

## Description of Spirituality in Vivekacudamani

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### ABSTRACT

Human life was crude in primitive times. With the gradual development of technology man began to control external nature, due to which civilizations developed in various parts of the world, giving him physical comforts and a modicum of security. Today's modern man has achieved a fairly good degree of control over the external nature and its energies. Vedanta asks him to go one step ahead, there is an internal nature, which needs discipline and control. That is the subject matter of the science of spirituality. Physical science attempts to control the external nature, spirituality deals with internal. Both are essential for the human development and fulfillment. Every civilized and cultured life needs the regulation of sensory impulses. That is what constitutional laws and regulations aim at. When we put moral and ethical teachings into practice, we manifest our higher dimension. We develop concern for other people and grow in ethical awareness, which is known as Dharma in Sanskrit. If we carry this development further we reach the higher levels of spirituality.

It is very much special and privilege takes the birth of a human being. The former makes for material development and the latter bestows on us spiritual freedom. Here we see both Vedanta and modern science speak of the uniqueness of man among all other creatures. Non-human species have only experience of pleasure and pain. Man also has experience of pleasure and pain, but in addition to this, he has knowledge- knowledge of the world outside and self knowledge, secular as well as spiritual knowledge. Having obtained, at the end of many births, this human form which is difficult to obtain, and though perishable, capable of conferring on man, in this very life, the highest spiritual freedom, the wise man should strive earnestly, before death overtakes him, for spiritual freedom, which is his highest excellence. Sensual delights can be had in all other bodies.

**KEYWORDS:** spirituality, spiritual freedom

### The Indian philosophy on spirituality for the prosperity of the entire world

Philosophy is the domain of wisdom, knowledge and understanding about reality. A philosophy is an explanation of the way things are where spirituality is a description of a position that you as a human being should take in relationship to the way things are. Philosophies give us big, and to the extent possible, objective pictures of reality without telling us explicitly how we should be in relationship to the picture. Even in moral philosophy generally what we get is an explanation of why certain things are right and others are wrong. What we don't get is someone telling us that we should do the right thing. What we do with morality is left in our own hands.

Spirituality resides in the realm of truth, spirit and moral judgment. Spirituality tells us how we should be in relationship to the way things are. Spiritualities always include philosophical explanations of the world, but those philosophical aspects are the backdrop for the main event which is direct instruction about how to live.

The other way is that philosophy tends to include wisdom gained through reason and rational argument while spirituality tends to be insight gained through spiritual

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experience and revelation. With this introduction I would like to Describe spirituality which is very important in anyone's life through Vivekacudamani.

### Description of spirituality in Vivekacudamani

Guru Shankaracharya was a great philosopher of our nation whose teachings are very much necessary for the betterment and welfare of a human being. Like Lord Krishna and Buddha he occupies a prominent place in the galaxy of the Indian national heroes. His abundant contribution to the thought of the world is his system of Vedanta philosophy is amazing. As a young boy possessed of extraordinary powers, highly intelligent and deeply conscious of his mission has worked wonders in the cultural, philosophical and religious fields of Indian life. Within a short period of thirty-two years he changed the mind of nation with his intellectual power, spiritual strength and intense dynamism. The great teacher moved from one place to another established the greatness of the Vedanta philosophy on firm rational foundations.

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degree of control over the external nature and its energies. Vedanta asks him to go one step ahead, there is an internal nature, which needs discipline and control. That is the subject matter of the science of spirituality. Physical science attempts to control the external nature, spirituality deals with internal. Both are essential for the human development and fulfillment. Every civilized and cultured life needs the regulation of sensory impulses. That is what constitutional laws and regulations aim at. When we put moral and ethical teachings into practice, we manifest our higher dimension. We develop concern for other people and grow in ethical awareness, which is known as Dharma in Sanskrit. If we carry this development further we reach the higher levels of spirituality.

Guru Shankaracharya speaks about the basics of Spiritual life. He emphasizes that the birth of a human being itself great hence it is said that "शरीर माध्यमं खलु धर्म साधनम्" He portrays the deep implications of the birth of a human body in this shloka;

जन्तुनां नरजन्म दुर्लभमतः पुंस्त्वं ततो विप्रता  
तस्माद्वैदिकधर्ममार्गपरता विद्वत्त्वमस्मात्परम् ।  
आत्मानात्मविवेचनं स्वनुभवो ब्रह्मात्मना संस्थिति-  
मुक्तिर्नो शतजन्मकोटिसुकृतैः पुण्यैर्विना लभ्यते ॥

It is difficult for living beings to obtain a human birth, more so is a male body; rarer than that is Brahmana hood; rarer still is the attachment to the path of Vedic religion; higher than this is erudition in the scriptures; discrimination between the self and non-self, realization and continuing in a state of identity with Brahmanam

It is very much special and privilege takes the birth of a human being. The former makes for material development and the latter bestows on us spiritual freedom. Here we see both Vedanta and modern science speak of the uniqueness of man among all other creatures. Non-human species have only experience of pleasure and pain. Man also has experience of pleasure and pain, but in addition to this, he has knowledge- knowledge of the world outside and self knowledge, secular as well as spiritual knowledge. Having obtained, at the end of many births, this human form which is difficult to obtain, and though perishable, capable of conferring on man, in this very life, the highest spiritual freedom, the wise man should strive earnestly, before death overtakes him, for spiritual freedom, which is his highest excellence. Sensual delights can be had in all other bodies.

This is the sense of urgency that Shankaracharya introduces to human life where man should be seeking truth, where he should be leading a true life, and not a fake life. When we know the truth, life becomes true. When we do not know the truth, our life becomes a fake life. Thus the main purpose of the human birth is the realization of the atman and the attainment of the supreme freedom.

