



A S Rajagopalan Idea Series



***IDEA – hmm should I do that?* #53**

Once there was an AcAryA in a famous mutt. He was teaching his disciples all the different types of knowledge. One day the AcAryA told, "My dear disciples, as you can see, I am growing old and getting to be slow. I can't provide the needs of our Asramam anymore as I once did. I know I have taught you a lot of sAstrAs etc., but have not taught you how to work for money. So, I can think of only one thing that will keep the mutt afloat."

The disciples were very eager to listen to the next words of the AcAryA. He continued, "You know our nearby town has a lot of rich people. Always they carry a lot of money and display their jewellery etc. I want you to go to the city and follow those rich people as they walk through everywhere- busy markets, crowded streets, deserted alleys etc. When no one is looking, and only no one is looking, just snatch their valuables. That way we will have enough money to run the mutt."

"But, AcAryA," the students screamed in skepticism. "You have taught us that it is wrong to take anything away that does not belong to us." The AcAryA smilingly replied, "Yes indeed, I have. It would be wrong to steal only if it were not absolutely necessary. And remember, you must not be seen. If anyone watches you, you must not steal. Do you all understand?"

The disciples looked nervously from one to another. Is it possible, the AcAryA had gone and lost his mind due to old age? But his eyes still show incredible determination and wisdom. "Good, now all of you go and come with bonanzas. Remember you should not be seen," AcAryA concluded.

Having commanded like this, the AcAryA got up and about to go to his room. He saw one student was still standing quietly in the corner. Surprised AcAryA questioned, "Don't you want to save the mutt, and why didn't you go with the others? The young boy replied, "I do want to save our mutt, AcAryA. But you have commanded that we should steal only when no one is watching! I think that is not possible at all. For all we know, that you have taught us, bhagavan is pervasive and present everywhere. There is no place I can go, where God is not watching me"

"Excellent", remarked the AcAryA. That is the essence, I hoped that all of my students would have understood. Please go and collect and bring back all your friends, before they do any damage."

Moral: Truth is always the truth whether someone is watching or not. So wrongful action needs to be avoided, because He is watching!

Ps: Many times, what our AcAryAs teach us needs to be interpreted properly. Apparent conflict can be resolved through razor sharp understanding only. The *mahavisvasam to AcAryA needs to be rock solid to avoid any second guessing, especially in the case of prapatti.*

***IDEA - Who should be our friends!* #54**

A scientist was working hard on finding, is there anything smaller than the atom? He was taught and well aware of many scientific postulates - atom is indivisible, energy is never created nor destroyed but changes from one state to another, things under motion continued to do so till something happens etc.

Finally, "Eureka!! he could split atom and find more. He found neutron - negative energy, proton - positive energy and neutron with neutral energy. He was extremely happy because it reflected the real world. Either you are my friend, enemy or you don't care, as simple as that.

Moral: *World is full of positive, negative and neutral energy people. Choose carefully.*

ps: svami desika about 700 years back reflected the same idea from a religious perspective. A prapannan may face 3 types of people - *anukulars with positive energy, pratikular with negative energy and anubhayars with neutral energy*. All these energies we talk about are with respect to help you to engage more in bhagavad vishayam or pull away from that. Though opposite energies attract each other, prapannas should use discriminative knowledge (vivekam) and seek anukulars only and have sahasam with them. In short, *stay in the boarding lounge with those who board on the same plane with you.*

***IDEA - Perfect partner* #55**

Once there was a young man, smart, handsome, and very nice to move along with. He was looking for a perfect partner for his life. In search of an ideal wife, he was moving around from one city to another - from New York to Los Angeles to Tokyo to London etc. But he never found anyone. As the

days go pass by, he became old and was at 70s, and still not successful in his endeavor on perfect match.

One of his old buddies, one day asked him, "You are trying for decades for a suitable match! Couldn't you find a perfect woman not even once?"

The sad old-man replied, "Yes once I did. One day a long time ago, I came across a perfect woman."

The guy asked the question continued, "Oh that was nice. Then what happened! Why didn't you get married to her?"

