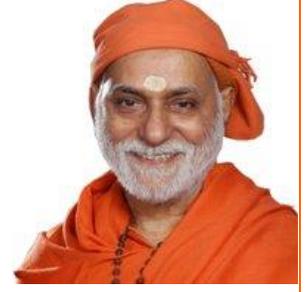


Austerity and *raaga-dvesha-bhaya*

prabhāta-raśmiḥ

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Harih Om Tat Sat. Jai Guru.

Yesterday during this time, I was speaking about austerity, as suggested by Maa. I would like to continue the theme. We have a body. Only when the body is born, we consider somebody to be born. When the body becomes functionless, we also say that the person has gone; he has ceased to exist. So the body is the fulcrum, the fundamental in our life; it is agreed. But mind you, the body by itself will not be able to do any function at all. At best, it can be considered as an instrument for different types of activity and interaction.

Then what is important in our life? What makes the body function and what employs the bodily limbs? What is that? The inner personality consisting of mind and intelligence primarily and an ego. If this is the fact, then all our austerity should be addressed to the mind, to the intelligence and to the ego!

If we start applying *viveka*, a thoughtful introspection over the subject, you will find, all kinds of austerity should have a direct bearing on the mind. It is from the mind that various types of emotional urges proceed. What are they? Primarily *raaga*, *dvesha* and *bhaya*. This is what features throughout Bhagavad Geeta.

We have the mind, but the mind produces a number of attractions, repulsions and fears. All our activity is triggered by these triple urges - either a desire, or a greed, or a hatred, or a dislike, or a fear, which is often undue and unjustified. Once you understand it, the purpose of the austerity should be to release the mind, touch these three - *raaga*, *dvesha* and *bhaya*, and go on sublimating them.

What do you mean by sublimation? Our mind should function like a moonlight or a moonbeam. It should not have anything like a heat coming from it. Either the heat of *raaga*, or the heat of *dvesha*, or the heat of *bhaya*. It is these three urges that multiply

themselves into many others. So an activity should be taken up not to indulge in *raaga*, *dvesha* and *bhayas*. Mark my expression. Not to strengthen them, support them; increase them in number and intensity. On the other hand, every activity should be done with a view to eliminate and sublimate *raaga-dvesha-bhayas*.

Perform in this world, act in this world – domestic, professional, societal, religious, spiritual activities – all of them will be there! Nothing is to be denied. There should be no reluctance at all to take up anything from time to time. But while doing so, make sure that it is not an extension, an expression of your desire, hatred, or fear. On the other hand, you do it with a view to eliminate these three and sublimate them. It is actually a reverse gear process, so far as the mind is concerned. You may suddenly wonder as to whether this is possible at all or not? This alone is possible.

As long as you work with *raaga*, *dvesha*, and *bhaya*, the mind will not only be constricted, it will be blazing. A desireful mind is never peaceful; a hateful mind is all the more so, and a fearful mind - nevertheless it is so. The mind is at peace only when it is pure that is - free of *raaga*, *dvesha*, and *bhaya*. Now in order to make the mind like this you have to do a lot of search, research, evaluation, verification, etc. This is done by the intelligence. And with the help of what does the intelligence do this? With the help of our scriptures and allied scriptural compositions. Valmiki Maharshi wrote Ramayana only to give the people of the place a beautiful figure, personality like Sri Rama, whose life, whose activities, whose exploits, when remembered, will be a panacea for the mind. This is the purpose of Ramayana. Mahabharata is all the more so. Bhagavad Geeta is the central scene of the entire Mahabharata drama.

By reading or by hearing to the scriptural compositions you will find a number of thoughts are generated. They are instilled into your mind. As against the worldly thoughts, which go on repeating, repeating, and repeating, these spiritual philosophical inputs from the scriptural compositions will also gain a place in your mind. There will come a time when you will be convinced of the tormenting nature of secular life and the relieving nature of spiritual life. So these inputs will be sought more and more by you, you will start indulging or involving yourself in spiritual thinking. The more and more you do so, the lighter and lighter the *raaga-dveshas* become, the weaker and weaker they become, and there will ideally a level and a state where all the three will become extinct.

That extinction as such may not be within your reach immediately, but certainly as in every examination, we have children or students scoring 50, 60, 70, 80, 85, 90 percent, like that. Here also you can reach that stage.

Our austerity should always be this. In Narayanasrama Tapovanam, right from the beginning, I felt that sublimation of *raaga*, *dvesha* and *bhayaas* is all that we need to do.

So the austerity is not so much physical in the matter of regulating the food, avoiding the food, and so many other disciplines. But these physical disciplines will help you until at last you understand that it is the mind, and mind alone, and that too acted upon by the intelligence. So our scriptures and scriptural discussions and narrations, they have a great inestimable value in the matter of generating, preserving and strengthening the real inner, mento-intellectual austerity. Remember this.

Harih Om Tat Sat. Jai Guru.

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