

Verses for Introspection

Mā Gurupriyā

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The Unfailing Refuge

Mā Gurupriyā

बालस्य नेह शरणं पितरौ नृसिंह
नार्तस्य चागदमुदन्वति मज्जतो नौः ।
तप्तस्य तत्प्रतिविधिर्य इहाञ्जसेष्टः-
तावद्विभो तनुभृतां त्वदुपेक्षितानाम् ॥

*bālasya neha śaraṇaṃ pitarau nṛsiṃha
nārtasya cāgadam-udanvati majjato nau: ,
taptasya tat-pratividhir-ya ihāñjaseṣṭa:-
tāvad-vibho tanubhṛtāṃ tvad-upekṣitānām .*

Śrīmadbhāgavatam 7.9.19

O Nṛsimha! In this world, parents are not truly the refuge for a child; medicine is not the real protection for the sick; a boat alone cannot save a person drowning in the ocean. O Lord, for the embodied beings in distress, any available redress in this world is verily not sufficient, if they are disowned by You.



Narayanashrama Tapovanam

Points for Introspection

In this life, man thinks security is to have friends and relatives around, who will stand by his side and protect him in the event of difficulties and sufferings. He feels satisfied by thinking that the wealth that he has accumulated is his security for undergoing good treatment if the body gets diseased. He plans various other securities and protective measures against possible dangers and calamities.

Foolish and ignorant as he is, he fails to see that all his plans are not infallible. He fails to understand that if God or Providence disowns a person or does not save him, he will surely perish in spite of all protective measures.

Parents bring up children with lot of care and protection, ignorantly thinking that they are the protectors of the child. They are intensely concerned, at times obsessively worried, about the child's welfare. They are always watchful so that no harm comes to their child, and in anticipation make safeguards so that nothing would go wrong. But alas, in spite of all protection, sometimes children are seen to go astray or die.

When one has disease, he takes to medicines and treatment. He feels very secure if he has enough money. For, he thinks even if a complicated disease sets in, he has enough money to get properly treated. But, it does not always happen so. In spite of all treatments and medicines, one may not recover at all.

When a man is drowning in the ocean, even if a boat is available for him to get into it, there are occasions when the saving-boat itself gets drowned.



Narayanashrama Tapovanam

In this śloka, it is being pointed out categorically that parents are surely not the final protectors of their children, medicines cannot always save the life of man, even a boat cannot protect a drowning man – all available ways of protection do not work if the all-merciful Lord disowns the person and does not protect him. So, to have Supreme protection in life, one must have complete reliance on the Lord and take wholesome refuge at His holy lotus feet.

What is meant by complete reliance and wholesome refuge? A true devotee depends on nothing else – neither people, nor wealth, nor any other resources – but on God alone, for his protection. Such a devotee is the one whom God cannot ignore and is the one whom God gives exclusive protection and support.

When chanted, this śloka is a powerful remembrance that all objects which we consider to be our anchor, are themselves momentary and perishable. The only refuge is the Lord's holy feet.

Word Meaning

बालस्य (bālasya) = for a child; न (na) = not; इह (iha) = in this world; शरणं (śaraṇam) = refuge, protection; पितरौ (pitarau) = parents; नृसिंह (nṛsiṃha) = O Nṛsimha; न (na) = not; आर्तस्य (ārtasya) = for the diseased; च (ca) = also; अगदं (agadam) = medicine; उदन्वति (udanvati) = in the ocean; मज्जतः (majjata:) = for the drowning person; नौः (nau:) = boat; तप्तस्य (taptasya) = of the sufferer/afflicted; तत् (tat) = that; प्रतिविधिः (pratividhi:) = remedy/redress; यः (ya:) = who; इह (iha) = in this world; अञ्जसा (añjasā) = truly; इष्टः (iṣṭa:) = desired; तावत् (tāvat) = so much;



Narayanashrama Tapovanam

विभो (vibho) = O Lord; तनुभृतां (tanubhṛtām) = of the embodied beings, of men; त्वत् उपेक्षितानाम् (tvat upekṣitānām) = forsaken/ ignored by you;

अन्वयः

नृसिंह, इह बालस्य पितरौ न शरणं, आर्तस्य न अगदं, उदन्वति मज्जतः च नौः (न)। इह तप्तस्य यः तत् प्रतिविधिः अञ्जसा इष्टः तावत् (न), विभो त्वत् उपेक्षितानां तनुभृताम्।

nṛsiṃha, iha bālasya pitarau na śaraṇam; ārtasya na agadam; udanvati majjata: ca nau: (na). iha taptasya ya: tat pratividhi: añjasā iṣṭa: tāvat (na), vibho tvat upekṣitānām tanubhṛtām.

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