

स्वच्छभारत् Clean India

Swami ParamarthanandaSaraswati's New year talk 2015

First of all, I wish you all a happy, healthy, prosperous and successful new year 2015. Today, I would like to share my thoughts regarding a topic which has been going rounds in the newspaper very often and the topic is "clean India", or "*svaccabharat*", a significant campaign, initiated by our Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi. And I consider that it is very important campaign, which of course requires all our support. And this idea of cleanliness or purity, is something very much in our scriptures. But unfortunately, it is only in the scriptures and we do not seem to be following it and therefore we have to lend a thought in that direction.

In the Vedas also *saucam* is talked with and in Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna repeatedly emphasis it. In the 13th chapter, Krishna mentions several spiritual values, *acaryopasanam*, *saucam*, *sthairyam*, *atmavinigrahaha*. And in the 16th chapter, as *daivisampat*, Krishna again reinforces, cleanliness or purity, *tejah*, *ksama*, *dhriti*, *saucam*. And in *astanga-yoga*, *yama* and *niyama* are two set of disciplines, and there also Patanjali maharishi, emphasises this, as the first *niyama* - *saucasantosah*, *svadhyaya*, *isvarapranidanaha*. Thus purity or cleanliness is very important as a spiritual value.

And at this topic of *suddhi*, or *saucam*, is very elaborately discussed in our scriptures at five different levels. And today, I would like to share that topic briefly.

Purity at five layers 1. *Desasuddhih*, 2. *Anna suddhih*, 3. *Dehasuddhih*, 4. *Vaksuddhih* 5. *manassuddhih*.

Each one of the later layer is tougher and very important also, especially for a spiritual seeker. We have to start with the grossest and outer most layer, and gradually we should pay attention to the purity of the subtler layers.

1. "*Desasuddhih*". Here the word "*desa*" means the place where we live. In fact, the conditions of the external world will heavily depend upon the condition of our house. Therefore, we have to start with the place we live, and then the surroundings. And if they are clean, generally, the country will be clean. And when we talk about the cleanliness of the place, it includes, 'orderliness' also. Cleanly disorderliness is not going to work. It should be uncluttered and orderly. We should first know what all the things that are inside the house. Many of us do not know what things are inside. So, as they say, everything has a place and everything in its place - just two rules. If we follow this rule, we are taking care of the first step of "*desasuddhih*", or cleanliness or hygiene.

2. "*Anna suddhih*". The food that we eat must be clean and pure. And in *Chandogya Upanishad*, it is pointed out that whatever food we consume has got three layers- *stula*, *madhyama* and *sukshmaamsas*.

The grossest part of the food, gives us the taste of the food and later it goes as a waste. The medium, middle part of the food caters to physical nourishment and the third layer, only our *sastrastalk* about, (the nutritionists do not talk about that) caters to our *suksmasareeram*, or mind in particular, which forms our personality and character.

And therefore, we have to eat only those foods, which will be good and healthy for our mind also.

Aharasuddhausatvasuddhih; satvasuddhau Dhruva smrtih; smriti-lambhesarva granthinamvopramoksah

That is why we ban non-vegetarian food as well as liquor, drug etc., because they are not good for spiritual health at all. And our scriptures point out, not only the type of food, but the one who cooks the food and the one who serves the food, the source from where it comes, all of them also contribute to our inner condition. That is why they suggest, "home food is always best".

And if we cannot do all these things, there is a general suggestion. That is, before consuming food, you may offer to the Lord physically. And if you are consuming elsewhere, atleast mentally offer to the Lord.

Annam brahma; rasovishnuh; bhoktade vomaheshvarah; evamjnatvati yobhukteanna dosaihinalipyate

The food is *Brahma*; the nutrition inside is *Vishnu*; and the one who digests inside our stomach is Lord *Shiva*. Remembering *Brahma*, *Vishnu* and *Shiva*, if you consume *annam*, that *annam* is always pure. Thus, *annasuddhi* is emphasized.

And in the *sandhyavandhanam*, a *prayascitta* prayer is also there – *yaduccistam - abhojyam yadva-duscaritam mama*.

O Lord, whatever I have consumed yesterday, whatever *papam* it brings, I don't know. Let all of them be washed with this prayer. So, this is "*annasuddhih*".

3. "*Dehasuddhih*"- the cleanliness of the body. The medical science is now talking about cleanliness of every part of the body. And a day has been dedicated for hand washing now. They are talking so much about washing the hands, before eating food. Sages were carrying a '*kamandulu*' all the time, "*apa-up- sprasya*" means handwashing must be regularly done.

