

No one can escape the consequences of their actions

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Karma is responsible for the birth, existence, and death of man.

It holds sway over all stages of his life as the very deity of human existence.

It is responsible for the joy and sorrow of man.
(Telugu poem)

What is *karma*? It is the action that we perform. *Karma* is the cause of man's birth, his life on earth, and his ultimate death. The very existence of man depends upon *karma*. There can be no human life without *karma*? Spiritual practices like *yajnas* and *yagas* are also forms of *karma*. The welfare and well-being of the world depends upon these spiritual practices. The very basis of the world is *karma*. Therefore, everyone must necessarily perform *karma*.

Strive to attain God realisation by doing your duty. As the action, so is the result. No one can escape from the consequences of his actions. *Karma* does not mean merely the actions that we perform with the limbs of our body; even the process of breathing constitutes *karma*. Eating, drinking, walking, sitting — all are various types of action that man performs. So, it is not possible to know the consequences of our actions. We should enquire about the nature of *karma* before performing. Being a human being, we should enquire whether the actions that we perform are befitting a human being or not. If you perform action without proper enquiry, you will not have the desired results.

Embodiments of Love!

Karma is verily God. God is not separate from you. God is present in subtle form in every action. God exists in the form of *karma* in everything right from microcosm to macrocosm. *Anoraneeyan mahato maheeyan* (Brahman is subtler than the subtlest and vaster than the vastest). One must necessarily perform action and should offer all actions to God. *Sarva karma Bhagavad pretyartham* (do all actions to please God). If you do like this, you will not be bound by the consequences of your actions.

Easwara sarva bhutanam (God is the indweller of all beings). He is present in all beings, be it a human being, a snake, or a scorpion. He performs actions appropriate to the vesture He takes upon Himself. Develop clear thinking and do not spoil your mind by unnecessarily thinking about something that you do not know. Man today ventures into fields about which he has very little knowledge. That is why he faces so many troubles. Therefore, men and women should undertake actions appropriate for them.

In childhood, one develops absorbing interest in play and enjoys the company of one's playmates.

In youth and middle age, one is engrossed in cultivating worldly relations and earning money.

In old age, one repents for not having this and that.

In this way, man wastes his precious human birth.

(Telugu poem)

Right from birth to death, man should lead his life befitting his human birth. Divinity is immanent in every human being. Man passes through the various stages of childhood, youth, and householder and ultimately grows old. With the advancement of age, man does not think of God and repents about what he has not got in life.

What is the use of worrying at this stage? We should have proper thinking from the very beginning. The youth leader, Vinay Kumar, prayed to Me to tell him what the youth should do. So, I told him that youth should always remain young and energetic. When youth misuse the power of senses, they lose their energy and start growing old. They should always remain young and never grow old with the advancement of age.

You should preserve your energy. Look at My body. I am 81 years old. Can anybody say that I am 81 years old? My body is free from all diseases. Sometime back, My leg was fractured when one boy fell on Me accidentally. That is why I am walking like this. I walk very freely inside My residence. But the doctor advised that I should take the support of one or two boys when I moved among the devotees. On the advice of doctors, I am taking the support of one boy while walking. Since it is My nature to satisfy everybody, I follow this advice for the satisfaction of doctors. All the same, I keep on telling the boys, "Don't hold Me, don't hold Me."

But you may not know that there is a subtle meaning behind whatever I do. Nobody can know the reality of My nature. I have never suffered any ailment whatsoever in My life, be it fever, cold, or headache. I have always been healthy. I am not only healthy, but wealthy also (loud applause).

Nothing escapes My attention. I noticed a couple of young *ritwiks* (priests) talking to each other during the performance of the *ya-jna*. I am hearing all that you speak. But, for Me, both good and bad are the same. I do not find anything bad in this world; everything is good. Similar is the case with right and wrong. Something may appear to be right at the present moment, but, on enquiry, it may turn out to be wrong.

Pleasure is an interval between two pains. We may eat very good and delicious items today, but how long that will remain good? The very next day, it may turn into a different matter. Difference of time determines what is good and what is bad. Therefore, we should understand everything clearly and act carefully in life.

In the Mahabharata war, Duryodhana and Dussasana and other Kaurava brothers fought with the Pandavas due to hatred for them, but they could not defeat the Pandavas because Krishna was on their side. Since the Kauravas were unable to meet the challenge of the Pandavas, they found Abhimanyu, the son of Arjuna, all alone one day and devised the *Padmavyuha* (an army formation in the shape of a lotus). Then they challenged Abhimanyu to enter it.

Abhimanyu was a young boy then. His father Arjuna was not there; only Dharmaraja was present at that time. He sought Dharmaraja's permission to enter the *Padmavyuha*. Dharmaraja told him that it was not an easy task.

