

Knowledge of Īśvara By Swami Shankarananda

*That everything is Īśvara / Bhagavān is being told through an imagined story of Nārada, (who is a typical trouble shooter with good intention). Word 'Rameshvaram' conveying either Rama or Ishvara (Śiva) or both is resolved through typical Sanskrit grammar rule. **This is a continuation from the previous month ...***

Rāmo Īśvaro yasya, rāman yarukku Īśvaranaha irrukirano (Says in Tamil - the one to whom Rāma is the Īśvara) that means what? *Śivanukku* (for Śiva) Rāman Īśvaran, Viṣṇu Īśvaran. *Enakku avanthan Īśvaran*. (says in Tamil – Rama is the lord, means Viṣṇu is the lord, for me too he is the lord). *Rāmeśvaraḥ. Rāmo Īśvaro yasya*.

What is this heavenly diplomacy? It is the way Cho (A famous Tamil author) writes stories; both of them are useless. This is what they call is scratching each other's back. Lord Viṣṇu says Śiva is Bhagavān, and Śiva says Viṣṇu is Bhagavān. *Ye kya baat hai?* It is a diplomatic thing. Only Nārada can solve this.

He goes to Brahmaji who is not involved in the compound and asks him, Brahmaji you please tell me; Viṣṇu says Śiva is Lord for him, *Rāmasya Īśvara*; and Śiva says *Rāmo Īśvaro yasya*. Therefore, you please tell me what is the meaning of this compound. *Ava appadithan cholluva. Nān choldratha kelu. Iduthan unmai*. (says in Tamil - They would say like that only. You listen to me. This is the real fact.) *Rāmasca asau Īśvarasca. Ivan dan Rāman, ivan dan Śivan appa, Īśvaran appa*. (says in Tamil – He is Rāma, He is Śiva. He is the Lord). There is no difference between the two. It is a karmadhāraya compound *Rāmasca asau Īśvarasca, Rāmeśvaraḥ*. In this there is no difference. You don't create your local difference in Bhagavān. Your difference let it be with you. There is only one. There are not many Bhagavāns. There is only one Bhagavān. *Bhagaḥ asya asti iti Bhagavān*.

The word *Bhaga* is a beautiful word. It means that which is a six-fold-virtue. Let us understand this word *Bhaga*. When you say *dhanavān*; little bit Sanskrit. *Dhanavān, dhanavānna yaru, dhanam irruppavannu artham*. (says in Tamil - Who is dhanavān? It means the one who has dhanam) *Dhanam asya asti iti dhanavān*. Similarly *Balavān*. This word is a Sanskrit word. *Balam asya asti iti balavān. Balam ivanidam irrukiradhu. Nān balavanunga. Saridhanppa*. (say in Tamil – The person

who has strength is balavān, right?) .

Now look at Bhagavān. Bhagavān means one who has Bhaga. So, now, what do we have to know? We have to get the meaning of the word Bhaga. Isn't that all? If we know that we get the meaning.

The first of the six-fold-virtues included in *Bhagaḥ* is *Aiśvaryam*, over-lordship; *Īśvaraśya bhavam aiśvaryam*. Over-lordship means there is no other Lord; the one who is the Lord of all. That is *Aiśvaryam*. The one who is not caused by anything; the one who is the cause of everything; the one who is everything. That is called *Aiśvaryam*. The over-lordship, *Aiśvaryam* is number one.

Number two: *Jñānam*, knowledge. Knowledge means what? There is no black spot of darkness. *Bhagaḥ*. He is all knowing Lord. That is why in *Gāyatri* mantra the *savitṛ* devatā is there. The *savitā, tat savituḥ vareṇyam devasya dhīmahi, savituḥ devasya dhīmahi*, unto the Lord who is *savita*, *savita* means the one who is all knowing; *savita* means Sun, all knowing because he spotlessly lights, the light without a spot. Similarly, the one whose knowledge is without a dash of ignorance, his knowledge is *Jñānam*, that absolute *Jñānam*.

Thirdly, *Vairāgyam* – *Vairāgyam* does not mean turning our face away from anything. This *Vairāgyam* is dangerous *Vairāgyam*. This is all silly. We commit lot of mistakes. You turn this side or that side - this is not *Vairāgyam*. *Vairāgyam* is the attitude centered on one who is free from any sense of want; not free from desire, but free from a sense of want. He can have hundred desires out of fullness, but not the sense of want.

