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A monthly newsletter that will bring you more happiness, more wisdom and more freedom



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Value of Values

Śaucam (7/20)

By Sheela Surendran, Mumbai

Śaucam is an important value among the twenty values enumerated by *Bhagavān* in the 13th chapter of the Bhagavad Gita. In Sanskrit, śaucam means purity.

There are two kinds of purity - Internal purity and external purity. External purity is well understood by all - emphasizing the importance of cleanliness and hygiene thereby helping in maintaining a healthy and sound body.

Internal purity, which many struggle with, is in keeping our mind clean. Self condemnation, envy, inferiority and superiority complex, fear, need for validation are some of the traits which if not checked, can make one restless and anxious - thereby opening the door to a whole lot of mental and physical health issues. These so-called negative traits is the root cause of internal impurity which becomes prominent when I operate from the space of fear. The fear of not being heard, fear of not being able to put across my views, fear of being rebuked, fear of being looked down upon, fear of not being loved, fear of being ridiculed. There is a plethora of fear which one faces and feeds on a daily basis. Along with the fears are our needs to be the best, most accomplished, most loved and famous. When these consume us, they lead to a very unhealthy mind and one needs to take care of it.



This is not easy, as the mind is very real for me. Hence, the first and foremost thing is to **be honest** with oneself and accept the fact that I do have all these fears. I draw upon courage to face these fears through my life experiences, the role models I look upto and seek the help of devata-s. This helps to shift the attention from 'why me' to 'why not me?'

The next big step is to be able to see that inspite of my fears, **I do what needs to be done** and follow dharma. This helps me in recognizing that I have always been taken care of and at no moment am I away from *Īśvara*. I take responsibility for my actions. Then there is no room for fear. They drop one by one. I seek help to move from darkness to light (*asato mā sadgamaya..*). Puja and japa greatly help.

Being able to move from darkness to light is nothing less than being in the lap of *Īśvara*. The more I am able to see *Īśvara* in all the moments of my life, the more I am able to drop my resistances. Clarity in my actions increases. I recognize that I



am never the doer and that all actions happen 'through me', not by me. This brings in a relative *śaucam*. I see that everything is *Īśvara*. There is only *Īśvara*.

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