

26. Raja Yoga Is The Fusion Of Bhakthi And Karma

One should accept both pleasure and sorrow and wealth and poverty with the same feeling. They always go together. One should display same attitude towards fame as well as calumny.

Divyatma Swarupas!

It is a very difficult task for an ordinary human being to decide what he should do or what he should not do and thus to steer himself carefully between the good and bad. He often does not have the independence to choose and decide. In view of this, the sacred *Sruthi* has undertaken the responsibility to guide the human beings as to what is right and what can be done rightfully and what is wrong and what should be

avoided. *Brihaspati*, *Vachaspati* and *Brahmanaspati* are names which we hear in *Sruthi* and all these names are contained in one name *Angirasa*. Another equivalent name is *Sama* and together with these three aspects the *Sruthi* has explained what is right and what is wrong in this world.

Sama is a word about which you learnt before. In this word *Sa* stands for speech and *ama* stands for the life force. Thus, this word *Sama*, which represents speech and life force has an important place in both the living and non-living aspects in this world. Whether it is an infinitesimal living being or a huge elephant, life is common to both. This word *Sama* has established this commonness of life. There might be a difference in their appearance outwardly, but the life principle in both of them is the same. This truth has been established by *Sama*, which is in fact, an admixture of speech and life force present in all human beings. It manifests itself as *Angirasa* in all the organs of a living being.

In order to make one's life sacred, the *Sruthi* has prescribed some types of *karma*. In this context, whatever work you do with your limbs or senses of action is called *karma*. Not only the senses of action, but the senses of perception as well are called organs. Whatever work you

do with any of these organs can be called *karma*. All the work done with the help of your body, mind and organs comes under one word namely *karma*. Only that portion which is not covered by the functioning of these organs or is above these organs has been referred to as Brahman.

The word Brahman has originated from the root word *Brahmana*. The meaning of this is that it is something which you cannot measure. It can grow and can become bigger and bigger and it grows in a manner that you cannot measure. The extent of this potential spread is something which cannot be described in words. Also, it is something which cannot be seen with the eyes. In view of this, the aspect of Brahman has been described as something which one cannot comprehend. This is man's destination and also man's goal in life. This aspect of Brahman must fill our lives. We are forgetting this important aspect and are paying attention to transient things in this material world. Thus, we are wasting our precious time. Only when one can develop an equal-mindedness towards everything in one's life can one understand the aspect of Brahman.

For developing, this quality of equanimity, *Sruthi* has laid down three methods. One path is described as

the *Meena Marga* or the path taken by a fish. Another one is the path taken by an animal. The third one is the path taken by a tortoise. It is the characteristic of the fish that it can live only in water. Once it is taken out of water, it cannot survive for long. The animal on the other hand can survive only on land. If you put the animal into water, it will not be able to survive. A tortoise is an amphibian and can live both in water as well as land with ease.

When we compare this with the three kinds of human behaviour, we note that man wants to live in the society because he cannot survive in isolation. This is comparable to the *Meena Marga*. Here he is like a fish and just cannot survive if he gets out of the society or family. On the other hand, an individual who always enjoys being in isolation, who always wants solitude and who feels uncomfortable if he is put in the midst of society is like the animal.

On the other hand, an individual who will never forget God—whether he is in the family or in the society or whether he is isolated or not—is like the tortoise. Wherever he may be, he will have his thoughts fixed on God and he will be perfectly in ease whether he is in the society or in isolation. This path—the path of the

tortoise—is very essential for man. We know that one of the *avatars* of the Lord was in the form of a tortoise and the purpose of this is to explain that the attitude which the tortoise adopts is the right one for human beings too. This *avatar* of the tortoise played an important role in preventing the whole world from submerging in the ocean. The *sruthi* has thus explained about the different paths *Jnani*, *Jignasu* and *Aruha*. However all the three different paths are relevant for us.

These three can also be mentioned in three different ways. One is the stage of the student and the other one is the stage when he is working as an officer. The third one is the stage when he would have retired from all the worldly work. Here we should recognise that a retired officer does not go to work in any institution. He stays at home and involves himself in activities that interest him. Looking at such an individual, if a young boy in the house says that he will also not go to the college because the older person is not going, it is not correct. This retired officer would have attended a college and would have done what one has to do in a college and thereafter he would have attended his office and would have done his duties prescribed for him as an officer and then retired and taken rest. It is in that

context that one should realise that everyone must undergo the stage of a student and learn what has to be learnt and thereafter undertake one's duty in any particular line of action as an officer and then only enjoy a retired life. That is why our *sruthi* has taught us *Karma Jignasa* and *Brahma Jignasa*.

