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WEALTH & VEDANTA
VENKATESWARA AIYAR

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WEALTH AND VEDANTA
Being an Exposition

OF

Their inseparable character

By

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ശ്രീ

മഹാഗണപതയനമഃ

Wealth and Vedanta.

I. Prayer.

യത്രയോഗേശ്വരഃ കൃഷ്ണാ

യത്രപാത്ഥമാധനശർധരഃ

തത്രശ്രീവിജയോഭൂതിഃ

ധ്രുവാനിതിഃ മതിർമമ.

Wherever Srikrishna the lord of yoga or leader of the organised physical, mental and intellectual activities and Partha the well-armed and (therefore the really powerful) go, there will be prosperity, victory, happiness, and firm morality and justice.

Man is rich with little were his
 judgment true
 Nature is frugal and her wants
 are few.

II Wealth and Vedanta are inseparable.

Very many are under a misconception that Vedanta is a speculative theoretical spiritual science which is not of much use in practical life. But as a matter of fact material prosperity is impossible unless our life is in accordance with Vedantie teachings. It will be seen in the sequel that the quantum of our material prosperity is in proportion to the acceptance of Vedantie principles in our daily life. A close study of Vedanta will convince any one that it is an unalloyed ocean of infinite practical wisdom. It will

be found to be an ocean of consciousness in which (1) Intelligence (2) Reasoning faculty (3) Prudence (4) Keen memory (5) Tact (6) Concentration (7) Determination and will (8) Comprehensive grasp (9) Self-satisfaction (10) Education (11) Training (12) Insight (13) Inspiration (14) Intuition (15) Occultism (16) Statesmanship (17) Self reliance (18) Self respect (19) Self-sacrifice (20) Self-culture (21) Moral courage (22) Up-rightness (23) Self-control (24) Presence of mind (25) Modesty (26) Nobility (27) Euthusiasm. (28) Clearness (29) Cleverness (30) Honesty (31) purity of heart and (32) Similar qualifications are like mere drops. Vedic wisdom extends far above intellectual expansion infinitely and it is the unlimited condition which is revealed by the Vedanta. The

earlier portion of the Vedas aims at the purification of the mind to prepare the intellect to generate a calm atmosphere for the manifestation of the Self which is an embordiment of unalloyed eternal supreme bliss. The final teachings being in the end they are called Vedanta or the end of the Vedas. Being eternal revelations they are not tainted with the defects of the human brain and heart so the teachings of Vedanta are perfectly reliable. They help us in eschewing our pain and misery altogether and the balance in us will be Brahmanandam or eternal bliss. In spite of such value for Vedanta the so-called Educated people are afraid of it almost like a scorpion's sting. They go to the Extent of *proclaiming loudly* that our material degradation is due to our over-attention paid to Vedauta

or spiritual science. They have not lost complete faith in the sastras and puranas but still are so much clouded by the disproportionate attention to the immediate results that they invite intellectual shortsightedness or even blindness. They forget that Vyasa the author of Vedānta Sūtras and Expounder of vedic wisdom is an incarnation of Vishnu or Lakshmīpati i. e. lord of prosperity. Vishnu is the lord of Bhūmī and Lakshmi who are patent and latent embodiments of prosperity. Vishnu's sudarsana is a symbol of his infinite insight and wisdom. The word Vishnu which means all pervading shows that his wisdom is infinite in depth and Expansion. Still Lakshmi or lordess of prosperity who is Chanchala or fleeting elsewhere is inseparable from Vishnu. But this illustration will be of use only to

those who have faith in the historic value of Puranes which are real histories of the seen and unseen worlds. We shall therefore try to Establish the position by means of reasoning.

III Wealth and its clasifications.

We hear very often people say that he is intellectually wealthy but materially poor and vice versa. Some say that intellectual poverty is more repulsive than material poverty. So we shall do well to analyse the literal and metaphorical meaning of the term 'wealth'. If we remember the five-fold classification of the human body and its correspondence with the world constitution the following parallels will be seen.

	Microcosmic	Macroscopic
(A) Physical	Health	Material Prosperity
(B) Astral	Strength	Power

(C) Mental	Purity of heart.	Morality
(D) Intellectual	Intelligence Reasoning Prudence Memory	} Statesmanship
(E) Spiritual	Realisation	Altruism

Of these we are now going to study the macrocosmic aspect of physical wealth which has been named material prosperity above. We often have heard that health is wealth. Similarly all the above qualifications are essential to call a man really wealthy in the sense that he has got all conditions of happiness. It will not be forgotten that wealth is liked by most people as it is believed to be an embodiment of all conditions of happiness. We shall confine ourselves to the study of material wealth and see how it is related to vedic wisdom.

