

20. The four beacons

Pradoshe deepakas-chandhrah

Prabhathe deepako Ravih

Thriloke deepako Dharmah

Suputhrah Kuladeepakah

PRADOSHE deepakas-chandhrah (At night the moon illumines the world). *Prabhathe deepako Ravih* (At daybreak the sun is the illuminator). *Thriloke deepako Dharmaha* (For the three worlds Dharma is the beacon-light). *Suputhrah Kula Deepakah* (A virtuous son is a beacon for the whole family).

The difference between Amaavaasya (New Moon light) and Purnima (full moon light) is between darkness and light. During Amaavaasya, the night is pitch dark. People do not relish this darkness in any way. Darkness invokes fear. It also breeds evil thoughts and provides opportunities for evil deeds.

Darkness is welcomed only by evil minded persons. No good-intentioned persons will welcome darkness. Darkness is a valuable ally for thieves and rogues. Hence only the evil-minded will hail the advent of darkness. The good-intentioned and righteous persons will welcome the advent of the full-moon. The hearts of good persons, filled with good feelings, are cool like the moon. Children delight in the sight of the moon. Poets are inspired to pour forth the joy in their hearts at the sight of the moon. On the day of the *Purnima* (full-moon) man's heart is also pure and bright. People should recognise the relationship between the fullmoon and the mind. The *Vedhas* declare that the moon emerged from the mind of the *Viraat-Purusha* (Cosmic Person) and the sun emerged from his eye. The human mind is a reflection of the moon and when there is the full moon the mind blossoms effulgently. Moonlight dispels the darkness of ignorance, drives away fear and confers peace and joy.

Reasons for the worship of sun

During the day, the sun affords light to the world. Without the sun, the world will cease to exist. The sun is the visible deity for the world. Without the sun there can be no life on earth. Crops cannot grow. There will be no air, no food and no means of sustenance for living creatures. It is only because of the sun that rivers flow, crops are grown, life is sustained and there is happiness and comfort. It is the power of the sun that helps to purify the heart. Hence, for the planet earth the sun is the visible manifestation of God. The earth receives its life-sustaining oxygen from the sun.

Thriloke deepako Dharmah (The light that illumines the three worlds is Righteousness). What is this *Dharma*? "*Dhaarayathe ithi Dharmah*" (*Dharma* is that which upholds everything). This means that without *Dharma* the Cosmos cannot exist. *Dharma* is the lifebreath of all actions. There can be no life without the sustaining power of *Dharma*. Every object in the universe is governed by its *Dharma* (the law of its being). For instance, there is fire. What is its *Dharma*? The capacity to burn is the basic trait of fire. When the burning power is lost, it ceases to be fire. It becomes mere charcoal. Likewise, the *Dharma* of ice is coldness. When ice loses its coldness, it ceases to be ice. For man, the *Dharma* is Righteousness.

Righteousness implies harmony in thought, word and deed. The unity of body, speech and mind promotes purity and sacredness in man. This triune purity constitutes humanness. All actions should be pure and according to the dictates of the conscience. The tongue is sacred organ endowed on man to chant the glories of the Lord. But today it is being misused to utter untruth. The *dharma* of man is to speak the truth and adhere to righteousness.

Three maxims for primary obligations of man

Three words describe the primary obligations of man: *Preethi*, *Bheethi* and *Neethi*. *Preethi* pertains to the *Dhaiva Preethi* (love of God). *Bheethi* is related to the *Paapabheethi* (fear of sin). *Neethi* is related to *Sanghaneethi* (morality in society). If these three are observed, there will be peace and non-violence. *Dhaiva Preethi* (love of God) is the basis for all human values. This love is inherent in all human beings. It is the index of man's divinity as proclaimed by the scriptures.

How is God to be experienced? God is present in everyone like butter in milk. Your heart is the container. Love is the milk present in the heart. When this love is offered to the Lord, it acts as the churning process for getting butter. There is then the direct experience of the Divine.

Some devotees fall asleep during the discourses or brood over some extraneous matters without listening to the discourses. Raamakrishna Paramahansa once chided Raani Raasmani for thinking about her court cases while appearing to listen to his talk. Persons who are not interested in the discourses should keep away from the meeting.

Man's *dharma* is threefold. It relates to his body, his mind and his *Aathma*. Good deeds, good thoughts and Godly experience of bliss are the expressions of this triple *Dharma*. The reference to the light that illumines the three worlds should be understood in this way.

Who is a good son?

"*Suputhrah Kula deepakah*" (A good son is a beacon for the family). Who is a good son? He is a good son, who is always immersed in the contemplation of God, in sacred activities and leads a godly life. A good son is one who reveres his parents, pleases them by rendering service, and is grateful for all that he has received from them. Nor is that all. A good son earns a good name in society. A good son sheds greatness on the family like the fragrance of a jasmine creeper in a forest.

Nowadays, parents distribute sweets on the birth of a son. But it is not the birth that is the right occasion for celebration. The right moment for celebration is when the son earns a good name in society.

"The father will not rejoice on the day a son is born.

He will rejoice when he hears the praise of the virtues

Of his sort by others," says a Thelugu poem.

God also will be happy when a son earns such a good name. A son should be called a good man by one and all. Such a *Suputhra* (good son) is a beacon-light for the entire family.

