

MAKARA-SANKRAANTI

January 15, 2012

Sages who have designed the Hindu calendar have arranged the holy festivals for fostering mental stamina and emotional purity. The Makara-Sankraanti (the Summer Equinox), when the Sun enters Capricorn, is laid down as the day when man dedicates his activities for the higher purpose of attaining Divinity, by following the northward path, the nobler path which the Sun Himself is seen to take from this day... For six months now, it is the season of pilgrimage. It is the superior path.

The Geeta proclaims that he who dies in this half of the year dies in peace and plenty and so, rises to purer levels of spiritual attainments. Bheeshma, who was stricken by mortal arrows on the field of Kurukshethra, waited for this day which ushers in the holier half of the year, so that he may give his breath up, and merge in the Super-Soul.

This is a day of dedication. Not a day of diversion and dissipation. It is wrong to waste it in feasting and catering to the lower instincts; it is not a holiday; it is in the strictest sense of the word, a holy day. Become whole, by wholesome deeds and thoughts; that is the message of the holy day. Mere spinning like a top, until you can spin no longer, and then falling helpless and inert, is dreary devastating existence. The top has no faith in itself; it has to be handled and twirled by another. Be self-confident, that is to say, have confidence in yourself; for, that self is Divine; it has in it all the strength, all the sweetness of the True Self, which is but a wave of the ocean of Supreme Reality...

Again, this day, you are requested to eat sweet rice cooked in milk. That is the food called Saatvik, which promotes elevated thoughts, mildness and humility. But, food does not end with what you take in through the mouth. What you take in through the eye, the ear, the nose, the skin, through your greed, your hunger for excitement, your thirst for variegated experience of the objective world - all is food. And, every particle of it has to be Saatvik, so that your progress towards self-realization may be quick and fruitful.

Vedanta is the best and highest food which man can consume; it keeps your propensities pure, your body in perfect trim, your passions well controlled, your

emotions clear and lucid, and your thoughts simple and sincere. Satsang (noble company), is more nutritious than fruits and nuts, milk or honey. It will keep you young and fresh, full and free, beyond the disintegrating influence of time and space.

These holy days are reminders of the discipline, which you have strayed away from. It is a grim world, from out of which you have to squeeze yourself out, into freedom and fulfillment. A train whistling past in full speed over the rails drawn by a giant locomotive cannot be stopped by a million hands; but by merely pressing a button, the driver can bring it to a halt. Installing that button, that mechanism in your mind that rolls along behind the senses is the purpose of saadhana; installing and operating it. The knowledge that you are the architect of your fortune and that you can, by steady effort, rebuild it or foster it, that you are ever laying on or pulling down the structure of your career, will be a great inspiration, provided you welcome it...

The Sun takes the northern path from today; the higher path. So, the children too have to follow the footsteps of the Parent. In the north, the Himaalayas welcome you into “achala” standing for un-affectedness, “hima” meaning snow representing purity and immaculateness, and coolness representing perfect joy. Whenever the mind yearns for and pursues these four gains, it is on the northern path leading to the Himaalayas, the Abode of the Gods; it is following the Sun, the Splendour of the intelligence.

Resolve to take the first step towards the Indwelling God, now, this day. That is the reason why people have hung mango leaves across their doors today, to welcome God into the home. But, your home is your heart, not the brick and mortar pile, where your body dwells. Hang the streamer of green across the door-sill of your heart. Enthroned the Divine there, and adore Him with all sincerity, offering Him your deeds, your words, your thoughts.

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba
Prashanti Nilayam
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Original Discourse can be found at:

<http://www.ssbpt.info/ssspeaks/volume11/ss11-06.pdf>