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Shiva Rathri – 07th March 2016
Message by Master K.Parvathi Kumar

Today is the auspicious occasion of Maha Shiva Rathri. In this month of Magha, the night of 14th moon phase is recognised as Shiva Rathri. Magha relates to Mahat which means Potential Space. It is the space from which the whole creation has come to be. Initially the Divine nature, time and root matter came together to form Mahat. The 3 qualities are born from that potential space. Mahat means everything appearing out of seeming nothingness. That grand principle of Mahat can be experienced in this month of Magha. From the 3 qualities of Mahat, 20 other principles have emerged. So there are 24 principles in total including Mahat and these 24 are said to have emerged from Shivam.

As per the Puranas, Shiva has graced Chandra and uplifted him from a curse. This night Shiva promised that he would grace everyone who orients to him. That is why we celebrate this occasion of Shiva Rathri. Shiva would grace us very easily on this day. This story happened before the marriage of Shiva and Sati whose story we are discussing in Bhagavatam classes. Chandra (Moon principle) was cursed by Daksha and to save Chandra from that curse Sati receives the Mrutyunjaya Mantra from Sage Markandeya and teaches it to Chandra and makes him chant it. As a result, he was saved by Shiva.

Daksha was the one who gave names to all the 27 constellations and he gave the knowledge relating to the energies that each one of them would present to us when the Moon passed through a constellation. For this work, Daksha takes the help of Sati and Sage Bhrighu because Bhrighu is highly knowledgeable in the science of Astrology as a result of his intense study of time. Daksha also takes the help of Lakshmi who is the daughter of Bhrighu. So with the help of these 3 persons, Daksha names the 27 constellations and gives qualities relating to them. As the moon is intense in some constellations and shallow in some, Daksha orders moon that he should shine with same brightness in all constellations. Daksha did not have that authority over the moon. Moon was following the laws of creation and he cannot change that law just because Daksha ordered.

As the moon does not agree, Daksha curses him to die by losing all his energy. The moon here is not the moon that we see. We are here referring to the moon principle in this creation. That principle is received by us through the moon globe that we see. That principle is responsible for growth on earth in many aspects. So as moon principle was dying, the other intelligences wanted to do something and requested Shiva to help. Shiva says that he would grace the moon principle when the time comes and that time is this day. Chandra was given the Murtyunjaya Mantra to gain the grace of Shiva and then Shiva appears before Chandra and tells "I will ensure that you will not die but Daksha's word cannot be thrown away because he a Prajapati. So from now on you will have waxing and wanning every month but you will never die."

Shiva also tells "I have taken to a form to grace Chandra on this day. I will remain very pleased this day and grant anything that people ask me by worshipping me on this day." So this has become a very auspicious day and people celebrate it with lot of fervour because everyone want their desires to be fulfilled.

The principle of Shiva is said to be a White principle. He always appears white. The Divine mother is white. They stay on a white mountain. Their vehicles are of white colour. It is symbolically given so because we should orient to that white light when we worship the Lord. White colour is the closest to space. Space is the true representation of the Divine principle. As we are in a form, it is very difficult for us to align to the space. That is why we are advised to meditate on white light.

The Shushumna column present in us is full of this white light. It is like a lighted axis. We should visualise this column connecting the Sahasrara to Muladhara as a bright white column of light. We should remain meditating on that light. We can either visualise the light in one of the 7 seven centres or we can visualise it as a column of light connecting the 7 centres present in us. The 5 senses, 5 pranas, 5 pulsations, 5 organs and mind work with this light as the basis. The light can be understood as the representation of vibrations of Shiva. We have the story of how the vibrations coming from the Shiva help in the working of the various organs present in us. These vibrations of Rudra permeate the 7 layers of the body. Their intensity keeps increasing and gives us strength to do lot of work if we worship Lord Shiva. That is why we do Water Ritual with chanting of Radra Namaka and Chamaka.

The light of Shiva is said to be Gowri, which is one of the names of the Divine Mother in a body of white light. So we should meditate on this white light and worship Lord Shiva. We can chant OM Namah Shivaya and visualise that all the impurities present in us are being removed by the Lord. Then we can experience the Divine presence. That is how Ramkrishna Paramahansa could experience the Divine by remaining in alignment with the Divine Mother at all times. Experience is only possible only when all the impurities present in us are eliminated. That can be done by Lord Shiva through his vibrations.

He can lead us to a state where we are able to experience the invisible creation apart from the visible creation. We move from objective world to subjective world. In the creation of Daksha, everything relates to objectivity and all his are relating to only objectivity. All experiences in objectivity are limited. To experience unlimited happiness, we need align with Shiva. The Divine mother grants us the experience of subjectivity and then leads us to Shiva.

Shiva has no form and that is why he is mostly represented by a Linga. Linga is a formless form. From the worship of Linga, we should reach a state where we can worship the formless principle. This Linga is a representation of the Golden Egg from which the Cosmic Person was born. We discussed that story in detail in the 3rd Canto of Bhagavatam. The Cosmic Person is called Vishnu while the basis of the Cosmic Person, the Cosmic Principle is referred to as Shiva. The Divine Principle is the principle from which this Cosmic Egg has emerged. So Shiva is existence, awareness is Vishnu and action is Brahma. We can experience the 3 logos in us at all times.

So we have to relate to Divine Principle in this manner. Worshipping Shiva Linga is one of the ways relating to that Divine Principle. I earlier thought of discussing the Daksha Yagna from Bhagavatam but later I felt that I should speak in general of Shiva principle. We can remain in alignment with that principle by reading stories of Shiva as given in various Puranas.

We have the tradition of remaining awake all through this night. The reason is follows. When we are awake in the morning, some metabolisms happen in our body and when we are asleep during night, some other metabolisms happen. When you are awake during a night, the chemistry in the body changes. The changes are so good that the body would be ready to receive a good experiences. The inertia in the body is weeded out and you would gain the right amount of dynamism to do very good work. The tissues in the body would be vitalised a lot and your will power will also be enhanced. All during the night, if you can remain awake, one can relate to Shiva principle. So this way by waking up all night for atleast 1 or 2 days a year, it is very good for the body and also Yogic practice. It does not mean the sleep the whole of next day to compensate for a night's sleep.

Now we will sit in meditation for about half a hour. Firstly we will utter the mantra "Om Namah Sivaya Siddham Namah" for 11 times and then sit in silence.

-Swasthi