Then he went to his mother Subhadra and sought her permission and blessings. She tried to dissuade him saying, "Dear son, it is a difficult formation devised by Dronacharya himself. Moreover, your wife is pregnant now. We do not know whether the time is favourable to us or not. Your father, Arjuna, and uncle Krishna are also not here to give you necessary guidance and support. Hence, give up the idea of going to the battlefield."

Abhimanyu was upset on hearing the words of his mother and said to her, “Being the son of Arjuna, I have to accept the challenge of the enemy. Otherwise, my father's name would be in disrepute. Even if I lose my life, I will fight in the battlefield.” He was very firm in his resolve and quite confident of coming out of the Padmavyuha successful. He told his mother, “I am going to attack the Kauravas like a tiger ready to pounce upon the horde of elephants. You should bless me to come out victorious in this fight by shooting the divine arrows on the enemy. Instead of blessing me, is it proper on your part to prevent me from going to the battle?”

Listening to the words of her brave son, at last she gave her consent.

May the same kind of protection cover you as that which Mother Gowri conferred on her son Kumara when he went out for battle against Tarakasura;

The blessing conferred by Kausalya on Rama when he was going to the forest to safeguard the Yajna of Viswamitra!

May such great and auspicious blessing and, the greatest of all, Sri Rama *Raksha* (the protection of Sri Rama) be with you and protect you!

(Telugu poem)

With these blessings, she sent him to the battlefield. He offered his salutations to his mother and entered the battlefield. He penetrated the *Padmavyuha*.

While his father Arjuna was narrating all about *Padmavyuha* to Subhadra, Abhimanyu heard the same being in his mother's womb. When Arjuna was half way through the narration, Krishna appeared on the scene and cautioned him that his son in the mother's womb was listening to all this. Krishna advised him to stop the narration forthwith. In this way, Abhimanyu could know only how to enter the Padmavyuha but did not know how to come out of it. As a result, he was trapped in the Padmavyuha by the Kauravas and killed.

The lesson to be learnt from this episode is: never ignore the advice of one's parents and elders. Listen to the advice of the parents carefully, contemplate on it, assimilate it, and put it into practice. That is why the *Vedas* declare, *Matru devo bhava, pitru devo bhava* (revere your mother and father as God). Whatever be the circumstances, wherever you may be, always obey the command of the parents.

When Arjuna returned, he was full of anxiety not to find Abhimanyu, who always ran to the door to receive him whenever he returned home. When Arjuna came to know that Abhimanyu died in the battlefield, he became very sad. Krishna asked him not to lose heart, saying, “Whatever was destined to happen has happened.” He also told Arjuna that the Kauravas who conspired against the Pandavas even in the past had again resorted to foul-play and killed Abhimanyu. In this moment of great anguish, Arjuna spoke to Krishna in very strong terms that He had not told him about the death of his son earlier and thus had betrayed him. As was His nature, Krishna heard all this, smiling all the time.

At the time of the death of Abhimanyu, his wife Uttara was in the family way. When the child was still in the womb of Uttara, Aswatthama attacked the child with *Brahmastra*. As a result, Uttara gave birth to a still-born child, and the Pandavas were grief-stricken. They blamed Krishna for all their misery because Abhimanyu was killed in the battlefield, the sons of Droupadi were slain by Aswatthama, and the son born to Uttara was a still-born child. Thus, there was none to continue the lineage.

Krishna tried to pacify them and advised them to be calm and composed. He asked Droupadi to bring the still-born child before Him. She brought the child in a plate. Krishna saw the child and said, “Look at his eyes, look at his nose, look at his face, he exactly resembles his father Abhimanyu.”

When Krishna was describing the child like this, the Pandavas grew very angry. They felt that He was describing the dead child without bothering about their pitiable condition. Krishna then held the child in His hand and patted on its back and stomach. Immediately, the child started crying, to the sheer joy of the Pandavas. Krishna named the child Parikshit, because He brought the child to life after putting the Pandavas to a *pariksha* (test). Without test, nobody can pass the examination and go to a higher class. That is why God subjects devotees to test. Never consider it as a test; rather, have a taste for such tests. All the tests given by God will be of good taste.

When Parikshit became the king of the Pandava empire, Krishna protected him in several ways. What I am narrating now has never happened anywhere else, in any country, at any time.

After Krishna left for His divine abode, a grief-stricken Arjuna returned from Dwaraka. Mother Kunti, being unaware of the happenings in Dwaraka, enquired of Arjuna about the well-being of Krishna. Arjuna wept inconsolably saying, "Mother, Krishna is no more."

The moment Arjuna told that Krishna had shed His mortal coil, Kunti collapsed and breathed her last. The Pandavas were immersed in sorrow. They thought, "Krishna was our very life-breath. He had been our source of strength and courage. What is the use of our life without Krishna?"

