

8. Face the challenge of Krodhana

GOOD and bad conduct are present among men but will not be apparent to others. The results of each one's good and bad deeds, however, will be reflected in each one's future life.

Man's waking life begins everyday with sunrise and closes when he goes to sleep. This is the pattern for all beings and in the process men attempt to discover the purpose of life. The sun rises in the east and sets in the west and on this basis the other directions, north and south, are determined. Similarly, on the basis of sun's appearance and absence, day and night are experienced. The different seasons are also based on the apparent movement of the sun.

This is the ordinary experience of man in daily life. When this matter is seen from a different view point, on a recognition of the fact that the earth is a globe revolving round sun itself, neither sunrise nor sunset nor east and west has any reality.

The real truth is one thing and what is apparent from an experience is another. When you are going in a bus, you are moving with the bus though you seem to be in the same place. Likewise, although the earth is revolving at the rate of several hundred miles per minute, people are not conscious of its movement. They feel that the earth is stationary and they are making all movements. Even scientists, who know the truth, behave on the basis of their daily experience and not on the basis of the deeper reality. They know that neither sunrise nor sunset, nor east and west have any basis in reality. But they regard them as facts of life. Likewise our daily life is based on the apparent facts of day-to-day experience.

Our days and nights, weeks and months, the changing seasons and the yearly rounds are all based on these recurring experiences. The science of astrology is based on this recurring phenomena relating to the movements of the sun, the moon, the planets etc.

Krodhana is the year of Anger

In the Hindu almanac there is a cycle of sixty years starting with Prabhava and ending with Akshaya. For each year there is a presiding ruler, a minister and a team of nine officers. Together they have a powerful influence over the course of human affairs during that year. For the new year Krodhana, which commences today, the ruler is *Sukra* (Venus). His minister is a malefic deity *Sahi* (Saturn). Among the nine officers, five are malefic and the other four are not so well disposed. Hence, according to the science of astrology, the indications for the new year from its very commencement presage trouble and turmoil.

The name of the year is Krodhana, which means Anger. This year is likely to be full of manifestations of anger. Even in trivial matters it will be difficult to restrain people's anger.

The primary obligation is to restrain anger

Today differences between man and man, village and village, one state and the other and one country and another are growing. According to astrology, the new year is filled with so much hatred and anger that its heat will burn even green grass. In view of this, we have to be extremely vigilant in all our actions. Fire disasters are likely to be numerous in this year. Except in the month of Sravana, rains are likely to be meagre during the rest of the year. The reason for this is that the succeeding year, Akshaya is going to be a prosperous and bountiful year and will be preceded by a period of scarcity and trouble. In the cycle of Nature, bad is likely to be followed by good and vice versa. Hence, we must cultivate the strength and equanimity to face difficulties and troubles. Only the grace of God can give this strength and courage.

Even in our daily life, we will have to conduct ourselves with great care during this year. Every word we utter must be spoken with due deliberation. We have to restrain our pride and anger to the greatest extent. We must eschew anger and hatred towards anyone. Even if there is some provocation for such feelings, it should be kept in check. If one succumbs to such provocations, grave consequences may follow. The primary obligation this year is to restrain anger in our own interest. ill-will towards anyone will not do any good.

Methods to control anger

When you find anger rising within you, you may withdraw from the place to pro. de time for cooling your emotions. Or you may drink a glass of cold water and sit quietly in a place. Or, take a brisk walk for a mile to get over your anger. Or, stand before a mirror and look at your face. By any one of these methods, your anger will gradually come down.

Do not, however, stay near the person who has provoked your anger, because there is no limit to what anger may lead you to. Owing to anger and agitation the blood gets heated up. It takes three months for the blood to cool down. Within that period, the nerves become weaker and even the blood cells get destroyed. Weakness is aggravated and the memory power is reduced. Old age sets in prematurely.

All the aberrations that we witness today among men arise from anger. Our entire daily life is filled with anger. When the contribution of the Krodhana year is added to this, the situation becomes intolerable. Therefore, you must meet this by presenting a smiling face all the time. That will demonstrate the presence of divinity. Happiness is union with God. We must link our happiness with the Diane. It is by such efforts, that we must con-front the challenges of the year Krodhana.

Again, when you feel angry, start reciting some song in praise of the Lord. Then there will be no fear of what Krodhana portends. Let the entire family join in prayers at least for a few minutes in the morning and in the evening. (Here Swami sang a song sweet and soothing as a lullaby):

When the mother and children gather round

To sing the Bhajan of Sainatha

Loving Sai will stand beside them.

Where, then, is the room for Anger?

And why despair when Sayeesa is there?

Why despair when Partheesa is beside you?

The name of the year does not matter. What is really important is how we think and feel. If we do not fill our hearts with pure and sacred thoughts, any year will be unfavourable to us.

Realise the divinity in man

We should not be preoccupied with the external world. Where, in reality, there is only One, it appears to us as two. One is *Jiva* and the other is *Deva*. The *Jiva* is absorbed in the external. This is a sign of forgetfulness (*marupu*). To turn the vision inwards is real awareness (*eruka*). It reveals God. The process by which the divinity in man is realised is known as *Tarakam*.

