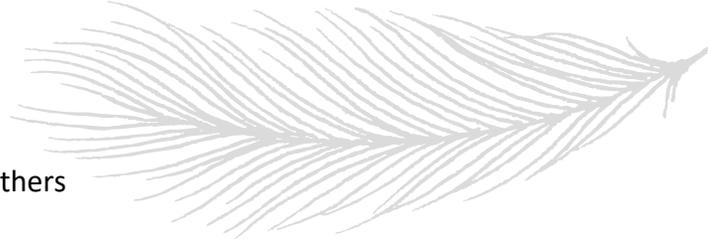


Gita Jayanti 2019



Dear Sisters and Brothers

Saprem Namaskar

This year the Gita Jayanti is on 8 December. We celebrate Gita Jayanti because Gita contains the philosophy of our culture, of our organization, of our work. Thus we celebrate Gita Jayanti to focus on the basic principles with which we should work and also how as an instrument we should develop.

Unfortunately lot of misunderstandings are there about the study of Gita. That Gita should be studied only in the old age, when you are retired and are not able to do any work at that time you should take to the study of Gita. To top this misunderstanding, there is another one that Gita should not be kept in the house, if we keep, then there would be fights within the family as was in the Kuru family. May be these misunderstandings gained ground because of our own ignorance and degradation or they were deliberately spread to keep us away from our treasure.

The Truth is Mahabharat was called initially as 'Jay – जय'. In the Mahabharat itself it is written that if one reads or listens to it and follows it, one would be victorious in life. Swami Govindadev Giri Maharaj has made it a point to take Mahabharat to the people so that we as nation march to victory. Mahabharat is not just the story of Kauravas and Pandavas. Keeping the story as the canvass Sri Vedavyasa has given the whole philosophy of life through many advises, conversations, anecdotes etc. Bhagavadgita is the gist of Mahabharat. If we want to live nobly, successfully and purposefully then the study of the Gita is must. Gita is not the book for the dying but for living. It has to be studied and practiced since the young age.

Gita is for management, for personality development, for social well-being, for facing the difficulties and challenges in the life without getting disturbed, for environment protection, for spiritual advancement and for living with right attitude in any condition. Mananeeya Eknathji used to study Gita daily. Many of his actions are the commentary on some shlokas of Gita. His facing of challenges that came on the way of Vivekananda Rock Memorial, the bringing of whole nation together for the construction of Vivekananda Rock Memorial was as per the directions laid out in Gita. We also get inspired when we realize that Eknathji had inculcated in himself, various qualities mentioned in the Gita like Sthitprajna Lakshana in 2nd chapter, qualities of a Bhakta in 12th chapter, or Lakshanas of Gunatita in 14th Chapter or divine qualities in 16th chapter. May be on Gita Jayanti we can read these shlokas with meanings.

Some of the pointers that how Eknathji followed Bhagavadgita in the saga of Vivekananda Rock Memorial are as below.



Yudhyaswa Vigatjwara – युध्यस्व विगतज्वरः

In life, there will always be obstacles, difficulties, oppositions from various persons. This may be because of their not understanding us or the nature of our work or because they are impelled by the afflictions of the mind. Whatever may be the reasons, we should not get annoyed, angry, jealous of them. Sri Krishna says 'Yudhyaswa Vigatjwara – युध्यस्व विगतज्वरः' fight without getting affected by the opponent's afflictions. Only then, there is a possibility that we can bring them to our path.

When a section of Christian community, Sri Bhaktavatsalam, Sri Humayun Kabir opposed, Eknathji did not have any ill-feeling about them in his mind. Actually in one of his letters while mentioning the situation of the Christian fisherman community, he writes, " I could get the chance to tour nearby areas of Kanyakumari and to study the life of illiterate and innocent fishermen and other downtrodden sections of the people there. Though they must have got converted into Christianity long back, the Hindu ethos and Samskars are still in them in abundance. To bring all these sections of people in this all-encompassing Hindu fold is not a very big task as it seems from outside. Even after such a long gap, all of them do not appear to be totally cut off from Hindu society. For me, many of them look pro-Hindu. The need is for planned and organised efforts of those few dedicated workers who have the inborn natural concern and feeling of oneness for the neglected poor people. The Memorial for Swami Vivekananda is only a forerunner to that grand plan. If my intuition had not shown that clear direction for future line of action, I would not have taken any interest in this spiritless work of laying stone upon stone. "..(Letter to Sri Jugalkishor ji Birla dt 05.04.1965) Eknathji did not go in direct confrontation with the fishermen but he drew a bigger line and thus their opposition got melted.

Sri Humayun Kabir who avoided meeting Eknathji, Eknathji had to fight. He went to the press, but as soon as Sri Humayun Kabir said that 'I am not against Memorial', Eknathji got it promptly printed in the press. There was no rancour in his mind.

