



A S Rajagopalan Idea Series

***IDEA – Where is the real value?* #33**

The seminar speaker was addressing a fully packed crowd of eagerly listening audience. The speaker took a \$20 bill from his wallet and was holding in his hand. He asked the crowd, “What is this?”. Everyone in a chorus shouted, “It is \$20 bill”. Then the speaker asked, “Who wants this \$20 bill?” Immediately, all the hands went up.

The speaker said, “Ok I am going to give this \$20 bill to you. But before that, please allow me to do this first.” He took the bill in his palm and squeezed and crumbled into a piece of paper ball.

The speaker asked the audience, “Who wants this paper ball?” All the hands went up just like the last time.

Then the speaker told, “My dear friends, I have showed an important lesson in your life. No matter what the abuse and offense I do to the \$20 bill, it did not decrease an iota of its value. It is still worth \$20.

Often, in our life, situation arises where we are treated low, our life crumbles and grinds us into the dirt. Whatever the difficult situation may be, your value is exactly the same. It never changes. Understand your value and you can soar into the heights”.

Ps: The external shape of the paper \$ bill is our body and its intrinsic value is our AtmA. Whatever the shape physically we are, it is immaterial to the value of the AtmA inside. In svashtAbhignAnAdhika in SRTS svAmi Desikan talks about how a prapannan can identify and calibrate himself. There svAmi advises, if anyone talks bad about your sariiram, physical appearance (no hair, long nose, flat ear etc.), ignore it. It doesn't belong to you. But if someone talks bad about your AtmA (how much sin you have done! etc.), go and thank him for reminding you, how bad you are! Lord krishNA advises uddhavA, *sama druk* (equanimity in view) that is *possible if we could follow DIP and DAP.*

***IDEA – Right place* #34**

A mother camel was lying down under the shade of a tree. Next to that was a small baby camel. All the young are curious and ask questions and camel species is no exception.

The baby camel questioned the mother, “mommy, mommy, why do we have huge humps? The mother camel smiled and said, “We are the desert animals. Not much water in desert. So, the Lord has given a huge hump to store water, so we can survive without water over a long periods.

The baby camel was very happy about the mother's answer, but still curious. Noe it asked, "Mommy, why do we have long legs and feet are rounded? The mother replied, "That is for us to walk in the desert easily, Lord has given them."

The baby paused for a few seconds and continued with the next question. "Mommy, mommy, why do we have long and thick eyelashes? They obstruct my vision, sometimes? The mother replied, the long eyelashes helps us to protect our eyes from the desert sand, when it blows during sand storm etc."

The baby was calm and was thinking. Then the baby asked, "I understand now mommy. Hump is there to store water during our stay in desert. Long legs help to walk in desert sand. Long eyelashes protect us from sand going int our eyes in the desert, then why are we in the zoo?"

Moral: *Abilities and talent are useful only in the right place at the right time.* Otherwise they go waste.

Ps: In our sampradAyam, jnAnam (knowledge) is very important. But mere understanding alone is not enough without putting them in to proper practice, anushtAnA. jnAnam without Anushtanam is as useless as the tail of a dog. ' _Sunah Pucham Iva Anartham Paandityam Dharma Varjitam.' _

Just like the camel example, if one does not strive to live in place that is conducive to anushtAnA, though he has knowledge, that is just a mere waste.

*jnAnam without AnushTAnA is like without legs; *
AnushTAnA without JnAnam is like without vision.

***Idea - Learn, learn all the way!* #35**

Human life is a precious gift, we often don't realize. The intellectual ability is far higher than any other species. Lord *krishNA while advising uddhavA says, "Of all my creations, I love humankind more".*

Why KrishNA loves more? Because humans can research, design, implement and enjoy many activities which others can't even imagine. Of all the human achievements, the one he does for eternal happiness is the best. Once he understands all happiness and despair in this world, birth after birth is a non-stop chain, he will try to break that cycle.

vedAs claim *ajjAnam-karmA- vAsanA-ruchi-deha sambhandham* (ignorance, actions, past impressions, a desire on them, rebirth) is a vicious cycle. To break that, target the weakest link, ajjAnam.

Let us see what we can learn

1. *Human life is a true gift*. Don't lose it on trivial and temporary pleasures
2. *You are not a resume. * Accomplishments in education, career is insignificant when you die. Imagine in your eulogy, someone is going praise your gpa? or graduation from Harvard? They will talk how kind, loving person you are and what have you done for others
3. *Live every moment Life* though it may be long is nothing but several sequences of events. Every event is important when it happens. Try to maximize thinking that is last event in your life.

4. *Loss is a gain.* We may lose physically, but mentally and morally we gain more through proper blessings. We don't learn by victories, it just adds to our ego. Losses are true teacher and makes us to think inwards and be humble and creative.

5. *Love - The only universal currency* here and everywhere. Be nice, kind and accommodative. If you see a long line behind you, don't grab all the jilebis from the buffet table. Action in life is like a boomerang. Be nice today and you will be awarded nice all along. Love towards bhagavAn matures into bhakti and prapatti. Even in moksham, when we recite sAmA gAnam "aham annan aham annam" it is out of extreme love towards bhagavAn. Love and the service born out of that called *kaimkaryam is the only thing eternal. Because it is the innate nature of our AtmA.*

***IDEA - Selfishness?* #36**

A teacher was telling moral stories to the kids. And that day, she was telling about a cruise ship. In that were traveling a young couple. Something hit the ship on the way and the cruise ship started sinking in the middle of the sea. This couple rushed made through their way to the life boat. But they realized there was space for just only one person left.

