

Sādhana-pañcakam
Pujya Swamiji's transcribed talk

This is the nineteenth part of the serial article, continuation from August 2022 newsletter.

PERCEPTION MAY BE LIMITED BUT STILL VALID

Ahañkāra will come because of pain itself. Because at the time when you got hurt or felt guilty, the 'I' that you knew was that 'I', namely the I-sense associated with hurt or guilt. Thus your memory has taken the 'I' and the pain to be one and the same. They are identical and that remains as only memory. That memory is *vyāvahārika*, empirically real, even though your perception may be wrong. That is the problem. In fact, a child's perception is always wrong because the child does not have any data. But still, its perception is valid. Validity is a different matter. A child cannot but perceive more than what it perceives. It does not mean it is right. That is why parents must be very careful. The child's perception is valid. Given the background of a child, it cannot see anything more. But if now, as an adult, you go and tell your father, 'I thought you didn't love me,' your father will say, 'What are you talking about? That's silly. I always loved you.' And he means it. Therefore he is right. Mother is also right. Everybody is right. So this means that the child is wrong again.

In fact, the child is wrong only in the sense that its perception is very limited, as it does not have any evidence to prove, 'My father and mother care for me.' It looks for certain overt things and those things are absent. A child cannot divine the emotions of people. Thus, the child's perception is valid but not totally true. The 'I' was very much involved in those perceptions, therefore it becomes an empirically true memory. Even though the perception was wrong, it has become the person's empirical reality. That is why there is confusion. We may say it is all your subjectivity. Still it does not go away. This is because it is not purely subjective, it has its own parallel reality. Cognitively you know, 'I am Brahman. I am more than convinced. I have no ignorance.' But this other feeling based on memory is still there, and it becomes an obstacle to your own knowledge. That has to be taken

care of.

THE ROLE OF CONTEMPLATION

It is for removing that obstruction alone that you spend time in *nididhyāsanam*. Thus contemplation is unavoidable. You have to spend some time in contemplation. If you ask, 'Swamiji, how long must I contemplate?' My reply will be, 'Another three lives minimum. Because if contemplation is such a painful thing that you have to ask me such a question, then you have a long way to go.' If I were to ask you to pull weeds and clean the whole yard, and you asked me, 'How long should I do this?,' that would be okay. Pulling weeds is a painful job. Here, however, contemplation is not a painful thing. Why did I say three lives? Because in the Gītā, Lord Kṛṣṇa says *bahūnāṁ janmanām ante* ¹⁰⁷

There is no time involved for contemplation. This contemplation is not on, 'I am useless.' You do not require to contemplate this. The whole world helps you to know this. There is a good support system. Therefore, the contemplation is only, 'I am *ānanda*, complete.' You contemplate, '*pūrṇo*'ham, I am fullness.' What is that *pūrṇa*? Is it something like honey, on which the mind lands and gets stuck like a fly? No, contemplation is seeing the implied meaning of the words very clearly, which itself is a pleasant job. It is just one practice which is a pleasure, the subject matter being what it is. Therefore the author says here *nityam vibhāvayatām, ahara-hargarvaḥ parityajyatām, dehe'hanmatirujjhyatām*; may you daily not come under the sway of the ego, giving up the notion that 'I am the body.'

Then the author gives some important advice: *budhajanairvādaḥ parityajyatām*, may you completely cease from entering into arguments with wise people. This relates back to *dustarkāt suviramyatām*, giving up wrong logic, which appeared earlier in the verse. It has nothing to do with *nididhyāsanam*. It refers to one's behavior after *nididhyāsanam* is done.

¹⁰⁷ बहुनांजन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान् मां प्रपद्यते (Bhagavad Gītā 7.19) - 'At the end of many births, [he] reaches me.' The plural form of *janma* is used in this verse. In Sanskrit, the plural form is used only for three or more things

CEASE ARGUMENTS WITH WISE PEOPLE

Vādaḥ means a discussion, a dialogue between equals. Any dialogue can be called *vādaḥ*. But *budha-jana* means *ṛddha*, an elder. *Budha* means wise. The one who has got knowledge is called *budha* or *paṇḍita*. So *budha-janāḥ* means *jñāna-ṛddhāḥ*, the ones who are elder in terms of knowledge. *Vādaḥ parityajyatām*; do not go and try to argue with them as equals. This is said because sometimes persons who have learned some Vedānta will want to go and try all the other persons out, to see how much they know. Then afterwards there is discussion, putting the other person down and so on, which is not necessary. You should seek the *satsaṅg* of *budha-janas*, not *vāda*. You can ask questions and learn from them.

Therefore, give up the *dustarka* and the *vāda*. A certain person will go from swami to swami. He will cover all of Rishikesh, arguing with all of them. And only in order to prove the swamis are wrong. In fact, some of them know that this person has come to argue, so they will not argue with him. They will say, 'You know everything, why do you ask me?' Or they will tell him, 'What you say is right.' And when this person says 'I have not said anything at all,' they will reply, 'Even without hearing you, I know that everything you say is right.' Then they will sit and have a cup of tea with this person and send him on.

Budhajanaivādaḥ parityajyatām can also be taken as the beginning of the next topic. You can either connect it to the third verse or just finish that topic with *dehe'hanmatirujjhyatām*. This part was added here because the metre is not complete without it. Actually it belongs with what is coming next, namely how to conduct yourself.

To be continued...

Due to printing space constraints, we are not able to publish following serial articles in this month newsletter. - Editor

- Kaivalyopaniṣad
- Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa
- The Wholeness of You