

Value of Values - Part 06

Value 8 : स्थैर्यम् (*Sthairyam*)

Being steadfast, before choosing the goal, think million times whether it is worthy or not. The goal what we are talking about here is *mokṣa* . Any auspicious thing will get obstacle, this is the nature of things. People of lowest category do not even commence something because of the fear of obstacle. The mediocre people will let go when they get obstacles. The exalted people do not give up their goal and their efforts even when confronted by obstacles again and again. Obstacle is a thing which comes in life. When you decide to be on spiritual path, they come at three levels,

आध्यात्मिक (*ādhyātmika*), आदिभौतिक (*ādibhautika*) and आदिदैविक (*ādidāivika*).

My own body and mind can become obstacle to me; the world around can become obstacle; my stars, karmas can become obstacles. As far as my personality is concerned, ill health, laziness, lack of initiative, lack of conviction etc. can become obstacles. It is my job not to submit to them. Greater the conviction for the goal, the stronger my efforts would be. All achievers in any field had to face many obstacles and only those who do not give up achieve. Therefore, to achieve, one must develop stronger and stronger conviction.

I get convinced that ignorance is my primary problem that has created all other problems. This should become very clear that neither the world nor anyone else responsible for my problems. We keep on finding problems outside like Don Quixote. The enlightened self is my friend and non-discrimination is my enemy. When the mind looks at someone else as the problem, I should bring it to my mind that no one else is the problem. I am the problem. Ignorance is the problem and knowledge is the only solution. Once the goal is clear, the means are decided. Purity of mind

(*antakaraṇaśuddhi*), वैराग्य (*vairāgya*) and values are important. Prayers should also become an important part of our daily routine. We always lack the adequate strength to overcome difficulty. Seeking help is the definition of intelligent living.

ईश्वरकृपा (*īśvarakṛpā*), गुरुकृपा (*gurukṛpā*), शास्त्रकृपा (*śāstrakṛpā*), आत्मकृपा (*ātmakṛpā*) and the grace of all are required. Work for these things. Stay put on the path and that is steadfastness.

Value 9 : आत्मविनिग्रहः (*ātmavinigrahaḥ*)

Controlling, restraining and mastering oneself is आत्मविनिग्रहः. The primary meaning of आत्मा is सच्चिदानन्द-आत्मा and therefore, controlling it does not make sense. So, here आत्मा is what we call in common sense terms, body-mind-sense complex; the उपाधि (*upādhi*) is called आत्मा here.

We entertain I-ness in this body-mind-sense complex. Why are we told to control and master those things, which are not usually in our control? Body and sense organs behave the way they want, and the mind too, the same way. They do not want to do what we want them to do. What is meant by control here is to make them do what we want them to do. We want their cooperation. We want the support and cooperation of this body-mind-sense complex.

आत्मैव आत्मनो बन्धुः आत्मैव रिपुरात्मनः (*ātmaiva ātmanō bandhuḥ ātmaiva ripurātmanah*).

It can be both our friend and enemy depending upon how we handle it. It is friend for those who have learnt to master it, rein them in. On the other hand, one who has not conquered these, for them, this body-mind-sense complex becomes enemy. In that context, it is more important that they are made our benefactor, our friend.

In the sixth chapter of the Gita, Bhagavan Krishna says –

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानम् (*uddharēdātmanātmānam*).

Lift ourselves up. Make sure that they become our assets, our blessings. If we do not pay attention to it, slowly they will become our शत्रु, enemies.

This force of gravity always pulls us down. For climbing up, we have to overcome that pull of gravity. If you don't do that, you can roll down. Force of *Rajas* and *Tamas* have tendency to pull me down. *Rajas* create restlessness, attachment and makes me extrovert towards the objects of pleasure. *Tamas* creates dullness and lack of motivation. When they are predominant, then they act as our enemies. *Sattva* makes the mind calm, inward looking and contemplative. *Sattva* is our friend, and *Rajas* and *Tamas* are not our friends. We require *Rajas* and *Tamas* to conduct our daily life activities but when they are within certain limit, it's all right.

There should be dominance of *Sattva* by *ātmavinigrahaḥ*. It is to transform one's personality into a *sattvik* personality. Therefore, one should develop tranquillity, transparency of mind so that when you want to meditate or study or pray, the mind would say "yes". Mind support us in our pursuit to attain our goal. It requires deliberate efforts to make our mind, a friend. We should consciously make these efforts, otherwise, force of *Rajas* and *Tamas* are always active and mind will come under their sway. We need to make sure that mind is under our sway and not under the sway of *Rajas* and *Tamas*.

