

24. One's Learning Is Useless If It Is Not Put Into Practice

If Lakshmi the Goddess of wealth decides to come to you, she will come of her own and unnoticed like the water in a coconut. If she decides to leave you, she will go away on her own and without any notice like the soft pulp in the wood apple swallowed by an elephant.

Pavitratma Swarupas! students, boys and girls!

For some time now, we have been trying to get at the inner meaning and significance of the word Bharatha. The *Vedas* are authoritative texts not only for the people who live in this country but for the entire world. All people, irrespective of whether they know and understand the significance of the *Veda* or not, follow

the instructions of the *Veda*. All that you see and enjoy in the material world, the *maya* or the illusion that shows you this material world, the life force in the world, have all been described by one comprehensive word *Purusha*, in the *Veda*. This word signifies the shining and self-effulgent Brahman.

This kind of self-effulgent Brahman is present in the human body in three different names that is *Viswa*, *Taijasa* and *Pragna*. In the world, the same Brahman is present in three different aspects of *Virata*, *Hiranyagarbha* (Golden Womb) and *Avyakruta*. The meaning of such Brahman was being propagated and protected by teachers and scholars from time immemorial. We have to understand the significance of the statement that the meaning of this word was being protected by the *Acharya*. We may think that the word “protect” here means that the teachers have been keeping it secure. This is not correct. The word is used to signify the fact that the *Acharya* teaches this aspect to his disciples who in turn pass it on to their disciples, undistorted.

Indra is one who has the form of *Virat* and gives all the *Aiswarya* or wealth. *Surya* the sun will have the form of *Hiranyagarbha*. *Vasu* stands for one who removes the sorrow. In this context, we know that Indra is present in the waking state, the sun in the dream state

and *Vasu* is present and takes care of the deep sleep state. While they correspond to these three respective states, they are not functioning independently in these states. Since these three are not fully independent, they do not act on their own in these states. Brahman is the only principle which is fully independent and remains as the basis for all the three states.

In this context, the *Veda* has conducted a deep enquiry into the aspects of *Ida*, *Saraswathi* and *Bharathi* and also *Indra*, *Surya*, and *Vasu*. *Veda* has established the sacredness of these aspects. Since *Paramatma* can create Himself and function independently, He has also got a name *Sudrutha*. If we wish to understand this self-creating, self-establishing aspect of *Paramatma*, we will have to listen to those well versed in this matter. The ruling deities of this world, namely *Agni*, *Vayu* and *Adithya* have also reached the status of Brahman.

A statement which says *Jagatah Pitarou Vande Parvathi Parameswarau* is to be found in the *Vedas*. In this verse it is clear that *Parvathi* and *Parameswara* are in the position of parents to the entire world and they look after the welfare and prosperity of the entire world. Understanding the meaning of the position of mother and father, our ancestors have been following the dictum *Mathru*

Devo Bhava, Pithru Devo Bhava, that is regard your mother and father as God. Just as every son and daughter have to recognise their relationship with their father and mother and respect them, so also recognising that Parvathi and Parameswara are in the position of mother and father for the entire world, we must revere them.

In this context, if we can recognise the underlying unity in the three divisions of time—past, present and future—the three worlds and of the three *gunas*, then we will realise that Parvathi and Parameswara are to be regarded as parents of the entire world. If we are able to comprehend the meaning of the words—*Bhur, Bhuvaha* and *Suvaha*—then we will understand that these are said in the context of *Prajapati*. If these are looked at in an individual aspect, then we will see that they are represented by Indra, *Vayu* and Sun. Indra, *Vayu* and *Aditya* are individual and specialised in themselves, but *Prajapati* connotes the totality of all these three. Indra is in the place of Ida, *Vayu* is in the place of Saraswathi and *Aditya* is in the place of Bharatha. Hence, Ida, Saraswathi and Bharathi are also words which refer to Paravathi and Parameswara, the parents of the entire creation.

These three deities—Ida, Saraswathi and Bharati—are understood as deities who are journeying

through the whole universe. When we understand the universal aspect of Ida, Saraswathi and Bharati, we also understand the universality of the three words Bharatha, Bharati and Bharath.

