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Vibhuthi Yoga And Practical Life

*Who makes the sun rise and set regularly,
and race across the sky everyday?*

*Who makes the stars that spangle the sky
at night vanish by day?*

*Who makes the Wind-god sustain, without
respite for a moment, billions of lives the
world over?*

*Who has made the bubbling brook that
gurgles along its winding course forever?*

*Why then should there be man-made
barriers of caste, creed and wealth?*

*Worship Him, the Lord of the Universe, to
whose command all are bound.*

*Do not deny the Lord just because you do
not see Him. Your ignorance denies you
the vision of God even as daylight renders
the stars invisible to you.*

Embodiments of Love!

For many millennia, the *Bhagavad Gita* has been propagating the high ideals of the life divine. It is a peerless spiritual text that has brought great fame to Bharath. It has been the special privilege of Bharath to have received the *Bhagavad Gita*. The *Gita* is a unique scriptural poem, unsurpassed in metaphysical content by the texts of any other country.

Unfortunately today, however, there is a growing miscomprehension of the message of the *Gita*. Some say that the *Gita* teaches the path of action or *karma marga*. Others aver that it proclaims the path of devotion or *bhakthi marga* alone. And quite a few hold that the *Gita* expatiates on the path of wisdom or *jnana marga* alone. Thus, depending on their own subjective experiences and powers of understanding, different people have been developing varying ideologies based on the teachings of the *Gita*.

The *Gita* observes no distinctions on the basis of caste, creed, community, or nationality or between men and women. It is an eclectic and catholic scripture, transcending all man-made barriers, and is of universal relevance. It reveals the importance of one's own *dharma* or duty (*swadharma*) to all those who study it in a spirit of adoration.

“*Dharmakshetre kurukshetre....*” So runs the first verse of the *Gita*. The first word of the first line is

Dharma. The last word of the last verse of the *Gita* is *mama* (*Yatra Yogeshwarah Krishna...Dhruva nitir matir mama*). The fusion of *mama* and *dharma* is *mama dharma*, which means one's own *dharma* or *swadharm*. Thus, the *Bhagavad Gita* teaches each individual the principles of his own *dharma*.

The articulator of the *Gita* is Krishna. Krishna, however, is also the person who heard the *Gita* and wrote it. This statement may be surprising to you. "Was it not Arjuna who heard the *Gita*? How could Arjuna be Krishna? Was it not Vyasa who wrote the *Gita*? How could Vyasa be Krishna?" it might be asked. The answers to these questions have been very simply given by Krishna Himself!

"*Pandavanam Dhananjayah*" or "among the Pandavas I am Arjuna", said Krishna in the tenth chapter of the *Gita*, the chapter titled *Vibhuthi Yoga*. Furthermore, among the nine names which Arjuna has, the epithet Jayakrishna equates him with Krishna (God). Since Krishna was firmly established in Arjuna's heart and since there was total spiritual empathy between them, it is absolutely correct to say that Krishna was not only the articulator of the *Gita* but also the person who heard it.

In the same manner, Krishna has identified Himself with Vyasa. "Among the *munis*, I am Vyasa", said Krishna. Not only this: the Lord dwells in the hearts of the sages. It would, therefore, be quite correct to say

that Krishna Himself wrote the *Gita*. We are reminded, in this context, of the words of Potana, the poet, by which he declares that the *Bhagavatha*, which he had written in Telugu, was composed by Ramachandra, the Lord. Potana was so devoid of the ego that he became the medium of divine poetic afflatus.

In the chapter *Vibhuthi Yoga*, Krishna proclaims His identity with the best and the most exalted of all the sentient and the insentient beings in creation. It is no doubt true that Krishna is omnipresent, that He pervades the whole universe. Nevertheless, He identifies Himself only with the best, the foremost and the highest of various beings, both animate and inanimate. "I am the Himalayas among the mountains, the Ganges among the rivers, Vasudeva among the Yadavas, the peepul tree among the trees, the lion among the beasts, the cow among cattle, Prahlada among the demons, the king-cobra among snakes, and Garuda among the birds", Krishna declared, for He is the integral incarnation of superlative excellence and perfection.