Kaṭhōpaniṣat gives a good allegory of a chariot.

आत्मानं रथिनं विद्धि शरीरं रथमेव तु ।

बुद्धिं तु सारथिं विद्धि मनः प्रग्रहमेव च ॥

ātmānaṁ rathinaṁ viddhi śarīraṁ rathamēva tu ।

buddhiṁ tu sārathiṁ viddhi manaḥ pragrahamēva ca ॥

This body is like a chariot. It is drawn by horses. The organs of perceptions are like horses, they draw body towards the objects. Charioteer is the intellect, the driver makes all the decisions. Driver must know what our goal is and what path should it be drawn, and the charioteer has the rein in his hands. Mind is in the place of the reins and intellect is the charioteer. Who is riding this chariot, you and I are riding that chariot. One who identifies with the body-mind-sense complex, the *Jīvātmā* is the one who rides this chariot. Who decides where the chariot should lead? The one who rides the

chariot should decide where the chariot should go. What path you take should not be determined by the driver. If it decides, then you would never reach your destinations. That's why the intellect, the charioteer plays an important role in taking the rider safely to the destination.

At every moment there is choice between श्रेयस् (*śrēyas*) and प्रेयस् (*prēyas*).

Prēyas is that which gives immediate satisfaction coming from the worldly things, materials and sense objects. *śrēyas* is the lasting value, the *mokṣa* pursuit. Every moment there is a choice between this two. What we choose decides our future. *śrēyas* is lasting happiness. It happens when the mind is inward looking. For enjoying pleasures, you don't need inward looking mind. It is easy and that's how chariot ends up on the road side, distracted. We end up in binding happiness instead of freeing happiness.

We have to make a strong effort to completely turn around the mind from its extrovert tendencies. Make it inward and introvert looking. This is a tremendous effort. This is what is meant by *ātmavinigrahaḥ*, controlling the mind sense complex. Mastering them is to slowly and slowly turn it around from extrovert tendencies and make them introvert. Mind should be self-abiding, not abiding in non-self. This requires tremendous efforts because it is easy for the mind to run away.

From काम (*kāma*) arises, क्रोध (*krōdha*) and then लोभ (*lōbha*). They will create hell for us. If mind remains extrovert, then it invites all negative tendencies which torture us. It should be made to taste the peace that lies within. Mind has to taste that until it will keep looking for immediate gratification.

How to control the mind, educate it and let it understand where it's real help is? How do you turn mind around and make it abiding in itself? By making the mind see. When mind seeks immediate gratification, it feels good, but it creates further craving, and time comes when these cravings cannot be satisfied anymore.

Educating mind is called दोषदर्शनम् (*dōṣadarśanam*). In Vivēkacūḍāmaṇi, it is said that let the mind see the disadvantages, damages involved when it is

running out and seeking the immediate gratification from the objects of the world. Make the mind free from the objects of pleasure and bring it back within, that is called restraining the mind.

In Tattvabōdhaḥ, we have learnt, शम (śama) दम (Dama) उपरम (Uparama). Every time mind seeks happiness out there, make the mind see all the pain involved in this short term pleasures. Short term gain brings long term pain. Let the mind see the long term pain involved. Turning the mind around also has pain. Mind like car running at 100 km speed cannot be immediately turned around; it needs to slow down. Practicing values is also suffering. Remain prepared for that initial pain. Short term pain, long term gain. When it runs out for short term gain, bring it back and show it long term gain. It is like turning the flow of the river. Values are of course means for that, means for controlling the mind. It is easy to cheat, tell lie, easy to do those things. We grow up telling lies out of fear of punishment as a child; fear of pain, so take the easy way out. Arjuna also wanted easy way out. It brings in greater pain; avoiding little pain results in greater pain. It requires understanding the mind; all values are meant for that. Purpose of practicing values is to help the turning around of the mind.

To be continued...

Any form of prayer is as efficacious as any other. This fact must be understood well, not as tolerance for or accommodation of forms of worship other than one's own, but in terms of understanding that the universal order alone is being implied. There is no pagan's prayer; there is only prayer.

- Swami Dayananda Saraswati