

8. Install Raama Raajya in your hearts

What can Kali do to the one

Whose heart is filled with compassion,

For whose speech truth is the ornament,

And whose body is dedicated to serving others?

EMBODIMENTS of Divine Love! A tranquil mind, a truth-filled speech, and a body dedicated to service one who has these three qualities is described as the embodiment of *Thriputhi* (the triple purity). Such a one is the noblest of human beings.

Tulasidas was the great one who proclaimed that human life is redeemed when every talent and every moment are utilized by humanity for realising the Divine. To God all objects in the universe are alike because they are manifestations of the Divine. The scriptures declared about this Divine manifestation "*Sarvam khalu idham Brahma*" (All this verily is Brahman). Hence, whoever worships the Supreme Lord should also worship *Prakrithi* (Nature or the Phenomenal universe). He should love Nature and adore Nature. Nature is not different from *Paramaathma* (Supreme Self). Nature is the effect and God is the cause. Nature is the expression of this relationship between Cause and Effect.

Goodness is a synonym for God. Hence, it is only by contemplating on the qualities of God that human existence finds fulfillment. The body of a human being who does not think in this way is merely a lump of clay.

God's words, actions, thoughts are always pure, selfless and infinitely precious. The truth of this is illustrated by an episode from the Raamaayana.

Dramatic acts of God to prove His omnipresence

Once, while proceeding to Mithila, Raama sat on a stone in the sage Gautama's *ashram*. That very moment, a woman emerged from the stone. However, Raama did not feel proud that by a mere touch of his feet, the stone had turned into a woman. On the contrary he felt sad that his feet had touched the wife of a great sage and thereby he had committed a wrong. This shows that God dwells in the minds of sages.

God indulges in dramatic acts like these to demonstrate His omnipresence in the universe and to teach the world the greatness of Nature.

Another episode reveals another aspect of the Divine.

For all the mighty deeds done by Hanumaan and great help rendered by him, Raama asked him: "Hanumaan! What reward can I give you? Apart from expressing my gratitude to you I cannot give you any fitting recompense. The only way I can show my gratitude to you is that whenever you think of me at any time in your life, I shall appear before you." Raama was showing his gratitude to Hanumaan in this manner.

This indicates that the primary duty of man is to be grateful all his life to the person who has done him a good turn.

Man has to realise his divinity and look at all Nature from the Divine point of view. Instead, man looks at everything only from the mundane point of view. The body is indeed perishable. But it

is also the means for realising the imperishable Truth. This means, all speech should be about the Divine. All actions should be godly. Every thought should be about God.

That is the appeal which Thyaagaraaja made to his mind: "Oh mind, think always about Shri Raama." (Bhagavaan sang in His own mellifluous voice Thyaagaraaja's song in which he said: "Oh Kaushalya, what penance did you perform to enjoy the privilege of calling Shri Raama affectionately as a mother and showering your kisses on the divinely beautiful child Raama. What penance did Dhasharatha perform to call Shri Raama to come to him?") Thus Thyaagaraaja was chanting Raama's name all the time and singing his glories. This is an example to the world.

Raama the ideal exemplar of righteousness

Raama is the supreme exemplar of how people should conduct themselves in the world, how a country should be governed, how the integrity and morality of human beings should be protected. High-minded actions, ideal qualities and sacred thoughts are basic foundations of character. Raama is the very embodiment of these three attributes. This means that every human being should cultivate sacred thought, right actions and good qualities. Raama demonstrated by his words, thoughts and actions how such a life can be lived. Raama acted upto the ancient injunction: "Speak the truth. Practise Righteousness." Eschewing harsh words, Raama pleased everyone by his sweet speech. He countered harsh speech by others with his composure, patience, sweetness and smile. He never pried into affairs of others, never took notice of their faults, never indulged in ridicule, and never caused any pain to others by the way he spoke to them. It is essential for everyone to follow the example set by Raama and cultivate his many noble qualities and do righteous actions. People should entertain sacred thoughts.