When we said *Pitarau Vande*, we have to regard Parvathi and Parameswara as the father and mother of the whole world. We should understand the true nature of Parvathi and Parameswara when we refer to them as the parents of the entire creation. Here the word Easwara refers to one who possesses all kinds of *Aiswarya* or prosperity. He is one who possesses *Aiswarya* of knowledge or wisdom. How do we recognise the meaning of the aspect of Easwara or *Aiswarya* of all types? The word Sankara signifies one who confers happiness. We may ask ourselves what kind of happiness. This does not refer to a particular variety of happiness like that of the body or that relating to the world. It represents all kinds of happiness that is the basis of the bliss we enjoy.

In those days *maharishis* used to worship the Lord as the embodiment of all bliss and happiness. This happiness does not deal with worldly or temporal matters. It deals with a different kind of spiritual happiness. Such spiritual happiness deals with matters

which are not worldly. The person who confers such bliss is called Sankara. They have also been using the word “Shiva” because the Shiva represents this kind of spiritual prosperity or happiness that has been referred to as *Shivam*. How do we understand one who can give all forms of *Aiswarya*? In fact, it is very difficult to understand the working of this universal father and his divine will. If only we can understand the grace of happiness in him and recognise the oneness in which all these qualities are represented in him, we would have learnt the right way to live. Although he is attributeless and formless he assumes a human form for conferring prosperity on the world. It is possible to recognise some form and *gunas* only in a human form.

We have learnt from books and elders that Easwara has *Nandi* or Bull and Parvathi the Universal Mother the lion, as their carriers. The head of her son is like the head of an elephant. His carrier is a mouse. Her second son has for his carrier a peacock. Thus, the four members of the family, Parvathi, Parameswara, Vinayaka(Ganesha) and Subramanya represent the four *purusharthas*: *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha*. In this family, consisting of four members, we can recognise the unity that exists in spite of the fact that their respective carriers

are in conflict with each other. We know that the lion and the bull do not go together at all. While the lion is the *vahana* for the mother, the son Vinayaka (Ganesha) has an elephant for his head. The lion and the elephant cannot bear to even see each other. The elephant will die of fear if it sees a lion even in the dream. The vehicle of Vinayaka is a mouse. All the ornaments which his father wears are serpents. There is enmity between the mouse and the snakes. The carrier of Subramanya is a peacock. The serpent, peacock and mouse are totally inimical to each other. Easwara wears *Agni* or fire in his forehead and water Ganga on his head. Water and fire do not go together at all. While their carriers and the ornaments they wear and their appurtenances are all mutually contradictory and inimical to each other, yet this closely-knit family of Easwara and Parvathi has been demonstrating to the entire world how a family, though consisting of contradictory elements, should live in concord.

From times immemorial, it has been an established fact that only when the leaders and elders follow good ideals and set good examples in their living, others could follow them and take to a good path. Although the *rishis* were realised souls they have no selfish motives; yet for the sake of setting an example to others they have been

doing certain things. Unfortunately, today some people calling themselves elders and scholars are not able to put into practice even a small fraction of what they have learnt. Thus, by not being able to set a good example, they are degrading the name of Bharath.

The most essential thing in this *Kali yuga* is that one who calls himself a leader must put into practice what he preaches and thus set an example to his followers. If a teacher is not able to set an example to others, one can say that all his scholarship is useless and he can be considered as an ignorant person. Every elderly and learned person has to control himself and his senses. If he is not able to do this, others will think that all his scholarship and his experience are useless.

All the sensory organs are symbolic of desire. This is not a natural quality. If this is natural to us, there is no need for our *Veda* to tell us what is permissible and what is not permissible and there is no need for a *guru* to tell us about the do's and the don'ts. Since the excessive indulgence of desire is not the natural fulfilment to us, it becomes absolutely essential that we should accept some teaching or *upadesa* from our elders and we should take them as examples. They advise us to take food when hungry, water when thirsty and sleep when we feel sleepy,

but there are also conditions attached, namely that you cannot eat anything that you want to eat when you are hungry. They do say that you should drink water if you are thirsty, but they also say that you cannot drink any kind of water. They say that you should sleep if you feel sleepy, but we are asked to be cautious as to the place where we sleep. You should sleep in a place which is conducive to your safety.