The four illuminators

There are three kinds of light. The lamp in a house illumines only the house. The moon at night gives his light to the world, although it is a dim light. But the sun who illumines the day sheds

his effulgence everywhere. The light that burns inside a home is comparable to *svaartham* (self-interest). The light coming from the moon may be compared to *Paraartham* (for the benefit of others). The light of the sun is *Yathartham*, the effulgence of Truth. Truth is God. The sun who illumines everything is verily God. For this reason, from early times Bhaaratheeyas were worshippers of the Sun-God. They offered *Suurya-namaskaar* (salutations to the Sun). They regarded the Sun as the visible manifestation of God.

Thus, what people need today are moonlight at night, sun-light during the day, and the light of Dharma which illumines all the three worlds, and a good son who is the beacon-light for the family.

Education alone does not make one a good son. One should be good in his actions and behaviour. The marks of a good son are good behaviour, good manners, good discipline and good devotion. These are the most important things. If there is devotion all other things will come easily.

Three sects, but one truth

Today there are three schools of philosophy prevalent in Bhaarith. *Dhvaitha*, *Visishta-adhvaitha* and *Adhvaitha* (Dualism, qualifies Non-dualism and Non-dualism). In the *Dhvaitha* philosophy, there is dualism, separation between *jeeva*, the individual self and Supreme Omni Self. There is no great difference between *Visishta-Adhvaitha* and *Adhvaitha*.

Whatever the creed, whatever the country or nationality, Truth is one. "*Ekam eva Adhvitheeyam Brahma*" (The Omni Self is one only, without a second).

The variations between the three systems of philosophy can be explained by an example. You have sugarcane, with a number of knots. Whatever the shape of the sugarcane, the juice in all of them is the same. *Adhvaitha* (non-dualism) may be compared to the juice which is one and the same irrespective of the cane from which it is extracted. The juice drawn from any cane has the same sweetness. There is no other taste.

Raamaanuja (founder of the *Visishta Adhvaitha* system) conducted his own enquiries and came to the conclusion that the sugar cane juice cannot be preserved indefinitely and therefore it should be converted to sugar. The sugar can then be used, any day at any time. This is qualified non-dualism.

Madhvaachaarya was the exponent of Dualism. Madhvaachaarya viewed the problem in this way. He declared: "Oh Lord! I do not want either sugarcane juice or sugar. I wish to be born as an ant that relishes the juice or the sugar. The sugar does not know its own sweetness. Only the one who consumes sugar can know its sweetness. O Lord! You are the very embodiment of love. I do not wish to be mere love. I want to be one who enjoys love. You should remain as God and I should remain as *Jeevi* (individual soul). It is only when the individual is separate from God that he can enjoy the Divine." This is the essence of dualism---the distinction between God and the individual self. When the individual self starts enjoying sugar (the Divine), in due course he becomes the Divine itself. "The knower of the Divine becomes the Divine."

Common truth proclaimed by all philosophies

Magnifying the differences between the three systems of philosophy, Bhaaratheeyas are wasting their time. All the three are essentially one. *Adhvaitha* is like the sugarcane juice. *Visishta-Adhvaitha* is sugar. The consumer of sugar is a *Dhvaithin* (dualist).

The truth is that sweetness is common to all, though the names and forms may vary. Similarly, in the world the different nations and countries have diverse forms and names. But the Divine in all of them is one and the same. The Indwelling Spirit is the same in all beings. The Divine energy is common to all, like the current which activates all bulbs, fans etc. God is present equally in everyone. The differences among human beings are the result of the differences in their capacities. When one is immersed in thoughts of God, his capacity will grow.

Develop greater love in your heart. As your love grows, the Spirit in you will shine brighter. Spiritual growth calls for restraint on desires. In addition, you have also to get rid of bad qualities like attachment and aversion. The three great enemies of man are *kaama* (desire), *krodha* (anger) and *lobha* (greed). Desire destroys devotion, anger annihilates wisdom and greed poisons every action. These three vices are destructive of *Sath-Karma* (good deeds), *Upaasana* (devotion) and *Jnaana* (spiritual wisdom). All the three have to be totally given up. The only cure for them is to burn them in *Premaagni* (the fire of Divine Love).

Example of Raama for being a good son

Good qualities can be acquired only by practice. The practice may be difficult, like moving an object uphill. But the effort has to be made. The *saadhana* (spiritual practice) must be done with full faith and no doubts. God is omnipresent. To experience God certain disciplines are required. This is the significance of the term *Suputhrah* (a good son). To realise God you have to be good. This means that one has to cultivate good qualities like reverence for parents, humility, respect for teachers and elders.

How did Raama achieve such greatness? By carrying out the injunctions of his father. Raama also exemplified friendliness and brotherliness. He moved among the people with a sense of endearment. He identified the people's welfare with his own well-being.

When you utter the prayer "*Lokaas-samasthaas-sukhino Bhavanthu!*" (May all people in all the world be happy), you should pray whole-heartedly with the conviction that the same Divine dwells in everyone.

Cultivate love for God. There is nothing greater than that. That is the message of Thulasidas and Meerabai. Realise God through Love.

Discourse in the Sai Kulwant Mandap on 18-6-1996.

It is on account of the mutual help, the collaboration that the Gopis of Brindhaavan were able to attain Moksha; their Bhakthi towards Lord Krishna endowed them with the Highest Jnaana also. Now the essence of Bhakthi as well as Jnaana is Shaanthy. The highest type of Shaanthy, Prashaanthy. Prashaanthy leads one on to Prakaanthy, the Glory of Spiritual Effulgence, and thence to Paramjyothi, the Super-effulgence, of the Highest Revelation.

Baba