

HUMILITY - A VIRTUE

- Ramapriya Ramanuja Dasi

In one of our important literature SriVaichana Bhu:shanam (verse 65) it is mentioned that “ when one behaves badly towards us, show them patience, grace, consideration, and forgiveness with a smile.” This is an important quality of SriVaishnava. We should feel sorry for their misconduct, because they will be punished either here on earth or from high above. That person should be pitied for their ignorant thought of having caused pain to others, and derives cruel pleasure from it. We should smile at their ignorance and stupidity. The wrong deed that is committed by them is only towards this body (that is temporary) and not towards the A:thma, and not pay heed to it. One should feel happy that their mistakes are pointed out that they can be corrected.

Our Mother Sri Maha Lakshmi calls Srimannarayana “Ripu nampi Vathsalaha” one who shows mercy towards His enemy. Seetha Devi tried to correct evil Ravana with Her kind words, and SriRama Himself was merciful to Ravana giving him a chance to return Seetha Devi unharmed, and when that failed only SriRama had to destroy Ravana.

Not retaliating and not harming others for revenge is Sri Vaishnava quality. This is depicted in the life of one of our great Acharyas “ Sri Parasara Bhattar “ who comes in the unparalleled lineage of SRI RAMANUJA.

As His usual routine, SriParasara Bhattar was at SriRanganatha Temple worshipping the deity;(Lord Ranganatha),another devotee who was extremely jealous of Bhattar’s fame started hurling hateful words towards Bhattar and called Him bad names in front of Lord Ranganatha and others. The other followers of Bhattar who could not tolerate such ill suited behavior towards their Acharya tried to remove Bhattar from there.He stopped them, who then called the person who was insulting Him and gave him a gold ring from His finger as a gift . He then went on to say “ I did not give you this ring as a bribe to stop you from saying ill words against me, but you made me realize my short comings in front of Lord Ranganatha. I am extremely pleased about this and hence the gift.” The other devotee was totally ashamed of his bad behavior and got embarrassed at Bhattar’s magnanimity. He fell at Bhattar’s feet and begged for forgiveness, that was given without hesitation.

Sri Parasara Bhattar was considered the adopted child of Goddess Ranganayaki and Lord Ranganatha and by His actions He showed us humility, forgiveness and a true Sri Vaishnava quality. With such examples from our Great Lineage of SriRamanuja, we all can strive to be better people.

Jai Srimannarayana !