Then the man pushed the lady down and rushed and jumped onto the lifeboat himself. The woman stood on the sinking ship and shouted, just one sentence.

The teacher stopped reading and questioned the students, "What do you think the woman would have shouted to her husband?" Many answers were flying – "You, selfish man", "I hate you," "I know about you the day I married you!". Only one kid was quiet and not replying. The teacher asked the kid and the kid answered, "Take care of our child"

The teacher was stunned. She asked that kid, "Have you heard the story before?" The boy shook his head, "No. That is what my mom told my dad before she passed away due to incurable disease." The teacher in a solemn tone said, "That is the right answer".

Many years passed and the husband died. The only daughter, started cleaning up his belongings and found his old diary. In that the husband wrote, "My dear wife, I know you have a terminal illness. And I wanted to take you one last trip alone in the cruise. But when the ship hit a disaster, I realized that I need to survive to protect our child and so I rushed to lifeboat so quickly. I truly wanted to sink to the bottom of the ocean along with you, but for the sake of our only daughter, I have to sacrifice the death. Sorry I have to let you lie down alone at the bottom of the ocean without me."

The story is finished, and the class went silent, and the teacher could see many glazed eyes.

Moral: *Good and bad actions happen* in the world. But many complexities exist to understand the correct reasoning behind them. *Dont offer judgement too quickly.*

ps: DAP

***IDEA – chANakya, a great philosopher* #37**

Many are familiar about chANakya. He was a great counsel to the King Chandra gupta mauryA and one of the greatest philosophers, economist etc.

One day, it was dark and the great chANakyA was working on some important papers under an oil lamp. A guest came, and he wanted to ask something. chAnakyA, immediately went out to the next room and brought another lamp. He extinguished the old one and lit the new one.

The guest was puzzled. He enquired, "Is it common practice or a custom to do that?" chANakyA replied, "No, it is not." He then continued, the lamp I was using earlier was using King's oil. So, it should be used only for royal work. Now you are my guest and I have to discuss with you personally. *So I opted for my own resource.*"

Moral: Honesty, fairness and justice to the core.

ps: *Think how much of someone else's resources, we use so frequently*, casually and take them for granted. For example, using the pen, writing pad from office, talking personal issues during office hours, extending the lunch hours etc. Never imagined where the core of honesty starts from. Every single act like this is stealing and cheating; may be a minor one. Never imagined where honesty should start from! And we sometimes get angry on people when they are engaged in things other than taking care of you as a customer! Where is the justification?

Upanishad declares "sathyam vada dharmam chara - dharmam Here is a place where one can *attempt to put that a little more in practice.*"

***IDEA – Horse and the goat !!! * #38**

A horse and a goat were brought up by a farmer. The horse got sick one day, and the farmer took it to an animal doctor. The veterinarian checked and said, "Your horse is infected with a virus. I will give the medicine and he has to take for 3 days. If there is no cure by then, we may have to put him down". The goat standing nearby, listened to the whole conversation.

The 1st day farmer gave the medicine to the horse and left. The goat standing close by cheering up the horse. "Be strong my friend, you can do it". On the 2nd day the farmer gave the medicine and left. The goat got pumped a little more and was shouting, "C'mon you horse, get up and go. Otherwise they will put you down permanently. I'll help you, c'mon stand up."

On the 3rd day again the farmer gave the medicine and left. The goat got really serious and was yelling, "Oh horse c'mon, you can do it. Listen friend, its now or never. Get up and have some courage. C'mon, c'mon, I will count one, two, three. Please have strength and try. Good, good. Now a little more. Yes, yes, yes. You did it. You are the real champ."

The horse slowly started jumping around and paced nicely. Now the farmer suddenly came there and witnessed the horse pouncing well. He shouted, "Oh God, it's a miracle, miracle. My horse is cured. I am so happy. Everyone, we must celebrate this. Tonight I am going to give a huge party for everyone. Let's have the goat for dinner!!!"

Moral: *Many times a good act slips away without recognition,* and in some cases, it is snarled into a punishment!

ps: *Learning to live without recognition is a skill * and a it's a great blessing. *Leaders are like ladders*. Looking back on our lives, many, many have shaped to what we are today. It is like the

ladder that helped us to climb to our glories. Rarely ever, the ladder gets any credit. Instead it may be kicked down. Parents, relatives, teachers, good friends, strangers etc. everyone had some role to play.

svAmi desikan in SRTS advises about constant thinking and praying to our guru paramparA (lineage of teachers) is essential for prapannAs. There he mentions, anyone who is directly or indirectly responsible for one to move into this prapatti mArgam (path of total uncondition surrender), the prapannA should recognize them and needs to be thankful for. At least the minimum, don't prosecute them!

ps2: *We should never look down on bhakti yogam and those who practise them*. After all, without those rishis elaborating the prapatti concept, imagine where we would be!