

Excellence in Action :

Points for Thought

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A. Establishing a Case for necessity of Excellence in Action :

- Man is the maker of his destiny, is the essence of the Law of Karma.
- Whoever has achieved great heights is because of his Karmas alone. As the saying goes, 'Even God helps those who help themselves'.
- The main question boils down to how to bring out our best.
- Lord Krishna also says that 'Even the so called very intelligent people very rarely know the complete truth of KARMA', (Gita Chap-4 /Shloka-16) and thus cannot bring out their best.
- The Vedas too enjoin a dynamic & active life. (Ref mantra 2 of Isavasya Upanishad.)
- Those who do not know the truth of these facts ascribe the results to factors like : Stars, Destiny i.e. Static Past Karmas, God's Wish, Vastu etc etc. Such people keep suffering endlessly. They are dependent, weak & helpless.
- Strong belief in anything does help to keep at rest some worries, but as long as belief is baseless it cannot help anyone for long. Belief should be based on facts.
- In this context the fact is that by our Karmas alone we carve out our destiny. Thus there is an ideal case for bringing out our best. There should be excellence in our actions. Everything will be thereafter be taken care of. Not only the end will be beautiful, but even the way will be very beautiful. A person doing his karma lovingly, creatively & dynamically is the one who gets the greatest joy. Good result is just a bonus.



B. Understanding Karma :

- Karma is the singularly most potent power in the hands of man, which can help him change the subjective & objective state of affairs. Our mind, body, relationships, finances, society or the world at large.

- Karma alone differentiates between an Animal & Man. Man alone is blessed with the potential to act - to do Karma.
- Karma is not a mechanical, habitual or programmed act, wherein there may be movement of limbs etc. Animals provide great output but are not said to do Karma. They are not in a Karma-Yoni, but are classified under Bhoga-Yoni. They do not act but rather react & respond in a conditioned manner. A Cow continues to act in the same way as it did thousand of years back, and so does a carnivorous animal or a bird etc. So conditioned & programmed act is not a Karma.
- Karma is a conscious, deliberate & even a creative act, with a clear understanding of end & means, bringing well being both to the doer & the world around. There is definite deliberation & thinking involved. It is an effort. There is nothing called as an effortless Karma, that is an illusion, that in fact A-Karma.
- While any deliberate & conscious effort is a Karma, it can be something which can be virtuous & even that which is not. It can bring about Punya or even Paapa. That which helps bring about Punya is Karma, and that which brings about Paapa is Vikarma, an act of ignorance and that which brings problem to the doer and even to the world at large. So Karma is something to be done and Akarma & Vikarma are something to be avoided.
- Punya is something which helps bring about well being to the doer & his world, while Paapa is something which brings about inertness, selfishness, pains & problem to the doer & is always a nuisance for the world at large.
- The scriptures declare that short of Moksha, Karma has potential to bring us everything. So man must learn about his great potential & power of Karma. Karma alone takes us to the gateway of Moksha too. The final entry into the portals of infinite & transcendental realm (which is Moksha) is not by any Karma, but by direct knowledge of the infinite truth.



C. Invoking Excellence :

- Some of the fundamental parameters required to help bring out our best in action are :
- Having a clear & definite goal. Goal should tickle our heart, involve & inspire us.
- While goals are very necessary, one should understand that the results depend upon our action, and not on any other thing. We need not bother about the getting of the result, it is bound to come. God says that it is his department and he will bring it. We just have to concentrate on that which is in our hand - i.e. the karma.
- There was a tradition, which was lately highly misunderstood & even misused, wherein goals of each person was set as per ones inclinations. That was what the Varna-Vyavastha (the so called caste system) was all about. This guaranteed great love for ones work.
- While goal was necessary but the goal is not to be seen as something which brings about some fulfillment. It is extremely necessary to see the goal as something which I lovingly serve.
- Best Actions are not out of a sense of lack, but out of a sense of fulfillment.
- Goals are a challenge in a field which I love to do & serve, they channelize our energies.

- Action out of a sense of lack is never an act of love, and leads to misery & pain. Such actions are inevitably selfish, and everyone knows the disastrous consequences of selfishness in our workfield, relationships etc. This alone brings about all stress & strain, with all its ugly consequences.
- An action out of a sense of fulfillment is a panacea for the cancer of selfishness. It is the basis for an act of love, fearlessness, creativity & tirelessness. This is the singularly most important factor to invoke excellence in our workfield.
- If someone gives out ones best, in a loving & dynamic way, then the results are bound to be good. The person enjoys the very process. Greater the challenge greater is the joy. There are no fears, for there are no personal insecurities & dependence.
- Such an act is compared to a Yagna. In fact the Yagna spirit is a synonym of 'Excellence in Action'.
- In a Yagna we have a reverential Devata in front of us, from whom we have already been blessed in various ways. We see his blessings being showered on us. He is like a goal for which we act. In a properly done Yagna, we have great respect & gratitude for the Devata. The motivation for the act is just love & respect. We serve him as best as we can. We love & enjoy the whole act. We involve our body, senses, emotions & intellect in the whole act. It is an integrated endeavor. Having offered our oblations we are contend with the prasad - that which is left behind.
- So the Yagna came to get a highly reverential place in our religion & culture. It is an exercise wherein we learn to act in a positive way. Everyone must perform some deliberate actions everyday in the - Yagna-spirit. Whoever gets the knack of the Yagna-spirit indeed comes to understand what is the secret of the Excellence in Actions. Success is thereafter guaranteed.



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