

Hara Hara Sankara



Jaya Jaya Sankara



Shri Vedavyasaya namah:

**Shri Shankara Bhagavatpadacharya Paramparagatha Mulamnaya Sarvagna Peeta
Shri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam - Kanchipuram**

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Dharmasandesam - 7

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Dr S Venugopala Sharma for Veda DharmaSasthra Paripalana Sabha and released on 11-06-2020.

Namaskarams

In the last few essays, we outlined how food, sleep and family relationship (as a man & wife) are the three pillars that support and sustain our body. Our thoughts meandered around the first pillar, 'Ahara' that is food. We had occasion to ponder over the saying in the 'Chandogya' Upanishat that 'purity in food leads to purity in our thoughts & deeds'. To further prove this, the immortal MahaPeriyava of the Kanchi Sankara Matha, once related the following story in one of his discourses.

A Sage once went up to a King on a courtesy visit. Many thoughts were exchanged, and it was nightfall in due time. The King persuaded the sage to have his night meal in the palace dining hall. The Sage had a sumptuous spread of dishes for his 'bhiksha' and also a silver-pot of water was placed alongside for his drinking. The pot was the one normally reserved for the king. After the meal was over, the sage forgetfully put the empty silver-pot into his hand-bag, without any palace attendant noticing it, and returned to his hermitage.

During the night, the sage found his stomach aching fitfully, as he had not experienced anything like that ever before! He was quite perplexed with the pain that he lost his usual peace of mind. Meditating on the possible reasons for it, he however spent the night. The next day when he started replaying in his mind the sequence of events that happened in the previous

evening, he came to the conclusion that the food he had in the palace could be the culprit. He checked his hand back casually, and his hand stumbled on the silver pot. By that time, the servants there in the palace also noticed that the pot was missing; but no one suspected the sage!

They were very much worried, as it was part of the King's silver that he used for his dining. In the meantime, the sage made it to the palace with the pot and returned it, regretting his inadvertence. He approached the King in his court and asked him, "O King, could you please tell me wherefrom the ingredients were procured for my meal last evening in the palace." The king detailed his minister to enquire about that and report to him. The minister went into the matter deeply, and in no time reported back to the king: "O King, the meal was prepared with the rice seized from a few traders smuggling it across our borders." The king and the sage looked at each other then, not knowing what to do! Then the sage told the king that we should be very careful about the source of our food. If it was procured by foul means, it was bound to affect our health. He quoted the aforementioned saying in Chandogya Upanishat. Hence, it is of utmost importance to us to be mindful of the source of our food.

Dharma flourishes

"Sarve Jana: Sukino Bhavanthu"

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