

॥ Shri Hari ॥

The Main Obstacle to Spiritual Discipline



Tvameva Maata Cha Pita Tvameva
Tvameva Bandhusha Sakhaa Tvameva
Tvameva Vidyaa Dravinam Tvameva
Tvameva Sarvam Mama Deva Deva

Swami Ramsukhdas

The Main Obstacle to Spiritual Discipline

The main obstacle to spiritual discipline is your attachment to the pleasures that you derive from the contact of your senses with their objects. You derive pleasure from the world and get pleased in favorable circumstances – this itself is the obstacles to your spiritual path. If you derive pleasure even from the spiritual practices and feel satisfied with it, your spiritual progress is hindered. As the modes of passion and ignorance bind man (spirit), so does the mode of goodness bind by attachment to happiness **“Sukhasangena badhnaati”** (Gita 14/6) . It is a fact that if you renounce your attachment to pleasure, you will be free from all sorrows and sufferings and you will attain the supreme bliss. This is the absolute truth! It is a very solid point. If attachment to pleasures goes, than you will attain eternal joy. All sorrows will come to an end. The pleasure that you derive from prestige, honor, contact with sense-objects and favorable circumstances is the main obstacle. If a person shows bravery and does not get attached to pleasures, he can make spiritual progress very quickly. Total renunciation of attachment to pleasures leads to progress naturally and automatically. The Lord declares – **“Tyaagaacchaantiranantaram”** **“Peace immediately follows renunciation”** (12/12). **This is something very important.**

I kept giving lectures for a number of years. I listened to divine discourses and gave discourses, I even studied the scriptures and holy books for several years but could not discover where is the obstacle and why is there obstacle to spiritual progress? Many years passed by, after which I discovered what the issue was. Therefore, I have explained it to you so that you may not remain in the dark. **You can't attain peace without renouncing attachment to pleasure.** If you take delight in peace, you will not attain the supreme bliss (salvation). **If you want to attain salvation, if you want liberation, then you will have to renounce attachment to pleasure. You will have to renounce prospect, hope, desire for pleasure. You will have to renounce enjoyment of pleasure. It is a confirmed fact that without renunciation you can't attain peace.** The Lord declares – “Ye hi sansparshajaa bhogaa dukhayonaya eva te” (Gita 5/22) “All the pleasures that are born of contact (with objects) are only sources of pain” (Gita 5/22). The so called pleasures indeed are very painful because they deprive a striver of the supreme bliss of God Realization. All kinds of pleasures derived from sense-contacts, honor, praise, comforts, rest and relaxation, hoarding and prosperity, knowledge, wisdom etc. are all based on pride and they are all obstacles to spiritual progress. Neither experience of pleasure, nor knowledge of pleasure is an obstacle, but **it is the desire within for pleasures and hope of continuing to get pleasures, which is an obstacle.** It is the cause of a lot of the nonsense within us. We feel

bad, if someone stands in the way of our pleasures. In this there is one very extra-ordinary point. Gentlemen, others appear bad in our eyes, this itself is the main flaw (defect).

Sukhasy duhkasya na ko'pi daataa
Paro dadaatiti kubuddhiresha |
Aham karameti vrthaabhimaanah
Svakarmasootrathitho hi lokah ||
(Adhyaatma Ramayana 2/6/6)

“No one gives us pleasure or pain. It is unwise on our part to think that someone else gives us pleasure or pain. It is our false pride if we think that we do something because people are chained by their own actions.”

He has not respected us, he has opposed us, he has caused me to incur losses, he has been an obstacle in my business, he has prevented me from progressing - it is a mistake on our part to think that the other is the cause or instrumental in our lack of progress. This blunder results in a calamity that **we instead of taking responsibility for our sufferings, blame others**. The day we realize this fact, that very day our spiritual progress will begin. There is no doubt about it. As long as the sight is on the other, that he did not do so-and-so, till then there will never be any progress; because the route was incorrect from the very beginning. However much we walk on the wrong path, it will never lead us to our destination. Those who say, that what was my fault in this, it is not my fault - this sort of thinking itself is a

fault. Not seeing one's faults - is itself in reality placing the flaws on a firm foundation. **“Paro dadaatitee kubuddhiresha”** He who thinks that he can create favorable circumstances, has a false pride. **“Aham karomitee vruthaabhimaanah”** Favorable and unfavorable circumstances appear and disappear, just as day and night follow each other, so do pleasure and pain follow each other. If we feel happy and sad in favorable and unfavorable circumstances respectively, we shall be deprived of the spiritual gain in the form of the supreme bliss which is totally free from any kind of suffering. **If you renounce pleasure, attachment to pleasure and desire for pleasure, all your sufferings will come to an end and you will attain bliss.**

If you think seriously, you will come to know that **sorrow or suffering is nothing but the desire for happiness.** There is no other sorrow of any sort. There is nothing called sorrow. He who has a desire for happiness will have to suffer. The Lord declares – **“The pleasures that are born of contact (with objects) are only sources of pain and they have a beginning and an end”** (Gita 5/22). **Pleasure does not stay but its hope and desire persist. Moreover it leaves an impression on the heart.** If the desire for pleasure is renounced, then there will be tremendous gain. Now what is that gain?

The Lord declares -

Yam labdhvaa chaaparam laabham manyate naadhikam tatah |

Yasminsthito na dukkhena guruaapi vichaalyate (Gita 6/22)

“Having gained which, he does not reckon any other gain greater than that and wherein established he is not shaken even by the heaviest affliction.”

That gain never diminishes and affliction can't touch it. Therefore there should be no attachment to the pleasure born of sense contacts. Moreover you should neither think of it nor wish and endeavor for it. Endeavor to earn your livelihood for the sustenance of this life. But do not aim at enjoying pleasures, otherwise you will get entangled. If you have any doubt about it, ask me. But if you have understood it, accept it starting today. **Be alert and determined never to enjoy the pleasure born of sense contacts.** If sometimes you get deluded by such pleasure and feel pleased, you should immediately realize that you are wrongly swayed by it. **O' Lord ! what just happened! As soon as you realize this fact, your attachment to it, will be renounced because it has no strength of its own. It is without any foundation or root, while the foundation or root of supreme bliss is God. Hence the supreme bliss never perishes.**

All the mundane pleasures as well as pains are transient. So they can't stay with you forever. But God ever lives with you though He is not seen. Instead of regarding the world as yours, you have to regard God as yours even though He is not seen.

Attachment to sense-objects obstructs the way of even those sages who lead a pious and secluded life

by eating edible roots and fruits. Therefore those who **think that they can derive pleasures from worldly objects and hanker after them commit a blunder**

नारायण ! नारायण ! नारायण

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