

## Temples

- Today these have become picnic spots, and where the idlers with evil minds, play cards or such games because a free area is available. This is A-Dharma.
- Ancients considered Temples as Deva-mandir (temples of god), but also as temples of spiritual wisdom. They considered it as their very heart.
- Because it is the very heart of human sustenance, it must be preserved, nourished and safe-guarded just like the heart that we look after.

## Temple gates or Gopurams

- \* Many ultra modern people condemn the construction of gopurams or temple gates as waste of money, due to poor insight and lack of vision.
- \* The gopuram is a reminder to one and all to come into the fold of divinity from the daily miseries, the departure from the path of truth and to find bliss.
- \* It is a reminder to enhance one's faith, and to struggle out of the darkness, and enter the realm of light and to find the royal roads of peace and Dharma (righteousness).
- \* One's true home is the Temple or where the God lives. Initially you see the God in the temple and then internalise in your own heart which is the temple of God.

## Temples

- \* Dawn and Dusk signifies the ushering in of Greed during day and Lust during night.
- \* Temples are a reminder of the true home of individuals, asking them to break free from the clutches of such Greed and Lust which takes you to the path of destruction.
- \* Culture of India 'Bharatha-varsha has God as its theme. Bha-ra-tha means land that has attachment to God.
- \* Both westerners and Indian culture renounced.
- \* Westerners had the single goal of finding solutions to the objective world.
- \* The Indian culture has the goal of finding your real self and discovery of the Absolute and Eternal – the prime cause of the Universe.
- \* When you know the Absolute, it confers on you permanent peace.

## Temples

- \* Temples are intended to instruct people to remove the veil of attachment to temporary things.
- \* Temple is the place where the remembrance of God's name is natural, automatic and undisturbed.

## Krishna declares in Gita

- \* Amongst sacrifices I am the repetition of the name (Nama Yajna)
- \* For the cure of grief, temples where the name of God is remembered can confer lasting joy.
- \* For bliss remembrance of the name(nama-smarana)
- \* For remembrance of the name – Temples.

## Temples as Promoters of Dharma- The House of God

- Existing rules at the temples, Church etc.
- They have led people away instead of bringing them to it.
- Rules are insisted upon blindly.
- Rules have done much harm to the world in general.
- Infact Rules and instructions have been responsible for people to become atheists.

## House of God – The temple

### Functions of the temple

- \* Temples are centres of discipline and guides the aspirant step by step to attain the vision of truth. ( in other words it teaches real from the unreal).
- \* They are schools for training the spirit
- \* They are academies for promotion of spiritual studies.
- \* Institutes of Super-science.

- \* Laboratories for testing the human values
- \* They are hospitals for the cure of the birth-death disease, and also for the mental disorder type.
- \* Temples are gymnasium where people are reconditioned of their faith, conviction and egoism.
- \* Temples are indicators of aesthetic standards and achievements of the society.

#### Purpose of Temple

- \* Awaken divinity in the humanity (Madhavathwa in Manavathva)
- \* Induces people to believe that the physical forms in which they live, are themselves temples of God.
- \* Points out that the individual is but a mighty ocean of God Himself. (Brahma Thatwa)
- \* Generates Devotion in the hearts of the humanity.
- \* Principle of Devotion

#### Devotion

- \* The Non-Attachment Principle with regard to actions and activities helps in the knowledge of Brahman.
- \* Devotion is the Queen amongst Devotion, Jnana (wisdom) and Vairagya (renunciation). Devotion has its own measure.
- \* Rules and rites are main – in – waiting to the Queen, and are but servants and aides to the Queen of devotion.
- \* All the formalities and rituals at the temples must sub serve the spirit of devotion by glorification of the same.
- \* This is the dharma that must govern all the temples.

#### Devotion continued

- \* Devotion helps in the attainment of bliss (merger with the basic Brahman) – Annamacharya, Devi Mahatmyam
- \* This is done by channalising the mental agitations, sensory perceptions and emotional urges.
- \* It was for this purpose the temple worship took shape.
- \* Various ceremonies at the temples were designed to promote the devotional aspect.
- \* The agitation of the lower emotion declined and disappeared.
- \* Vulgar feelings of ordinary life became elevated to the status of worship and dedication to the Almighty presence.