IV Material Wealth.

Its evolution began from the barter system in goods in cattle and took the shape of money as a symbolic medium of exchange. Then the idea of proprietorship in lands and negotiable instruments were evolved. After-wards credit also was included under the heading of wealth. So (1) Goods (2) Money (3) Negotiable instruments (4) Documents under-taking liability (5) Lands and (6) credit are all now regarded as elements of wealth. We shall next see how it is earned.

V Inheritance or self-acquisition.

Wealth is acquired either by inheritance including devises, gifts &c. or by hard and wise industry. Those who know the principle of karma and the theory of

incarnation will know that both means are identical as the former is only the result of previous Karma. We do not see the immediate relationship between the industry of the heir and the wealth inherited. As regards self-acquisition there are dependent and independent means such as (1) Government service (2) Other service (3) Agriculture (4) mining (5) Industry other-wise (6) Trade and commerce including brokerage (7) Legal profession (8) Medical profession (9) Educational profession (10) Missionary Enterprise. In all these methods of earning wealth it will not be difficult to see that the following virtues are essential for success in the attempt viz.

(1). Deep insight in our work. Corresponding to Atmagnana or self realisation of the Vedantin.

(2). Habit of loving service corresponding to Brahmananda or altruistic service and bliss.

(3). Freedom from doubts corresponding to Samsarahani or killing of samsara.

(4). Comprehensive grasp and freedom from confusion corresponding to Agnana palayana or Running away of ignorance.

(5). Feeling of responsibility and Discharge of duty corresponding to krita krityata.

(6). Contentment or self-satisfaction corresponding to Tripti.

(7). Uprightness in thought, word, and deed corresponding to Adwaita.

(8). Precaution against evil consequences corresponding to Dosha Drishti.

(9). Realisation of the ideal in our work corresponding to praptyaprapti. Thus we see that the conditions essential for the acquisition of wealth and the realisation of the supreme are identical. Those conditions are called Antahkarana suddhi or purity of heart.

VI Wealth and purity of heart.

We thus find that competency, capacity and character are essential both for wealth and self-realisation.

Edward young says :—

A competence is all we can enjoy

A competence is vital to content

Much wealth is copulence if not disease.

The qualifications necessary for purifying the heart are enumerated in

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slokas 1 to 3, of the XVI chapter of Bhagavadgita. They are called Daivi-Sampat or Divine prosperity which is the seed of material prosperity. They are as follows :—

അഭയം സത്വസംശുദ്ധിഃ
 ജ്ഞാനയോഗം വ്യവസ്ഥിതിഃ
 ദാനദമശ്വ യജ്ഞശ്ച
 സ്വാധ്യായസൂച ആജ്ഞം
 അഹിംസാ സത്യം അക്രോധഃ
 ത്യാഗഃ ശാന്തിഃ അപൈശ്വര്യം
 ദയാഭക്തേഷു അലോലുപ്ഷം
 മാദംഭ്രിഃ അമാപലം
 തെജഃ ക്ഷമാ ധൃതിഃ ശൗചം
 അദ്രോഹോ നാതിമാനിതം
 ഭവന്തി സമ്പദം ദൈവീം
 അഭിജാതസ്യ ഭാരത.

- (1). Moral courage
- (2). Purity of heart

- (3). Comprehensive grasp
- (4). Charity
- (5). Self control in action.
- (6). Sacrifice
- (7). Study
- (8). Uprightness
- (9). Repentance for wrongs
- (10). Harmlessness
- (11). Honesty
- (12). Sweet temper
- (13). Freedom from sensual craving
- (14). Peace of mind
- (15). Hate of slander
- (16). Philanthropy
- (17). Freedom from avarice
- (18). Gentleness
- (19). Meekness
- (20). Steadfastness
- (21). Self respect
- (22). Patience

- (25). Will power
 (24). Simplicity and cleanliness
 (25). Freedom from causing pain
 and (26). Modesty

It is also said in the next sloka that

ஓஓஓ ஓஓஓ அகிமானது
 கொய் பாடிவெவவ
 அனாதாநம் பாடிஜாதநு
 பாடும்பவமோஸுலீ.

(1) Hypocrisy (2) Arrogance (3) Conceit
 (4) Wrath (5) Harshness and (6) Ignorance are obstacles to the means of acquiring wealth.

Thus we see that the lessons from Vedas help us in laying the foundation of the root cause of wealth and its development. If we see wealthy people without these qualifications we may be sure that

their position is the result of having had these qualifications before. Of course these qualities take time to unfold themselves as concrete wealth as we find in the case of all cultivation. Any mistaken hurry will be like the impatience of a father who wanted his son to be a Dewan in his infancy when the astrologer predicted that the child's horoscope is such that he would become a Dewan.

