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Chapter 18

Relevance of Indian Knowledge Systems in Morals and Ethics

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Every human being wants to lead a happy life, which can be achieved once we realise the essence of human life, that is, we all came from same source- Supreme soul, all of our souls return to the source in the end.

Our human body consists of 37.2 trillion cells; if one cell gets affected, it will influence other cells, which leads to health issues. In other words, a person will not deliberately cut his hand, or his foot, or his face because all these are parts of his own body, and though an injury on his hand does not directly make his organs, such as a foot ache, he feels the pain from any part of his body. The foot, being ignorant and limited, is not conscious at once of the wound made in the hand, but the person is conscious of it and will not let the foot carry his body into a place where the hand will be injured. Of course, the foot ultimately suffers from the general fever of the whole body caused by a severe injury to any part of it, as ignorance of the unity of the body does not alter the fact of unity. And so the person who believes that the self is one, in him and in all others, also necessarily believes that in hurting any part, he is hurting himself. The one who uses that one body and lives and moves in all. If we could realise this and feel it always, we should always act for the highest good of all.

In life, every person wants to achieve 3 things: firstly, success in their career, secondly in life, and thirdly, to realise his own self, that is moksha or khaivalya.

In order to achieve them, we should follow the code of conduct, which consists of morals and ethics. The conduct of man is related to his surroundings as well as to himself/herself. We have to ascertain what is good in relation to those who form our surroundings, as well as in relation to the time and place of the actor, and we may take a wider and wider view of our surroundings according to the knowledge we possess. We have also to ascertain what is good for ourselves and in relation to ourselves. What is good for one man may not be so for others.

Morals are to bring about happiness by establishing harmonious relations between the members of a family, community, humanity, and harmonious relations between the inhabitants of the earth and those of other worlds of the system.

Career: If we were to succeed in our career, we should be honest in our efforts and give our best to get good results. How we behave with our colleagues is also very important. As Shirdi Sai Baba says, **"If you look at me I will look at you" in the same manner we should treat our colleagues in the way we want them to treat.** If we do so, we could cultivate good relations.

How we conduct our lives is imperative; when we don't care for others' praise and criticism, we could become Sthitapragna, who is well mature enough to lead in any situation in the face of life. Sthitapragna becomes indifferent to pleasure and pain; honesty is his armour, and simple truth is his utmost skill, according to Wotton.

Each religion has a different path to go on to reach God. The first thing we learn from religion is the unity of all selves. All human relations exist because of this unity, as Yajnavalkya explained to his

wife Maitreyi when she prayed for him the secret of immortality. All-wife, sons, property, friends, worlds and even the Devas themselves are dear because the One-Self is in all.

“Vyasa has said 2 things in the whole of the 18 Puranas: Doing good to another is Punya (right); causing injury to another is Papa (wrong).”

As a general rule, when one helps another, makes him happy, then, whether he wishes it consciously or not, that happiness comes back to him by the law of action and reaction; this is expressed by the rule that Punya brings happiness. Exactly similar is the case regarding misery and Papa.

Happiness in any relationship depends on the parties to the relation fulfilling their duties to each other; that is, on their practising the virtues which are the fulfilment of the duties of the relation. Unhappiness in any relationship results if one or both parties do not fulfil their duties to each other; that is, if they practice vices, which are the absence of fulfilment of the duties of the relationship. A father and son are unhappy if the father shows the vices of harshness, oppression, and neglect, and the son shows the vices of disobedience, disrespect, and careless disregard. If father and son love each other, the virtues of that relation will be practised; if they hate each other, the vices of that relation will appear.

Self-realisation, which is the real goal of humanity, every one of us should realise; to achieve this, one should conduct oneself such as purity of speech, purity of thought, and purity of intention; always think of others' welfare, practice meditations, and see, feel oneness of Supreme self in everything and practice in day-to-day life.

The great Rishis knew that the Supreme soul and self of all souls is one. The authoritative declarations of the Shruti on general morality

are final because they are based on this fact, and they can be defended by reason and shown to be of binding and universal obligation.

In the 10th Adhyaya of the Bhagavad Gita, Shri Krishna declares: "I am the Self, O Gudakesha, seated in the heart of all beings; I am the beginning, the middle, and also the end of beings." He then names Himself as many objects, such as sun and moon, mountain and tree, horse and cow, bird and serpent, and many others, and sums up in one all-embracing declaration.

India's way of life and culture are evaluated over 5000 years from the India Knowledge System, which consists of Vedas, Vedangas, Itihasa, Darmastras, Darshas, Nyayas, Upanishads, Ayurveda, Puranas, Sribhagvadgita and Bhagavatham. All these teach you how to lead a happy life and attain moksha. The bottom line to achieve them is one should follow morals and ethics, why which one becomes a humble human being, who is very sensitive to the needs of others that is paropakarardam idam shariram (soul takes human form to help others).

To sum up, as long as human beings are yet to realise self and to run smoothly the day-to-day activities without attachment, we need to follow morals and ethics.

PEACE TO ALL BEINGS

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