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Sanskrit slokas and human values

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Introduction

Sanskrit Literature [Kavayas, Natakas(dramas), Epics, Puranas, Shatakas as well as the Vedas and Upanishads etc.] has given much importance to human values. The makers of Sanskrit literature have a clear vision about the life which is undisturbed and pious. They know how a man can make his life happy by following human values. Life without human values is waste, meaningless and sinful. That is why the Sanskrit writers have filled their works with human values like Truth, Charity, Service to humanity, Self-Control, Patriotism [Respect towards mother and mother land], Respect forwards elderly people, God-fearing nature etc. The “Mahabharata” speaks volumes about human values. The importance of Truth (Satyam) is brought out in the following sloka:

**“Satyameveswaro Loke Satyaddharma Pratishtitaha
Satya Moolani Sarvani Satyam Nasti Param Padam.”**

{This world is based on only one thing i.e satyam, there is no other better place than satyam it self.}

-Mahabharata

(Satyam=Truth)

The ‘Rig Veda’ stresses the need for being scrupulous, virtuous and straightforward from early childhood. If a child (i.e son) is spoiled he will ruin his whole dynasty. The following sloka brings out the above-mentioned fact:

**“Kotaramtarbhavo Vahnihi Tarumekam Dhahishyati
Kuputrasya kule Jataha Swakulam Nasayetpatram.”**

-Rig Veda:

Fire which is generated in a stick burns it only, but a spoiled child ruins his whole dynasty }

Importance Of Mother

There is a sloka which brings out the greatness and importance of mother. The sloka is given below:

**“Bhoo Pradakshina Shatkena Kaasi Yatraymentena
Sethu snana satairyutcha TatPhalam Maatru Vandane.”**

[Circumambulating the earth for six times; going on a pilgrimage to Kaasi i.e, Varanasi, bathing in the ocean for hundred times – are equal to putting ‘Namaskaram’ i.e greeting the mother for one time.]

Greatness Of Mother and Motherland

There is a sloka which is said as uttered by Lord Sri Rama with his brother Lakshmana which is as follows:

**“Api Swarna Mayee Lanka Na Me Lakshmana Rochate
Jananee Janma Bhoomischa Swargadapee Gareeyasee.”**

[Mother and motherland are superior to the heaven itself.]

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Importance of Charity (Danam)

Great men think that poverty comes to man as a result of his miserly deeds of his past birth. A man should, as sastras say, donate some of his earning to the poor. He should cultivate the habit of doing charitable deeds. Otherwise in his next birth he will again be born as a poor man who will be forced to do sinful deeds and as a result of which he will be placed Narakam [Hell] and after receiving punishment in Hell, he will be born again as a poor man:

**“Adana Doshena Bhaveddaridram
Daridraya Doshena Karothi papam
Papadavasyam Narakam Prayathi
Punar Dadidro Punareva Papi.”**

Another sloka also brings out the importance of Charity and the sloka is as follows:

**“Daridraya Krutam Danam
Soonya Limgascha poojanam
Anadha Pretha Samskaram
Aswamedha samam viduhu.”**

{Helping the poor with money, doing ‘Archana’/‘pooja’ [worship] to the Shiva Lingam of a dilapidated temple, doing funeral rites to the corpse of an orphan are equal to doing Aswamedha Yagam.}

Importance Of Brother

Sri Rama is deeply worried when his brother Lakshmana falls unconscious as he is beaten by ‘Bhramastra’ which is cast on him by Indrajit. He describes the importance of a brother as:

**“Dese dese kalatrani dese dese cha bhandhavaha
Tantu desam na pasyami yatra bhrata sahodara.”**

{One can find wives and relatives in all countries but there is no country where one can find a faithful brother like Lakshmana.}

The Ramayana: Yuddha Kanda

Respect Towards Women (Brother’s wife)

When Lakshmana is asked to identify the ornaments of Sita, he says that he can’t identify the ornaments of head or ear but he can identify the ‘noopuram’ [i.e the ornament of the feet] only because he has the habit of putting ‘namaskaram’ to her feet daily. The sloka is as follows:

**“Naham Janami Keyure Naham Janami Kundale
Noopuretwabhi Janami Nityam Padabhivandanat.”**

-The Ramayana

The above sloka throws much light on the character of Lakshmana.

Service To Humanity

Bhartrihari, a famous Sanskrit poet, in his “Neeti Shatakam” brings out the importance of human birth. The sloka is as follows:

**“Paropakaraya Phalanti Vrukshaha
Paropakaraya Vahanti Nadyaha
Paropakaraya Charanti Gaavaha
Paropakarardha Midam Shareeram.”**

According to Bhartrihari trees bear fruits for others’ sake, rivers flow for others’ sake, cows wander for others’ sake and

the shareeram (human body) itself is for others’ sake (i.e The beneficial use for others).

Respect towards Teacher (Guru)

**“Gurur Brahma Gurur Vishnuhu
Gururddevo Maheswaraha
Gururssakshat Param Brahma
Tasmaishree Guraver Namaha”**

In Indian tradition Guru (teacher) has been given much value and respect. He has been considered to be Brahma (The creator), Vishnu (The Saviour), Shiva (The Destroyer), and also considered to be Param Brahma (The Supreme God). I put “namaskaram” to such Guru.