

INNER CLEANSING CAN BRING ENLIGHTENMENT

Lord Budha attained final enlightenment after four decades of purging negative and irrelevant thoughts and focusing on positive and purposeful thoughts pertaining to goal of life. That was a long but steady process of inner cleaning which ultimately made him a realized and enlightened soul.

During Diwali – the festival of lights, people clean their hearth, home and surroundings and keep their houses lighted with doors & windows open, hoping to be blessed by goddess Laxmi's auspicious visit and presence.

Outward cleanliness and purity are of no use, if the individual inside is dirty, dishonest and deceitful in intentions and actions. If the person is unclean in his mind, corrupt in intelligence and vicious in habits, then no amount of external purification can bestow any sanity or luck to the person.

Goddess Laxmi whom people venerate as giver of wealth and prosperity, is herself an embodiment of innate qualities like purity, peace, tranquility, love and power which are not physical but spiritual wealth or treasures needed to be inculcated and developed in life rather than to be begged or bestowed in the form of blessings.

In fact, the festival of Diwali inspires us to look within, introspect and meditate on what has gone wrong when and where in our life? Are we goaded by our senses or are we able to guide them properly? Is our mind ruling over thoughts? Is our intellect making correct discrimination and judgment? Are our sanskars or habits healthy and harmonious for self and others ?

It is the materialistic mindset which prompts people during Diwali to invoke goddess Laxmi for physical riches and resources which by nature are incapable of ensuring lasting peace and happiness. In fact, in their rat race for materialistic acquisitions and sense gratification, people have forgotten the old wise maxim that **purity is the mother of peace and happiness.**

Purity, in fact, is much deeper than mere cleanliness. It connotes positive, healthy, universal and altruistic nature of our thoughts, emotions, attitude and memories (TEAM) which begets love, compassion, peace, harmony and happiness. Conversely, impurity implies our negative, narrow, selfish and egoistic character of our TEAM which creates hatred, animosity, conflicts, clashes, sorrows and sufferings.

If the divine quality 'purity' is symbolized by goddess Laxmi and other deities, devilish quality 'impurity' is symbolic of demons like Narakasur & King Bali who in epics have been described to have imprisoned goddess Laxmi and other deities in nether world.

Allegorically, we see that such impurity of consciousness, vision, values, character and conduct are ruling over our times and lives today with impurity and has rendered the world to become a veritable hell (Naraka) with crimes, corruption, disharmony, diseases and disasters. Purging people and society off this evil spell of impurity with the regular infusion of purity in thoughts,

words and deeds, would amount to annihilation of Narakasur and restoration of divinity and discipline in self and society.

Like Budha, we need to ask more basic questions as to what is our true identity and nature of self, purpose of existence and goal of life? We need to ignite the sparkle of purity in self, with the holy thoughts and spark of spiritual wisdom on the true nature and religion of our inner being, with its harmonious relations with fellow beings, society and ecology and with the blissful experience of its loveful communion or meditation with the Supreme Soul.

India's ancient wisdom depicts the inner self of human being as a tiny and microscopic conscient point of light somewhere between and behind eyebrows. It embodies seven (Satto) innate qualities such as purity, peace, love, happiness, bliss, knowledge and power. The confluence and predominance of these seven core qualities in the self make the person sattoguni and enjoyer of true inner peace, tranquility and contentment.

In the absence or weaker presence of these satto qualities, the person proportionately becomes rajoguni or tamohguni with innate proclivities predominated by aggressive, hostile, combative or negative nature propelled by ego, anger, avarice, attachment, lust and sense-servitude thereby causing and experiencing pain and misery in self and others.

Excessive body consciousness or materialistic mentality is the reason for preponderance of these unhealthy and harmful negative qualities and vices in the self and these evil traits grow and spread in society in epidemic proportion engulfing the lives of mankind in the darkness of all kinds of evils, ills & ailments, helplessness and hopelessness.

The only ray of hope to fight and finish these mental maladies and their negative fallout in society, is to make a paradigm shift from our mundane or gross conscious mindset to regular cultivation of soul consciousness and experiencing of soul's innate positive qualities in constant intellectual communion with the Supreme Being- the eternal source of all virtues & powers- through Rajyoga Meditation. By this process of inner empowerment, we will be able to control over our unruly senses, mind, intellect and habits and regulate them in positive, healthy, harmonious and balanced way for optimizing our happiness.

Thus, by lighting the inner light of soul and by experiencing its innate qualities and powers in a sustained way and by sharing & spreading the same with others in society through the practice and promotion of spiritual knowledge and Rajyoga Meditation, we can strengthen the process of self-enlightenment and social empowerment which all Diwali stands for.

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