Krishna declares that He is the *prana* or life-force in all beings. The head is of great importance for man, and the body comes next. But body and head are not enough for man as there must be *prana*, the *elan vital*, to keep the body and the head functioning. Thus, Krishna says, "I am the *prana* in all *jivas*." He is the *prana* for the physical body just as *mumukshatva* or desire for liberation is the *prana* or life-force for all spiritual

endeavours of which *nityanitya pariseelana* (differentiating the real from the unreal) is comparable to the head, and *sama* (tolerance), *dama* (endurance) and other virtues, to the human body.

Krishna also states in the *Vibhuthi Yoga* that He is Light (*Jyothi*), Prosperity (*Aishwarya*), Courage (*Dhairya*), and Bliss (*Ananda*). The divine utterances of Krishna should inspire students to perform right actions in their daily lives. God manifests Himself as divine effulgence and we must, therefore, make an optimum use of the Divine light of wisdom. On the physical plane too, we must ensure that the body is kept healthy by well-illuminated and clean surroundings.

Aiswarya is also a divine *Vibhuthi* (attribute of the Lord). Therefore, you should try to uphold the divine nature of *aiswarya* by spending your money and wealth properly, and for the promotion of *dharma* (righteousness). Misuse of money is an evil and it leads to sin. If the students of today are developing evil thoughts and habits, it is because they have too much money to spend. You should be careful in your spending and must curtail your expenditure. If you require ten rupees to meet your needs, ask for only nine rupees from your parents. On the other hand, if you ask for fifty rupees, you will be spending only ten rupees rightfully and you squander away the other forty rupees, ruining yourself. You should regard money as being as precious as blood and use it with prudence. It is only when you

spend money properly and for the promotion of *dharma* that it can be regarded as *aiswarya*, or divine *Vibhuthi*—otherwise, it could only be considered as the devil's gift!

Courage or *dhairya* is also a divine *Vibhuthi*. True courage is the *dhairya* that comes from the practice of *dharma* (right action) and as a benediction from God. All other forms of courage, such as the courage which is based on physical prowess or intellectual strength, are of no avail. Physical and mental strength, economic power and public influence are like passing clouds.

The body is meant to enable man to perform sacred actions and spend his time in such a manner that Time, the ultimate destroyer, is itself destroyed by him. This transition to the deathless state is brought about by spiritual evolution. Just as the minerals became the tree, the trees gave rise to animate life, and the lower animals evolved into man, man too should evolve further and become God.

Mukti or liberation is the attainment and experience of pure, unalloyed and absolute Bliss. Some ignorant people think that *mukti* is attained only after death or in some future life. This simplistic view involves a gross misconception of *mukti*. *Mukti* really means freedom from bondage and implies an ascent from a lower state to a higher state. It is the result of a process of transcendental evolution by which the human becomes the Divine. Your mother liberates you from

the pangs of hunger by giving you food, and your doctor liberates you from the agony of disease with some medicine. These, however, cannot be examples of true liberation. Food and medicine are palliatives that only temporarily relieve you of pain. True liberation is attained when you merge with the Almighty and experience absolute Bliss.

Will the snake die if you keep beating the anthill? Will the vices in man die if the body is punished? Does one become the knower of the Self merely by giving up food and water? How can the science of the Self be known unless you know yourself? Therefore, first try to realise who you are. You must know from where you have come and whither you are going. When you write a letter, you put on the envelope the “from address” and the “to address” and only then drop it in the mailbox. But, if the envelope does not have these addresses, there is every likelihood of the letter finding its way to the wastepaper basket in the post office. Your life is like a postal envelope and you must know the name of the sender as well as that of the addressee; otherwise, it will be lost in the dustbin of worldliness.

Thus, you must know where you have come from, what you are and where you are going. In other words, you should comprehend your divine antecedents, your divine nature and your divine destiny. You must strive to get back to the spiritual haven from which you have come. You have come from the *Atma*, you are essentially

the *Atma*, and you must realise your identity with the *Atma*. Dedicate your faculties for the realisation of the sublime truth of your divinity.