Eknathji had to fight a long-drawn battle of nerves with Sri Bhaktavatsalam, to keep the dialogue open even when he was dead against the memorial. When ultimately Sri Bhaktavatsalam had to agree for the memorial after the submission of memorandum of 323 MPs, Eknathji immediately offered himself to work under his guidance. Eknathji could see and admire Sri Bhaktavatsalam beyond his political compulsions. Thus, gradually both became very close friends. These are the examples of Yudhyaswa Vigat Jwara. By this there is no division, dissensions in the society, but all come together to work for the good cause.



Parasparam Bhavayanta shreya paramavapsyath – परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ

When we work in the society, we have to acknowledge the Shakti Kendras of the society and associate with them, thus mutually helping each other attain the noblest in life. As soon as Eknathji got the responsibility of Vivekananda Rock Memorial, he went straight to Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math. He knew that in the minds of the people Vivekananda was associated with Ramakrishna Mission. Thus the association of the Ramakrishna Mission at least at mental level and blessings of Ramakrishna mission were essential for the success of Vivekananda Rock Memorial. Eknathji could foresee that as the construction of Vivekananda Memorial on the Rock, had become a controversy, the media may try to go and ask Ramakrishna Mission that, 'Are you for Vivekananda Memorial on the rock at Kanyakumari?' And if at that time for the want of information if they would say that, 'we are not aware about it.' Then the fate of the memorial would be sealed. Therefore, from the day one Eknathji saw to it that blessings of the senior monks of Ramakrishna Mission were secured.

Similarly, Eknathji met Shankaracharya Sri Chandrashekharendra Saraswati of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham known as Paramacharya and got his active support and blessings. Sri Bhaktavatsalam was ardent devotee of Paramacharya. When he knew that Paramacharya is actively associated with Vivekananda Rock Memorial Committee and in designing of the Memorial, he cooperated well.

When the state committees were being formed again Eknathji saw to it that highly respected persons got associated with it. For example the Congress leader S K Patil was very well respected in Maharashtra, so to get him in the committee, he tried for two months, and ultimately when he became the president of the committee in Maharashtra, the Memorial got very good support. Persons from different political, cultural backgrounds who had influence in the society got associated with the Memorial work. Thus it could come up as national monument, a unique monument in the country.

In this, we can see that if we have good sampark in the society then it is easier to seek the association of those persons who are Shakti Kendras. Thus our Vishesh sampark is important from that point of view also.

Karmanyevaadhikaraste ma phaleshu kadachan – कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन

Eknathji lived this shloka of Bhagavadgita. We all have a choice in action but not in the fruit of action as there are many factors working for or against it. Not only that, we might have planned something but Ishwara has chosen us as instruments to do some greater work. Thus the fruit that we are expecting we may not get, but we should not give up our efforts, our actions. Those actions also we should properly choose and do it.



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Eknathji never slacked in his efforts. His choice in action i.e. what to do, how to do, when to do was always clear. As a Karyakarta, we always have to do so many things, but in that also we have to exercise our choice. What is important should be done immediately. The routine work keeps us busy. But certain works which should be done at specific time should be done then. That choice of 'when to do what' needs to be exercised by all the Karyakartas. For example we have taken 'Vivekananda Shila Smarak: Ek Bharat Vijayi Bharat' as the Sampark work to be done in the 50th year of Vivekananda Rock Memorial. What needs to be done now, if we just take it lightly, we will miss the bus. Exercising choice in action is very important.

Nimittamaatram Bhav Savyasachin – निमित्तमात्रं भव सव्यसाचीन

Each one of us is chosen by Ishwara to do His work. That is what Srikrishna in his Vishwaroop Darshan showed to Partha that the Kauravas were killed by providence, i.e. by their own actions. Arjun only had to become a cause, a nimittam to actualize it. In 1963, when the mood in the country was low, the soul of the nation needed to be expressed in something noble, grand. The ground was already made. Birth Centenary of Swami Vivekananda became the occasion. Only someone needed to be a nimittam, an instrument to actualize it with one's efforts. That is what Eknathji did. The providence prepares the ground, chooses the person to act. If at that time we escape it or does not take it seriously then we cease to be an instrument for that work. Therefore, we should not lack in our response to fulfil our Dayitva that opens up the road for further work and our inner development. Only what is needed is - complete humility and throwing ourselves 100 % on the job, as was done by Eknathji.

Tasmat tvam uttishtha yasho labhaswa – तस्मात् त्वं उत्तिष्ठ यशो लभस्व

Sri Krishna says do not be faint hearted, get up and achieve success in great works, noble works. A too much calculative person cannot succeed in life. Life is not a trade. It is an opportunity to grow, to contribute, to take ahead the process of human evolution. That is possible only if we are working with integrity and seizing the opportunities. Eknathji used to say 'Opportunities are duties.'

On the eve of Gita Jayanti let us ponder on these lessons of Gita so that we are able to make use of this opportunity of the 50th year of Vivekananda Rock Memorial to take the work Vivekananda Kendra to the greater heights in interest of our nation and our culture.

With warm regards

Yours Sincerely

Nivedita

