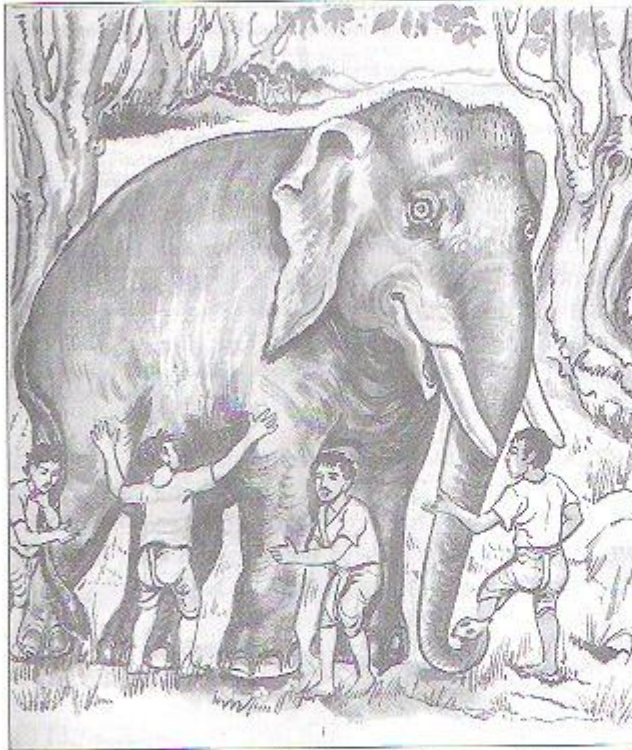


The Blind Children and the Elephant

In a town there was a school for blind children. Teaching blind children was difficult. They are unable to see things. So they do not have any proper idea about most things. They have to use their imagination to understand things.



One day the teacher was telling them a story about an elephant. The children asked, "Sir, what is an elephant?" The teacher said "I cannot describe to you what an elephant is. But I shall take you to an elephant. You can touch it and understand what it is." The children were all happy. They could, by personal touch, know what an elephant is.

The teacher took the children to the Manager of a circus nearby. He told the Manager "Sir, these children are blind. They want to know what an elephant is. Can you please permit them to touch a real elephant?" The manager looked at the blind children.

He was moved with pity. He called one of his assistants. He told him "Take these children to our elephant".

The assistant led the teacher and the students to a tree to which the elephant named Raja was tied. He asked the elephant-keeper to allow the children to touch the elephant safely. So each student was permitted to touch the elephant. All of them surrounded the animal. One of the boys moved his hands over the large ear of the elephant. He caressed the ear with his hand and thought to himself "The elephant is like a fan". Another boy held a leg of the elephant with both his hands. He decided "The elephant is like a big pillar." A third student touched the trunk of the elephant. He understood the elephant is like a thick club. Another touched the stomach of the elephant. He concluded that an elephant is like a huge jar! Everyone was delighted. All of them returned with their teacher to the circus

manager to thank him.

The Manager asked them "So, all of you have touched the elephant. Tell me, what is the animal like?" Each boy began to say what he felt. The first blind boy said "Sir, the elephant is like a huge fan". But the second boy interrupted. "No, no, you have not understood properly. The elephant is like a big pillar similar to the one we have in the school"

The third boy laughed and said "What fools you are! The elephant is neither a fan nor a pillar. It is like the big club we have in our gymnasium". The fourth boy now intervened. He told the Manager "Sir, none of these has felt the elephant properly. I will tell you what it looks like. It is like a huge jar, is it not, sir?"

The discussion became warm. The students began to quarrel among themselves. The manager smiled and asked them to stop the discussion. "I will tell you what the elephant looks like. Each one of you is right and all of you are wrong. Each of you has touched one part of the elephant. From that knowledge you have tried to describe the whole elephant. This is not correct. The elephant is like a fan, like a pillar, like a club and like a jar. But it is something much more than all of these. Only if you see the elephant as a whole can you know what it is. So, don't quarrel with one another."

We are all like these blind children when we quarrel about the nature of God. Each of us can only know a small part of the infinite God. We must not limit God to what we have experienced of Him. God is the sum total of the different experiences of different people and much more than that. We have to be humble when talking of God. We must admit that other views of about God can also be true. ✽

(ஓ பக்கத்தொடர்ச்சி -)

பூசுவதம்- அவர் சாங்கைப் பூசிக் கொண் டால் என்ன?

பேசுவதம்- என்தில் விளங்காத மறை பெய்தில் பேசினால் என்ன?

பூண்பதுவும்- கொடிய நஞ்சுடன் கூடிய அரவங்களை அணிந்து உடலெங்கும் ஓ விட்டிருந்தால் என்ன?

கொண்டு என்னை- இப்பளமெல்லாம் அவர் கொண்டிருந்தாலும் என்னடி? ஏன் நீ இப்படி யெல்லாம் அலரி ஆராய்ந்து பார்த்துக் கொண்டிருக்கிறாய்

ஈசன் அவன் எவ்வயிர்க்கும்- அனைத்து ஈயி-
னங்களுக்கும் அவர் தலைவராக இருந்து
கொண்டு

இயல்பானான்- எனியவராகவும் இருந்து
அருளிவரும்

இயல்பினராகவும் இருக்கின்றாரே

சாழலோ- அவருடைய நுண்ணியல்புகளை
அறிந்து அவற்றை உணர்ந்து சென்னி தழ்த்தி
அவரை வணங்குவாயாக, வனிதா மணியே.