Without being a student first and then fulfilling your duty as an officer, you cannot become an officer deserving a pension and rest. If what has now been said is interpreted in the context of spiritual education, the steps through which one has to go are: you must first learn the education relating to the *Atma*; thereafter involve yourself in work that is ordained and then take rest and enjoy the bliss that is given by the knowledge of the *Atma*. Without working, it is not possible for us to understand the aspect of right conduct. Without knowing the full meaning of *dharma* or right conduct one cannot reach Brahman.

Brahman is a state of wisdom. The aspect of Brahman should not be understood as conferring as some strength and power. The realisation of the oneness of everything in the world is the understanding of Brahman. This state of *Adwaita* or the realisation of the oneness of everything in this creation is understanding

Brahman. There are different aspects of *dharma*. You have to go through all these stages. If you simply go on repeating *Sarvam Brahmamaya jagat*, you are merely uttering words and statements. Such statements without practical experience do not carry any significance.

One who lives in this world should in the first instance become human in nature. To learn the *Atma Vidya* is tantamount to knowing the Brahman. For attaining *Raja Yoga*, this is the path. The word *Yoga* indicates sacrifice and also indicates union with something that is sacred. *Raja Yoga* in particular signifies something which has a very high place. The one who attained *Raja Yoga* in a remarkable manner is King Janaka. If *Raja Yoga* to be explained in simple terms, we can say that it is a union of *bhakti* and *karma*. By involving yourself in action in accordance with the scriptural injunctions and performing it in the name of God, you will be combining *bhakti* and *karma* which will lead you to *Raja Yoga*.

It is said that King Janaka was performing all his daily work in this manner and thus enjoyed the fruits of *Raja Yoga*. It is in this context that Janaka is also called by the name *Videha*, that is one who has no attachment to the body. There is a small story illustrating this aspect

of Janaka's life. In a forest near Mithilapura there used to be a great *rishi* by name Suka. Several disciples used to gather round him and he used to teach them spiritual knowledge leading to the realisation of the *Atma Thathwa*. Janaka came to know of this *ashram* of Suka and went there and prayed to Suka to permit him to be one of his disciples. Suka thought it very desirable to have such an ideal king among his disciples and readily agreed to his request. He asked him to come every day at a particular time. In this manner, many days went on. One day Suka came a little early and all the other disciples gathered to hear his discourse. But Janaka did not come yet. Hence, Suka decided to wait for the arrival of Janaka.

In the meanwhile the students began to develop some peculiar feelings bordering on envy. Each one was telling himself that Suka was partial to Janaka because of his wealth and position. They thought that Suka was willing to wait for Janaka, the king, but never for others. Does Suka also suffer from partiality towards people in position? They were thinking that it was not proper for a *rishi* of Suka's stature to make a distinction between kings and commons. Suka in fact did not have any such feelings. He was one who attained equal-mindedness to

a very high level. Suka on the particular day delayed the commencement of his discourse with the specific intention of making his disciples realise the greatness of king Janaka and his devotion.

After some time, Janaka entered the class. Soon after, Suka commence his discourse. Suka was a very pious and divine person. He wanted to teach his disciples a lesson. He made it appear as though the entire city of Mithilapura was in flames. The moment Suka created such an illusion, all the students immediately bundled up their seats, mats and books and began to run to Mithilapura thinking that their houses were burning and their parents were trapped in the flames. But, Janaka was not at all disturbed, as he was deeply engrossed in Suka's teaching. After a little while Suka declared that even the King's palace was on fire, but Janaka would not stir and refused to even think of Mithilapura as he was deeply engrossed in the teachings and was completely lost in the thought of God. He was enjoying such supreme bliss that he forgot everything else.

After some time, the students who rushed towards Mithilapura had all come back reporting that nothing really was burning. Suka then explained that each one had only one small house in Mithilapura and they ran in

great anxiety to save these houses. On the other hand, Janaka who was the king of Mithilapura was not disturbed in the least even when he was told that his own palace was on fire. Nothing could move him. Thus, the difference between Janaka who had a steady mind and all the others who had wavering minds could easily be seen. It is enough if one student like Janaka whose attention is steadily fixed and who is engrossed in the lesson, is available. There is no point in having several students with distracted attention. That is the reason why I was awaiting Janaka's arrival. It was not because he was a king or a rich person. You should understand the reason for my being more anxious to convey my knowledge to Janaka rather than to you people with wavering minds. From this incident, you can understand that the words of elders and the teachings of great teachers are not to be ignored. They are to be taken right into your heart. You have to understand and assimilate them so that when the occasion arises, they can be put to use.

