

# **ANANDA RASA RATNAKAR**

Selections from the talks and writings of  
**PARAMPUJYA MAHARAJSHREE**  
**SWAMI AKHANDANANDA SARASWATI**

**Volume 2**

Compiled by  
**Govindananda Saraswati**

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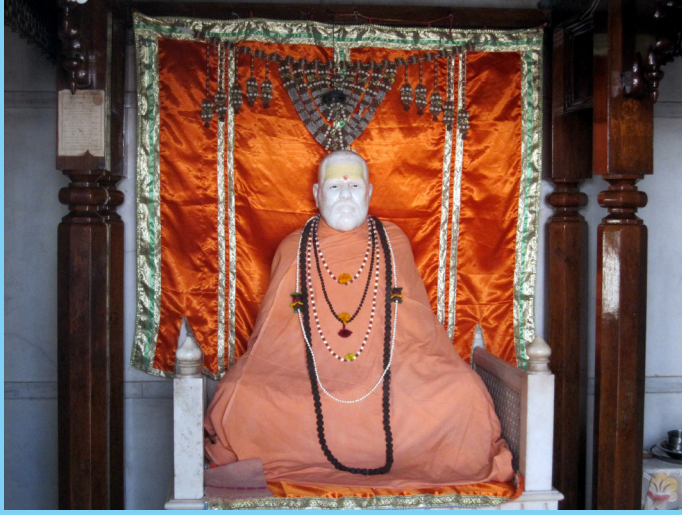
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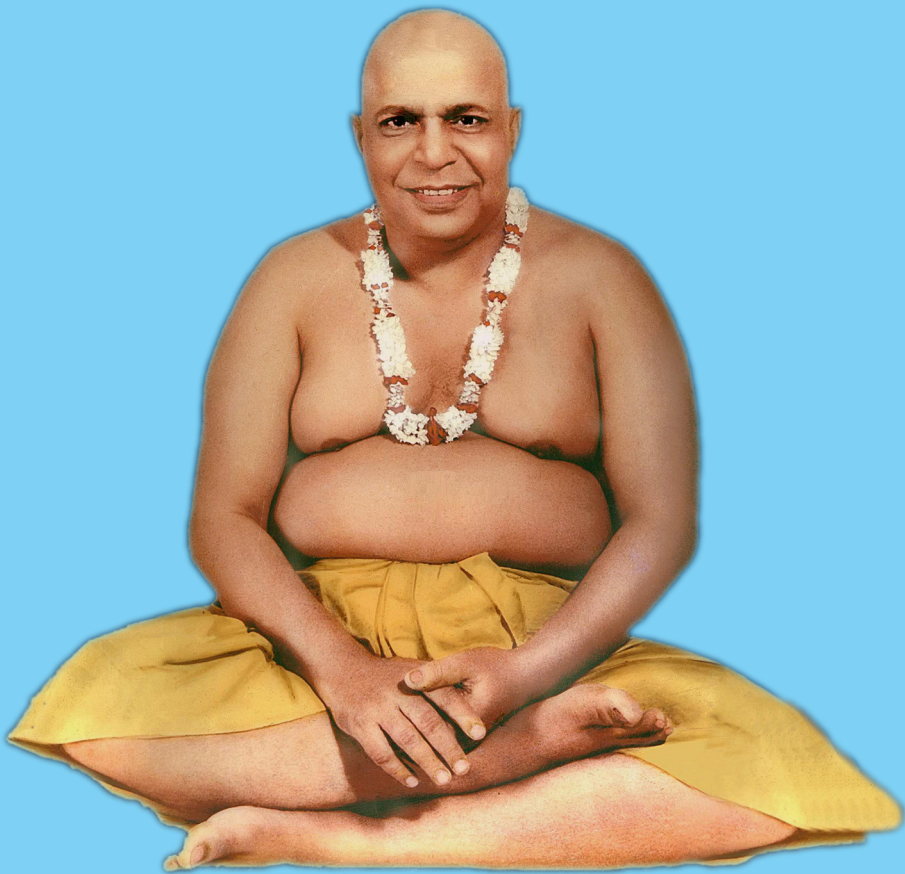
शिक्षा सर्वागमानां निखिलजनमनः पावनी कापि दीक्षा  
दीप्ता सर्वात्मदृष्टिर्निरवधिकरुणा किं नु वात्सल्यदृष्टिः।  
निष्ठा ब्रह्मात्मविद्याद्युतिदलित तमस्तोमविद्वन्मणीनां  
श्रीपूर्णानन्दतीर्थो जगति विजयते सत्प्रतिष्ठा यतीनाम् ॥२॥

The precept of all Shastras,  
That (indescribable) 'initiation'  
Which cleanses, purifies, sanctifies,  
the minds of all people,  
That radiant vision of oneness in all,  
That infinite compassion,  
That rain of tenderness;  
The perfect crest-jewel among Jnanis  
Who remove the darkness of ignorance  
By the effulgence of Brahmailidya,  
Glory to (that) Shri Poornanandateertha  
Ever victorious over all world  
Who is indeed the manifestation  
Of the firm abidance of 'sat' (सत्),  
(Truth-Substance-Existence-Reality)  
Of all ascetics.