#### God's role vs emotion exhibited

- \* Whatever emotion you evoke, God presents himself as that association with you.
- \* It will assume many a form adjusted to the attitude of the devotee. (Khamasa, Jarasanda, Hiranyakasipu, Sisupala etc., had an attitude of enmity) Jayadeva, Tukaram, Ramdas, Surdas, Gouranga, Meera, Radha and Sakkubhai had an attitude of surrender to the love of the Lord and so He manifested as the dearest and nearest to them).

#### Low Level Animal Nature

##### vs Feelings during worship

##### Feelings during worship at the temple

- \* During worship feelings aroused must be sweet and melodious.
- \* It must transform the low desires and cravings as well as quieten the animal instincts of people, who run behind the matter principle. (Life of Thyagaraja – the saint)
- \* When You stand in front of God during worship, you must install the Brahman in your heart as your very existence, knowledge and bliss.
- \* Rites and ceremonies at temples are intended to bring out this aspect of installation of Godhood in our hearts.
- \* Story of Shepherd vs the Brahmin.

#### Perceiving Divinity vs Devotion

- \* Divine couples (sita-ram, radha-krishna, lakshmi-narayana, parvati-parameshwar) How do we look at them when we see them in the temples ?
- \* Lord is sleeping, He is having food, drinking the offering of the devotee etc., must be interpreted correctly. If not it will install wrong conclusions in the minds of people. (duties of temple administrators)

### Feelings during worship

- \* Temples should not be valued at Secular principles.
- \* You should be cultured enough to avoid the lower worldly path.
- \* Through devotion you can overcome all those emotions that drag you into the misery filled lower worldly aspects, and make your life noble, rich and sublime.

### God the Real vs How foolish people perceive

- \* He sustains the entire Universe down to the last minutest atom.
- \* He is unreachable by Time
- \* He is effulgent beyond imagination
- \* Merciful above all expectations
- \* He is the vital energy that pervades everywhere in the visible and non-visible spectrum.

### Universal Mother versus His children

- \* Does the mother keep quiet when the child cries for milk in the middle of the night ? Does she push the child and denies milk ?
- \* Similarly the 100s of 1000s of millions of His children – when they cry from the bottom of their heart, for His help to save them from miseries, does the Lord follows any time table like the Temple Administrators have made ?

\* The Tirupathy Lord used to wait for Annamacharya's divine poems in person after the temple doors were closed.

\* Kali temple in Calcutta of Rani Rasmani- gopala idol's leg got broken.

### Pure Devotion vs Rules at the temple.

\* Where devotion is pure and is on the rising mode, the Lord is patent even in broken things. Dharma declares so about Him.

\* Temple rules of closing the door did not apply to sankara, gouranga, Jayadeva and Chaitanya.

\* At Udipi Krishna, turned around to give His darshan to His devotee.

\* Siva yielded before the pure devotion of Nandanar.

\* Rules at the temple have no connection with the Lord. They were prescribed for reasons unconnected with divinity by elders.

### Then why do temples have rules?

\* Rules at the temples should not conflict with the highest conceptions of the devotee.

\* To instill a sense of devotional discipline, in the ordinary minds of the masses, the temple administrators have to follow certain timings.

\* It is also intended to raise the level of awe and respect of those who are with pure devotion. (the piercing of the tongue etc.,)

\* That is the real reason for the Temple rules and not otherwise.

### Devotion Vs Temple Rules

\* While having all the rules for Temple administration, the main principle of Devotion arising from the hearts of the Devotees should never be forgotten.

### Responsibility of Temple Administrators, the Pundits and the Public in General

\* The aim of the Temple rules should be always to promote Dharma and not otherwise.

\* The temple rules must promote the inner culture and spiritual discipline of individuals.

\* Everyone concerned must be aware of their individual responsibility in the maintenance of temple as also the rites conducted at the temples.

\* Temples and temple rites promote faith and devotion (Shraddha and Bhakthi).

\* Temples exist for the welfare and progress of Humanity.

### Temple Dharma

To misuse such temples, to spoil the sacred atmosphere, to forget their holy atmosphere, to decry the conventions and customs prevalent means to pave the way for the decline and destruction of temples.