So far we have been considering the acquisition of wealth in the literal sense. Now we shall study the elements of metaphorical wealth.

VII Metaphorical view of wealth.

There seems to be a confusion of ideas in the minds of persons who spoil their health and risk everything else in

their enthusiasm to earn wealth. They forget that after all wealth is only a means to an end viz to bring about conditions of happiness. That is why sages say "Wealth may be a blessing or a curse according to the use we make of the same. Riches bring happiness only to people who use them for the good of others. In fact the wealth in the whole universe is a fixed quantity. It flows only in channels which will lead it to the greatest use. So unless one makes himself as useful to others as possible by exerting his utmost to enhance their happiness he will not be a channel for the current of prosperity. In other words he will never be wealthy. If he is already wealthy by previous virtues and has relinquished a virtuous path, wealth also is bound to flow out of him through thieves, fire, litigations, and

extravagant living. We have further to see that it is not in the quantum of wealth that we are rich or poor but in a combination of wealth and contentment.

Goldsmith Says :—

Fortune, men say, doth give too
much to many
But yet she never gave enough
to any
Let us draw upon content for the
deficiencies of fortune

We ought to remember that God the manager of the world family is giving us enough according to our necessities and qualifications. So any idea of storing to make wealth rot is against divine plan and will not receive support from him. That is why we find that ambitious men find

difficulty in earning, and preservation of wealth. They feel difficulty even in determining how to make use of it. We ought to be careful not to become vain. Vanity is sure to bring on a luxurious habit and ultimate loss of wealth. This leads us to a study of the progress of virtues from economics.

VIII Virtues unfolded through love of wealth.

Love of wealth generates thrift and perseverance. Gradually prudence, freedom from passions, attempt to make mind peaceful and well-balanced are acquired for the preservation of wealth at first and ultimately they become habits. Then we find as Byron says

It is a very good world we live in
 To lend, or to spend, or to give in
 But to beg or to borrow or get a man's
 own

It is the very worst world that ever was
 known

Thus we find that spiritual bliss is
 only the spirit or Atma or heart of mater-
 ial prosperity. The ultimate effect of both
 is a combination of

(a) ദുഃഖരഹിതം = Freedom from pain and
 misery

(b) കാമരൂപം = Satisfaction and content-
 ment

(c) കൃതകൃത്യതാ = Feeling of having dis-
 charged one's duty

and (d) ബ്രഹ്മപ്രാപ്തി = Realisation of the
 ideal

IX Vedantin alone is the really rich man.

The above thoughts show why Vidyaranyaswami says as follows when he realised Vedantic teachings in slokas 58 to 62 of the XIV prakarana of Pauchadesi

ധന്വേദം ധന്വേദം നിത്യം
നാപാത്മാനം അജ്ഞാതവേദി

ധന്വേദം ധന്വേദം ബ്രഹ്മം
തന്മോവിഭാതിമെസ്തജ്ഞം

ധന്വേദം ധന്വേദം ദുഃഖം
സാംസാരികം നവീക്ഷേദ്യ

ധന്വേദം ധന്വേദം സ്വസ്ത്വ
അജ്ഞാനം പലായിതം കപാപി

ധന്വേദം ധന്വേദം കർമ്മവും
മേനവിദ്യതെ കിഞ്ചിത്

ധന്യോഹം ധന്യോഹം
 പ്രാപ്തം സർവ്വമു സമ്പന്നം
 ധന്യോഹം ധന്യോഹം തൃപ്തഃ
 മെകൊപമാ ഭവേൽ ലോകേ
 ധന്യോഹം ധന്യോഹം ധന്യോ
 ധന്യഃ പുനഃ പുനഃ ധന്യഃ
 അഹോ പുണ്യം അഹോപുണ്യം
 ഫലിതം ഫലിതം ദൃശം.

I am wealthy now only
 as I realise my self and as I enjoy supreme
 bliss

I am wealthy now only
 as I do not feel the miseries of life
 and as I am free from ignorance which
 has fled, some where.

I am wealthy now only
 as there is no further necessity for any
 exertion. I have got all that I want.

