

### 33. Let Your Buddhi Shine

*Sukham aathanthikam Buddhi graahyam atheendhriyam.* The Gita declares that everlasting bliss can be secured by the *Buddhi* (intellect) by transcending the senses. *Sukham* (happiness) cannot be derived through the senses. Sensory pleasures are deceptive and transient. True happiness is permanent and real. Man can realise this only through the *Buddhi*. The intellect is characterised by earnestness and steadiness.

All the pleasures enjoyed by man in ordinary life are related to the senses. *Vishayasukham* (sensuous pleasure) is verily *visha* (poisonous) and not *Amrithasukham* (eternal). These pleasures result in bondage for man and do not elevate him. All the pleasures man enjoys are based on the senses and have no relation to the intellect.

Man should seek the bliss that is real and lasting and this can be got through the *Buddhi*. The *Thaitthireeya Upanishad* has expounded the nature of the *Buddhi* in detail. Comparing *Buddhi* to a bird, the *Upanishad* has described its head as *Sraddha* (earnestness). The two wings of the bird are *Sathya and Ritha*. *Yoga* is its tail. The body is *Mahath-Thatwa*. The five constituents--*Sraddha, Sathya, Ritha, Yoga and Mahath Thatwa*--are parts of *Buddhi*.

Among these *Sraddha* comes first. Man cannot accomplish any undertaking without *Sraddha* (earnest endeavour). All daily actions like eating and walking are prompted by *Sraddha*. "*Shraddhaavaan labhathe Jnaanam,*" says the Gita (The higher wisdom is obtained by the earnest seeker). Nor is that all. The Gita has declared that *Sraddha* as well as *Buddhi* are forms of the Lord. *Buddhi*, therefore, should not be regarded as an ordinary appendage of man. It is associated with *Sraddha, Sathyam* (Truth), *Ritham* (the Cosmic order), *Yoga* and *Mahath* (the Supreme Principle). To treat an attribute that is related to these five significant entities as an ordinary quality in man is the result of viewing it from a mundane perspective.

#### Supremacy of *Buddhi* over mental cleverness

*Buddhi* should not be equated with *Medhaa Shakthi* (mental agility or cleverness). The superiority of *Buddhi* over *Medhaa Shakthi* was proclaimed by King Vikramaditya at an assembly of scholars whom he had gathered for discussing this issue. Without *Buddhi*, with its five important associates, all mental faculties are useless like a fruit without juice, a tree without fruit, a temple without a lamp, or a counterfeit coin. Most intellectuals today, not realising the supremacy of the *Buddhi* and relying only on their intelligence, are ignoring their inherent divinity. *Buddhi* is the divine element in man, which is shining effulgently always. The Gita declares: The *Buddhi* transcends the senses (*Atheendriyam*). It is related to the Divine. What passes for the intellect today is divorced from the Divine and is not *Buddhi* in its real sense. This intellect is limited in its capacity and is motivated by Self-interest. Hence the *Buddhi's* power of discrimination is used by man for selfish purposes. All actions are based on *swartha* (self-interest) and not on *Paraartha* (higher values). Actions which are free from self-interest lead to *Thaarakam* (liberation). Actions based on self-interest lead to *Maarakam* (mortality). The difference between these two should be properly understood. All actions based on the *Aatma-bhaava* (the *Aatmic* feeling) lead to liberation. All worldly actions are *Maaraka* (self-destroying).

#### The object of reciting *manthras*

In olden days, many persons who were observing transitional practices, used to recite some *manthras* before taking food. "*Annam Brahma*" (The food is Brahman). "*Rasam Vishnu*" (The

sweet drink is Vishnu). "*Bhoktho Devo Maheswarah*" (*The partaker is the Lord Maheswara*). Reciting these *manthras*, they would start eating. The object of this prayer was: "May the food that we consume be converted to the vital fluid that circulates in every part of the body and endows the body with all powers. Confer on our mind the capacity to make right use of these powers. Purify our speech in conformity with the nature of the mind."

The physical part of the food that we consume serves the needs of the gross body. The subtle element in it goes to the mind. The subtler element enters into *Vaak* (speech). The *Buddhi* is thus related to the functioning of the body, the organs and the mind. These three are represented by Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara. The *Praana* (life-principle) is related to Brahma. The mind is related to Vishnu and *vaak* (speech) is related to Shiva. These three faculties should not be wasted. They should be utilised properly. The power of speech should be used for speaking the truth. The mind should be directed towards sacred paths. The body given to man should be used for achieving righteousness. *Sareeram-aadyam khalu dharmasaadhanam*. (The body is the primary requisite for realising *Dharma*). Thus, the mind, speech and body are manifestations of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.