In the same manner, just because we have several sensory organs, we should not go on using them without any control. We should give freedom to the sense organs but use them within the limits set by one's country, time and circumstances. Even if the horse belongs to you, it cannot be used without proper reins. Simply because a car is in your name, you cannot use it without applying the brakes at the appropriate time. Simply because the sensory organs belong to you, you cannot use them without proper control. The *Vedas* have been serving a useful purpose by explaining to you the nature of the human sensory organs and how, when and in what manner to use them for the benefit of the world.

The aspect of Shiva Sakthi is responsible for all creation in the world. The force behind the creation has also been mentioned in three different ways namely *Agni*,

Vayu and *Aditya*. Those who accept and follow the *Vedic* practices regard *Agni* as an important item in their *Sadhana*. *Agni* is an important deity and constitutes the life force for the sustenance of the human body. In the human body, *Vayu* takes the form of *Prana* or the life force. *Aditya* also takes the aspect of the heart and is as if it is propelling the whole machine of the human body. One regards *vayu* as a *manthra*, body as a *yantra* and heart as a *tantra* or a propeller for the entire body. Here the three aspects *Yantra*, *Manthra* and *Tantra* that are the machine, the mind and the propulsion are respectively represented by *Ida*, *Saraswathi* and *Bharati*. These are required for anyone in any country and are essential features of life.

Divyatma Swarupas,

Develop a firm conviction that this word *Bharati* has not come up as a result of one particular country taking it on. Be specific in understanding that it is a *Vedic* word obtained from the *Vedas*. By taking these sacred meanings and sacred aspects, our sacred texts like *Bhagavatha* and *Ramayana* have given important meaning to these things. It is this *Vedic* aspect that was understood by the *Gopikas* and they used to sing in a beautiful manner addressing Krishna their Lord “Sing a

song, Oh Lord Krishna! Speak such words which give the meaning of the *Vedas*. Extract such words from *Vedas* and change them into *Nada Brahma*, that is Brahman of sound and pour it into your flute and sing a song out of what you have poured into the flute!” Thus, the *gopikas* realised that the song of the flute is identical with the song of the *Veda*. Such situations and such sweet songs which exhilarate our minds and give us bliss are seen in plenty in the *Bhagavatha*.

When we are able to convert this human body which has nine holes, into a flute which also has nine holes and make it function like a flute, we will be able to hear the divine song. At one time, all the *gopikas* were discussing the process and the path by which they can reach *Paramatma* and enjoy that bliss. They made enquiries as to what kind of *vratha* and *thapas* they should undertake to have *Paramatma* their constant companion. One *gopika* suggested that if only they could convert themselves into a conch and a wheel they could be in the hands of *Paramatma* at all times. Another *Gopika* said that the conch and the wheel were used by the Lord only occasionally, and so she suggested that they should turn themselves into something which is always used by the Lord. On further introspection, they

learnt that the items which are continually with the Lord are his flute and his slippers. Krishna will not leave his flute and slippers wherever he may go. By this, one cannot conclude that all those who do not leave their slippers are like Krishna. Nowadays people do not leave their slippers even in their bedroom and puja room. All such people cannot be compared to Krishna.

Radha who was listening to all this discussion said that if one really wants to be like a flute and constantly be with the Paramatma, then one must realise that the flute is hollow and like the flute one must also completely rid one's self of all desires and become hollow. Then Paramatma will come and reside in his heart. If you want to be like the slippers, you must be able to bear all the burden that is put on the slippers. You should be able to withstand the tests put by the Lord. Even in the worldly aspects, there are a lot of thorns on the ground and the slippers have to withstand the thorns as well. Only when you can withstand both the thorns from below and the tests from above can you hope to be like the slippers of the Lord. This is what Radha told them.