*Sri Poornananda Teertha Stava, Verse 2*  
*Swami Akhandananda Saraswati*

वृष्णात् परं किमपि  
तत्त्वमहं न जाने ।  
ऊर्वा षडाब्दे





**Parampujya Maharajshree  
Swami Akhandananda Saraswati-j Maharaj**

## **Maharajshree : A brief sketch**

Maharajshree Swami Akhandananda Saraswati was born in Vikram Samvat 1968, on the new moon day of the month of Shravana, in the asterism of Pushya – which corresponds to the Western calendar date of 25th of July, 1911 CE. He was born in a Sarayupaareen Brahmana family living near the banks of river Ganga in a village of name Mahraai, in the region of Varanasi, the holiest place in Bharatavarsha.

His birth was exactly nine months after his paternal grandfather had prayed to Lord Thakur Shantanu Vihari of Vraj, asking the Lord to bless the family with a son. In gratitude, the child was given the name of the Lord, Shantanu-Vihaari.

When his horoscope was cast, the leading astrologers of the day declared that Maharajshree would live only for 19 years. As a consequence, the fear of death drove young Shantanu to the path of spirituality. All the sages and saints that he met told him clearly that they could not tell him how to escape from death, for death comes as preordained by Prarabdha Karma; but they could give him that 'Jnana' (knowledge), by which the fear of death would cease, once and for all. And that is exactly what happened. Deathless Brahman revealed itself in the heart of Maharajshree, by which the dark shadow of death fled far away, for all time to come.

On one occasion, Maharajshree went to Jhusi in Prayag-raj to meet the celebrated saint Sri Prabhudutt Brahmachari. It was here that Maharajshree first met the Supreme-sage Sri Udiya Babaji Maharaj, and he received many clarifications from Baba on questions related to Vedanta. Seeing the steady, non-dual, Self-abidance of Baba, and the unique bliss of his Jeevanmukti, Maharajshree became quite spellbound. Right from the first meeting, he was blessed with Baba's love and affection. Maharajshree's taking up Sanyaas was at the inner prompting of Baba, and he received the vows of renunciation from Jyotish-Peethadheeshwar Jagadguru Shankaracharya Swami Shri Brahmananda Saraswati. Prior to his taking Sanyas, he served for seven years in the editorial board of 'Kalyan' magazine, published by Gita Press, Gorakhpur.

He was first introduced to the study of Srimad Bhagavatam at the tender age of ten by his paternal grandfather. And from that time onwards, right until the end of his earthly sojourn, Srimad Bhagavatam

remained with him as a companion in the manner of a 'heart friend'. His daily Satsang, which was a sharing of the revelry springing from his inner bliss, carried on without break till the evening Satsang of 17th November, 1987. Devotees of Satsang heartily partake the ambrosia of his words even to this day, by means of his books, audio and video recordings.

At 2 AM, Brahmanuhurtha time of 19th November, 1987, corresponding to the thirteenth day of the dark fortnight of the month of Margasheersha, the individual life-force of Maharajshree merged in the Cosmic life-force of Creation, and He became all-pervading.

It was clearly seen in the life of Maharajshree that he had the same love for all people; irrespective of sect or belief, or whether the person was a dunce or a scholar, a woman or man, a young boy or an aged person, poor or wealthy. Whatever desire a person approached Maharajshree with, the person achieved that. Right to the very end, Maharajshree freely handed out all four Purushartha-s (the four objects of human pursuit – viz., Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha), as well as the fifth Purushartha – namely, Bhakti.

The Ananda-Vrindavan Ashram established by Maharajshree in Sri Brindavan Dham, is equivalent to Teertharaj Prayag, the King of the holy river confluences; for here, there is the convergence of Karma, Bhakti and Jnana. The Ashram activities include regular Satsang, service to God-Supreme, service to cows, service to Sanyasis, the study of Shastras in the Veda Vidyalaya, free medical clinic etc. In addition, the tradition of celebrating the birth anniversaries of all the great Acharyas, which was started by Maharajshree and continues to this day, shines as something quite amazing from the point of view of cultural synthesis. Indeed, it is a standout example of the broadmindedness of Maharajshree.

Glory to Maharajshree!



