

**Satsanga with Sri Swami Viditatmananda Saraswati**  
**Arsha Vidya Gurukulam**

**Bhaja Govindam – Verse 25**

What should we do or not do?

शत्रौ मित्रे पुत्रे बन्धौ मा कुरु यत्नं विग्रहसन्धौ ।

सर्वस्मिन्नपि पश्यात्मानं सर्वत्रोत्सृज भेदाज्ञानम् ॥

*śatrau mitre putre bandhau mā kuru yatnam vighrahasandhau,*  
*sarvasminnapi paśyātmānam sarvatrotsṛja bhedājñānam.*

Strive not, waste not your energy to fight against or to make friends with your enemy, friend, son, or relative. Seeking the Self everywhere, discard the sense of division, born out of ignorance.

**Do not keep seeking the pleasant and avoiding the unpleasant**

*Vighraha sandhau yatnam mā kuru*, don't keep on wasting your time doing *vighraha*, battle or war, and *sandhi*, alliance or friendship. I find myself doing this constantly. When I am confronted with something agreeable or pleasant, I make friends with that. When I am confronted with something that is disagreeable or unpleasant, I immediately proceed to develop enmity towards that. I make friends with some people and I create enmity with some others because there is someone whom I brand as a *śatru* or enemy, and someone else whom I brand as a *mitra* or friend. Then there is one whom I brand as a *putra*, son, and another whom I brand as a *bandhu*, relative. Thus, there is the enemy, the friend, the son, and the relative. I keep on confronting all of this and I keep responding to them, meaning I come under their spell. That is how my responses come to be determined not by me, but by them. Thus, in my life, I am constantly engaged in either *vighraha*, division, or *sandhi*, joining. I want to keep myself away from something that is unpleasant, or I want to keep myself with something that is pleasant. This is what I am trying to do constantly and this is the story of my life. I waste my life in always seeking to be with that which is pleasant or avoiding that which is unpleasant.

**Trying to adjust the unpleasant to the pleasant will exhaust your time**

Don't do this because it will completely exhaust your life. There is no end to the pleasant and the unpleasant; life will keep on presenting these two things.

You are not always going to confront the pleasant, and neither will you always have to contend with the unpleasant. The pleasant and the unpleasant, the agreeable and the disagreeable will keep on coming to you, and continually trying to adjust things in such a manner that everything is agreeable will never work.

I often relate an experience that I had when I first came to the United States. I was the guest of a friend who had been living here for several years. He was very enthusiastic about taking me around, and showing me the mountains, the rivers, and the parks. He once took me for a ride in his nice car along a beautiful scenic road. He had showed me the weather control in his car with which one could get the right kind of temperature inside the car. I liked the idea. Turning and twisting that knob fascinated me! He was driving along the road and I found the temperature a bit too warm, and so I made it a little colder with that knob. All of a sudden the clouds came, and I felt too cold. So I turned the knob a little bit to make it a bit warmer. The bright sun came back and soon I felt a little warmer, and again I turned the weather control knob. It went on and on like this throughout the ride. At the end of the drive my friend asked me whether I had enjoyed the ride. I told him yes, I had. He asked me whether I had enjoyed the mountains and the scenic views. I was wondering, what mountains and what scenes? I had been so busy adjusting the knob that I did not notice the mountains or the scenic way! This is what we keep on doing in our life. We are always trying to arrange things around ourselves so that they are pleasant and agreeable. The teacher says here, that if this is what we try to do, there will be no end to it at all.

### **There is no ideal arrangement**

*Mā kuru yatnam vighrahasandhau*, don't keep on trying to rearrange things around yourself in search of an ideal arrangement. I am constantly trying to find that one ideal arrangement that would be perfect, but when I do discover the arrangement, I find that that is not what I want. So I re-arrange it. Again, it is not quite what I want. Like this, we re-arrange our jobs, our houses, and sometimes, even our families! Where is the end to that? There is no end to it. Therefore, *mā kuru yatnam vighrahasandhau*. I find myself either fighting with the situation or in love with the situation. That is not love, but attachment. Don't waste your time like this, because there is no end to this. Then what should you do?

## See the same self in everyone

*Sarvasmin paśya ātmānam*, may you see the one self in all. May you understand that it is the same Viṣṇu that comes as the pleasant, who comes as the unpleasant as well. “Swamiji, that seems very convenient. From now on, my wife should not complain about me because I am Viṣṇu appearing before her in an unpleasant situation.” It does not give one a license to be whatever we want to be because we should also have *samacittatvam* in ourselves, and seek to live upto these values. Let me maintain some dignity in that I am not merely this body or mind or personality, but the person. I try to remember that and exhibit that dignity in life. How can I do that? If we think of the real nature of ourselves, we will refrain from doing that which is unbecoming of us. *Sarvasmin api paśya ātmānam*, in everyone, may you see the same Self.

*Sarvatra utsrja bheda ajñānam*. *Utsrja*, discard or give up. What? *Bheda ajñānam*, that *bheda* or division, which is a product of *ajñānam* or ignorance. Because of ignorance, you take the personality alone to be real, the costume alone to be real, and the external appearance alone to be real. Appreciate that through that costume, or the variety or multiplicity, there is that one manifesting itself and, therefore, seek to give up the duality or division that arises from ignorance. Seek to see the same self in everyone.

## Alertness helps in cultivating equanimity of mind

Why is it that we are not able to see the same self in everyone? It is because we come under the spell of the situation! How is it that we come under the spell of the situation? That happens because there are difficulties within our own self. As long as those reactions and impurities are there in my heart, so long am I not able to maintain equanimity of the mind. Only later on do I realize that I should not have become angry, or that I should not have said this, or that I should not have behaved like that. I realize it after the fact, but when the situation is upon me, I just forget myself. I forget my values. Why is it so? Again, it is because there are some demons, or some evils within me and I am under their hold. That is the reason why my wisdom and discrimination do not seem to come into play. If I am alert in every situation, it would not be difficult for me to live by my values. However, there are different situations when I am not alert. At those times, I lose myself in my own reactions<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Transcribed and edited by Krishnakumar (KK) S. Davey and Jayshree Ramakrishnan.