The old-man replied in a sober tone, *"Well, what to do? She was looking for the perfect man too!"*

Moral: *When looking for perfection, how blind are we to our own imperfections!*

ps: We are always in search of perfect God. Even with our own God, we look for perfect actions. Perfection usually means, He has to bless us only good things, whenever, wherever and whatever the form we desire or demand. Otherwise we get angry and say, "This bhagavAn has no eyes. He is looking at my suffering and just standing still". Stop for a moment and look how much he had already blessed. Think if He start looking for a perfect bhaktA, where we would end up with!

*bhagavAn had blessed 99.9% of what we really need despite of our unworthiness, but for the last 0.1%, we go and still fight with Him! *

***IDEA - karma* #56**

A poor boy who was selling items door to door, one day was very hungry. At that young age, he had to work to pay for his education. That day, he hadn't got any money except holding his last dime. Due to extreme hunger, he knocked on the door of the next house with hope to ask for a meal. But when a young woman opened the door, he didn't have any nerve to ask for meals and instead asked for a cup of water. That woman brought him a full glass of milk.

After gulping down the milk so fast, the young boy asked, "How much I owe you?" The woman smilingly replied, "Nothing. Parents have taught us never to accept any pay for kindness". The boy replied, "Its so nice of you, I thank you from the bottom of my heart". As the little boy left the home, his faith in God and in good people has grown multifold.

Many decades passed. The woman now became old and was critically ill. She was admitted to the hospital, where the young boy turned out to be one of the fine doctors. When the doctor heard the name of the town where the old lady came from, a strange chill came to his heart. When he saw the patient, he recognized her immediately, the young woman once helped him when he was hungry. He gave special care to her and the battle to save her life was won. She was cured completely and ready to be discharged.

The hospital clerk gave the final bill in an envelope to the old woman. She was so scared to open, because of fearing not to have enough money to pay for all the charges. Finally, with some courage, she opened thinking it would take rest of her life to work to pay for the huge multifigure number at

the bottom. But to her surprise something caught her attention on the side of the bill written in red. It was scribbled, "Paid in full with one glass of milk."

Tears of joy filled her eyes and she said, "Thank You God. Your infinite compassion that has spread to many corners of human heart and hands."

Moral: *Every deed creates a ripple that comes back to you in some way.*

Ps: Our religion and sampradAyam is based on karma. What we do, is always accounted for. brahmA may be destroyed one day, but karma will still be chugging along. Don't expect anything in return for being good, because being good should be our nature (savrupam). svAmi Desikan says, saMtOshArttam (only purpose is to please the Lord).

***IDEA – What is good for the goose..* #57**

"This is unacceptable, the father shouted after staring at the phone bill. Why is it so high now? It is ridiculous to pay this amount, month after month. I never use the home phone. I go early to work and come in late. I use only my office phone". Saying like that he turned his head and looked at his wife.

The wife remarked, "Why are you looking at me like that? You know, I do the same. I use only phone at work. Even for emergency call, I never touch the home phone!"

Now the son looked at the parents and said, "I am not the one! I have the cell phone from office and that is what I use all the time. Who is ever at home to use the home phone?"

Everyone now looked at the maid. She exclaimed, "What? We all use our work phones. What's the big deal?"

Moral: Common attitude – It is wrong,, only when others do it, but not when I do. Is it fair?

Ps: In svanishtAbhignAdikArA, svAmi desikA ys how we calibrate ourselves as a true prapannan. vaisampAyaNa asked vyAsa bhagavAn, "Who has all the time read 100,00 sLOkAs? Tell me the essence in one line." vyAsa replied, "Never think of something bad to happen to others, which you don't want it for yourself."

***IDEA - 100 years of life?* #58**

Not all living things have the same lifespan. when Brahma created he gave different ages to live for different species.

At the beginning, he wanted to give 40 years of life span to the monkey and the monkey said "We jump constantly from one branch that that branch, we don't get much food, and we are not even smart, and why do we need 40 years, please give us half of that."So brahmA did that.

Next Brahma looked at a bull and said I'll give you 40 years and the bull said, "All the humans use us only for labor and they don't feed us well, why do we need 40 years please give us 20 years". Brahma did the same.

