

Service-An Attribute of God

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Abstract: God stands for universal values and virtues; He is not different from the five elements. Service completes the very nature of all the values and so service stands as a vital part of goodlihood. His Holiness Poojya Dr. Sharanabaswappa Appa's concept of Mahadasoha propounds the same in one of the twenty-one Mahadaasoha Sutras and the same is found in Rabindranath Tagore's "Gitanjali" (1912). The article focuses the importance of Service as service can be considered as God's nature.

Key-words: Mahadasoha-universal service; dasoha- an act of giving selflessly; jest-amuse, a joke; glace-brightness; chariot-car.

The concept of Mahadasoha is propounded by His Holiness Poojya Dr. Sharanbaswappa Appa, the Eighth Peethadhipati, Sharanbasaveshwar Samsthan, Kalaburagi, Karnataka, in his Twenty-one Mahadasoha sutras. In the Light of Mahadasoha, each of the Twenty-one Mahadasoha sutras is composed. Dr. M.V. Kamath, the former Chairman of Prasar Bharati, Govt. of India, passed his comments while translating these sutras in English language. His book of translation of these sutras has been widely accepted and appreciated by many scholars and philosophers. Regarding the scope and significance of the Mahadasoha concept, Sri.M.V. Kamath observed as below:

'Shri Appaji puts this (Mahadasoha) thought beautifully. See the spirit of Mahadasoha in all that is around you. That is the universal religion. There is universality in service. Service is not exclusivist. It is not confined to one people, one race, one class or one religion. He spoke to and for all mankind. And that is the core of the sutra. Dasoha embraces other fields like knowledge. To know is also to serve. Without knowing it, perhaps Gandhiji was expressing the spirit of Mahadasoha. Whether it is Dr. Raman, Mahatma Gandhiji, Dr. Radhakrishnan, Swami Vivekananda, they have their own interpretations. But in all cases Shri. Appaji's exhortation holds good. Listen to them all. But go beyond their words to the inner core of their thought, there lies dasoha.'

The cardinal philosophy of the Sharanbasaveshwar Samsthana is 'No religion is greater than service and service to humanity is service to God'. This will be found through the concept of Mahadasoha in the following poem of Rabindranath Tagore who is considered as the universal man through his words and deeds. The poem deals with the importance of giving spirit with body mind and soul and declares that the giver gets back multiple times more whatever she/he has given away. The text of Tagore's poem is as follows.

“I had gone a begging from door to door in the village path, when thy golden chariot appeared in the distance like a gorgeous dream and I wondered who this king of all kings was!

My hopes rose high and me thought my evil days were at an end, and I stood waiting for alms, to be given unasked and for wealth scattered on all sides in the dust.

The chariot stopped where I stood.

Thy glance fell on me and thou camest down with a smile. I felt that the luck of my life had come at last. Then of a sudden thou didst hold out thy right hand and say ‘what hast thou to give to me?’

Ah, what a kingly jest was it to open thy palm to a beggar to beg! I was confused and stood undecided, and then from my wallet I slowly took out the least little grain of corn and gave it to thee.

But how great my surprise when at the day’s end I emptied my bag on the floor to find a least little grain of gold among the poor heap. I bitterly wept and wished that I had the heart to give thee my all”.

Tagore, being the true representative of the ancient India, is aware of virtues of charity, service, and sacrifice. The essence of the poem is that one will get more while giving even less. The power of charity and service as well as total surrender to God’s will is elevated in the poem. The poet pictures himself as a beggar going from door to door in the village path. At once he sees God in a golden chariot in the sky descending towards him with a smile. The poet-beggar is excited with hopes that God would bless him with prosperity generously, munificently and thought his evil days would come to an end.

Contrary to his expectation, God asks him with smile, “What do you have to give me?” The poet was shocked and unaware of the intention behind God’s act of begging. Being confused and confounded, the poet gives God a grain of corn from his wallet. At the end of the day, when the poet-beggar empties his bag on the floor, a small piece of gold is found to his great surprise among the grains. He weeps bitterly and regrets that he must have given everything to God.

Here, giving is proved as culture and culture starts from agriculture i.e service. The Seventh Mahadasoha Sutra presents emphatically the spirit of giving as below: “Dasohi—one who has learnt to give; Dasohi—one who inspires others to give, and when his example is well practised in the world, then he is called a perfect Dasohi; a dasohi wishes good for all living beings, and He is a messenger of peace, Mahadasohi Sharanabasava So expects us to serve”. The Twentieth Sutra underlines the importance of giving: “Giving without ego, with composure of mind and devotion, is dasoha”. The Second Sutra also presents the significance of the giving spirit: “Dasoha means giving without ego, so it ends the sense of self”. Finally, how to accomplish dasoha is presented in the Eighth Sutra: “...serve guru – linga – jangam, with body, mind and possessions, but don’t dwell on it; God will then grant all your wishes, and whatever comes your way will be Prasad. That Prasad will cleanse you of sins, and you will be in eternal bliss. When all this has come to pass, you’ll have reached the summit of dasoha, Mahadasohi Sharnbasva”.

Thus, we have Mahadasoha, the universal feelings of Giving in the above poem of Rabindranath Tagore and the way of giving without ego or any expectation remains eternally as the prime attribute of God.

Reference:

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