

29. Love for the divine transcends all kin

Happiness emerges from total love;

Truth and renunciation lead to peace;

Without love there is no well-being;

Hearken! oh valiant son of Bhaarath!

STUDENTS! There can be no human being who is unaware of love. The universe is permeated with love. Love is beyond description. It is beyond the grasp of the mind and speech. Naaradha declared: "Love is beyond the scope of words."

How can an ordinary man, living in this phenomenal world, understand such love? This love is an expression of Divinity. Like the mariners compass, it always points to the Dime wherever it may be present. As oil makes a lamp burn, love illumines life itself.

What is termed love in ordinary worldly life is not real love at all. It is only one or other form of attachment based on human relationships in the family or in society.

True love is pure, selfless, free from pride, and is full of bliss. Such love can be got only through love. All worldly attachments are not real love at all. They are transient. The everlasting, pure love arises from the heart. In fact, it is ever-existing and all-pervading. How is it that man is unable to recognise such all-pervading love? It is because man's heart today has become barren and is polluted. The heart is filled with all kinds of desires and there is no room in it for pure, unsullied love to enter. It is only when the worldly attachments are expelled from the heart that there will be room for real love to abide in it and to grow.

Quality of true love is to give and not to receive

As a man grows from childhood to manhood, his attachments change from the mother to friends, to wife and children, and then to the acquisition of wealth. In the ups and downs involved in the pursuit of wealth, he begins to feel the need for God. This perpetual alternation of attachment and separation cannot be called real love which is spiritual and enduring.

The quality of true love is to give and not to receive. How many are to be found today in the world who love to give? Even a father hesitates to part with his property to his children. Only God can be the infinite giver. Hence love is a divine quality. Although inherently love is present in every cell of the human being it does not manifest itself because of the pollution of the heart. A man without love in his heart is as good as dead.

Make the preceptor's message part of your being

Once a preceptor summoned all his disciples and told them that he was going to give them something extremely sweet which they should protect from insects and rodent. The disciples resorted to various devices to safeguard the guru's gift. However, one of them ate the sweet, digested it and derived considerable strength and energy from it.

What is the lesson to be drawn from this story? It means that the teachings learnt from the preceptor are not to be merely preserved in safety. The nectarine message of the preceptor should be enshrined in the heart. It should be made part of one's being. Then the recipient acquires vigour and strength.

In the same manner, whatever you see or hear or read should be taken to heart and then put into practice. Only then you have the full satisfaction of benefiting from the teachings. Hearing is not enough. You must take in and digest what you have listened to. It must be put into practice in daily life. This was the prayer which the gopikas addressed to Krishna that the nectarine music flowing from His flute should fill their dry hearts with divine love. A pure heart is essential for progress in the spiritual or other fields.

Divine love is all-compassing and the whole cosmos is contained within it. Hence it is essential for man to comprehend the nature of this love. Today, the world is riddled with disorder, violence and unrest. Injustice, exploitation, corruption and immorality are 'ubiquitous'. All these are the very antithesis of love. Only through the divine love can the world be transformed.

Aathmik love (Spiritual love) has to be distinguished from love or attachment related to the body, the mind or the intellect. These latter attachments are related to the world and they are the source of sorrow.

Four types of love

Love of the Divine is of four kinds. One is *Svaartha-Prema* (love based on self-interest). The second is *Samanjasa-Prema*, the third is *Paraaartha-Prema*, and the fourth is *Yathaartha-Prema*.

Svaartha-Prema is like a lamp kept in a room. The lamp illumines only the room. This kind of selfish love is confined to a limited group and does not extend to others.

Samanjasa-Prema may be compared to the light from the moon. This moonlight is visible both outside and inside. It is, however, not very effulgent. The light is dim. This kind of love extends to a wider group but is not very intense.

The third is *Paraaartha-Prema*. It is like sun-light. It illumines both inside and outside with brilliance. But it is not continuous in the sense that the sun is not visible at night. But this is not a permanent absence, because the sun rises again. Actually, the sun is always there. Likewise, this selfless love may appear to be absent some times, but it will appear again.

The fourth one is *Yathaartha-Prema* or *Aathma-Prema*. This love is present always, inside and outside, in all places and at all times, in all circumstances. This is Divine Love. It is imperishable. It is eternal. It is immanent in everyone. When this love is manifested by a person, he achieves the peace that passeth understanding.

