

who love us sound harsh as beneficial medicines taste bitter,” though we consider them as harsh, scolding and physical punishments are intended to divert us from the paths of wrong doing.

### 1.3.8. Proverbs and Aphorisms

In Bhutan, proverbs and aphorisms are widely used both in general conversation and talks, and also in more structured settings. This is popularly known as *Pche tam* or *Pe tam* and also considered as one of the ornaments of the art of speech. Literally, *Pche/pe* means example, simile, illustration and *tam* means speech, conversation, talk or an account. Thus, *Pche tam* is a figure of speech which appears often in a phrase or short verses. *Pche tam* are composed by intellectuals and wise people, based on after based on experiences and truths and often used to show the right direction to youths. Some proverbs are extracted from lozey and it appears in verse, prose and sometimes in mixture of both verse and prose.

The terms *Pche tam*, *Pe tam*, *Kha tam*, *Leg she*, *Lung drang* and *Lab ja* are synonyms and used by different people in their respective languages. They are considered the ornaments to the way of speaking and important part of our speech.

As “*proverbs are the ornaments of speech*” without the use of some proverbs our conversations are like dead plants without leaves and flowers, while a speech decorated with proverbs is well received by listeners. Proverbs are classified as two types:

#### 1.3.8.1. Religious proverbs

Any proverbs that convey the concept of sacred Dharma and are told by spiritual masters, parents and elders to guide their followers on the path of virtue are called *choe drel gi pche tam* (religious or spiritual proverbs).

For example:

- It is one thing if you are blessed by the wisdom eye, but the rest of us ordinary people must make our own fortune.
- The consequence of mischief done to a nun is more severe than the benefit of circumambulating the sacred place of Tsari (said to be the most difficult of all pilgrimages).
- Making pilgrimage to India and Tibet just by dreaming will not help purify the bodily defilements. Being good at teaching will not remove defilement, being good at crying, cannot remove the sorrow.

- Peace and suffering are like the sun in the summer season; it shines and then disappears a moment later.

#### 1.3.8.2. Laity Proverbs

*Jig ten pai pe tams* (secular proverbs) are mostly associated with the daily activities of ordinary people. These are mostly composed by experienced and learned elders and by the enlightened beings to direct our actions along the right path.

- The bird on top of the tree and the sun on top of the pass. Sow the seeds in spring, rear livestock in summer, store the grain in autumn and conduct rituals in the winter season.
- The normal traditional life of the village, even the mighty King cannot change.
- If you want to feed on a boneless fish and reap fruits without undergoing hardships, you must be born a fortunate person.
- Eat what is acceptable to your body, attire yourself in accordance with time and tradition, speak as appropriate for the occasion, do your work at the right time and make your best effort, bear burdens according to your strength, and make plans according to your ability.

#### 1.3.9. Poem

A literary work written in a meter, verse, prose or in a mixture of both verse and prose with various types of speech used is called *Nyan tsom* or just *Tsom* (ode, a poem or poetry). These are written according to the level of education and knowledge of the writer with the purpose of communicating to the readers or listeners the intended messages in poetic sentences.

These written pieces can either be sung or just narrated and mostly written in Chokey. The subject of *Tsom* covers all genres such as narratives for example legends, stories, human dilemmas, relationships, descriptions, commentaries and elegy, satirical and verse fable etc. Beside these, *Ka-tsom* (alphabetical poetry), is a unique poetry genre and it is as popular among farmers as among literate and/or articulate people. It is a type of acrostic poem whose first line begins with the first Dzongkha letter (ka), follows alphabetically and ends with the last letter (A). Thus it will have 30 lines. Similarly, there is an ode called *a Tsom* (reversed alphabetical poetry) it starts with the last letter (A)