

Sādhana-pañcakam
Pujya Swamiji's transcribed talk

This is the twenty second part of the serial article, continuation from Nov 2022 newsletter.

BE INDIFFERENT TO PRAISE OR CENSURE

Jana-kṛpā-naiṣṭhuryam utsṛjyatām: This compound can be split *janānāṁ kṛpā naiṣṭhuryam*, do not react to the praise and censure of others. Sometimes people have got *kṛpā* and they praise you. Sometimes they censure you also. Here *kṛpā* means *praśamsā*, praise. People have great appreciation for you and therefore they praise you, flatter you, but do not get flattered. Or they will censure you, but do not become flat. So the advice is, 'Don't get flattered or flattened!'

People will praise you based upon their own judgment and say you are a great *mahātmā*. Then afterwards, when they do not get what they want, they will put you down. You are what you are and they will praise you from their own standpoint. You do not know what things they have on their scales for measuring you. If you do not fulfil those things, then you will fall in their image of you. Once you fall in their image, you become upset because they are so important for you. Why? Because they flatter you. This is a problem for *mahātmās*. People will praise you and they will put you down also. You cannot stand that so that is why he says from the beginning, *kṛpā naiṣṭhuryam utsṛjyatām*. *Utsṛjyatām* means *parityajyatām*, may that be given up. Even if there is censure, do not censure yourself. Do not try to please people either. Appeasement does not work at all. Do not try to please them just because they censure you. Simply leave them alone. *Duniyā to baḍā vistār hai!*, the word is a very vast place.

When people censure you, the world is very vast. You can go away and leave them alone. Everybody has got accommodation in this world. Do not try to appease them. Appeasement never works. I have seen this and learnt the hard way. You should never take up appeasement work. Those who need appeasement need treatment. It is a waste of time and not helpful for you or the other person. Therefore, let them say you are bad, it does not matter. Leave them alone. You have not taken charge of people in the world. Bhagavān is there, he will take care of them. You need not bother about it. You take care of yourself, that is enough.

AVOID USELESS SPEECH

Then, in between, the verse says *na tu vṛthā vākyaṁ samuccāryatām*; may you refrain from speaking words that have no meaning. *Vṛthā* means *vyartham*, useless, so *vṛthā vākya* means words that have no meaning. *Na samuccāryatām*, may they not be spoken. Why? Because they have no meaning. This is called *vāk-tapas*, discipline with reference to speaking. If your speaking is alright, your thinking will also become alright. It is in speaking alone that you have to correct your thinking. Because you cannot really do anything about how you think. If you can correct your expression, then your thinking will naturally adjust itself. The whole thinking will change as your speaking changes. Therefore, words which have no meaning at all, even complaints that are not heard by anybody else, all of these should be given up. They have no meaning because they have no productivity. Maybe it is good for you to exhaust your energy or some emotional buildup, but a *mumukṣu* definitely should not speak useless words.

This includes unproductive words such as gossip. Gossip is also called *vṛthā vākya*. May you refrain from gossiping. If somebody did something, why do you bother about it? People who bother about what others did are people who want to do the same thing. That is why they talk about it. If someone says, 'Did you hear...?', it means that that is exactly what this person wants to do. Suppose you want to do something and you cannot, either because you are chicken or because you have some kind of value or whatever. And if others do it, you start gossiping. Talking about others is one of the worst things that one can do. A *mumukṣu* cannot afford to do that. Leave people's personal lives alone and do not talk about them. This is a very important thing. No one's personal life should be attacked by anybody.

While teaching, I may say things about what a person says. That is a different thing because it is *śāstra*. But some people dabble in the *śāstra* without any responsibility and we have to deal with those statements. They are modern *pūrova-pakṣas*, philosophical opponents and it is the teacher's job to respond. We deal only with the words they use, the philosophies that they propound. These have to be examined because somehow they have gone into your head. And if they have already gone into your head, then we have to remove them. That is my job and that is what I do. But you should definitely not say anything about the person's personal

life or lifestyle. That is his lookout. They are all adults and can take care of themselves. Therefore *na tu vrthā vākyam samuccāryatām*; never, never talk about others' personal lives. This is one of the important things in a seeker's life.

I go one more step and say do not even use adjectives which have no meaning. Why use them? There is no need to say 'white milk,' for example, or 'good *sādhu*.' These adjectives are all unnecessary words. Do not use words that are redundant, like 'eternal immortal.' Eternal is enough, why immortal, infinite? Infinite is eternal, eternal is immortal, immortal is eternal, eternal is infinite. 'Eternal, immortal, infinite, supreme consciousness, at once divine, spiritual centre, sparks in your heart.' When used together like that, they are redundant. These are all words to be unfolded, not simply used.

MAINTAIN EQUANIMITY

Then, *audāsīnyam abhīpsyatām; āptum iṣyatām*, may you desire to achieve *audāsīnyam, udāsīnasya bhāvaḥ*. *Audāsīnyam* is having the attitude of *udāsīnaḥ*. *Udāsīnaḥ* means one who does not join this side or that side. This is not like the neutral policy of Switzerland, which is a neutrality in which there is some benefit. Being neutral, they get the benefit from all other countries, that is the whole idea. That is not the kind of neutrality we are talking about. Here you are neutral without exploiting neutrality.

Audāsīnya means that in your heart, emotionally, you do not join one side or the other. In any relative issue, there is no final say. If you analyse carefully, you will find that there is something right on both sides, so it is always a problem to say that a person is absolutely wrong. Generally, you have to go with those who are supposed to deal with issues and decide what is *dharma* and *adharma*. It is not always black and white. Sometimes, more than often, there is grey also. So a *mumukṣu* is one who does not join any groups. He or she maintains *samatvam*, equanimity. May you maintain *audāsīnya* towards any pleasant and unpleasant situations that might arise. As a *karma-yogī* you require *samatvam*, and that should be maintained all the way, even as a *sādhu*. Therefore the *karma-yogī* is also a *mumukṣu*, and should follow all this advice.

To Be continued...