

Verses for Introspection

Mā Gurupriyā

e-Series
No 51



Vairāgya leads to Truth

किं वानेन धनेन वाजिकरिभिः प्राप्तेन राज्येन किं
किं वा पुत्रकलत्रमित्रपशुभिर्देहेन गोहेन किम् ।
ज्ञात्वैतत्क्षणभङ्गुरं सपदि रे त्याज्यं मनो दूरतः
स्वात्मार्थं गुरुवाक्यतो भज मन श्रीपार्वतीवल्लभम् ॥

kiṃ vānena dhanena vāji-karibhiḥ
prāptena rājyena kiṃ
kiṃ vā putra-kalatra-mitra-paśubhir-dehena
gehena kim ।
jñātvaitat-kṣaṇa-bhaṅguraṃ sapadi re
tyājyaṃ mano dūrataḥ
svātmārthaṃ guru-vākyaato bhaja mana
śrīpārvatī-vallabham ॥

- Śivāparādha-kṣamāpaṇa-stotram 12

Of what use is this wealth, the horses and elephants, the acquired kingdom? What is the use of son, wife, friend, animals, even the body and the house? O mind, knowing all



Narayanashrama Tapovanam

this to be instantly perishable, and (hence) to be kept far away, meditate upon Lord Śiva (consort of Goddess Parvati), for attaining your own Self, following the teachings of the Guru.

Points for Introspection

In this life, most people feel that the aim of life is to acquire more and more wealth and property for a secure and comfortable living. Additionally, people yearn to acquire name, fame, recognition and prestige. Many feel that contentment and happiness lie in achieving all these. If a person has acquired wealth, has a comfortable living with a good family, has been able to settle the children well, and also has enough recognition in the society, then it is considered that he has lived the life well.

Most people fail to see that these worldly achievements which they feel proud of, and which give them a sense of security and stability in life, are transitory and perishable, that none of these will remain forever to give ever-lasting joy or certainty in life. They fail to understand that permanent happiness cannot be had through objects which themselves are impermanent and perishable.

A man of discrimination and introspection finds that possessions themselves being transitory, the joy that he experiences initially, after gaining the desired possessions, is short-lived and disappears after some time. Say, one has the wish to buy a car. When he is able to buy, he is extremely happy in possessing the car. But as days pass, the same car does not give him the same amount of joy. In fact, to be happy again, he wishes to acquire either a new car or something else which he feels will give him happiness.

When a child is born, parents and others are flooded with joy. But, is that joy permanent? As the child grows, along with the joy and fulfilment of having a child, the mind picks up worries and anxieties about issues related to the growth and health of the child, upbringing, education, character, qualities and behaviour of the growing child. How long does the joy of having a child remain?

With acquisition of wealth and property, there also develops anxiety about its preservation as well as the fear of its loss. Again, a person may have a beautiful, strong and healthy body. He may be proud about it. But for how long? Disease and ageing as well as ordeal of old-age are always a source of worry for the embodied. So, is there any lasting happiness and peace from anything in this world?

Although man suffers misery looking for happiness from the impermanent objects of the world, he still fails to introspect over this ephemeral nature of the world and his fleeting life in it. He must realize that instead of the perishables, he must seek “that” which does not change, does not decay, but is imperishable. He must look for something eternal by possessing which he would be contented and would not have any more craving to possess anything else; by attaining which he would get permanent peace and happiness.

There are very few rare seekers who are fortunate enough to see the impermanence of life and the ephemerality of possessions and acquisitions gained in this life. Such a seeker realizes that to attain ever-lasting peace and happiness one must seek and realize within himself his own

Self, the Ātmā, which alone is eternal, immortal and imperishable. He must seek in himself that ever-present joy, which does not depend on anything in the world.

Now, how does one seek and attain the Self? Who would show the path and guide him along? There comes the role of a Guru. In order to attain one's own Self, a seeker must approach a Wise, Self-realized person, the Sadguru, and follow his instructions.

This śloka is the dispassionate cry of such a fortunate one who has understood the transitoriness and perishability of every worldly object including one's own body, mind and intelligence. He says, "What will I gain by riches, elephants and horses (these were considered to be great possessions in olden times), or even a kingdom? What will I gain by sons, wife, friends, cows, house or even the body?"

In great sincerity and earnestness, the seeker addresses his own mind, which runs to various objects of the world and clings to them in vain seeking joy: "O mind, dwell not in the thoughts of sons, wife, house, property etc. What happiness will you get in these momentary fleeting objects? Throw the thoughts about them far away. Instead, contemplate on Lord Śiva, reflecting upon your Guru's instructions regarding how to realize the eternal, imperishable Self in order to enjoy supreme Bliss".

This śloka when read, chanted, and reflected, generates strong dispassion towards worldly enjoyment and possessions. It inspires one to seek the Self. The śloka also emphasizes the fact that one must go to a Guru, seek his instructions on Self-realization and ruminate over the words of the Guru.

Word Meaning

किं वा (kim vā) = what (is the use)? अनेन धनेन (anena dhanena) = by this wealth; वाजिकरिभिः (vāji-karibhiḥ) = by horses and elephants; प्राप्तेन राज्येन (prāptena rājyena) = by the acquired kingdom; किं (kim) = what? किं वा (kim vā) = or what? पुत्रकलत्रमित्रपशुभिः (putra-kalatra-mitra-paśubhiḥ) = by son, wife, friend and animals; देहेन (dehena) = by the body; गेहेन (gehena) = by the house; किम् (kim) = what? ज्ञात्वा (jñātvā) = knowing; एतत् (etat) = this; क्षणभङ्गुरम् (kṣaṇa-bhaṅguram) = instantly perishable; सपदि (sapadi) = immediately; त्याज्यम् (tyājyam) = to be abandoned; मनः (re manaḥ) = mind; दूरतः (dūrataḥ) = at a distance; स्वात्मार्थम् (svātmārtham) = for attaining one's own Self; गुरुवाक्यतः (guru-vākyataḥ) = according to the teachings of the Guru; भज (bhaja) = worship; रे मन (mana) = O mind; श्रीपार्वतीवल्लभम् (śrīpārvatī-vallabham) = the beloved of Parvati (i.e. Lord Shiva);

अन्वयः - (Prose order)

अनेन धनेन वाजिकरिभिः किं, प्राप्तेन राज्येन वा किं, किं वा पुत्र-कलत्र-मित्र-पशुभिः, देहेन गेहेन किम्। रे मनः, एतत् क्षणभङ्गुरं ज्ञात्वा सपदि दूरतः त्याज्यम्। मनः गुरुवाक्यतः स्वात्मार्थं श्रीपार्वतीवल्लभम् भज।।

anena dhanena vāji-karibhiḥ kiṃ, prāptena rājyena vā kiṃ, kiṃ vā putra-kalatra-mitra-paśubhiḥ, dehena gehena kim. re manaḥ, etat kṣaṇa-bhaṅguram jñātvā sapadi dūrataḥ tyājyam. manaḥ guru-vākyataḥ svātmārtham śrīpārvatī-vallabham bhaja.