Supreme example of Vibheeshana

How the love of the Divine manifests itself in a devotee is illustrated by the example of Vibheeshana, the younger brother of Raavana. Vibheeshana submitted himself to many indignities at the hands of Raavana out of the love he had for Raama. In the battle against the Raakshasas in Lanka, Raama and Lakshmana destroyed many of the great Raakshasa warriors on the first two days. On the third day a formidable warrior stood before them. Vibheeshana told Raama: "If you conquer this warrior, the whole of Lanka will be yours. He is a greater warrior than even Raavana." Raama fought with this mighty Raakshasa the whole day, but could not vanquish him. Raama was on the point of giving up the battle for the day. At this stage-, Vibheeshana, who was behind Raama, said: "This is not the time to give up the fight. You must rally all your strength and destroy the enemy. You should not miss this chance. I am telling this out of my love for you." Egged on by Vibheeshana, Raama continued the fight and destroyed his opponent.

The formidable warrior fell on the battlefield. The moment he learned that the warrior was dead, Vibheeshana also collapsed on the ground. Recovering himself after chanting the name of Raama, Vibheeshana got up and confessed to Raama: "Svaami! This is a mark of weakness on my part. I should not have succumbed to such weakness. Having filled myself with your love, how could I succumb to such weakness?" Raama observed: "That's all right. But why did you collapse so suddenly?" Vibheeshana replied: "Svaami! This happened because of bodily attachment. It was due to parental affection. That mighty warrior was my son."

He was Vibheeshana's son! See what Vibheeshana did. To ensure the victory of the Lord, Vibheeshana did not hesitate to get even his son killed in battle.

God is greater than son

Raama asked Vibheeshana: "Why did you do this? Is it not wrong on your part? Why did you not tell me at the beginning itself that he was your son?" Vibheeshana replied: "When you are facing an enemy, you should not worry about any kind of relationship on the battlefield. In this war there is no room for considerations of relationship. When anyone takes up arms against you, he ceases to be a relation. Whether it is mother, father, son or anybody else, when he figures as an enemy especially against God, there can be no question of relationship. I have completely surrendered to you. I am your servant. I must be primarily be concerned about your victory and not about any temporary kinship. The only truth for me is your will."

It is this abounding love of Vibheeshana for Raama, which contributed to Raama's victory. Love for the Divine should be inextricable bond. All other worldly attachments are impermanent. *Thaamasik* bonds are like iron chains. *Raajasik* bonds are copper chains. *Saathvik* bonds are like chains of gold. But, whether the chains are of iron, copper or gold, they are chains all the same. The nature of the metals may vary, but the chains are shackles nevertheless. Vibheeshana declared: "I have no use for any of these bonds. I am content with the pure love of Raama."

It is to demonstrate to the world the supreme quality of total love for the Divine that Vibheeshana acted in this manner.

Vibheeshana is a *saathvik* (Supremely sacred) friend of Raama. Despite his long intimacy with Raama, Lakshmana was not in the same category. He was a *saathvik* brother, not a *saathvik* friend. Sugriva was a *Raajasik* friend. Jaambhavan was a *thaamasik* friend. Vibheeshana, though he belonged to the Raakshasa brood, stands out as a *saathvik* friend (pure and selfless). It is in this unalloyed purity that love shines. It is utterly invaluable.

Divine Love as glorified by the Vedhas

About Divine love the *Shruthi (Vedha)* declares: "It did not originate from the firmament. It did not grow from the earth. It has no birth and death. It is all-pervading. It emerges from the heart when the knots of ignorance are broken." This is how the *Vedhas* glorified Divine Love. Even Naaradha, the author of the *Bhakthi Suthras*, could not describe the nature of Divine Love. He described in various terms the state of mind of the devotees filled with love of the Lord, but he could not describe *prema* (love) itself. He compared *Prema* to a priceless gem. Likewise Tulasidas also referred to Raama's name as a precious gem.

Where is this love to be found? It can be got only from Bhagavaan Himself, who is the very embodiment of love. Do not treat lightly this infinitely valuable love, which is eternal, pure, sacred and powerful beyond words.

Do not miss this opportunity given to you by Sai.

It is only devotion to His feet that will redeem you.

Do not be swayed by anyone's words.

Come all of you! Come!

Come along and bask in this blissful love!

Discourse in Sai Kulwant Mandap on 27- 7-1996.

My desire, if I can put it that way, is this: More and more should yearn for me. That desire can be realized only if I assume this form and come among you. Those of you who have been following the unfolding of my story will have discovered this by now ... My purpose can be understood in a general way only by earnestly and vigilantly watching, trying to get to the meaning of every word and action with patient attention.

Baba