

Happiest man is he who is happy under all
circumstances

Dr. S. V. Raghavan

The Message of Love Universal of which the above statement forms a part also contains the statement of the Master, “It is a hidden dictum of Nature that every soul must live a happy and restful life. If we do otherwise we are spoiling His world”.

The dictionary meaning of happiness is joy, being pleased and contented. We should note that there is no happiness without contentment. Though some regard happiness to be a state of mind, it is commonly expressed as a feeling state. It is a refined emotion as compared to the feeling of pleasure arising out of sense-gratification. It is unique to human beings alone. Happiness has several synonyms, such as, condition of supreme well-being and good spirits, supreme felicity, beatitude, bliss, gladness, cheer, ecstasy, euphoria, elation, jubilation, gratification which convey the intensity, depth and longevity of the feeling state.

It is universally agreed among the ancient sages and modern thinkers that happiness is to be sought within one's own being and not from external objects, persons and situations. Happiness contingent on circumstances and combination of desirable objects and persons is no happiness in the real sense. It will be fleeting and ultimately pave the way for sorrow when the conditions can not be maintained or replicated for ever. Sense enjoyment has its own severe limitations and the disastrous consequences of its blind pursuit have been well discussed in the scriptural tradition. The discerning seeker knows and realizes that real lasting happiness can never be derived through sense enjoyment.

We will examine briefly the basis of happiness (Ref. The Five kosas). It is well recognized that all life in particular and all existence is all organized with several layers of essence also called kosas. Five such layers have been identified and they are regarded as being maintained in balance or harmony, a principle basic to all existence. This is the layer of peace or balance also

called Ananda in the esoteric sciences. It is always dynamic and pulsating least visible in the grossest form of all existence called Anna. There are higher forms of existence characterized by Life or Prana responsible for preserving and continuation of life and still higher forms of existence such as man in which the Vital life principle is aided by the resources of mental and intellectual essences called as Manas and Vijnana in the esoteric disciplines. There is a constant interplay between the components of the soul or individual self namely, Buddhi (intellect), Manas (affective and conative faculties), ahankar (self-identity) and Chitta (consciousness) and the layers of existence described above constituting the drama of life (page 1,2 – Five Kosas). The layers act as binds preventing the individual self from recognizing its true nature and subjecting it to the unrelenting cycle of birth and death.

With the above preliminaries we can look further into the nature and origin of happiness. It is a generally accepted principle in the spiritual traditions that the purpose of creation is the will of the Lord to express

Himself in myriad ways and to show that all forms of life are meant for the experiencing and expression of joy and happiness. We talk of the Ananda Tandava of Lord Shiva, His cosmic dance in and out of sheer joy and also the mesmerizing dance of our beloved Srikrishna. Bliss is regarded as the core of every being and all cultures and traditions are agreed in that the essence of all that is of the nature of bliss. Happiness ranging from the grossest to the subtlest levels and degrees felt out of any activity is only the expression or modification of this bliss sheath.

The pursuit of happiness through the fulfillment of desires is however fraught with rather disastrous consequences to the unwary traveler on the slippery path of spiritual ascent. This has been graphically portrayed in the 2nd Chapter of the Gita as an uncontrolled catastrophic descent into a spiritual abyss. Thinking about objects of enjoyment causes attachment towards them, attachment leading to a desire for possession of the object; the desire when thwarted turns into wrath, wrath in its turn causing delusion

leading to the clouding of reason and logic; delusion leads to loss of memory of our real nature and the instructions of the Guru. With loss of memory discrimination is lost and the seeker falls irretrievably.

The Master addresses the householder in this message and counsels him how to live the life so that he can be happy under all circumstances. It is very important to have a proper conception of life itself and what for it is to be lived. Life is to be lived in such a way so that we can be in tune with the purpose of God, namely that every flower may grow to its right standard. This implies tolerance, co operation, sharing and mutual service coming out of the realization that all of us have the same divine origin and a common purpose that is to lead a holistic life of harmony and concord. The realization that the same divine essence inheres in all promotes compassionate behaviour. Life is not monotonous as some would have it but it is a state of being which should remain permanently as long as we live thoroughly in contact with the Being smelling the fragrance of the Being. This is constant remembrance

and being absorbed in pious thoughts of great purity which we will see subsequently as the only remedy to come out of the state of suffering and pain.

