

Verses for Introspection

Maa Gurupriya

Verse No. 35 (5 Aug 2010)

सत्येन लभ्यस्तपसा ह्येष आत्मा
सम्यग्ज्ञानेन ब्रह्मचर्येण नित्यम् ।
अन्तःशरीरे ज्योतिर्मयो हि शुभ्रो
यं पश्यन्ति यतयः क्षीणदोषाः ॥

मुण्डकोपनिषद् ३.१.५

satyena labhyastapasā hyeṣa ātmā
samyagjñānena brahmacaryeṇa nityam ।
antaḥśarīre jyotirmayo hi śubhro
yaṁ paśyanti yatayaḥ kṣīṇadoṣāḥ ॥

muṇḍakopaniṣad 3.1.5

Translation:

The Self, which the pure-minded ascetics realize as the taintless brilliance within, is to be attained through relentless pursuit of truth, austerity, integral knowledge, and continence.

Points for Introspection:

The Supreme purpose of this life is to realize the Self – the most brilliant and pure – in our own within where it is always there. The whole spiritual pursuit consists in realizing one's own Self and identifying the Self as the Universal Self.

This shloka declares with great fervour and intensity who can realize the Self and how. It says, the Self or Ātmā is attained (लभ्यः, Labhyah) by those striving seekers in whom the impure tendencies of the mind (anger, intolerance, jealousy and the like) arising from desires have completely got attenuated; whose minds are pure and absolutely transparent.

How do the impurities of the mind get attenuated? By constant striving to hold on to Truth and to eliminate falsehood; by understanding that whatever is perishable is untruth, and the Imperishable alone is Truth. To understand this and bring it down to every moment of one's life, reject untruth and pursue truth alone, whatever maybe the circumstances in life. Have discrimination to distinguish between what is everlasting and what is short lived. Without break, engage the mind to dwell on the eternal immortal nature of the Self as opposed to the futile nature of the world.

This constant discrimination of the eternal and the transient is the real austerity (तपस, tapas) a seeker undergoes. Allured by worldly objects, our sense organs are always focused outward. They look for immediate pleasures and never think that immediate pleasure is always short lived. Enjoying such pleasures can never bestow permanent bliss. The mind becomes intensely agitated and restless when the senses are not able to get what they want. Only when the mind is rid of all such agitations born of desires, it becomes restful and pure.

So, the austerity a seeker takes up is to constantly and effortlessly withdraw the senses and the mind from all worldly attractions and repulsions which make the mind distracted. He strives to converge the mind wholesomely to the thought of the Self. This process or practice of withdrawing the mind and senses from worldly allurements is austerity in itself, because the mind and senses refuse to be disciplined and be dwelling on the Self.

The shloka also says that the seeker should strive for comprehensive knowledge of the Self (सम्यक् ज्ञान, Samyak-jnaana). That is, not only the simple knowledge about “I am not the body-mind-intelligence. I am the birth-less, death-less, decay-less, taintless, motionless Self”, but also to be firmly established in the knowledge and living it ceaselessly.

Also, the seeker must have “brahmacharya”. Brahmacharya means practising celibacy. It also means dwelling upon the thought of Brahman – the Universal

Self. So, the seeker has to constantly practise brahmacharya, practise abidance in Truth, pursue the austerity of sublimation of desires, and focus on the Self. He must always try to be established in his own real nature.

By constant practise of these disciplines, which a serious and sincere seeker must take up, one gets purified in the heart and is able to realize the Self within (अन्तःशरीरे, antaḥśarīre). That Self which reveals itself to the seeker is resplendent (ज्योतिर्मयः, jyotirmayaḥ), and taintless (शुभ्रः, śubhraḥ). When the seeker's mind becomes purified (transparent) by these disciplines (सत्येन, satyena, etc.), then the Self is revealed clearly in the heart.

Chanting of this powerful shloka repeatedly brings about a liking for these disciplines and one is able to feel the Ātmā which is brilliant and transparent right in one's heart.

Word Meaning:

सत्येन (satyena) = through veracity; लभ्यः (labhyaḥ) = attainable; तपसा (tapasā) = by austerity; हि (hi) = indeed; एषः (eṣaḥ) = this; आत्मा (ātmā) = Self; सम्यक् ज्ञानेन (samyak jñānena) = through comprehensive knowledge of Truth; ब्रह्मचर्येण (brahmacaryeṇa) = by brahmacharya, continence; नित्यम् (nityam) = constantly; अन्तःशरीरे (antaḥśarīre) = within the body; ज्योतिर्मयः (jyotirmayaḥ) = brilliant, resplendent; हि (hi) = indeed; शुभ्रः (śubhraḥ) = pure; यम् (yam) = whom; पश्यन्ति (paśyanti) = see; यतयः (yatayaḥ) = ascetics; क्षीणदोषाः (kṣīṇadoṣāḥ) = sinless, taintless.

अन्वयः

यं क्षीणदोषाः यतयः पश्यन्ति, एषः ज्योतिर्मयः शुभ्रः आत्मा अन्तःशरीरे हि । नित्यं सत्येन, तपसा, सम्यक् ज्ञानेन, ब्रह्मचर्येण (च) लभ्यः हि ।

yam kṣīṇadoṣāḥ yatayaḥ paśyanti, eṣaḥ jyotirmayaḥ śubhraḥ
ātmā antaḥśarīre hi. nityam satyena, tapasā, samyak jñānena,
brahmacaryeṇa (ca) labhyaḥ hi.

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