### ***Sathya* and *Ritha* are vital in a man's life**

If people today indulge in meaningless and impure activities, it means that they are wasting their Divine gifts. Before undertaking any action, one should utter the prayer: "May my actions be holy. May my speech be helpful to others and not cause any pain to them. May all my thoughts be sacred, godly and purposeful." The rulers and people in ancient days used to sanctify their lives by such prayerful actions.

Two things are vital in a man's life: *Sathya* (Truth) and *Ritha* (Unity in thought, word and deed). In most people today, this triple unity is absent. One reason for this is that people have allowed their intellect to be polluted, as in the case of a lamp in which the chimney is covered by soot from the flame inside and dust from outside. The light from the lamp will be effulgent if the soot inside and the dust outside are removed. In the case of the *Buddhi* (intellect), the soot comes from *Ahamkaara* (ego) and the dust from *Mamakaara* (mine-ness). These two reduce the effulgence of the intellect. They have to be removed to make the *Buddhi* shed its light fully.

### **The role of *Ahamkaara* and *Mamakaara***

To explain how *Ahamkaara* (egoism) and *Mamakaara* (Mine-ness) affect even those who claim to be renunciants, there is an episode from the life of Aadhi Sankaracharya in which Ubhayabhaarathi, the wife of the great scholar, Mandana Mishra, acted as a judge in the debate between Sankaracharya and Mishra. In the first debate Ubhayabhaarathi declared Sankaracharya to be the winner and Mandana Mishra took *Sanyasa* (renunciant stage). Thereupon, Ubhayabhaarathi challenged Sankaracharya to vanquish her in a debate as she was one half of her husband. She also took to *Sanyasa* after losing in the debate.

One day Ubhayabhaarathi saw a *Sadhu* (mendicant) using his drinking vessel as a pillow while resting on the ground and meditating. She remarked to her disciples: "Look at this *Sadhu*! He claims he has renounced everything, but in his attachment for his drinking vessel he is taking care of it by keeping it under his head lest someone should take it. Is this renunciation?" On hearing her words, the *Sadhu* threw away the vessel. While Ubhayabhaarathi and her disciples were returning from the Ganges, Ubhayabhaarathi noticed what the *Sadhu* had done and remarked: "I thought the *sanyasi* had only one defect--attachment. I find he has another: Anger

arising out of ego, *Ahamkaara*. He threw away the vessel enraged by my words. Both attachment and anger are enemies of *thapas*." On hearing these words, the *Sadhu* fell at her feet and declared that she was her preceptor.

### **The purpose of worshipping Devi**

Every man who aspires for experiencing the Divine, should strive to remove the blemishes affecting the *Buddhi* by getting rid of egoism and attachment. When the ego goes, attachment also can be given up easily.

The ego affects in various ways. It induces people in various professions to resort to pomp and ostentation for impressing their clients. Egoism is a demonic quality. Devi has been described as a destroyer of demons. Worshipping of Devi is for the purpose of destroying the demonic qualities in each person.

During the *Mahabharatha* war, Arjuna got dispirited on the ninth day when he saw Krishna bleeding all over, as he shielded Arjuna from the rain of arrows showered by Bhishma. Krishna jumped down from the chariot and advanced towards Bhishma, declaring that He would himself slay Bhishma. Bhishma was so much charmed by the beauty of the Lord that he declared: "If Sri Krishna is coming to kill me, let the same Krishna be my saviour." Devotees nowadays would act differently. If they lost their faith in one deity, they would seek favours from another. But, in fact, there is only one God. Irrespective of names and forms, God is one only.

Dhurga represents *Prakruthi-maatha* (Mother Nature). To overcome the demonic qualities arising out of the influence of Nature, the power of Nature has to be invoked. This is the meaning of the worship of Dhurga. Nature is the protector as well as the chastiser. Lakshmi represents the protecting aspect of Nature. When Dhurga has destroyed the demonic qualities, Lakshmi purifies the mind. Then there is purity in speech, represented by Saraswathi. The worship of Dhurga, Lakshmi and Saraswathi is thus undertaken to get rid of the impurities in the mind and purify one's thoughts, words and deeds.

*Prakruthi* (Nature) is the embodiment of the Divine. Man perceives Nature and experiences Nature, but is unable to recognise the Divinity in Nature. To see the external manifestations of the Divine and yet fail to recognise the Divine is a sign of stupidity.

Man sees Nature in the form of the Universe, which is *Virata-Swaroopa* (Cosmic form of Vishnu). Has the Lord any particular form or abode? No. He is everywhere. He is you and you are He. The day you recognise this, you will comprehend God. If you want to see the Divine in you, you have to use your *Buddhi*, just as you need a mirror to see your own eyes, which are able to see everything else in the world. It is folly to seek the Divine elsewhere. God is nearer to you than your own mother. With purity of heart, you can experience the Divine within through your intellect. Love is the means to have this experience, for Love is God.

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