

Auspicious Deepawali 2020

'Let us establish Ramarajya in our hearts'

In the Uttarakanda of Shri Ramacharitamanasa, the saint-poet Shri Tulasidasji begins the description of Ramarajya with these words:-

राम राज बैठें त्रैलोका । हरषित भए गए सब सोका ॥
बयरु न कर काहू सन कोई । राम प्रताप विषमता खोई ॥

Raama raaja baithein trailokaa | Harashita bhaye gaye saba soka ||

Bayaru na kara kaahoo sana koyee | Raama prataapa vishamataa khoyee ||

'With Shri Ramachandraji established on the throne, the three worlds were overjoyed, all their sorrows melted away, no one had any animosity towards anyone. By the splendour of Shri Ramachandraji, everyone's mutual differences were washed away.' (Doha 20, Chaupai 4)

दो० - बरनाश्रम निज निज धरम निरत वेद पथ लोग ।

चलहिं सदा पावहिं सुखहि नहिं भय सोक न रोग ॥

Doha: - Baranaashrama nija nija dharama nirata veda patha loga |

chalahi sadaa paavahi sukhahi nahin bhaya soka na roga ||

'Diligently practising the principles of righteous conduct (dharma) appropriate to their stage of life (ashrama) and nature (varna), everyone walked on the path shown by the Vedas and obtained happiness. They were not afraid of anything, nor were they troubled by grief or disease.' (Doha 20)

Even in this time and age, every person in every circumstance can experience this Ramarajya which is full of love and bliss. For this, a few points based on the commentary by Shri Dharmendra Mohan Sinha (respected 'Nanaji') on Shri Ramacharitamanasa are presented here:

(1) Ramarajya does not refer to an externally imposed rule or administration. It is that self-discipline which a person adopts by the exercise of free will and with diligent effort.

(2) The purport of this self-discipline is that every person should engage in activities that are complementary to his or her specific ashrama and varna (stage of life and nature). In this, it is of paramount importance that each person performs righteous duties while adhering to the prescribed norms of decorum (maryada).

(3) At the very beginning of the description of Ramarajya, Shri Tulasidasji has laid out a critical litmus test. The first outcome of following these prescribed norms is that mutual differences towards others, and the resultant ill-will disappears. The tendency of finding fault in others and the expectation of a particular form of behaviour from them, all these go away. Seeing one's beloved Lord in everyone, one experiences a feeling of love towards them, and the focus remains firmly on the performance of one's own righteous duties.

(4) When the Lord is enthroned in the heart thus purified, the three worlds are infused with joy and life is filled with happiness.

(5) When dharma is followed with enthusiasm and perseverance, worldly pleasures appear bland and separate efforts to obtain them seem unnecessary – these worldly pleasures are automatically drawn to a person immersed in dharma. Shri Ramacharitamanasa gives a clear assurance to this effect:

जिमि सरिता सागर महुँ जाहीं । जद्यपि ताहि कामना नाही ॥
तिमि सुख संपति बिनहिं बोलाएँ । धरमसील पहिं जाहिं सुभाएँ ॥

jimi saritaa saagara mahun jaahee | jadyapi taahee kaamanaa naahee ||
timi sukha sampati binahi bolaaye | dharamaseela pahi jaahi subhaayen ||

'As rivers flow into the ocean, even though the ocean has no desire for them, in like manner happiness and wealth flow to the righteous, of their own accord, uninvited.' (Baalakaanda, Doha 294, Chaupai 1-2)

(6) When worldly objects and their enjoyment lose their importance, there is neither fear of, nor grief over, losing them. Therefore, such a person is not troubled by diseases either.

(7) To obtain these benefits, it is necessary to follow the prescribed norms of decorum (maryada) and righteous duties (dharma) in accordance with one's nature (varna) and stage of life (ashram). (For this, the book 'Anand-Yatra – Volume Two – Grihasthashrama Dharma' has useful points based on the scriptures for different categories of people such as men, women, students, elderly, married, unmarried.)

(8) In addition, it is necessary to make an effort to uproot from one's heart all feelings of difference, fault-finding and expectations from others. To achieve this, one needs to firm up one's resolve by moulding one's thoughts through regular swadhyaya of relevant texts. Freedom from the afore-mentioned feelings can be obtained by surrender to God through fervent prayer and ceaseless chanting of God's name.

On this auspicious festival of Deepawali, let us welcome Shri Sitaramji into the abode of Ayodhya, representing our physical form, let us enthrone them in our purified hearts and fill our lives with the lustre of Ramarajya.

