

Three Minutes - 27 I know You !

**aham vedmi mahAtmAnaM
rAmaM satya parAkramam |
vasiShTho'pi mahA tejA
ye ca ime tapasi sthitaH ||**
*(shri VALmiki, shrimad rAmAyaNam
bAla kANDam 19-14)*

*aham vedmi rAmam - I have the
knowledge about rAma
mahAtmAnam - the superior soul
satya parAkramam - (and has)
truthfulness as His valor
vasiShTo'pi mahA tejA api- (even) the
great shiny VasiShTha
ye tapasi sthitaH ime ca - (and) those
saints who are present here (know
about rAma)*

This verse (shloka) was spoken by R[^]iShi (seer) vishvAmitra to king dasharatha, Lord rAma's father. "I have the knowledge about rAma, the superior soul, and whose valor is His truthfulness; even the great shiny vasiShTha and other saints here are also aware of that".

Once, vishvAmitra came to King dasharatha for help, to slay off the demons (asuras) who were disrupting vishvAmitra's rituals (yaga-s). vishvAmitra asked for rAma's help, but dasharatha pleaded for an alternative. The King stated that rAma was too young to confront such mighty evils (rAkShasa-s) and thus, refused to send him. dasharatha was willing to send the whole army, or perhaps, even himself. At that point, the sage said,

"Oh! dasharatha, You may not know about your son, but I do".

vishvAmitra continued, "King dasharatha, using the inner eye called knowledge, I know rAma, you do not know because you are using the mere external eyes; I prostrated to scholarly teachers, I know Him, prostrated by several ignorant people, you don't know; holding the grass (darbha) in hand, I know Him, holding the bow, you may not know; wearing the ragged hair, I know Him, wearing a jeweled crown, you don't know; filled with pure character (sattva guNa), I know Him, brimming with passion (rajo guNa), you don't know; following the discipline of having the seat and bed below the teacher, I know Him, sitting above everyone on the high throne, you don't know; having performed the rituals on the yearning of permanent bliss (mokSham), I know Him; you led the rituals to beget the child (putra kAmeShTi) in this world, you don't know."

"aham" is the word with which VishvAmitra started to indicate the definiteness in his complete knowledge of the paramAtmA (Ishvaran). Our AcArya-s have extolled this word "aham" to show who will (try to) understand the Lord. vishvAmitra was first a king, then raja R[^]iShi (royal seer), then became a brahma R[^]iShi (seer in search of the ultimate Lord), and finally performed mokSha kAmeShTi (path to achieve mokSham). On the contrary, dasharatha is still immersed in earthly pleasures and

delusions, which do allow him to recognize rAma.

What PuruSha sUktam says, "I know that puruSha (brahman, the final Lord) is the supreme, too high to be understood" (*veda aham etam puruShaM mahAntam*) and Lord KRⁱShNa said (*yo mAM pashyati me na praNashyati*) seems to be literal translations by VishvAmitra. He is very careful in presenting his case. Along with VasiShTha, the royal teacher (rAja guru) VishvAmitra names other sages like Kashyapa, VAmadeva, in case VasiShTha supports the King's inclination.

PuruSha sUkta also states that "the wise understand Him as the primary cause" (*tasya dhlra parijAnanti yonim*). ANDAL notes "the veda-s have conceded that You are the one who cannot be measured" (*URRamuDaiyAi periyAi*) just in two words. In summary, VishvAmitra understands that God is beyond all modes of comprehension. That attitude will come only when one can steer away from worldly pleasures and can attempt to truly concentrate on shrIman nArAyaNa.

What we learn from here

1. Present your case strongly. VishvAmitra, like a shrewd lawyer, points that rAma is really great, regardless of His age; for example, VishvAmitra describes rAma as the "highest soul" and a "righteous person. VishvAmitra quietly reveals dasharatha as rAma's opposite

because of dasharatha's hesitation and inability to live to his word.

- 2. Give supporting materials** VishvAmitra here, by contrasting his and dasharatha's approach and lifestyle, proves that he knows about rAma best, although dasharatha may be the father.
- 3. Provide convincing witnesses.** Smart lawyers try to get opponent's witness to side with them. VishvAmitra does the same, by trying to take King's own trusted gurus and friends on his side.
- 4. Lord and worldly pleasures are inversely related.** They are like Ying and Yang. If one goes higher, the other goes down. Best way to understand God is to have the discriminative knowledge on permanent and temporary (nitya anitya vastu vivekam) things.

"Knowing the God is, knowing that He is unknowable".