

Chastity is the Hallmark of a Woman

Prasanthi Nilayam

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Realize that you and I are one

Everybody is afraid of Yama, god of death. He goes about in every corner of the world and takes away the life principle of those whose life sojourn on earth comes to an end.

Chastity endows women with immense power

When Yama took the life of Savitri's husband Satyavan, Savitri was full of grief and prayed to him to bring her husband back to life. She said, "You either give back my husband's life or take my life also. I cannot live without my husband; we are one".

When Yama wanted to go away after taking the life of her husband, Savitri blocked his way and did not allow him to move. Yama had no choice but to listen to her prayer. He asked her, "Mother! What do you want"?

"Give my husband back to me because it is not possible for me to live without him," said Savitri.

Ultimately, Yama had to yield to her prayer and revive Satyavan. Yama not only brought Satyavan back to life but granted many boons also to both Savitri and Satyavan, happy as he was with the chastity and determination of Savitri. It was because of her power of chastity that Savitri could bring her dead husband back to life.

Chandramati was another great woman of the sacred land of Bharat (India) who set a shining example of chastity in the world. When she, along with her husband Harischandra and son, was crossing a forest, it was suddenly engulfed in wild fire, which threatened their life. Then Chandramati prayed, "If I am truly a chaste woman and have been adhering to *dharma* all my life, let this wild fire be extinguished". And lo and behold, the fire was extinguished in a trice, and the entire

forest became calm and serene. So great is the power of penance and chastity of a chaste woman!

But she was always humble and expressed gratitude to God, saying, "It is by the grace of God that I have been able to uphold the *dharma* of a chaste woman." She always followed her husband and could never bear separation from him even for a moment. That is the hallmark of a chaste woman. Both husband and wife should live together in harmony whole of their life.

(Here Bhagavan narrated the story of King Harischandra and his chaste wife Chandramati, who, in spite of undergoing untold sufferings, upheld the virtues of truth and righteousness and set a shining example of virtuous life.)

This land of Bharat (India) has given birth to many noble women, like

Damayanti, who reduced an evil-minded hunter to ashes with the power of her chastity, and

Sita, who proved her chastity by coming out of blazing fire unscathed.

(Telugu Poem)

Life finds fulfillment when husband and wife live in unity

When Sita was put to the fire test, the fire god himself manifested out of it and told Rama, "Sita is a woman of great chastity." There were many women of chastity in the sacred land of Bharat, like Sita, Chandramati, Damayanti, and Savitri.

People are afraid of Yama, the god of death, but Yama is afraid of the women of chastity. Just as Savitri could bring her dead husband back to life by the power of her chastity, Sita could also come out of blazing fire unscathed by the power of her chastity.

All these examples of chaste women of Bharat set the ideal that for a woman her husband is God.

These ideals set by such chaste women made India a teacher of the world and leader of all nations. Except in Bharat, in which country of the world do you find examples of women who brought their dead husbands back to life? Even if you search the entire world, you cannot find such chaste women. Such is the sacredness of this land of Bharat. That is why God loves to incarnate in Bharat.

Just as women should observe *dharma* for a chaste woman (*patrivrata dharma*), men should also adhere to *dharma* for an ideal husband (*sativrata dharma*). A woman must be a chaste woman, so also her husband, an ideal husband.

The wife should never go against the command of her husband; similarly, the husband should conduct himself according to the wishes of his wife and should look after her with great love.

But, unfortunately, only a few men today observe *dharma* for an ideal husband, though a large number of women adhere to *dharma* for a chaste woman. God is pleased with those women who observe *dharma* for a chaste woman.

When there is unity between husband and wife, they can achieve anything and find fulfillment in life. Draupadi had five husbands, and she considered them as her five life-breaths. Women today should observe chastity like Sita, Savitri, Draupadi, and Damayanti. It is the sacred land of Bharat where you find such a large number of chaste women and nowhere else. People who leave such a sacred land and go to other countries waste their life.

You say, my body, my handkerchief, so on and so forth. But who is this 'my'? That is the Self or I. I means *Atma*. Without realising the *Atma*, all spiritual practices like rituals and sacrifices are of no use. You say, this is mine and that is thine. What is the use of doing any spiritual practice unless you give up the feelings of mine and thine? Get rid of the narrow feelings of mine and thine and realise that you and I are one.

— From Bhagawan's Divine Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 18 May 2010.