Similarly "*acamaniyam*" - mouth washing. Not only regular mouth washing, but cleaning the teeth, ears, eyes, stomach etc., are emphasised in olden days. And in *yoga-sastra*, they talk about, "*nadisuddhi*". *Pranayama* is supposed to be a wonderful practice for cleaning the internal physiological system.

4. "*Vaksuddhih*". Our mouth is continuously producing words. These words can make wonderful result or it can destroy relationship; it can destroy a family; it can destroy an organisation, because of wrong words used at wrong time.

Therefore, our scriptures considered, "*vak tapas*", or "*vaksuddhih*", as an important purity for them. And therefore, whenever we talk, they say, watch for quality control. Also one should talk consciously, deliberately. And to control the quality, in the *Bhagavad Gita*, Lord Krishna, gives four parameters:

1. *Anudvegakaram* – make sure that it does not disturb the other people, non-hurtful words, *ahimsa* – quality no. 1, avoid verbal *himsa*.

2. *Satyam*- non-hurtful, truthful, transparent.

3. *Priyam* – peaceful, gentle, pleasant. Even an unpleasant message can be given in a pleasant manner. The adverse impact of an unpleasant content can be diluted, by communicating that content, in a very thoughtful and pleasant manner. Therefore the manner of communication, the tone of communication, the facial expression during communication, the body language during communication; they all can be gentle. That is called *priyam*.

Priyavaakyenapradhaanenasarveytushyanti janthavaha: thasmaathvakthavavakthavyam, vachaneyaaHDRARIDRATHA.

By talking a few pleasant words, everybody will be happy. Then why can't you use some pleasant words? Why should you be stingy? So, gentleness is the third parameter.

4. *Hitam* - The word must be useful. It must take care of interest of all the people

Therefore, *ahimsa, satya, priya, hitavaakyam*, these four parameters, we are supposed to observe, before we utter the word. And if we are careful, we won't have much to talk.

And, this "*vaksuddhih*", is considered extremely important for one's own well being and as well as, well being of the surrounding also. Therefore, in our Scriptures, it is glorified. And the Scriptures point-out, the best ornament for a person is '*vaksuddhih*'. If "*vaksuddhih*" is there, even if no other ornaments are there, that person

will be beautiful person. He will attract all people to himself.

On the other hand, you can think of the reverse, a person has got best dress, the best ornament. Even if all of them are there, if his tongue is lashing, rude, stinging tongue, then, nobody will like to go anywhere near him. After ten minutes conversation, thereafter, if I see that person, I will avoid.

If we are failing in relationship, we have to do introspection. Often, there is a problem for us with regard to our talking. Unfortunately, we never know that we have a bad tongue. The indication is, generally, people avoid me, generally people become hostile towards me. If one or two incidents happens, it might be other's problem, consistently, if it is happening, then I have to introspect and check the quality of my utterings. There are many *slokas* talking about beautiful speech.

And *shudhdhava* is called *Samskrutavak*.

Sloka: Lakshmi vasatheyyigvaagrey; jigvaagrey baandavaa: bandhanamcaivajigvaagreyji gvaagreymaranamdravam.

Prosperity is at the tip of your tongue. Relationships are decided whether they are there or not by the tip of tongue, words that come out, you will be arrested for wrong words, *maranamdravam*.

So, this is called *vaksuddhih*.

5. "*Manassuddhih*"- Cleanliness or the purity of the mind is also very elaborately talked about in our scriptures. In Bhagavad Gita, 16th chapter is exclusively dedicated for that, titled, *daiva- asura-vibhaga yoga*. Healthy thoughts are called *devas*, *daivam* and unhealthy thoughts are called *asuravrittaya*. We have to look upon our

mind as a garden and all the healthy thoughts mentioned in 16th Chapter we have to carefully nourish. Then the mind will be like a garden, which will give *aananda* to ourselves. A nice garden at home, will give *aanandha* to others also.

And when we are tending the garden, we have to regularly weed out the wrong plants. Thus manage your mind a garden. Similarly one important topic of 'ragadveshamanagement' as a part of *manassuddhih*, is stressed here in Gita.

Ragah means attachment or liking and *dvesha* means dislike. And if I have to manage my *ragadvesha*, I should understand the ways of *ragadvesha*. So, the scriptures talk about their ways, their nature, their features.

