

## 1. World needs spiritual transformation

THE four *Purusharthas* (*Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha*) are regarded in common parlance as the purposes of human life. They are given a worldly meaning. But their real meaning is spiritual. The foremost purpose of the four *Purusharthas* is to make man realise that his primary duty is to divinise himself (to transform himself from Man to *Madhava*).

The word *Purusha* does not signify the masculine gender as is commonly assumed. It refers to the Atma, the Supreme Consciousness, which has no gender and which is immanent in all beings. Of the two terms *Purusha* and *Prakriti*, the latter represents the gross element in Nature. It refers also to the body. *Purusha* is the Consciousness, the Indweller in the body. The two are interdependent. The *sastras* have declared that the body is *jada* (gross) and the Atma is *chaitanya* (consciousness) and that the body is feminine. Every being can be considered as made up of both elements and therefore everyone irrespective of sex, is entitled to pursue the *Purusharthas*.

### The true meaning of *Purusharthas*

Of the four *Purusharthas* (*Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha*, the first one, *Dharma*, is regarded in common usage as referring to actions like charity, the duties of one's *ashrama* (stage in life), going on pilgrimages and such other good deeds. But these relate only to external actions. The true *Dharma* of every human being is to make every endeavour to realise the Divine. The process by which this consummation can be reached constitutes *Dharma*. The observance of the duties relating to different *ashramas* (*Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vaanaprastha and Sanyasa*) is incidental to the particular stage in life. The duties do not constitute *Dharma* proper. *Dharma* should lead to Self-realisation.

Similarly, *Artha* does not mean, as commonly understood, the accumulation of property and wealth. They may well become *anartha* (calamitous). They are not lasting. The acquisition of such wealth cannot be considered as *Purushartha*. The real wealth that the man should acquire is the wisdom that is related to the Divine.

The word *Kama* is generally associated with worldly desires and sensual pleasures. But, when it is considered as the *Purushartha*--as one of the purposes of life--it relates to the yearning for God and not to mundane desires. The term *Moksha* is generally understood as referring to the means by which one reaches God or Heaven. But one can be in Heaven only for the period earned by one's meritorious deeds and at the end will have to be reborn again. But *Moksha* in the true sense refers to a state in which nothing is lacking and there is no incoming or going out. It is a state without name or form. It is not a specific place to go to. It is the attainment of unity with the Divine.

For every human being, the first task, among the four *Purusharthas*, must be to determine what is permanent and what is transient and seek the Eternal *Madhava*. The second objective is the acquisition of the Divine Wisdom as the real wealth. The third is to develop faith in God and yearn for realisation of merger in God. The fourth is *Moksha*, the state of Self-realisation in which there is no change and there is no movement.

### Herald of big change

We celebrate this day as the holy day of Sankaranthi. Nature wears the garb of Supreme Peace. The day is pleasantly cool. This is the last day of Sun's southern journey and the first day of his

northward course. It is the last day of *Dhanurmaasa* (the month named after the constellation *Dhanus* or Centaur). It is the beginning of *Makaramaasa* (when the Sun enters the constellation Capricorn).

We bid farewell to *Dhanurmaasa* and welcome the *Makkala*. The day of *Sankaranthi* has a special significance. *Sankaranthi* means San (coming together; Kranthi (a big change). *Kranthi* also means knowledge of the past, present and future. That is why Kavi (a poet is described as *Kranthi-darshi* (one who knows, the past, the present and the future). The term cannot be applied to one who dabbles in mere words and rhymes. It can only apply to God, who presides over time, space and causation.

The entry of the Sun into *Makararasi* (Capricorn) heralds the beginning of a great change from this day. It marks the entry into a Divine phase. It signifies the attempt to turn man's mind towards God. It is a day when we pray to the Sun, who is presiding deity for the eyes, to direct our vision to the pure and the holy, the sacred and the Divine.

### **Spiritual transformation will bring peace**

*The Makara* month is holier than all the other months. All auspicious ceremonies and activities are embarked upon only from this month. For the performance of the *Upanayanam* {sacred thread-wearing ceremony) people wait for the *Uttarayana*. In this period Nature is vibrant with joy. The harvest is brought home and the farmers enjoy the fruits of their labours. Young girls decorate the fronts of their houses with flour designs and pumpkin blossoms. They celebrate the season with group dances. Newly-wed bridegrooms are sent to the houses of their brides for celebrating the festive season. Cattle are given a new look and taken round for display of many tricks. Man should recognise the change in season and reform himself to discharge his duties appropriately.

The real meaning of *Purusharthas* is to make use of the time and the circumstances as they arise for making one's life meaningful and sublime. We have to effect a remarkable spiritual transformation in the world today. Only then the observance of *Makara Sankaranthi* has a meaning. External changes with no change in one's outlook and attitude will not signify *Kranthi* (radical change). When we bring about a great spiritual transformation, then there will be real peace.

*Discourse in the Poornachandra Auditorium on  
Makara Sankaranthi Day, 14-1-1985.*

*The only way of hope in the enveloping gloom of fear violence and cruelty, of enforced conformity, of hatred and persecution, is the Peace that one can win through self-control and Sadhana. That peace will pervade and puff up the inner consciousness as well as the outer atmosphere. Sadhana is the life-breath of man; struggling for power and pomp is but the breath of poison. Poor silly man craves for the air that will destroy him, the food that will torment him and the drink that will defile him!*

BABA