They decided to coronate Parikshit and go to the Himalayas. Dharmaraja instructed Arjuna to make arrangements for the cremation of the body of their mother. At the same time, he gave necessary instructions for the arrangements for the coronation of young Parikshit. Thereafter, he told Nakula and Sahadeva to make preparations for their *mahaprasthan*a (final journey) to the Himalayas.

After the cremation of their mother and coronation of young Parikshit, the Pandavas began

their march to the Himalayas, proceeding one behind the other. Dharmaraja, led the march. Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula, and Sahadeva followed him in that order. And Droupadi walked behind all.

Everyone has to face the consequences of their actions, whoever they may be.

No one can know what lies ahead for themselves in future.

But this much is sure: everyone has to reap the consequences of their own actions.

(Telugu song)

During their *mahaprasthan*a, Droupadi, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula, and Sahadeva shed their mortal coils one after the other. Dharmaraja continued his march all alone.

Dharmaraja had never uttered a lie in his life. However, during the Mahabharatha war, he did say something that caused the death of Dronacharya. When an elephant by name "Aswatthama" was killed in the battlefield, Dharmaraja declared, "*Aswatthama hathah kunjarah* (elephant)". He deliberately lowered his tone while uttering the word "*kunjarah*".

Since Dronacharya could not hear the word *kunjarah*, he thought his son Aswatthama was killed. He became utterly dejected and consequently gave up his life. Dharmaraja had to spend some time in the hell as a result of uttering this "lie". People may wonder, how is it that even Dharmaraja, the very embodiment of dharma, had to pay a visit to the hell. The fact remains that however great and noble one may be, one cannot escape from the consequences of one's actions.

When Dharmaraja entered the hell, Droupadi and the other four brothers were already present there. The five Pandavas were like five life-breaths. They were the embodiments of dharma. That is why their mere presence in the hell alleviated the suffering of all those who were undergoing punishment for their sins. They fell at the feet of Dharmaraja and pleaded with him to stay there for some more time.

Dharmaraja replied, "My dear ones! I am not allowed to stay here any longer. I am being sent away by the Lord of hell from here." Thereafter, the five Pandava brothers and Droupadi left for their heavenly abode.

In this manner, even the Pandavas, who were the very embodiments of righteousness and morality and who had acquired great merit, could not escape from the consequences of their karma.

Droupadi was a great *pathivrata* (woman of chastity). Even she had to face the consequences of her *karma*. Once, there was a debate as to who was the greatest *karma*. People expressed various opinions. It was Lord Krishna who gave the final verdict saying,

She dutifully obeyed the command of her husbands.

She would never say to any one of them that she had no time to serve him.

She was satisfied with whatever she got in life. She was the supreme example of chastity, and None could match her in this respect.

(Telugu poem)

In this *Kali* age, women find it hard to obey the commands of their husbands. Imagine the case of Droupadi. She had to obey the command of not one, but five husbands. She never complained. She always had time to serve each of them.

These days, we find women whose demands are much more than what the husbands can really afford. When the husband is drawing a salary of one hundred rupees per month, his wife demands a sari worth two hundred rupees! But Droupadi was not like that. She was always satisfied with whatever she had. That is why she earned a reputation as the greatest *pathivrata*.

The Pandava brothers were fully aware of her nobility and chastity. They always took her views into consideration and acted accordingly. That is why their name and fame remained firmly etched in the annals of history.

A person is respected even for small acts of nobility. However, while performing any action, there is always a possibility of mistakes creeping in. Whatever may be the mistake committed, one cannot escape from its consequences. Hence, one should always speak truth, follow righteousness, and lead a life suffused with love. This is the foremost duty of man.

One should consider the five human values of truth, righteousness, peace, compassion, and love as his *pancha pranas* (five life-breaths). One bereft of these five values is verily a living corpse. One should never speak untruth even in a lighter vein. Never make fun of others. It is the worst of sins to criticise others. Hence, however wicked a person may be, never criticise him.

Love all. Love is God. God is love. Love is your very life.

(As per Bhagawan's instructions, the students sang the song "Love is My form, truth is My breath, bliss is My food". Then, Bhagawan continued His discourse.)

Develop love. Wherever you may be, be it in the forest, or in the sky, be it in the city or in the village, be it on the mountain top or in the middle of deep sea, love is your sole refuge. Love even your enemy. If you happen to see him, do not turn your face away from him. Instead, greet him with love saying, "Hello brother! How are you?" Suffuse your life with love. Develop courage and conviction. Only then can *manavatwa* (humanness) gets transformed into *Divyatwa* (Divinity).

Propagate this principle of love to one and all. This is My principal message for you today.