One should never go back on the plighted word

Man is an image of the Divine. The Lord has declared in the Geetha: "My Spirit is the indwelling Spirit in all beings." God is the indweller in all human beings. Today, in the pursuit of power, men are prepared to commit any kind of crime and to inflict any kind of harm on people to achieve their ends. Raama, on the contrary, gave up the kingdom and, to honour the pledge given by his father, chose to face the ordeals of life in the forest as an exile. He demonstrated to the world that one should never go back on his plighted word. Raama gave up the throne and became a denizen of the forest. In life, it is not difficulties and calamities that are important. The supreme importance of Truth was that Raama wanted to hold forth to the world. One should never go back on one's pledge even at the cost of one's life.

Today, however, men go back on their words from moment to moment. They indulge in falsehood at every step. Promises are forgotten. How can the Raama-principle flourish in such a human environment? The Raama-principle is remote from such an atmosphere.

God will be in proximity only to those persons whose thoughts, ideals and deeds are in accord with Raama's. Raama was a man of his word, but man is the very reverse. It may be asked- "In this situation how is it possible to say that in human beings there is divinity?" Not at all. In such human beings there is either animality or demonic nature. Whatever *saadhanas* (spiritual practices) one may perform or however much one may recite the Lord's name, God will not judge one by these criteria. What is the transformation in one's heart? If there is no transformation of the heart, of what avail are spiritual *saadhanas*?

Indwelling divinity within the shrine of the body

Man is not a mere creature of flesh and blood. He is the embodiment of the *Aathma*. It is only when man recognises this truth that true spirituality will be evident to him. Concentrating all the time on the physical body as the only reality, time is wasted on external observances. The body should be regarded as a temple of God. To consider it otherwise is a sign of foolishness. Only he is a true human being who recognizes the indwelling divinity within the shrine of his body. The scriptures have declared: "In the temple of the human body dwells the individual Self which is the eternal Self."

In this context, it may be noted that even scholars and intelligent persons tend to get confused over this matter. People who go to endless trouble to acquire positions, power or reputation do not care to devote even a small fraction of that effort to earn God's grace. The lesson taught by the story of Raama is different. Thulasidhas said: "Raama! I am helpless, poor and crippled." Why did he say he was a *Angaheena* (cripple)? He had hands and legs, head and everything else. Nevertheless he declared that he was a cripple. What is the inner meaning of this? "What is the use of having hands when I am unable to serve you, oh Raama! What is the use of having eyes, when I am unable to see you? So, I am verily blind." Thulasidhas declared that limbs that are not used in the service of the Lord are as good as lost.

Purandharadhaasa also sang in the same manner. "Alas, even when they are endowed with eyes, they do not see your glorious form! Even when they have ears, they do not listen to the songs in the praise of the Lord."

Men use their eyes to look at the attractions of the world and not the charm of God. As long as man is fascinated by *Prakrithi* (the phenomenal world), he cannot comprehend the Divine. Even the most eminent persons are subject to this weakness. This is the mark of the powerful influence of the *Kali* age.

The way to God

Men, however, should strive to get rid of the attachment to the body by persistent efforts. The yearning for God should be nourished. Qualities such as backbiting, spreading scandal and searching for the faults in others are not human but demonic. People should cultivate good thoughts, good words, good hearts and good conduct. This is the way to God. That man is redeemed who follows this path.

History is full of examples of men who used force and fraud to come to power. There are examples from the communist countries. In Muslim countries also there are examples of persons who did not disdain to imprison or kill their kith and kin to seize power. But Bhaarith has generally been free from such deeds. This is the result of Raama's glorious example.

