, food component), the *Praana* (vital air, breath), the *Mana* (the mental, emotional, volitional), the *Vijnaana* (rational, discriminatory intellectual) and the *Aanandha* (blissful, equanimous, balance). It is the fragrance of that Love that emanates from him as love towards things, beings and ideas. That Love is ever urging and surging for expression, enlargement and enclaspings. But the tangles of fear, greed, egoism and aggrandizement do not allow the spark to grow and illumine the sheaths as well as the world around.

This day is the Festival of Light; that is to say, of Love. Knowledge too is praised as light, but it is often a clouding fog, a weapon of offence, a burden on the head, a drag on the hand of charity, a shackle on the feet. It ripens into a liberator only when it is earned through love and put into practice through love. Love alone gives Light.

Love unfolds first on the lap of the mother. The eyes of Love fasten themselves on the caressing face of the mother. It then spreads towards the father, brothers and sisters, kith and kin, friend and playmate, region and language, world and its Maker. The I that lives within the body is like a lion in a cave. It is the monarch of the forest; but it limits itself to the few square feet of rocky floor. Let it come out, renouncing the petty possession. So long as you crib yourselves into the body-consciousness (I am the body), you are the lion moping in the musty cave! Do not feel, *Dhehoasmi* (I am the body). Roar, *Brahmaasmi* (I am *Brahman*, I am all this and more, I am all this is, was, and will be)---and littleness, time, space, ego, all will flee from your heart! You will be Love, Love, Love---and nought else. That is to say, you will be Divine, one with the One.

Light has no boundaries, prejudices or favourites

Expansion is Love. Expansion is the essence of Love. Love is God. Live in Love. That is the Dheepaavali Message I give you. When a lamp is lit from another, there are two where there was but one. The first one did not stop emitting light. You can light a million lamps from one; but, yet, the first will not suffer a jot! Love too is like this. Share it with a million, it will still be as bright as when it was alone. There is another lesson too which the illuminations on Dheepaavali Day tend to teach. Each house in the street, lights a few lamps and keeps them on the door sill, the parapet wall, the gate, the porch, the well, and, what is the effect? The town is filled with light, the residents are happy, the children dance in glee and the sky shines in the glow of earthly joy. Light spreads; it mingles with the light from other sources of light, it has no boundaries, no prejudices, no favourites. You may not like your neighbour. But the light from the lamp on your verandah shines hand in hand with the light from the lamp on his verandah! You cannot keep it back!

Hold fast to God through any of three paths

Dheepaavali is intended to teach you this lesson of light and love; move out, clasp, spread, expand, give up limits of mine and thine, his and theirs, caste and creed, in one limitless flow of Love. That is the culmination of all spiritual *saadhana*. Competition, the desire to defeat and overwhelm the other person, whatever the means necessary for his downfall, the greed to earn wealth, fame, superiority, these have put out the lamp of Love in the human heart today. Resolve on this Festival Day to light it again. When the worship of God starts in the shrine room, the first act of yours is 'lighting a lamp,' isn't it? Without a lit lamp, no auspicious ceremony is initiated.

When the lamp of love is shining, God manifests! Keep it burning bright and pure, God persists! Allow all to light their lamps from it, God showers Grace!

God, first; the world, next; myself last! That is the legitimate sequence for the *saadhaka*; and, who is not a *saadhaka*? You have to be one, now or later, so that you can be liberated from this cycle of birth-death! Now, man, in his callousness towards his own welfare, has turned it topsy-turvy! It is 'myself first, the world next and God is last.' So, God is lost, too! Hold fast to God; then, you will be safe.

You can hold fast to him, either through *jnaana*, *Bhakthi* or *Karma maarga* (paths of knowledge, worship or work). You may travel first or second or third class in the train; the destination is the same, for all *jnaana* proceeds on the assumption that God is immanent and transcendent. *Bhakthi* believes that God is Creator, Preserver and Destroyer, that He is to be adored, and propitiated by deeds that He appreciates, that God is Master and you are privileged to serve. *Karma* takes into account a third category---Nature! It is not simply God and man. Man has to manipulate Nature, live in Nature, live by Nature---always dedicating his activity to the further Glory of God, resigning himself to the worshipful activity, unconcerned with the fruits of his activity, for they are in the hands of God. Do your duty; leave the rest to God. A disc with the seven colours of the rainbow, when rotated quickly gives not the band of vibgyor, but, a band of white! So too, the three colours, *Jnaana*, *Bhakthi*, and *Karma* are different only when the white light of God is passed through the prism of human reason and mind. Activate them in deed, they are but parts of one ray.

Love is the breath of the *Saadhaka*

Believe that All are God, through *Jnaana*; even then, compassion compels you to love and serve. Believe that God is Master or Father and that you are His children or servants, through *Bhakthi*. Even then, His command is to wipe the tears, nourish the sick and help the lame to climb over the stile, through pity and sympathy. Believe, through faith in *Karma*, that God has to be adored through dedication; even then, Love says the highest form of adoration is by means of *Seva* (service), done in Love.

Love, therefore, is the breath of the *Saadhaka* and I call upon you to celebrate the Dheepaavali, not by feasting and exploding crackers to disturb the peace of the neighbourhood, but by silent lighting of lamps and silent service through Love.

Dheepaavali, Prashaanthi Nilayam, 29-10-1970