

|| Shri Hari ||

True Shelter



Swami Ramsukhdas

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tvameva mata cha pita tvameva
tvameva bandhuscha sakha tvameva |
tvameva vidyaa dravinam tvameva
tvameva sarvam mama devadeva ||

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It is human nature to take the support of one or the other. Every living being wants to get the shelter of someone, wants to make someone his support. Why is there this sort of nature? It is so because the being is the inseparable part (ansh) of the Supreme Lord (Paramatma). If he takes the support of only the Lord, then he will have no need for any other shelter. But till he gains resort of the Supreme Self, he goes on seeking shelters one after the other. He needs to take God's shelter, but instead he takes the support of various others. He seeks the shelter of wealth, of his abilities, his strength, his family, his knowledge, his talent and skills, but these shelters do not last.

Only God's shelter should be sought – this idea seems to make sense in mind and understanding, but we do not give up other shelters! Though you are not bound in giving up others shelters, rather you are altogether free, yet by taking special support and shelter of others, and by continuing to gain

consolation and pleasures there from, an illusion has arisen in the heart that how without this support or how by giving up this shelter you will be in a position to live at all! How will you be able to sustain? How will you be able to manage your livelihood? By the surging of this kind of emotion, a sort of cowardice has taken root in the mind, that you cannot leave their shelter!

Whose support is there when we are under the spell of deep sleep? No one else's dependency or support is there, not even of God's! In that state, there is a certain sort of semiunconsciousness, a kind of swoon. In that state, the shelter of the world is automatically given up, but that of ignorance (moodhataa) persists. Thus it is a sheer illusion that we cannot live without someone's shelter. Or, else, tell me on whose support do you exist or live during deep sleep? In deep sleep "shushupti" you exist even without or in absence of world's shelter or support.

Please be kind and do pay attention to this one point of great importance. We do not get as much happiness from depending on the world, as we get in sleep from leaving the dependence on the world. The extent of joy and freshness that we experience, the energy that we accumulate from leaving the dependency of the world, these do not come from taking the support of the world. What to speak of conservation of energy, it is exhausted away! By continuing to depend on wealth, family, intellect, abilities, etc. you become restless, tired, and exhausted. Your energy is used up, and then you leave every one and fall off asleep. And while sleeping you once again regain the energy. In this manner, by sundering of worldly shelters a distinctive and refreshing power will grow in you. And by taking the shelter of God, boundless will be the strength, so limitless will be the power that no fear or

anxiety will ever haunt or trouble you! For this reason alone it is said -

“yam labdhvaa chaaparam laabham manyate naadhikam tatah.” (Gita 6/22).

“Higher than this there has been no real or great gain at all.” There is no higher gain than this, nor can, nor shall it ever be! But this will occur only on giving up all the ephemeral or perishable shelters of the world. The mistake which is often committed is that you do not give up the shelters which are believed and known to you as being perishable. You repeat and recite the Divine Name of God, you meditate, you sing God’s glory and contemplate on spiritual matters, but simultaneously you keep shelter of the perishable things! Without totally relinquishing the shelter of the perishable world, one cannot entirely and in toto take the shelter of God. Without seeking complete support (of God), total power cannot be secured.

There is no dearth or paucity from God’s side. To the extent you seek God’s shelter, to that very extent you will get consolation, power and gain. You will undoubtedly get illimitable power if by totally giving up the shelter of the world, you depend on God alone for everything.

Where is that God? In this regard, may I tell you one thing that He is in the heart of all beings’ – “sarvasya chaham hrdisamnistah” (Gita 15/15); “isvarah sarvabhootaanam hrddeserjuna tishthati (Gita 18/61). He is the Indwelling Spirit of all the beings; but the difficulty is that the being looks only outward, he does not look deep within. You regard yourself that “I am”. Of that “I-ness,” Atman (Self, Spirit) is the support; and God, the Supreme Self, Supreme Spirit is the shelter even of the Atman – mamaivaamso jivaloke

(Gita 15/7). Your Atman is an inseparable part of the Paramatman. You (amsa) are in one “ksetra” i.e. body and your “amsi” (God) is in all the bodies (ksetras) - “ksetrajnam chaapi maam viddhi sarvaksetresu bhaarata.” (Gita 13/2). The Gopis said - “na khalu gopikaanandano bhavaanakhiladehinaa mantaraatmadrk”

i.e., “you are not mere the child of Yashoda, you are the witness to the Inner Self of all the beings, of all the bodies in living and inert forms, whether they be gods, demons, ghosts, or spirits or be they the residents of hells or heavens, devotees or meditative and contemplative seeker of Truth or God-loving fellows. But how are You here, when you are all these?”