The glory of Raama's sandals

Once, while moving about in the forest, Raama and Lakshmana sat under a tree. At that time, they heard the neighing of horses and the cries of elephants at a distance. Raama asked Lakshmana to find out how horses and elephants happened to appear in the forest. Lakshmana climbed a tree and noticed Bharatha coming with a huge army. Immediately he exclaimed "Brother! Get ready for battle. Take up your bow and arrows." Raama smiled at Lakshmana and said, "Why are you so excited? Do not be hasty. Calm yourself. What has happened?" Lakshmana replied, "Bharatha is coming with an army to kill us." Raama said "Lakshmana! What a serious mistake you are making! It is impossible for any action of the Ikshvaaku clan to

think of such a preposterous idea even in dream. Because we two were not present in Ayodhya when Bharatha and Shatrughna returned to the capital, they are now coming to see us." Raama sought to pacify Lakshmana.

Lakshmana replied: "What is this forbearance and sympathy on your part? If they merely wanted to see us, will they come with a huge army? No. they are coming only to slay us."

Raama said' "Lakshmana! You are too much dominated by *Raajasik* tendencies. You seem to be attached to kingship. Why worry? Bharatha is coming. I shall ask him to crown you as king. You may go with him."

Even as Raama was speaking thus, Bharatha came rushing towards Raama, fell at his feet crying: "Raama! Raama! Raama!" and said: "I am not competent to rule over Ayodhya. To reign over the kingdom Raamachandhra alone is worthy as' the eldest son of Dhasharatha. You alone are fit to role over the kingdom properly and establish *Raama Raajya*. Please return to Ayodhya." Thus pleaded Bharatha.

As Bharatha was entreating in this manner, Raama looked smilingly at Lakshmana. "Compare your feelings with the expressions of Bharatha," he said.

Sage Vashishtha also joined in the appeal to Raama to return to Ayodhya. But Raama did not yield to Bharata's entreaties and, acting according to Vashishtha's directions, offered his sandals to Bharatha and asked Bharatha to perform the coronation for the *Paadhukas* (divine sandals).

You must recognise the inner significance of this episode. People generally regard the sandals as objects to be despised. But Raama taught a different lesson about them. Raama treated the kingdom and the sandals on par. "I don't want a crown. Enthroned my sandals."

Acting on Raama's injunctions, Bharatha performed the coronation of Raama's sandals and spent his time peacefully, contemplating on Raama.

Raama's teaches lessons to Bharatha

Raama taught Bharatha how government should be carried on. "Have as your ministers only persons of character and virtue, who are tranquil in mind and devoted to truth. Don't have as ministers anyone lacking in these four qualities. Moreover, they should possess self-confidence, practise righteous conduct, and be capable of giving proper advice. These are essential prerequisites for wise administrators. Give no place for selfish persons. There should be no room in the government for persons animated by self-interest. Nor is that all. Don't allow anyone given to vices like gambling and drink to wield authority. Entertain only those who command the esteem of the people and who are respected and loved by the people. You must have daily conferences with three or four such ministers. Your talks should be in private and no outsider should know anything about them. It is only when such secrecy is observed that the nation will prosper. You will then be able to ensure peace and prosperity to the nation. Moreover, you must send out as envoys to other countries ambassadors who are totally loyal to the king and not time-servers who practise duplicity. Only such men can convey to the king truthful information."

Raama did not stop with that. I request the women devotees not to take it amiss. Raama told Bharatha that he should not permit women to take part in affairs of state. Women have their estimable role in household affairs, but they should be kept out of state politics. "Don't employ women as ministers. The reason is: a nation's honour is based upon its women. It is only when

women maintain their respect and honour that the nation will be respected. It is not proper for women to cheapen themselves by roaming in public places."

How to establish *Raama Raajya*?

Such were the sacred precepts of good administration which Raama taught to Bharatha. How does the situation in the country today compare with Raama's conception of an ideal government? The state of things today is 100 percent contrary to the ideas and ideals of Raama. How, then, can *Raama Raajya* be established here?

If we desire to establish *Raama Raajya*, there should be harmony in thought, word and deed. This applied not only to Bhaarath but to the entire world. All countries should have governments which conform to this principle of triple purity. Only then, the people also will reflect the character of the rulers.