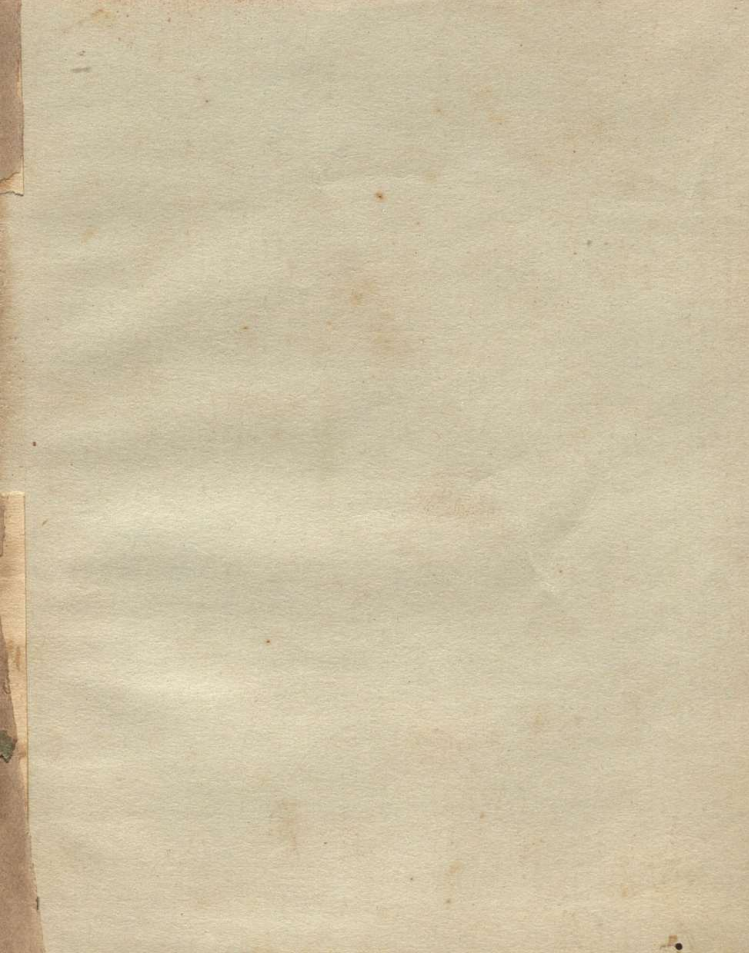
I am wealthy now only
 as I do not find anything in the world
 which can satisfy me as this realisation
 of Vedantic lessons has done. Therefore
 I am indescribably wealthy.

Oh how completely virtues are reward-
 ed in this Universe of justice.

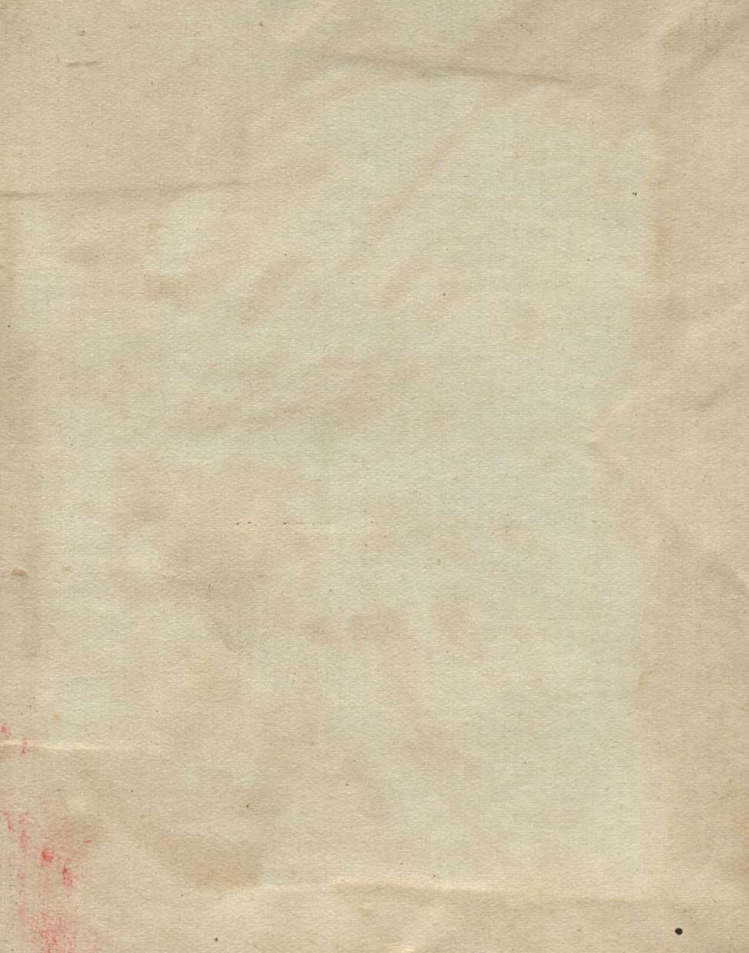
Therefore it is abundantly clear that
 our degeneration in material welfare is due
 to our neglect of the study of Vedanta
 which leads to Brahmandam.

Om Tat Sat.

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