

Verses for Introspection

Mā Gurupriyā

e-Series
No. 55



Lord's Feet - the Abode of Fearlessness

Mā Gurupriyā

रोधस्तोयहतः श्रमेण पथिकश्छायां तरोर्वृष्टितः
भीतः स्वस्थगृहं गृहस्थमतिथिर्दीनः प्रभुं धार्मिकम्।
दीपं सन्तमसाकुलश्च शिखिनं शीतावृतस्त्वं तथा
चेतः सर्वभयापहं व्रज सुखं शंभो पदाम्भोरुहम्॥

*rodhas-toyahṛta: śrameṇa pathikaś-
chāyāṃ taror-vṛṣṭita:*

*bhīta: svastha-gr̥haṃ gr̥hastham-atithir-
dīna: prabhuṃ dhārmikam।*

*dīpaṃ santamasākulaś-ca śikhinaṃ
śītāvṛtas-tvaṃ tathā*

*ceta: sarva-bhayāpahaṃ vraja sukhaṃ
śambho padāmbhoruham ॥*

Śivānandalaharī 60



Narayanashrama Tapovanam

As one swept by flood seeks the bank, a tired traveller seeks the shade of a tree, one afraid of rain longs for a comfortable home, a guest longs for a welcoming householder, a poor man looks for a virtuous rich, one afraid of darkness yearns for light, one suffering from cold seeks fire-hearth – in the same manner, O mind, seek the lotus feet of Lord Śambhu (Śiva), that ward off all fears and grant happiness.

Points for Introspection

Our life in the world is full of fear and anxiety. One enjoys happiness too, no doubt, but all happiness is fleeting. Even if one acquires all that he desires, he still is fearful of losing it and is anxious about preserving all that has been acquired.

Man looks for security through wealth and people around him. He foolishly thinks that in the face of danger and unfavourable situations, money and people will be his support and saviour. He forgets that in spite of having enough wealth and many people around, he may not get cured of his disease or saved from impending danger. Anxiety and fear will still be his companions. Man forgets that fearlessness and real security cannot be bought by wealth.

So, wherefrom can we get fearlessness? All our scriptures declare unanimously that the holy lotus feet of the Supreme Lord are the abode of fearlessness. When a devotee holds on to those



Narayanashrama Tapovanam

feet with complete reliance, he overcomes fear and anxiety.

It is our experience that when we think of God, when we engage in devotional routines and worship, when we read about excellences and glories of the Supreme Lord, when we sing hymns in His praise, **our mind gets filled with deep peace and joy**. All anxieties and fears fade away for a while. The mind becomes full of love and tolerance for all; it becomes full of hope and confidence. When viveka (discrimination) dawns, we realize that our only security lies in wholesome devotion, and not in money, people or position. As the devotion grows, deepens, and becomes one-pointed, we feel lighter, more joyous and free.

In this śloka, Śaṅkarāchārya says: “O mind, seek one-pointedly with a burning zeal, the lotus feet of Lord Śambhu – the Supreme Lord. When one takes refuge in His feet, all his fears are removed.” Now, what should the seeking be like? The seeking should be one-pointed and completely focused on the Supreme Lord alone and not on anything else.

In order to emphasize the wholesomeness and intensity of seeking, Śaṅkarāchārya has taken a few examples. He says: one getting swept by flood waters desperately seeks to hold on to some obstacle to the flow; a tired traveller looks eagerly only for the cool shade of a tree; a man afraid of rain longs for nothing other than his comfortable home; a traveller intensely longs for a householder who would welcome him as a guest; a man in distress



Narayanashrama Tapovanam

seeks with all his heart, a rich and benevolent person who would help him and relieve him of distress; a man scared of darkness tries to get hold of a lamp; a man intensely suffering from cold weather yearns only for the heat of a hearth.

In each of the above examples, the yearning is one-pointed and intense, to the exclusion of all other desires. Thus should be the longing for the holy lotus feet of Lord Śambhu – one-pointed, focused and completely rid of any other longing or desire. Only when the mind holds on to the holy lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, leaving all other desires, man attains fearlessness and becomes supremely happy.

Our mind and heart should delight in the thought of the Lord alone. We should remember again and again that our strength is only in holding on to God, in surrendering to Him completely, in relying upon him supremely. Everything in the world is laden with fear and misery. Realizing this truth, the mind slowly withdraws from all such distractions and gets fixed to the one changeless imperishable Lord, holding on to whom alone one attains deliverance from fear.

Repeated chanting of this śloka generates the intense one-pointed yearning for the holy lotus feet of the Lord. Everything else seems unimportant. A great strength is felt. The mind touches the state of fearlessness.



Narayanashrama Tapovanam

Word Meaning

रोधः (rodha:) = bank or dyke or obstruction; तोयहृतः (toyahr̥ta:) = one swept by flood waters; श्रमेण (śrameṇa) = with fatigue; पथिकः (pathika:) = traveller; छायां (chāyāṃ) = shade; तरोः (taro:) = of a tree; वृष्टितः (vr̥ṣṭita:) = of rain; भीतः (bhīta:) = afraid of; स्वस्थगृहं (svastha-gr̥haṃ) = comfortable home; गृहस्थम् (gr̥hastham) = householder; अतिथिः (atithi:) = guest; दीनः (dīna:) = distressed; प्रभुं (prabhuṃ) = rich, powerful; धार्मिकम् (dhārmikam) = virtuous; दीपं (dīpaṃ) = light, lamp; सन् (san) = being; तमसाकुलः (tamasākula:) = one who is afraid of darkness; च (ca) = and; शिखिनं (śikhinaṃ) = fire; शीतावृतः (śītāvṛta:) = one suffering from cold weather; त्वं (tvaṃ) = you; तथा (tathā) = in the same manner; चेतः (ceta:) = mind; सर्वभयापहं (sarva-bhayāpahaṃ) = warding off all fears; व्रज (vraja) = go (seek); सुखं (sukhaṃ) = happiness; शंभोः (śambho:) = of Lord Śambhu; पदाम्भोरुहं (pada-ambhoruham) = lotus feet;

अन्वयः

(यथा) तोयहृतः रोधः, श्रमेण पथिकः तरोः छायां, वृष्टितः भीतः स्वस्थगृहं, अतिथिः गृहस्थं, दीनः धार्मिकं प्रभुं, तमसाकुलः सन् दीपं, शीतावृतः शिखिनं च, तथा चेतः त्वं शंभोः सर्वभयापहं पदाम्भोरुहं सुखं व्रज ।

(yathā) toyahr̥ta: rodha:, śrameṇa pathika: taro: chāyāṃ, vr̥ṣṭita: bhīta: svasthagr̥haṃ, atithi: gr̥hastham, dīna: dhārmikam prabhuṃ, tamasākula: san dīpaṃ, śītāvṛta: śikhinaṃ ca, tathā ceta: tvaṃ śambho: sarva-bhayāpahaṃ padāmbhoruham sukhaṃ vraja.



Narayanashrama Tapovanam