That is why there is a song in Thyagaraja kīrtana; *Kadale vadu kade ramudu kathalennu kalavade*, (sings the song) *kalpana lennu kalavade. Ramudu kalpana lennu kalavade*. What *kalpana*? Two blades of grass don't look the same. *Ma ramudu kalpana lennu kalavade*. There is no sense of want. *kalpana lennu kalavade ma Ramudu, Kadale vadu kade*. He won't change. There is no change what-so-ever. He won't change. *kathalennu kalavade ma Ramudu*. Everybody's story is his story alone. Therefore, *kathalennu kalavade ma Ramudu*. How many biographies he has got, my God. Everybody's biography is his biography. And therefore, *kathalennu kalavade*, but *kadale vadu kade*. But he doesn't undergo any change, he is

kūtasthaḥ. Thyagaraja is a Jñāni. We will see his bhakti afterwards. *Kadale vadu kade Ramudu, kathalennu kalavade. kalpanalennu kalavade Ramudu sankalpa-mulenu kalavade, Vairāgyam, kalpana lennu kalavade*. Rāma has so many *kalpanas* but then *sankalpamulenu kalavade*, he has no *sankalpa*; means there is no sense of want. That is Īśvara. Desire is not a problem. Desire is a privilege. It is Bhagavān's privilege given to you. Have a few more desires. Desires are not a problem. The sense of want is a problem. That they have to be fulfilled without which I am empty; that is the problem. That is not there for my Rāma. Bhagavān, therefore, he has got *Vairāgyam*. That is called *Vairāgyam*. *vītaḥ vigataḥ ragaḥ yasmāt virāgaḥ, tasya bhāvaḥ, virāgasya bhāvaḥ* is *vairāgyam*; that *vairāgyam* means dispassion. He is free from *rāga*; means there is no want.

Aiśvāryam, Jñānam, Vairāgyam and then fourthly, Yaśas. This is another glory of our culture. Yaśas, anywhere any fame it belongs to Bhagavān. Look at this. In Europe, you go to any beautiful spot you will find there they will have a castle or a palace. You go to ancient India there will be a temple in such spots; whether it is Palani hills or it is Uchchi Pillayar Koil on that hill or any beautiful place, all these were given to God. All the palaces were built somewhere, and they are no more seen anywhere. Colas built many magnificent temples. Which Cola palace you see? But how many temples you see. If you fall down in Tamilnadu your feet will be on one temple and hand will be on another temple. All Cola temples are there but do you see one palace of that Cola dynasty? We don't see any. That is the glory of our country. All the beautiful spots were given to Him. Any fame or any ray of fame or name is there, it was always dedicated to Him. If one had a skill, skill to paint one painted in colours and colours the glories of the Lord. If one could sing one sang one's heart out in praise of the Lord. If one could sculpt one just erected monuments towering to the clouds and reaching the clouds all for the glorification of my Lord. Any talent, any skill that we have it was given to you because Bhaga includes fame. *Yad yad vibhūti-mat sattvam*; wherever there is any glory he says that is all *mama tejo aṁśāsambhavaḥ*, wherever there is *vibhūti*, any *vibhūti*, any glory it belongs to the Lord.

I talk to you; I have a voice. Whom should I thank? My mother, my father, whom should I thank, my grandfather, my grandmother? And then who is the great grand-

father? We have seen all these things. Suppose I don't have this voice. Whom should I thank for my voice? I have this voice; I can talk to all of you. Suppose this voice is not there and I have a voice like this (Talks in a squeaky voice). I keep talking; how would you all listen to me tomorrow? I will have ten fellows always because they will come for my knowledge. There will always be some people for me because I have some *jñānam*. There are jigyasus for that in the world. But an audience, no way. Possible? You will all come and listen to me? (Talks in a squeaky voice) The voice is also a very important thing. It is a gift of Bhagavān.

Any gift belongs to Bhagavān only. Nothing is yours, really speaking. Anything is Bhagavān's as we have seen before. Therefore, wherever there is ray of glory, Lord Krishna says if there are rivers and rivers and Ganga is the most sacred among the rivers because that is considered the most sacred. Ganga is most sacred. Lord Krishna says that sanctity belongs to me. He doesn't say I am more sacred than Ganga. That is a silly interpretation. People think Ganga is most sacred. That extra sanctity that you attach, it doesn't belong to Ganga it belongs to me. If it has the power to purify it belongs to me. And thus, wherever there is *vibhūti* that *vibhūti* belongs to me. Even in Sanskrit compounds he says, *samasānam dvandvaḥ aham asmi*. Because in other *samasās* one becomes inferior to the other etc. But in *dvandva*, both have an equal place. *Rāma-lakshmanau* means Rāma is equally stated as Lakshmana in the compound. Both have equal places. Therefore, Lord Krishna says *aham dvandvah samasikasya ca*. Thus Lord Krishna says wherever there is an extra glory that belongs to me and therefore, *Yaśas*. Absolute *Yaśas* is Bhagavān.

Aiśvaryam, *Jñānam*, *Vairāgyam* and *Yaśas*. Then what? *Vīryam* is fifth; *Vīryam* means *śakthi*, to create, to sustain, to resolve, to withdraw. Not destroy but to resolve; that is why I use the word resolve. It is not destruction it is resolution; and therefore, to resolve; This capacity to create, to sustain, to resolve is called *Vīryam*.