Today, the people reflect the vices of the rulers. If a minister prefers one bottle, the man in the street asks for two (drinks). How can such citizens establish *Raama Raajya*? They can do so only if there is a complete transformation in their mental attitudes. Despite all the teachings they have listened to, their minds remain in the same state. Without a mental change, they are not entitled even to utter the name Raama. What, then, is the meaning of talking about *Raama Raajya*? It will be only *Raama Raajya* in name, but in reality it will only be *Raavana Raajya*.

Declining trend in respect for parents

If you really value Raama's ideals, you should practise them. You may say that the high ideals of Raama are beyond your competence. But there is one thing which you can do: Raama carried out the words of his father

Pithruvaakya paripaalana. How many today respect the words of the parent? If the father asks the son, "Son, where are you going?" The son replies: "Shut up and keep quiet in your place." Few have any respect for the words of the father. There is no need to speak about respect for the mother. Such unworthy sons are ruining the world. Mothers are shedding tears over the behaviour of such sons.

This state of things should change. The sacredness of parents should be restored. Young people should cultivate pure thoughts and lead unselfish lives. Children who disregard their parents will be treated likewise by their children in due course. Partly the parents are to blame for the way they pamper the children. The children of today are worse than even Raavana's children, who obeyed him to some extent.

People who acquire knowledge or wealth are making no use of it to help others. They are following a dog-in-the-manger policy. This is not the way to follow Raama's example.

True meaning of devotion lies in practice

Today people celebrate Raama's birthday as a festival, but do not practise Raama's ideals. Enshrine Raama's ideals in your heart. Without it, there is no meaning in celebrating Raama's birthday. You must follow the example of a noble and ideal person. This is the meaning of devotion.

People talk about devotion. Does mere participation in *bhajans* constitute devotion? No. It is all a stunt. True devotion calls for the practice of at least one of the teachings that you learn. By following at least one good lesson, a man should lead an ideal existence.

Remember that the lessons taught to Bharatha by Raama are ideal lessons. After instructing Bharatha regarding the principles of good government, Raama told Bharatha: "You must revere the parents, the preceptors and all elders. If any person misbehaves within your kingdom, do not punish him. Banish him. That will be punishment enough."

Here I wish to explain what is meant by punishment. There is no need to beat or abuse the erring person. Stop talking to him. What is the use of talking to a person who is going astray? I do not want to waste my words on such a person. I attach great value to my words. They may not know it, but I know their value. None of my words has any selfish motive. Everything is for the welfare of all. If one has no such broad outlook and is only concerned about his personal interests, what is the use in talking to such a person? As long as one remains self-centered, he cannot understand the Divine.

The reign of *Dharma* is *Raama Raajya*

At the outset, understand what is *Raama Raajya*. It is the reign of morality, of truth and virtues. *Raama Raajya* means that which engenders happiness (*Raamayathi*). There should be no ill-will towards anybody. No one should be harmed. That is *Raama Raajya*. When such feelings arise among the people, *Raama Raajya* will come into existence of its own accord.

It is with such feelings that Thulasidhas extolled Raama. His Raamaayana is suffused with his deep devotional experience. He exclaimed: "Raama! I have no abilities of any kind. I have practised no system of *yoga*. I have not developed any method of meditation. I have no possessions of any kind. I have only one thing and that is my love. I love you for love's sake."

Spiritual practices of various kinds, including *japa*, *yoga* and the like, will not lead you to God-realisation. I do not suggest that you should discontinue these exercises. The devotional activities are better than many other useless pastimes. But, if you want to get near to God and to experience God, you have to transform the heart. As you sow, so shall you reap. Sow the seeds of love and reap the fruit of love. Sow the seed of immortality and reap the fruit of immortality. Today you want sweet fruit, but you sow poisonous seeds. This is thoughtless action.