Then Brahma located a dog and he said I'll give you 40 years and the dog said, "We don't have any food unless people throw at us and we are considered to be one of the lowest animal and why do we need for 40 years, give us only 20 years. Brahma did the same.

Then brahma looked at a bat and he said I'll give you 40 years and bat said, "No no no we just need only 20 years", and here also Brahma did the same.

Now brahma saw a human and said - "I will give you 20 years of life. The human got angry and argued, "Why just 20? I have hands, legs and better brain. You have to give me more years of life and 20 is not enough" Brahma said, Ok all the four animals what they had rejected 20 years of each, of that I have 80 in hand, and another 20 for you and totally 100 years hundred years, I give you". That is how human being got hundred years.

Because each 20 came from different species, human act differently in each of those periods.

0-20 he'll be jumping like a monkey, both physically and mentally

21-40 will be like a bull on working so hard to raise a family

41-60 will be like a human, middle age crisis - thinking about what is the purpose of life and go on the quest of searching the soul

61-80 will be like a dog guard the house when everyone is gone and play with the grandkids in the house and be an obedient servant.

81-100 where he will be hanging upside down like bat; most organs would have failed, and just the prANa only will be oscillating.

Moral: Life comes in different flavors. Expect it and enjoy it.

ps: Our philosophy divides life into 4 stages called Asrama, and each one with 25 years of life.

0-25 brahmacharya Where learning stage as bachelor

26-50 grahastha. married life and raise the family. Help others on the way

51-75 vanaprastha Detached life where devote more to people and society

76-100 sanyasrama Complete renunciation from worldly pleasures and attachment and devote entirely on Lord.

Learn, Live, Loosen up, and Let go.

***IDEA – You mean, I need to struggle? #59**

Once a noble man found a cocoon of a butterfly. As everyone know cocoon is an envelope which an insect larva forms about itself. While watching this, the man saw one day a small opening appeared. He continued to watch very patiently. The butterfly struggled to force its body through the little aperture.

After a while, it stopped making any effort. No attempt was made to get out. Looked like that's all it could do and can't go out any further. The man decided to help the butterfly. He took a small knife and snipped off the remaining bit of cocoon. The butterfly then came out very easily.

But the body of the butterfly was swollen and was small. The wings were withered also. The man continued to watch the butterfly expecting at any moment the wings would enlarge and be able to support the body, where the body would contract in time.

Well, neither happened!

In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of the life crawling around with swollen body and shrunken wings. It could never be able to fly!

What happened? The man was puzzled. I helped this butterfly to come out and the growth has suddenly been muted? Now he has learned that in his kindness and haste, he did not understand the growth process. Restricted cocoon and the struggle was required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening. Why? It was God's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings so that it could be ready for flight, once it is out freely from the cocoon.

Moral: *Sometimes struggles are exactly what we need in our life*. If God allowed us to go through our life without any obstacles, we would not have been strong but settled into more of a cripple. And we could never fly

ps: svAmi deiskan in SRTS and nyAsa tilakam very beautifully tackles *the most common question - why bhagavAn gives problems to prapannan? *

We attribute that to prArabdhA karma. If bhagavan is capable of taking out sins from trillions of janmAs, couldn't He take out a few in this life, so that we all would be happy till our life is over? It is not that bhagavAn could not! But He doesn't want to. He removed trillion \$ loan but left a couple of \$, so that we will always remember we are borrowers from Him and act like a debtor. Similarly He left a little of the sins to affect us, so that we would always remember him. Otherwise, *if prapanna's rest of life is so merry and ecstatic, then would anyone think of bhagavAn? *

Struggles of the prapannan is similar to struggles of cocoon. bhagavAn wants you to get strong wings and fly!

Ps2: Sometimes no help is the biggest help! Tell to yourself and to your kids.

***IDEA - AgAra niyamam for the modern world* #60**

Your diet is not only what you eat. It is

- what you watch
 - what you listen to
 - what you read
 - what you touch
 - what you smell
 - the people you hang around
- .. be mindful of the things you put into your body physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

ps: Most of the time we are concerned about mouth only. But other indriyams, panca jnAnendriyams receive input. Make sure the inputs are pure before the panca karmendriyams act and on them then we claim indriya nigraham