The Master then exhorts us to live like coots and duck in water which when they are out of water have no effect of water on their wings. Similarly we should love our parents and every body in the family without being soiled by attachment. This is the development of refined vairagya namely detachment in attachment. We should learn the proper utilization of love and love in such a way that there is no brokenness so that every one will have the same share. This when matured grows into universal love where all the beings in the universe are loved without any expectation or motive as they all equally enshrine the Divine Beloved. We are counseled moderation in all dealings. Money is required for the maintenance and good living for the family but we are cautioned against love of money for its own sake. Obsession with earning money and its accumulation is a sordid ambition which is to be shunned. The ideal is 'plain living and high thinking'.

Master's compassion for all of us beset with difficulties mostly of our own making is seen in His prayer that every one may get over his difficulties and live a happy life worth living for spiritualism. Master once again reiterates that He is there for the service of all and it goes without saying that all of us who are aspiring to be His followers ought to follow in His foot steps cooperating with Him in the fulfillment of the Divine plan for Humanity. We can see that the above prescriptions are to be followed implicitly for leading a happy, meaningful and fulfilling life.

In another context the Master states, 'Happiness consists in due discharge of one's duty. The Gita lays so much stress upon it. It is in fact the very life and soul of spirituality' (SS-383). Similarly one should encourage himself to cultivate right faith, right cognition and right morals as the basis of yoga has always been right morals and proper behaviour. Rev. Lalaji Saheb has emphasized on cultivating principled character. If it is not there the person is not capable of having the fine type of spirituality which is beyond everything and is

worth having. (SDG-65). The committed seeker can not afford such a situation and if it were to happen he will be the most miserable man. Thus he will look to the proper discharge of all his duties towards the family, society and God dedicating all his actions to the Master and leaving the results in His hands. Again he will endeavour to maintain the highest moral standards so that no one will raise a finger against him as the Master puts it elsewhere.

We started with the proposition that the person who is happy under all circumstances is the happiest one. It is easy to be happy when things are favourable, we are getting to enjoy what we want and there is no threat or challenge to the condition. It is like the smooth sailing of a ship in calm waters with a favourable wind bucking up its sails. When we are subjected to pain, grief, loss of property, spouse and progeny, our equilibrium is sorely tested. It is like the Titanic hitting the iceberg. We are now reminded of the portrayal in the Gita of the person of steady wisdom (sthithaprajna) established in the awareness of his true nature (swaswaroopa jnana) at

all times irrespective of the circumstances in which he may find himself. Such a state can be entered into and a permanent stay therein is possible only when all desires have been cast away from his mind. His mind is not shaken by adversity nor does he hanker after happiness and freed is he from attachment, fear and wrath. The state described is one of balance, equanimity and serenity and is the characteristic of the fifth knot. Thus it is seen immediately that considerable spiritual evolution is required before we can live and act in the spirit of the topic we are discussing. Talking in terms of the sariras it is the steady dwelling in the atma sarira. This is where the opposites, success and defeat, loss and gain, life and death, matter and spirit are transcended and the person is established in the balanced state. It does not however mean that the person is not swayed at all by the positive and negative circumstances. He is able to recover his equilibrium and poise much more quickly and authentically compared to the unevolved. It is a dynamic equilibrium.

In this context it may be noted that there can be no happiness without peace of mind- *ashanthasya kuthassukham*. Thus a mind which is running wild full of restless tendencies is not the platform for happiness. Even if the aspirant abstains physically from the fields of enjoyment (sensory), the memory of the taste (*ruchi/vasana/rasa*) of the past enjoyments remaining within the bliss sheath causes a storm to rage in his mind. The longings are purged only after assiduous practice and the grace of the Master leading to the realization of the Supreme. The practitioners of the Natural Path know and appreciate the value of 'A' and 'B' meditation practices, the purification sessions, individual and trainer assisted in overcoming the above practical problems in dedicated spiritual pursuit.

A discussion of happiness can not but deal with the subject of pain and suffering. In fact it is definitely a pain to know that the state of happiness will pass away leading to the pessimistic observation that all is sorrow. However the followers of the Natural Path are quite well placed in this respect as the subject of suffering and the

proper attitude towards it is dealt with great insight, compassion and pragmatism by the Great Master. Maintaining equanimity in the face of adversity demands moral and spiritual courage, a profound goal clarity and a never say die attitude towards the attainment of the goal. It also reflects a realistic spirit which acknowledges suffering/pain is very much part of the life process. The new born does not come into the world without the birth pangs and labour pain of the mother who even desires death in lieu of the pain, of course only as long as the pain endures and is endured. The moment she sees the child delivered she goes into raptures of joy and feels that it is all worth the trouble. This is true of any creative process.