“Vikhanasaarthito vishvagupte sakh udeyivaan saatvataam kule” (Srimad Bhagwat 10/31/4) - “you appeared when Brahmani prayed to you”. Why did he pray? “Visvaguptaye” i.e. he prayed for the protection of the universe. For, Thou alone are the saviour of Creation, none else has this power to protect. Besides, you have “appeared” – not born – in the Yadava clan “udeyivaan saatvataam kule”. When the sun rises, no body says that the sun is born, because the Sun is present even before it appears to rise in the eastern skies! Likewise God descends in divine ways. He is not born like our bodies are born.

Mind, intellect, senses, body, individuals, things, objects, money, wealth etc., nothing belongs to you, nothing stays with you; every moment it is parting from you, and yet you seek their shelter! Here in lies your mistake. Relinquishing the shelter of such things, please seek the shelter of God alone - “maamekam saranam vraja” (Gita 18/66). “Tameva saranam gaccha

sarvabhaavena bhaarata, tatprasaadaatparaam saantim sthaanam praapsyasi saasvatam” (Gita 18/62).

Seek the shelter in Him alone, wholeheartedly. By His grace you shall attain supreme peace (total unconcern from worldliness) and eternal abode. We are all free in seeking the shelter of God, no one is dependent. None is incapable of taking His shelter and support.

This very moment you “can” seek the shelter and support of God, because He is with you and you are with Him. Neither He can ever be separated from you nor can you be ever separated from Him. If He parts from you, then there will be two Gods; one He, and the other one you. His indivisibility, omnipresence and supremacy will be disintegrated. His significance will not remain if he separates from you. He cannot, therefore, be separated from you. Nor can you be separated from Him. Yes, you may regard yourself separate from Him, but you cannot be separated from Him. Similarly, you can certainly regard yourself dependent on the world and seek shelter of worldly goods and materials, but cannot be dependent upon them for all time. You took the shelter of wealth, family, friends, intelligence, ability, power etc., but could you and can you really be dependent on them permanently? You know it, believe it and yet you seek their shelter. What an illusion! What an error! It is so because such supports will not last. Therefore, turn your back upon them all and seek only God’s shelter. Do not take the support of anyone or anything else. Make use of wealth in the best possible manner. Do all work but trust only in the ever-abiding shelter of Almighty and Eternal God. The Saints have said:

Pativrataa rahe pati ke paasaa Yom saahiba ke dhiga rahe daasaa

i.e. "Just as the chaste wife lives under the shelter of her husband, so also the devotees of the Lord live under God's support and shelter only."

Jagajjanani Janaki used to pay great respects to her parents-in-law much more than her regards for her parents-in-law much more than her regards for her own mother and father; but when her Lord Bhagavan Sri Ram left for the forests, she gave up even the in-laws. King Sri Dasharatha said to such an extent that if Janakadulaari stayed back in Ayodhya, his life would be saved; and yet she chose to live for and with Lord Sri Ram. She could not think of staying or living without Lord Sri Rama. How can moonlight remain in absence of the moon? How can the daylight remain without the sun? How can the bodily-shadow live without the body? So also, no Jiva (being) can ever live apart from God. But, since he seeks the shelter of the world, alienating himself from God, he time and again suffers misery. If he did not take the support of that which is going to separate, and takes the support of that which will stay forever with him, than he will undoubtedly be greatly benefited and joyful.

Please, decide right now and once and for all, that you will not take the shelter of the world. You earn money, do all the work that is to be done, but do not make wealth and world your life's resort or shelter. So far you have taken much from the world, so you work for the world to repay your debt to it, not to seek it's shelter now. As a matter of fact, the world is not worthy of being a shelter, for it is constantly changing. It changes with such dynamic speed, that we cannot see it twice. Only that which changes is called

“samsara” - “sam sarati iti samsaarah”. As God is Mercy Incarnate – “prabhu murati krpaamayi hai” (VinayaPatrika 170/7), so is this world change incarnate. There is nothing in it except change. You have wrongly regarded worldly as worthy of your shelter. Now turning away from it, only take shelter of the Lord’s Lotus feet, right now! Yes! Just now!

“Mere to Giridhar Gopa, dooseron na koyi”, “ek baani karunaanidhaan ki, so priya jaake gati na aan ki.” - Do not take the shelter of others. With complete sentiments take total refuge in the Lord. “Tameva sharanam gaccha sarvabhaavena” (Gita 18/62), “Sa sarvavidbhajati maam sarvabhaavena” (Gita 15/19); “Sarva bhaav bhaj kapat taji moho param priya soyi” (Manav 7/87 Ka). Verily indeed, your kinship with God is self-evident and profound. Yoke yourself not with the changing world – this is the entire thing. The only thing! That is all there is to it!

Narayan ! Narayan ! Narayan !

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