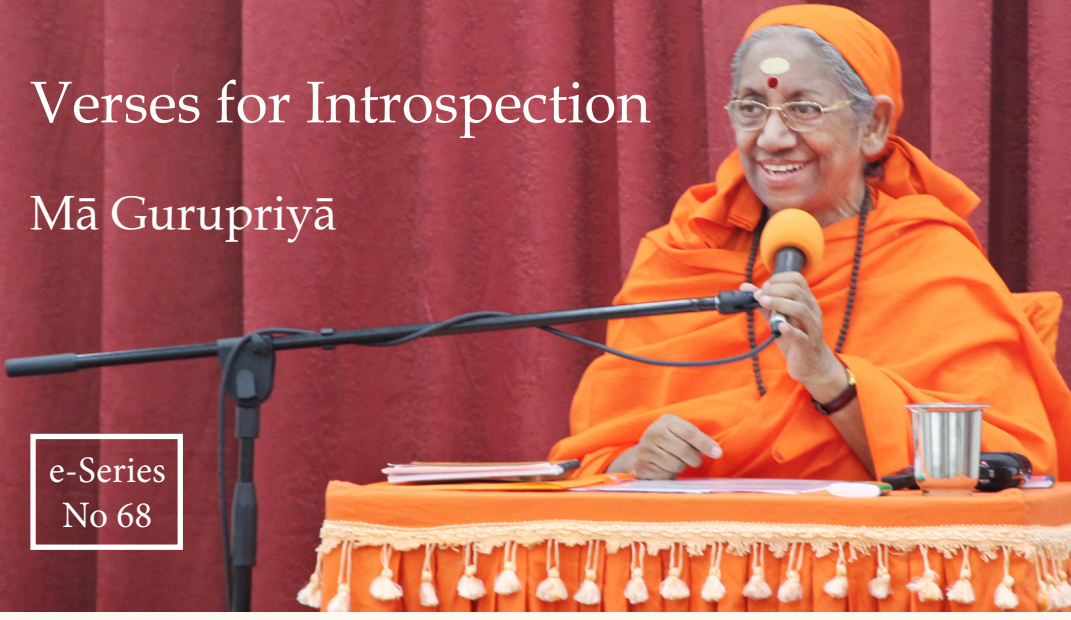


Verses for Introspection

Mā Gurupriyā

e-Series
No 68



Introspection – the Essence of Humanhood

गच्छतस्तिष्ठतो वापि जाग्रतः स्वपतोऽपि वा ।
न विचारपरं चेतो यस्यासौ मृत एव सः ॥

gacchatas-tiṣṭhato vāpi jāgrata: svapato'pi vā ।
na vicāraparam cetto yasyāsau mṛta eva sa: ॥

- Yogavāsīṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa

While moving or keeping still, while awake or even while lying down or dreaming, if one's mind is not given to vichāra (introspection), he is virtually dead.

Points for Introspection

Mostly we are complacent about the life we live. We think that life means – to be born, to grow, get educated, earn money, have family,

educate and settle the children, grow old, and die eventually.

Mostly one does not think beyond this. Driven by sense-attractions to the various allurements of the world, one becomes a victim of unending desires. Desires cloud the mind to such an extent that very rarely man thinks about what is supremely auspicious for him. In fact, very rarely he thinks deeply about anything.

This śloka says emphatically that vichāra or introspection has to be done at every moment – while moving or keeping still, while awake, while lying or even in dream. One must be thoughtful, and introspect about all thoughts, words, actions and interactions. This śloka also declares that one whose mind does not remain engaged in vichāra, is virtually dead.

Out of all the creatures, man has this special faculty called intelligence. Of what use is one's intelligence if one is not given to deep thinking and discrimination?

What is meant by vichāra? Vichāra is truthful introspection – enquiry about what is true and what is false, enquiry about oneself as well as the true nature of the world. Vichāra is to think always where lies the lasting auspicious

development.

Not remaining complacent with the common flow of life, a man of intelligence should try to know: “Who am I, what is my relationship with the Creation and the Creator?” He should enquire into the real nature of the World, and also about God: “What is God? Why do we worship Him? Where does my worship lead me to? With all my worship why is it that I am still gripped by anger, fear, etc.?”

His introspection and thoughts should be about everything that he encounters in life: “What is dharma? What is adharma? What is sin and what is virtue? What is real and what is unreal?”

His vichāra should be on the transitory and momentary nature of the world. Constantly encountering the fact that nothing is permanent in this world, one should introspect on the permanent changeless substratum over which the changeful world moves on unendingly.

Vichāra should be there about one’s own mind – the states of happiness and unhappiness which the mind undergoes repeatedly. One must introspect whether there exists a state of unaffectedness and freedom; whether there

exists a state of fearlessness. He has to find out what bondage is and what liberation is.

And finally, the supreme vichāra is: “What is the Soul, God or Brahman? How do I realize the Self?”

The more the mind is given to vichāra, more the intelligence gets sharpened and purified. One is then spontaneously led to the vichāra of the eternal, imperishable, immortal Soul and realizes it as different from the changeful, perishable body. By this ultimate vichāra of the Self one realizes that he is not the body-mind-intelligence but is the changeless Self. Gaining this knowledge, man becomes immortal. One who is not given to vichāra, thinks that he is mortal.

While chanting this śloka with fervour one is repeatedly reminded how essential it is to do vichāra every moment; how vichāra alone opens the door to Self-realization.

Word Meaning

गच्छतः (gacchata:) = while moving; तिष्ठतः (tiṣṭhata:) = while keeping still; वा (vā) = or; अपि (api) = also; जाग्रतः (jāgrata:) = while awake; स्वपतः (svapata:) = while lying down/dreaming; अपि (api) = also; वा (vā) = or; न (na) = not; विचारपरं (vicāraparam) = given to vichāra; चेतः (ceta:) =

mind; यस्य (yasya) = whose; असौ (asau) = this (he); मृतः (mr̥ta:) = dead; एव (eva) = indeed; सः (sa:) = he.

अन्वयः - (Prose order)

गच्छतः वा तिष्ठतः अपि (वा) जाग्रतः (वा) स्वपतः अपि वा यस्य चेतः विचारपरं न (भवति) सः असौ मृतः एव ।

gacchata: vā tiṣṭhata: api (vā) jāgrata: (vā) svapata: api vā, yasya ceta: vicāraparaṃ na (bhavati) sa: asau mr̥ta: eva.

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