#### Self Realization is the means to Liberation:

वदन्तु शास्त्राणि यजन्तु देवान्  
कुर्वन्तु कर्माणि भजन्तु देवताः ।

आत्मैक्यबोधेन विनापि मुक्तिर्न

सिध्यति ब्रह्मशतन्तरेऽपि ॥

Let people quote scriptures and sacrifice to the gods, let them perform rituals and worship the deities, but there is no liberation without the realization of one's identity with the atman, no, not even in the lifetime of a hundred Brahmins put together.

The above verse imprints on our mind a fundamental principle of spiritual life the need to focus all our energies towards the direct experience of the hidden reality within us and not engage merely in external rituals. In many verses Shankara sings this note that we ought not to depend too much on external rituals. We don't gain true spiritual height thereby. Ritual is good as a part of spiritual struggle to experience the reality within. It has no meaning as an end in itself. Every great saint of this land has implored us to become truly spiritual and realize God by developing *bhakti* and *jnana*. Ritual has only provisional value; it cannot be our prime pursuit.

Work and wealth can create and provide us with different commodities of this world but not immortality, because immortality is a self-existent eternal entity. That ever-existing immortality has to be just realized by the extraordinary experience of spiritual illumination, which alone destroys our ignorance about our true nature. Wealth as well as work done with a selfish motive, will never take us towards spiritual illumination. Immortality is attained through self-realization, the way to which is paved only through renunciation, and never through enjoyment.

#### The means to self Realization;

अतो विमुक्त्यौ प्रयतेत विद्वान्  
संन्यस्तबाह्यार्थसुखस्पृहः सन् ।  
सन्तं महान्तं समुपेत्य देशिकं  
तेनोपदिष्टार्थसमाहितात्मा ॥

Therefore the man of learning should strive his best for liberation, having renounced his desire for pleasures from external objects, duly approaching a good and generous preceptor, and fixing his mind on the truth inculcated by him.

We conquer external nature by science and technology. Similarly there is an inner nature to be conquered. We have to have tremendous self control. But this is what is lacking today. We follow the "impulse release philosophy"-an American psychology idiom. This philosophy asks us to release all our impulses whenever and wherever they arise, without checking it in any way. Today this has become the natural philosophy of most of us. It is a dangerous philosophy of life. Science of spirituality as taught in Vedanta is just counter to it. It primarily teaches us to become the master of our inner world through the supreme discipline of self control. Even a little practice of self control brings great results.

We have to fix our mind on the truth inculcated by a teacher. We have to train our mind in the teachings imparted by him.

We have to train our mind in the teachings imparted by him. This brings strength to our mind, followed by tranquility. Every one of us has to undergo this discipline for oneself. We have to raise ourselves by our self.

उद्धरेदात्मानं मग्नं संसारवारिधौ ।  
योगारूढत्वमासाद्य सम्यग्दर्शननिष्ठया ॥

Having attained the Yogarudha state, one should recover oneself, immersed in the sea of birth and death, by means of devotion to right discrimination.

Yogarudha state is the state in which we are free from psycho sensory urges. In this state one is completely free from external pulls. By practicing discrimination and self control, we can slowly free our consciousness from the clutches of the psycho sensory system and reach the inner sanctum sanctorum. Thus we can raise our lives to higher levels from our present low state. Raising the level of consciousness is an important subject even in modern psychology. We lose our peace when our mind is at a low level. When we raise it a little higher, we feel the difference. Peace comes. We become more selfless. We grow in charity and service. The more we raise its level, the more is our sense of true freedom and peace. And finally when we raise it to the summit, this world loses its grip over us. In yogarudha freed from external lower pulls, one becomes truly fit for intense meditation. But this state is the outcome of a hard and prolonged struggle.

संन्यस्य सर्वकर्माणि भवबन्धविमुक्तये ।  
यत्यतां पण्डितैर्धारैरात्माभ्यास उपस्थितैः ॥

Let the wise and erudite man, having commenced the practice of the realization of the atman, give up all works and try to cut loose the bonds of birth and death.

The wise and learned man, having commenced the practice of the realization of the atman should try to cut loose the bonds of birth and death. By giving up all works-by giving up all self prompted and selfish actions. Every action we do

must be for the good of others and without selfish motive. This is how the mind becomes pure and gets lifted to the level of sattva from tamas and rajas. With a view to achieve freedom from worldliness, the wise should struggle.

By incessant struggle, we slowly gain spiritual strength (yogabalam). From physical strength (baahubalam) we rise to intellectual strength (buddhibalam) and from Intellectual strength we rise to spiritual strength (yogabalam). It is progressive transformation of our crude physical energy into the superfine spiritual energy by means of a conscious process of refinement. This is the nature of our march towards freedom from the bonds of birth and death. Once we realize our true nature, nothing can shake us thereafter. To reach there we need a high degree of discriminative power to cut across the thick veil of ignorance.

### Conclusion

As long as our actions emerge from our psycho-sensory impulses, we are not different from animals. But with the touch of conscious awareness, our actions begin to bring about a transformation within us. This is something wonderful. It makes us purer. This is what Shankaracharya says; Such work leads to purification of the mind, It is for the purity of the mind that work is prescribed. It does not lead to the perception of the reality. It doesn't give us directly the spiritual realization. Work is a physical and mental act. But the important point is that the attitude of the mind behind the work must be pure and selfless. Then only it gradually leads us to the doors of spiritual realization. Therefore it is to purify the mind that work is prescribed. Mechanical impulsive actions have no value at all as far as spiritual realization is concerned. There should be that magic touch of discrimination in every act we do. This makes us gradually gain higher levels of conviction about ourselves.

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