

71. With faith in human divinity, service to mankind becomes service to God

People say that service to humanity (*manava-seva*) is service to God (*Madhava-seva*). That is a true statement. But although the service of humanity is holy, unless it is merged in the bigger ideal, people won't benefit, however huge the service.

Mere repetition of the slogan is useless if service is done without faith in the divinity of people and with an eye on name and fame and the fruits of one's action. Whatever actions one undertakes, if one constantly has as companion the contemplation of the Lord, and if one has faith in the essential divinity of people, then the statement about service to humanity and service to God being the same is justified.

Without thoughts of God (*Madhava*), how can service to God originate? All such talk is mere show. I won't agree to that. Instead, whatever is done with the Lord in mind, along the path of truth and according to aspects of *dharma*, has to be considered as selfless service (*seva*) to the Lord, and whatever is done for name and fame and for the fruit thereof shall not be referred to as service to people.

In fact, those who are immersed in the uninterrupted contemplation of the Lord need not do any other task at all. The fruit of their prayer itself can make the world holy. However, all can't be thus engaged, so the others must try to prepare for that stage by purifying their mind and diminishing their desires. The spiritual seekers who have achieved this can realise things for themselves. Others can't grasp the sameness of service to people and service to God.

72. Purify the mind by meditation and japa

This does not mean that you can sit quietly. Grasping the sameness is dependent on your destiny, past actions, and spiritual discipline. Until you grasp the sameness, do meditation and repeat the name, so that your mind will become free from the waves of feeling and full of the divine form. Also, carry out deeds for the good of others. Devote your time to the service of the world, regardless of the results thereof. Thus can you become blessed.

Otherwise, though the body may be inactive, the mind will be very busy, committing acts on its own. People with such minds fall prey to fate (*karma*) in spite of their not doing anything! When a person has the mind fixed on contemplation of God and the pursuit of truth, though the body and senses do acts that are of service to the world, they won't be affected by them; though they do actions (*karma*), they are still non-doers of action. The lesson of the *Bhagavad Gita* is embedded in this.

The heart of the person who doesn't strive to cultivate the mind with holy thoughts is certain to be the paradise of evil and wickedness. This has to be borne in mind by all those who aspire for salvation, who seek one-pointedness, and who hope to rise to greatness. Neither caste nor monkhood nor rituals nor scholarship gained by study of the scriptures is a criterion to realise this knowledge of the *Atma*. Steady contemplation of *Brahman* (*Brahma-nishta*) is the only criterion. The *Upanishad* text also emphasises this:

Spiritual wisdom alone is the cause of liberation; not the stage of life or philosophy.

Naashramam kaarnam muktheh, darshanani na kaaranam Thathaiva sarvakarmaani jnanamevahi kaaranam.