The final virtue included in *Bhaga* is *Sri*, Lakshmi, *Aṣṭalakṣmi*. All Lakṣmi belongs to him, *Srīḥ*

This six-fold virtue absolute is called *Bhaga*. This means these virtues are limitless, which means wherever these are seen, they are to be identified as this bhaga

alone. *Bhagaḥ asya asti* ; *Bhagaḥ* is there for him, and therefore, he is called Bhagavān. Therefore, once you say *Bhagavān Viṣṇuḥ* or *Bhagavān Śivaḥ* or *Bhagavān Gaṇeśa* or *Bhagavān Subrāmaṇya* or *Bhagavatī* if you say, Lakṣmi etc. it is all the same. There are not many *Bhagavān*. There is only one *Bhaga* possible virtues being absolute, being limitless, and therefore, there is one *Bhagavān*, in fact there is only *Bhagavān*. We therefore, don't say one *Bhagavān*. Therefore, I can invoke him in any form. And all *devatās* are called *adhiṣṭhāna devatās*.

In our culture even a *grāma* (a village) has got a *devatā*, called *Grāma-devatā*. *Vanam* (a forest) has got a *devatā*, *Vana-devatā*. In the village you look at the Lord through this village then he becomes *Grāma-devatā*. It is endless, it is. Therefore, all these *devatās* etc are all aspects of the same Īśvara. Therefore, in worship etc. in whichever form you invoke him, in whichever form you offer your worship, it all goes to Bhagavān. One step further our *śāstra* goes, when you see, when you hear, you think the eyes see, true; but these eyes see the colours and forms and that sight is controlled by a law, and if you look at the Lord through that law, he becomes the *adhiṣṭhāna devatā* of sight. Similarly, there is *adhiṣṭhāna devatā* for the ears; there is *adhiṣṭhāna devatā* for the sense of smell, sense of taste and sense of touch. There are *adhiṣṭhāna devatās* for your hands, for your legs, for all the *kar-mendriyas*. There is an *adhiṣṭhāna devatā* for your *buddhi*, for your *manaḥ*. *Adhistana devatā* for the *manaḥ* is *chandra*. Not this Chandra, *adhiṣṭhāna devatā* of *manaḥ* is *chandraḥ*. *Adhiṣṭhāna devatā* for *buddhi* is *Bṛhaspati* etc. We have varieties of *adhiṣṭhāna devatās* for all these senses etc means everything is connected to that total. If you look at this individual expression and that individual expression, from the standpoint of that individual expression, a functional feature of an individual, then from that standpoint when I look at the Lord, the Lord becomes the *adhiṣṭhāna devatā*. And thus, we have endless *devatās* but then all that is there is one and we say the Lord alone is existing; we say the Lord alone is. This is called surrender, this is called *śaraṇāgati*. This *śaraṇāgati* is the end of your pursuit of *bhakti* or *jñānam* or whatever. That *śaraṇāgati* is what? All that is here is the Lord if you say, that is *śaraṇāgati*; it is *jñānam*. To say all that is here is the Lord, you must have *jñānam*.

People say, Swamiji, it is all intellectual knowledge. Ah, you have got nasal knowl-

edge also? What is this? All knowledge is Intellectual knowledge. Is there some other knowledge? When do you add an adjective sweet to sugar? Unless you have got some other type of sugar why should you say sweet sugar? Similarly, please tell me unless you have knowledge taking place elsewhere why do you say it is intellectual knowledge? And another common expression is mental attitude. As though there is some nasal attitude or dental attitude or some ocular attitude. Attitude is enough. What mental attitude? Why intellectual knowledge? Means what? Forget this adjective intellectual. There is knowledge, just knowledge; it can be direct or indirect.

Therefore, if you say all that is here is Īśvara, even the awareness because of which I am aware of all this, is all included, it is all Īśvara. If you say, this is *jñānam*; this is *śaraṇāgati*. Is that not true? What did you surrender? Nothing; all my notions. Therefore, surrendered is only *adhyasa*. All that is *adhyasta* is surrendered. There is nothing else; *adhyasta* is surrendered. What is, is what is. All notions are surrendered. Therefore, knowledge is surrender. And for this knowledge and surrender what do you require? Enquiry you require; that enquiry itself is *bhakti*. Don't think there is another *bhakti* which is separate from enquiry. Enquiry is *bhakti*. And when you sing in glories of the Lord, that is also *bhakti*. When you sit there elaborately performing the rituals that is also *bhakti*. When you offer unto this fire various oblations that is also *bhakti*. When you do some mental *japa* that is also *bhakti*. Fulfilment of this *bhakti* is in seeing all that is here is Īśvara, that I am never away from, never alienated from Īśvara.

Om Tat Sat

“ Life is nothing but a series of decisions. You have to make decisions in life all the time. And those decisions have to come from a clear mind, not from a confused mind. Therefore, you have to be prayerful so that clear decisions will come to you.”

- Swami Dayananda Saraswati