Our Master's greatness from the practical angle lies in open acknowledgement of suffering or misery in life paralleling in this respect Lord Buddha who recognized the existence of suffering making it the first Noble truth. Thus one can not be really happy under all circumstances unless he learns the proper place for suffering in spiritual life recognizing that enlightenment

and transformation are painful processes though ending ultimately in the crowning success of becoming a real man.

The subject of the nature of misery and sufferings are extensively dealt with in various writings of the Master and we find all the important guidelines in the work Silence Speaks-Problem of living. It is also extensively discussed in the articles 'Path of Pain' and 'This and That have Gone' published in BP V3. There has also been a seminar with the topic "Suffering is the root and results are flowers". I feel that we would benefit a great deal spiritually by going through the above writings again and again trying to meditate on them and endeavoring sincerely to bring them into practice in our day to day living. However I thought of re-presenting some valuable insights found in these writings for the sake of recall and emphasis of the theme, quoting as necessary.

"There are miseries all around for the embodied one. None can escape it. Even then we remain so much

attached to the body, that this thing does not forsake us up to the end, and we even wish to be born again--- As soon as the name (Individualized Existence) has arisen, my bretheren, misery would start in howsoever subtle mould it might be cast”(SDG-39). The Master says that the remedy is devoting ourselves to Godly thoughts of the purest nature. Again He says, ‘If we go with full force at our command towards our main goal the world itself would become a second thought. When (process of meditation maturing to attain the last stage) we become one with the real thing and the things following it become so dark that we do not perceive them. We become blind to in this respect and our vision for the real thing improves and we bring it to such a standard that we are lost altogether. This is the condition of liberation. If this state matured there is the end of all miseries- no pain no sorrow no enjoyment and no pleasure. The machinery of body works without producing any impressions upon us. It becomes an automatic machine which runs by itself as duties demand. Here is the end of everything and there is no

making of samskaras. Here is the point where we surrender ourselves in toto automatically.

This is the essence of the Gita.—The thing is not difficult to be achieved. Absorbency in pious thoughts achieves this goal.” (SS 508-10)

We find the Master explaining the logic behind the sufferings and miseries in the following manner. One who is born is in tumult and disorder because contradictions presented themselves the very moment he came into existence and one who attaches himself unduly to them is held fast in their trammels. The way out is total reliance on divine support. Here the Master gives the example of the great King poet Birthruhari who even abandoned his pillow supporting his head thinking that reliance on the pillow for support would militate against his total reliance on God.

Sufferings have their own place in life for if they were not there man's thought would not have gone upto its reverse- bliss. They constitute the inducement for finding out means for emancipation and even serve as

stimulants. Our discriminative faculty is so much overshadowed by the hankerings of the mind that we have become quite blind to the real values of things concerned with in our life. The Master emphasizes that everything is for ultimate good and we should learn their proper utilization for turning them to our advantage.

The case of conversion of coal into diamond is looked upon as a change of set up and how the change gives a new and pleasing appearance and also makes it more useful. The thing becomes useful and pleasing when the set up is right and it becomes painful and ugly when the set up is wrong.

We ought to realize that sufferings and miseries are caused by our own wrong doings and we should gladly accept them with a welcoming attitude the opportunity given by Nature to get relief through their bogha having full faith in the Master and in a spirit of surrender to Him. This is the essence of the 5th and the 7th Commandments. By giving undue attention to them we

only intensify their power and when we cease to give attention to them they wither away like unwatered plants. This is possible only when we divert our thought from body- consciousness towards soul. The sufferings and miseries, influenced by the effect of superior consciousness in course of time will be entirely cleared and their outbursts shall also cease. Man then will be in soul consciousness enlivened by the divine will. Afflictions are to be looked upon as the reverse side of bliss and they form the only thing that revives in our heart a consciousness of the real and helps us to march in the path of peace and progress.