This divinity can be realised only by *Thyaga* (sacrifice or renunciation of the worldly things). *Thyaga* is a supreme virtue in man. One who has no spirit of sacrifice will be sick in body and

mind. What *thyaga* does to a man is to eradicate his selfishness. As long as self-interest is dominant, one cannot understand Reality. The self-centered man cannot attain the Supreme. Hence, we must cultivate a broad mind and seek to serve the fellow-beings who need help. Even in the pursuit of Mukthi (Liberation), there is no place for concern with one's self. To be concerned about *Naa Mukthi* (My Salvation) will lead only to *na mukthi* (no salvation). Those who are concerned only about their liberation, will not achieve it.

Prema is the basis for every thing

To understand the true meaning of *Paratatawa* (Self-realisation), the first step is to grasp the significance of the Love-principle. For everything, *Prema* (Love) is the basis, the cause and the consummation. If there is no love, there is no life. When love is developed, anger automatically ceases. When you feel angry, sit down with a hearty laugh. Limit your speech. Too much talk leads to heated exchange of words.

The lesson to be learnt in the year of Krodhana is the cultivation of peace by keeping anger under check and developing a large-hearted love for all. The values a man must cherish as his life-breath are: *Sathya* (Truth), *Dharma* (Righteousness), *Shanthy* (Tranquility), *Prema* (Love) and *Ahimsa* (non-violence). Of these five vital principles *Prema* is the foremost. It is *Prema* that flows as the under-current for the other four values. How does it flow this way? When *Prema* is associated with feelings it produces *Shanthy*. When *Prema* animates actions, it results in *Dharma*. When *Prema* is combined with understanding it becomes *Ahimsa* (non-injury). Therefore whenever you feel angry, think of *Prema* {Love}, develop thoughts of love in your heart. You will have peace.

This is the way you have to develop human values. Anger and hatred are demonic qualities. *Asooya* (envy) is worse than either of them. You must get rid of these demonic qualities and attune your life to dignity. When anyone realises you, do not retort in the same way. You then descend to the level of the other man. You should not do yourself what you consider bad in others. You must strive to develop sacred qualities not for this year alone, but for your entire life. Awareness is life. You must know everything that needs to be known, but make only the good things part of your life.

Call to women to be on their guard

All must be careful about their behavior during this Krodhana year. Women in particular must be on their guard, because women are capable of making great sacrifices either for good or bad purposes. So, make all your sacrifices for good causes. Develop good traits and eschew all that is evil. When the housewife has such good qualities, the house becomes a miniature paradise. When the mistress of the house indulges in bad deeds, there will be no peace in the home. Controlling their tendencies to quarrel over petty differences, women should try to behave like sisters, developing harmony and mutual regard.

Men also should learn to behave like brothers, believing in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. Young people should realise that the nature of their actions will determine the nature of their future. Bad actions will only result in bad consequences. Moreover, in this year, it is advisable for everyone to practise the virtue of *mounam* (reticence). Control of speech is highly desirable. Whatever thoughts may arise in the mind, let them not find expression in words. It has been said that restraint in speech gives abundant peace. Excessive talk harms the mind. Even in restrained speech, there should be sweetness and joy.

Apart from warning against giving vent to anger, the Krodhana year is fraught with some unwelcome happenings. Poor harvests are in prospect. Scarcity of food is likely. Excessive rains in some parts and poor rainfall in some others are likely.

Karma is inexorable

These occurrences are the result of *Karma* (past misdeeds). Hence everyone should be continuously vigilant regarding every one of his actions. When the actions are bad, even a stick can turn into a snake. There is no escape from the consequences of one's actions. Only by vigilance can disasters be avoided. (Swami then recited the following poem):

*Can you escape from Karma oh man?
Whatever your scholarship,
Whatever your daily worship,
Whatever penance you may perform
Can you avoid the results of Karma?
Whether you fill your vessel
In a small pond or the vast ocean
It will be filled only
Upto its capacity.*

Therefore if you watch over your actions, the results will be appropriate. You cannot indulge in sinful deeds and hope to realise the fruits of meritorious actions. Hence embark on good deeds and sanctify your life. Do not get needlessly agitated over the name of the year. Shed all fear and, placing your faith in God, transform even a dreadful year into a divine one.

Discourse on Yugadhi, Telugu New Year Day, at the Prashaanthi Nilayam Mandir on 22-4-1985.

Consider how far man has succeeded in overcoming the animal inheritance of lust, greed and hate, when he spends time, energy and money for the so-called "adhyathmic" exercises. What progress does he make by listening to exponents of texts? Has man become any less bestial? This is the enquiry, this is the assessment for the man to be engaged in, but this is the very task which is ignored by him at present! The spiritual exercises and disciplines now adopted, promote only pride and pompous display, envy and egoism. They do not uproot them in the least.

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