Some people say that they are too weak to scale spiritual heights. But you have the strength to commit sins and do wrong actions. The strength required for good or bad actions is the same. In fact, it is more difficult to commit sin than to be good and meritorious. To utter an untruth is difficult. To speak the truth is easy. Speaking the truth calls for no effort. But to declare what is not true as true calls for considerable ingenuity. Uttering an untruth is therefore more difficult. Equally, cheating is more arduous than being honest.

Many devotees tell Svaami that they are caught up in the coils of *Samsaara* (family and worldly life) and are unable to break away from it. But what is the truth? Is it you who are clinging to *Samsaara* or is it *Samsaara* that is holding you in its grip? Has *Samsaara* any hands to hold you? You have hands and you are holding on to worldly life. *Samsaara* is not holding you. It is a paradox for you to say that *Samsaara* is holding you in its grip when the truth is otherwise.

It is excessive attachment that is the cause of man's troubles. Do everything as an act of offering to the Divine. Without faith in God man ceases to be human.

Diversion of mind in religious gatherings

Devotees who attend *bhajans* turn their looks this side and that side without concentrating on the *bhajans*. If they are not interested in the *bhajans* why should they come at all?

Once Raamakrishna Paramahansa slapped Rani Rasmani at a gathering of scholars and worshippers. All people were astonished at Raamakrishna's action. Raani Raasmani felt humiliated. Raamakrishna explained that he found Raani Raasmani thinking about her court affairs while sitting in the religious gathering. This was highly improper and hence he slapped her. It was equally improper for devotees to sit in *bhajans* and divert their thoughts to worldly matters. Sitting in good company, how can one entertain bad thoughts? People speak about *Sathsang*. What is *Sathsang*? It is not mere assemblage of ten devotees. 'Sath' refers to that which exists in all the three categories of time--past, present and future. The term applies to the Divine. *Sathsang*, therefore, means association with the Divine.

God is pleased only with inner feeling

Each word has profound and sacred meaning. But common people do not relish such interpretations. They enjoy what is trivial and pleasing to the ears. I do not want to please people in this way. The truth has to be taught. Some day or other people will understand it. Worldly sayings may please people for the moment, but they are of no value spiritually. God is pleased with the inner feeling and not the external show. But most people are interested only in the external and do not bother about the inner feeling. If you break the branch of a tree and plant it in the sand, will it grow into a tree? It must be planted in soil where it can strike roots. Similarly, the feeling must arise in the heart and get deeply rooted in it. Then the fruits will appear in the external world. Therefore, cultivate the feeling inside and enjoy the fruit outside.

Such wise teachings were taught to the people in the reign of Bharatha and Raama. When we speak of establishing *Raama Raajya*, let not Bhaaratheeyas imagine that it is relevant only to Bhaarith. The whole world needs the advent of *Raama Raajya*. What this means is that the rulers should have three qualities. They are: *Sathpravarthana* (righteous conduct), *Sadhaalochana* (good counsel), *Sadhguna* (good qualities). There should be a combination of all the three. Today good counsel is a rarity. As for good qualities, the less said the better High-souled persons, who represent harmony in thought, word and deed, should fill the seats of power. There should be no place for the wicked who think one thing, speak another thing and act in a different way.

Devotees should till their minds with sacred thoughts. At least from now on, banish all bad thoughts, Turn your minds towards God. At least install *Raama Raajya* in your hearts. When this happens, the world will experience *Raama Raajya*.

Fill your minds with the ideals of Shri Raama and try to put them into practice as much as possible. This will cost you nothing. You do not have to perform any *asanas* or go to the forest for practice. Staying in your homes, attending to your duties, purify your hearts.

Discourse in Sai Ramesh Mandap, Brindhaavan, on 9-4-1995, Shri Raama Navami Day.

A loveless heart is a dry desert. Love is the foundation of life. The air that is inhaled and exhaled has to be loved in order that it may replenish and revive.

BABA