Talking about Himself He says, 'I have my own experiences of sufferings and miseries and after pondering over them a good deal I have now come to the conclusion that they are boons of nature which helps deliverance from the effects of samskaras. When one is cleared of their remnants spiritual progress goes on unabated provided one's mind is inwardly inclined towards it". (SS-) He says elsewhere, "I was and I am weak still. But when I think of the Master, I become

young with all percolating influence of the Great. The disease is hated by all who suffer. But basically it is very purifying. When impure samskars come into Bhog the eyes of the creator are towards us. It serves as a cradle for rocking the baby and we get nourished. Even when the virtuous samsakars come for Bhog the eyes of God are towards us. It means we are benefited by the disease also which takes along with it the vicious samskars. All is the play of His love” (SDG 121)

Now we may consider for some valuable insights from the articles “Path of Pain” (BP V3) apt for the context.

‘Saha’ means “to endure, to patiently go through patiently hardships without rebelling”. The enlightenment that the process of enlightenment is a painful process comes only after disillusionment about the permanency of objects and relationships we have somehow got involved with. ‘Sahaja’ would therefore mean that which arises from enduring suffering accepting everything as a gift of God. (page 155)

The things we consider as pain and that we considered as cruel and demonic is in fact the doorway to liberation. These are the thorns that lead us to the flowers of the garden as Master puts it. (page 157)

In fact in all the mental processes that we have in the states of Moodha, Kshipta, Vikshipta, Ekagra Vritti and Samadhan, there is always the point of heat and we experience that as a pain of restlessness. It may be surprising that I have included in the painful process even the state of Samadhan or settledness. In the path of Infinity there arises a condition when we move on even after the state of peace to a state of restlessness in peace. Master puts it “ Many a man must have had the taste of the condition of peace. Let us now taste the former (restlessness) for a spark of which one might be ready to forego a thousand states of peace and calmness. This is in fact the foundation of the entire structure which brings forth rare personalities into the world”. Rev. Dr. KCV called it another dawn. This is the heat of Reality in contrast to the physical heat of the star Sun referred to in the 1st Commandment. That is

the heat of activity near the Centre or Tam. (page 158-159)

In a reasonably successful person there is a large area of self-satisfaction but when difficulties and miseries engulf him there develops an area where there is a crack in the door of the ego. And it is through that crack alone does the bright light come and it is not at all pleasant in the beginning. Slowly when the cracks increase and more light starts pouring in through the crevices in the ego we start learning to look for the same with eagerness. We learn that the light is really inviting us to find our way out and we find the doors of the ego are now open to go yonder. This is one of the most important lesson in sadhana.(page 160)

During our meditations all the dirt and unwholesome ideas and desires are basically thrown up. Instead of keeping quiet we seem to run in search of our broom to sweep them away.

When the Master says that we should treat all thoughts as uninvited guests He is asking us to develop tolerance to our own mistakes and follies which fry up through the crevices of the ego structure during meditation.

When pain is understood as the means to develop humility which in turn makes us remember our Master as long as pain persists it becomes something we earnestly seek for. Only then it gets treated as a gift from God. (page 161-162)

If our meditations are disturbing it is really helping us to search for reality. We should not try to perpetuate the blissful or peaceful condition. Thus we may have to relate to the pain even in the bliss. This is the call for the condition of non peace –peace the Master talks so much about. (page 163)

Spiritual life can easily become imbalanced and fixated at a certain point if the bright aspect of Truth or God is not balanced with its shadow aspect. Kunti of

Mahabharat knew the value of contemplating on her own misery which brings balance and humility to the exalted states of communion with the Lord and in the end abundance prosperity due to her. (page 165)

Thus we see how crucial it is to understand the nature of suffering and the beneficial role it plays in attaining the goal so dear to us for developing a proper attitude towards it. Developing such an enlightened attitude towards suffering is indispensable for being happy under all circumstances. We had referred earlier to the state of balance, equanimity and serenity which one has to enter into and achieve stability therein for being happy under all circumstances.

It is the experience of the keen followers of the Natural Path that full adherence to the Ten commandments in a consistent manner enables them to be stabilized in the state of balance. The assiduous practice of the 'A' and 'B' meditations along with other prescribed practices of the system and the assistance rendered by the trainers through Pranahuti enable the serious aspirant to follow the commandments in letter and spirit. The state

described becomes the launching pad for the soul to progress into the cosmic, pan cosmic and realms beyond.

May the Master bless us all.