



Can We Rejoice Always?

Dipavali is the day when there is light everywhere. There are reunions and celebrations. People rejoice. A question arises: “Should it not be possible to make this mood a permanent state of your inner being? Should you not try to see if it is possible to perpetuate this mood and make it a permanent state of mind within yourself, so that all the days will be of light, of cheerfulness, of rejoicing?”

We do not require any special day to celebrate God, because God is everywhere, every day, always. So we can always rejoice in Him, because He is a perpetual being. He is eternal. And being all-pervading He is everywhere present. We are never far from Him; He is ever near to us at all times. This very fact, this great truth, which our ancestors realised, provides us with an answer to the question. Certainly it is possible to make it a permanent state due to the very fact that this great eternal Light of lights beyond all darkness dwells within you as your eternal, permanent indweller. That light is within you. So it is certainly possible, because what it takes to live thus, and be thus is already there within you as the essence of all beings.

The wonder is that this possibility is forgotten and the absurdity of such a thing as the absence of God or Light is imagined. It is very strange. This most improbable and impossible situation is referred to in Indian philosophy as Maya.

To be true to our own self, we must be what we are. Therefore, shine! Let your life be an effulgence. Make it impossible for darkness to prevail. All negativity is darkness. The simple little prayer of St. Francis of Assisi is a great reminder of this fact, of this truth.

St. Francis teaches us how to dispel darkness: “Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; and where there is sadness, joy.” This simple prayer is not merely great and beautiful in its idea; it is also great in the philosophy, which it conceals within these simple words. And it concludes by saying that this is the way to find joy within yourself, peace within yourself, to liberate yourself from the little self and to attain your birthright – the eternal Light and everlasting life. Let your life be a bright and shining factor as something divine and positive that all negativity of our human life is replaced by that which is desirable and bright.

God Bless You!

■ *Swami Chidananda*