

Hara Hara Sankara



Jaya Jaya Sankara



Shri Vedavyasaya namah:

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

**Veda DharmaSasthra Paripalana Sabha** Kumbakonam, (Regd. 1942)

### **Dharmasandesam - 9**

As per the benevolent orders of Jagadguru Shri Kanchi Acharya, this article has been compiled by  
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#### **Namaskarams**

The link between 'Achara' (conduct) & 'Ahara' (food) has been engaging our attention for some time now. We have seen how our great Rishis have regulated every moment of our life with their prescription of the detailed steps that we have to take in each & every aspect of our life, so that we do not swerve from the righteous path. We face no issues in such a well-regulated life if we follow those instructions, scrupulously. When we transgress those instructions, we sow the seeds of misery in our life.

We pondered over, last week, the connection between one's conduct and the food one eats, and the subset of the various things connected with 'food' -such as sourcing of the ingredients, the ingredients themselves such as groceries, vegetables & fruits, vessels, place of preparation, the one who prepares the food and, so on. These will have to be examined in three stages:

- 1) That which strikes our external organs – eyes and other sensory organs.
- 2) That which do not hit our eyes, but which are perceptible to Seers-the Maharishis with the great power of their penance, and
- 3) A still higher state -beyond the frontiers of even the perceptions of 'Rishis', but finds a place only in the Vedas. Our Itihaasas & Puranas narrate many incidents of the third category, which Ishwara himself has affirmed. We had occasion to consider in the last few weeks that how these three basic mental attributes of human beings, viz., 'Sattva' (balanced), 'Raajasa' (passionate) and 'Taamasa' (dullard) impact human behaviour. Lord Krishna declares in Bhagavad Gita that these attributes determine the kind of food the respective category of

people choose to eat and why they behave as they do! Generally, the Smritis have detailed notes on what kind of food one should take which are the food one should not eat.

What is interesting to note is that these three attributes apply only to the food consumed by human beings. Our native health-science, Ayurveda lets out a secret that even the food that we eat can contain these attributes. 'Whoever is bestowed overwhelmingly with one of these attributes, though such attributes are not inherent from the time of birth, one feels that that is the highest state and accordingly chooses the kind of food that has the attributes as one's' - so declares Lord Krishna in the 17th chapter of Bhagavad Gita. These attributes impel one's mind to choose a kind of food leading to different degrees of nourishment as well as physical/mental afflictions.

'Sattva' kind of food translates into 'kapha' in liquid form (phlegm), 'Rajas' to 'pitta' – bile – also in liquid form in yellowish colour, and 'vaata' – with a bit of warmth of the wind called 'vaayu'. These three humors Vāta, pittha & kapha in this order impact various stages of the age of all creatures, day time & night time and the food we take, so says Vagbhata -the celebrated author of 'Ashtaanga Hridaya' – a premier text of Ayurveda: 'वयोऽहोरात्रिभुक्तानां तेऽन्तमध्यादिगाः क्रमात्:' (AH. Su.1.8) at the end, middle and at the start of all these above mentioned.

More on this in our next message in this series!

### Dharma flourishes

**"Sarve Jana: Sukino Bhavanthu"**

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