The first point we have to note about *ragadveshais*, we can only try to manage and can never eliminate it. *Ragadvesha* destruction does not exist. Dayananda Swamiji, nicely says, 'even our Gods have preferences. Vigneshwara, for *naivedhyam* wants '*kozhakattai*'. Krishna always likes 'butter'. When Gods themselves have got their own preferences, how can we human beings avoid? Therefore, the first point is, *ragadveshas* cannot be avoided.

In the Gita, Krishna says, *Indriyasindriyartharthey, ragadveshauve vasthithau*. *Raga* and *dvesha* will be there. *Ragadveshas* give happiness, if they are advantageous and give sorrow if they are disadvantageous.

My *ragadvesha* conforming or compliant events will give happiness. I will call

CS – Compliant or conforming situations (which gives happiness) and

NS – Non Compliant nonconforming situations (which gives unhappiness).

This is the second point.

The third point is, in life, events are not going to happen based on my *ragadvesha*. Events are going to be governed by several factors, which are known or unknown. So many events can be CS and many events can be NS also. So, life is a mixture of CS and NS. Therefore life involves continuous confrontation of CS and NS, unpredictable, no advance notice. And people behaviour also is going to be or not going to be based on my *raga* or *dvesha*. Others are not going to behave according to my *ragadvesha*, they will not respect my *ragadvesha*, because their acts and behaviours will be governed by their own *ragadveshas*.

So, all our human interaction will involve lot of NS which are unavoidable and our *ragadveshas* are increasing and becoming finer and finer. You cannot avoid *ragadvesha* and therefore cannot avoid NS also.

The next point is NS will always cause emotional disturbances (ED) in the form of disappointment, irritation, anger, hatred, regret, worry and in the modern word of STRESS.

So, *ragdvesha* (RD) to NS to emotional disturbance, is our daily life. Now and then, we have CS. And during that moment, you smile. So RD, NS and ED are unavoidable. There is no choice.

The next important point, where we have a choice.

From Emotional Disturbance (ED), the next possible stage is Emotional Slavery (ES). This is based on important psychological principle, when any emotion disturbance

like fear, hatred, anger, anxiety or jealousy stays in mind it can grow very fast. Any emotions outside the mind cannot survive like fish out of water. Once emotion becomes very strong, you cannot eliminate it, it stays there and the mind becomes slave of that particular emotion. This emotional slavery is a very serious problem.

Emotional disturbance is unavoidable, it is a minor problem. But emotional disturbance to emotional slavery is a serious problem. Because once emotional slavery comes, my mind is no more available for me. Mind becomes useless. When the mind becomes useless, I become useless. The second problem is mind becomes harmful to me. When there is a stress in the mind for a longer time, we get varieties of health problems. All the problems, which are dormant in the body will grow up. Their cancer is wide spread because, the immunity system is failing because of stress.

Therefore we have to avoid emotional slavery. And it is possible using our free will. We don't have choice in the first three stages – RD to NS to ED, but freewill can function in the fourth stage of the blocking the conversion of ED to ES.

The five methods useful towards this blocking of the conversion of ED to ES are

1. *Vivekha* – remembering ES makes me useless and it is harmful to me. ES doesn't have any advantage and is harmful to me.
2. *Sankalpa*: - A strong auto-suggestion that I will be alert through out the day. ED is going to happen several times but I will be alert of not converting ED to ES.

3. *Pratipakshabhavana* – whenever negative thoughts are continuously going on, I have to use my freewill to generate positive thoughts or neutral diversion thoughts to displace ED. You completely flush ED out by replacing them with your free-will.
4. *Satsangha*: - to have positive thoughts, remember some model people and their teachings, who are embodiment of courage and positive thoughts. Studying of Bhagavad Gita will help to give lot of positive thoughts.
5. *Prarthana* – Pray to the Lord. O Lord, I should have the strength to avoid emotional slavery. Emotional disturbances, I cannot avoid, it is inbuilt. Give me the strength and freewill to avoid emotional slavery. This is called *manassuddhih*.

Manassuddhih means, having only those *ragadveshas* which will not create any emotional slavery. Toxic *ragadveshas* produce ES. Non toxic *cragadveshas* will not produce ES.

Bhagavan Krishna says... "*ragadvesha viyudvaishu, indriyaanindriyais charanatmavisyayi vide atmaprasaada madigachchathi*".

When you have a mind which is well protected by this five point programme, you have got *manassuddhih*. And if you follow this *panchashudhhi*, you can be successful in the material life as well as spiritual life. So, let's follow *svaccabharat* programme.

—Transcribed by
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