As our attention and our care begin to grow, so also the fruits of our knowledge begin to grow. It is in this context said that where there is care and where there is a desire to learn with attention, wisdom will appear. This *prema* or devotion is also like a creeper which can

grow quickly. Only when we are able to absorb the fire of wisdom into our heart will it be possible for us to quickly burn away our distracting desires.

The fire always tries to rise higher and higher. Even if you put the fire in a low ditch, it will try and rise higher. Water, on the other hand, will rush down even if you pour it on a higher level. Water cannot go higher up on its own. Our sensory desires relating to the material world are like the water. On the other hand, our thoughts of the Lord are like the fire. Once we understand and appreciate what is true and what is permanent, then these transient things will not give us any trouble whatsoever. If you want to establish one truth, it is possible to do so only by following and practising other related truths.

Just as we have to use a thorn to remove another thorn and a diamond to cut another diamond, so also, if you want to remove the effect of bad actions, you can remove them only by good actions. A good action is needed to remove a bad action. Following this principle that a good karma has to be performed to sanctify a bad karma, our *Vedas* have taught us how to distinguish between forbidden work and prescribed work or the right type of action. Therefore we should make every effort to recognise the aspect of speech and the life force.

I had explained this earlier while giving you the meaning of *Angirasa*. Since this aspect of *Angirasa* is present in every limbs of our body, it has been called *Angirasa*. That limb in which there is no life force will deteriorate. This *Angirasa* is the form of life. This is the reason why we should see that whatever limb you put into action must be full of *rasa* of life force. In this context, it is said that out of *rasa* comes only *rasa*; weakness cannot come from *rasa*.

With regard to our speech, we should take care to utter only such words which have life in them. You should utter such words which carry strength with them. Today, the words coming out of the mouths of young people are lifeless. They are not attaching any importance to the principle of quality in their work. They think that whatever work they do is for their own benefit. We also see that people develop interest to hear only unnecessary things. This is the reason why the value of a human being has come down to so low today.

To be born as a human being is a very sacred thing. That is why it is said *Jantunam nara janma duralabham*. That is: among all the animals, to be born as a human being is something very difficult and sacred. Even the *devas*, at one time, longed to have a human birth. Such a

sacred birth is not being respected by us today. We think that man is simply a mass of flesh. One must make a firm resolve to use all the organs in the body for sacred purposes. Why do you not utter the name of the Lord? Why do you wander here and there aimlessly with bad intentions?

Oh mind! are you not ashamed to be so wavering? Why do you wander from place to place like a lunatic? Why do you run after worldly pleasures? If you spend all your time in seeking worldly pleasures, what remains for you at the end? You are not able to spend your time usefully; you simply want to go and listen to stories about others, stories about people with whom you are not concerned. You are willing to talk ill of others all the time. You do not have the time to go and listen to good things about the Lord and good people. What is wrong with your ears? They are ever ready to hear scandals about neighbours with whom you are not concerned. They have no time to listen to the stories about the Lord. You are not performing the duties enjoined on you. You are attending to movies. You are very happy to go to a cinema, but you do not want to use your eyes to witness the beautiful and auspicious form of the Lord even for one moment. Like a dog which has no other work, you

want to run about in the streets and use your legs for that useless purpose rather than for going near God. Is it difficult for you to stand near God even for one moment? What is the use of your learning cinema songs and singing them?

If only you can listen to the good words of the elders and follow the straight path contained in the words of your elders, there is every chance of your becoming wise. Therefore, you must make an attempt to sanctify all the limbs of your body and engage them to undertake the right type of work. Simply because God has given you hands, if you use them to do wrong things, even the hands will dry up and become like dry wood and useless.

It is in this context that Prahlada said that if you cannot use your hands for praying to God, they are useless. If you cannot use your mouth to sing the praise of the Lord, then your mouth will be useless. If you are born in such a way that you neither use your hands nor your mouth in the praise to the Lord, your birth itself is a burden to your parents. No useful purpose will be served by your being born as a human being.

Divyatma Swarupas!

For a moment, you think of the good fortune of your birth as a human being. Undoubtedly you have got

an unparalleled opportunity to grasp the teachings of the sacred texts like *Bharatha* and *Bhagavatha*. You must make the best use of the opportunities which you have. I am hoping that you will derive the best possible advantage from such teachings. Youth of today should remember the sacredness of a human being and also bear in mind the prosperity they can bring to society of which they are a part. They should think of the welfare of the country. I hope that you will be paying attention to these things and be able to revive and re-establish the fair name of our country.