Man should realise that his relationships with his family and friends and all his worldly attachments, are primarily based on the physical body. A man and his wife are strangers before they got married. The relationship between a husband and his wife does not exist prior to their marriage. Similarly no filial love could be there between a baby and its mother before the birth of the baby. It is only after the baby is born that the relationship between the child and the mother arises. All mundane bonds are ephemeral. The *Atma* that you really are knows no parents or other relations. To realise the truth that you are the *Atma*, you must acquire spiritual knowledge (*Adhyatmika Vidya*).

Secular knowledge is no doubt necessary to eke out one's living, but spiritual knowledge is essential if the purpose of life is to be fulfilled. Spiritual knowledge is comparable to the infinite ocean, whilst the various branches of secular knowledge are like the rivers which ultimately merge in it. Spirituality enables an individual to harmonise the separate elements of his psyche into an integrated experience of the immanent Divinity. Secular knowledge, on the contrary, has brought about the dehumanisation and the fragmentation of the human personality.

Here is a small illustration. Ten students specialise

in different branches of medicine. One of them becomes an ophthalmologist and another, a cardiologist. A third becomes an ENT specialist. Like this, they become specialists in ten different fields. They acquire so much expertise in their respective fields that they cannot see a patient as a harmonious, integral personality and are unable to look after his general well-being. Each of them performs an operation by which the patient is cured of the ailment which falls within the ambit of his own limited knowledge. None of them can ensure, by himself, total health for the patient. All their specialisation is directed merely for their own individual prosperity. The vivisection of the human body into many parts for the purpose of medical attention is designed to promote the selfish interests of a few.

We have to recognise the divine macrocosmic principle which governs and regulates all microcosmic entities in the universe. When you see a piece of cloth in its entirety you can know that it is, say, a handkerchief. But if only portions of the piece of cloth are exposed to your gaze, how will you be able to identify it and know that it is a handkerchief? Thus, the prevailing tendency towards specialisation in modern education is leading to the atomisation of the human psyche.

“Why should you study and stuff your mind with all sorts of useless knowledge and then die in ignorance to be born again and again? Acquire that knowledge which will make you immortal”, said Vemana. You may

be well-versed in worldly knowledge, but without knowledge of the Self, you will remain an ignoramus. Man searches in the world outside but fails to find his true self therein, just as a person who looks for some article in a room is unable to see himself. Seek within, realise the Self, which resides there, and then experience the Bliss of God.

Bliss or *Ananda* is a divine *Vibhuthi*. That is why it is said, “happiness is union with God.” Your true nature is bliss. Know this and be cheerful always. The mind that is morose harbours nothing but malice and jealousy. Divinity cannot reside in such unholy minds. Cheerfulness is the first sign of spirituality. Therefore, strive to be happy always. Live in contentment and with cheer and thereby qualify yourself for the experience of Divinity which is Bliss supreme.

Sound or *sabda* is also a *Vibhuthi*. Divinity is described as “*Sabda Brahma mayi*” or as being immanent in sound. Use the faculty of your speech in a manner that is becoming of your divine status. Speak gently and softly. Do not let your tongue indulge in evil talk or revile others and misuse the God-given gift of speech.

Embodiments of love, students!

You have been here for a month now and have imbibed the high ideals of Indian culture and spirituality. It is My hope that you will carry their message with

you and live as examples for your brethren everywhere. By *vidya* (education), you get *vinaya* (humility). Humility confers on you the deservedness by which you acquire wealth. Wealth you must put to use for the promotion of *dharma*, and that would lead to both material prosperity and spiritual upliftment.

Students!

It is indeed a misfortune that education these days is making the youth unfit for rendering selfless service to their motherland. Modern education is merely churning out useless degrees which only operate as begging-bowls in the job-market. Make your life meaningful by acquiring spiritual knowledge.

Remember your great ancient heritage and revere your parents as the embodiments of God. Your mother and father are God for you. Do not cause them anguish now, for your children will surely cause you pain in your later life, as for everything in this world there is a reaction and a reflection. For the sacrifices they undertake for you and for your own future well-being, love your parents and serve them with devotion. Be good, do good and see good—that is the way to God!