श्रीहरिः

श्रीगणेशाय नमः



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पूज्यपाद मान्यश्री स्वामी अखण्डानन्दसरस्वती - महाभाग विद्वान् और विनम्र मनीषी थे। 'भगवत्कृपासे मुझे सन् १९७२ से १७ नवम्बर १९८७ पर्यन्त उनका सान्निध्य सुलभ हुआ है। इस अवधिमें उनके वचनामृतका मैंने आस्था और अपनत्वपूर्वक आस्वादन किया है। उनकी सरस तथा सरल प्रवचनशैली अवश्य ही अद्भुत थी। वे 'नारायण'- इस भगवन्नामका उच्चारणपूर्वक ही सम्भाषण करते थे। उनके प्रश्नोत्तरकी शैली भी मनोरम थी। अध्यात्मके सुगूढ भावोंको भी सुगम और सरसशैलीमें प्रस्तुत करनेकी कला उनमें स्वभावसिद्ध थी। सन्तों तथा विद्वानोंको वे सम्मान देते थे। वे जहाँ श्रीवल्लभादि - वैष्णवाचार्योंके सिद्धान्तको स्वपक्षको हृदयङ्गम करनेमें उत्तम सोपान मानते थे; वहाँ कश्मीरी शैवदर्शनमें सन्निहित स्पन्दतत्त्वके भी प्रशंसक थे। वे साधकोंको मन्त्रजपके प्रति आस्थान्वित करनेमें दक्ष थे। वे आवश्यकतानुसार व्यवहारकी चर्चा भी अध्यात्मकी चासनीमें पागकर ही करते थे। उनका वचनामृत श्रवणसुखद और मनको विश्राम देनेवाला था।

श्रीभगवत्पाद शङ्कराचार्य - महाभागके द्वारा उद्भासित सिद्धान्तके सम्बन्धमें पूज्यपाद स्वामी श्री अखण्डानन्दसरस्वती - महाभाग कहा करते थे कि विविध दर्शनोंमें औपनिषद - सिद्धान्तको पूर्वपक्ष अथवा उत्तरपक्षके रूपमें जिस प्रकार ख्यापित किया गया है; उसीको श्रीशङ्कराचार्यने युक्ति तथा अनुभूतिसहित सैद्धान्तिक धरातलपर उद्भासित किया है। अतः परम्पराप्राप्त औपनिषदसिद्धान्तका वही स्वरूप ग्राह्य है, जिसे भगवत्पादने ख्यापित किया है। श्रीवैष्णवाचार्योंने ईशादि - उपनिषदोंपर भाष्य न लिखकर मानो मौनरूपसे उसे स्वीकार कर लिया है।

श्री स्वामीजीके प्रवचनोंका स्वान्तःसुखाय आस्था और दक्षतापूर्वक सङ्कलनकर उसे सर्वजनसुखाय 'आनन्दरस- रत्नाकर'- नामसे प्रकाशित कर एवं उसके इंग्लिश - अनुवादके संयोजन तथा पत्रिकाके माध्यमसे क्रमशः प्रकाशनका मार्ग प्रशस्तकर डॉ. श्री स्वामी गोविन्दानन्दसरस्वतीजी ने हमें प्रमुदित किया है।

निश्चलानन्द सरस्वती

स्वामी निश्चलानन्दसरस्वती

श्रीमज्जगद्गुरु - शङ्कराचार्य - पुरीपीठ

११.१२.२०२०





**Shree Govardhan Math Puri Peethadheeshwar  
Parampujya Jagadguru Shankaracharya  
Swami Sri Nischalananda Saraswati-ji Maharaj**

## Shree Hari Prostrations to Shree Ganesha

Pujyapaada Maanyashree Swami Akhandananda Saraswati Mahabhaaga, was a great scholar and sage, endowed with great humility, gentleness. By the grace of God, I was blessed with his proximity from 1972 CE to 17, November, 1987 CE. During this period, I have, with deep faith and a sense of personal belonging, greatly relished his *vachanaamrita* (the ambrosia of his words). His nectarous and simple style of speaking was indeed wonderful. He would always start his speeches by first voicing Bhagavans Name – ‘**Narayan**’. His manner of answering questions was captivating too. His style of communicating even the most intricate, subtle, points of Adhyatma-Vidya in a nectarous, easy to understand way, was something that came naturally to him. He held sages and scholars in great honour. While he considered the Siddhanta (doctrine) of Vaishnavacharyas like Shri Vallabha as being an excellent ladder for getting to a good understanding of one’s own philosophy, he was also all praise for the *spanda-tattva* (principle of pulsation) embedded in the philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism. In enabling Sadhaka-s to develop a firm faith in *mantra-japa*, he was an adept. He would engage in discussions on worldly matters when necessary, but only after soaking these in the syrup of Adhyatma-Vidya. His *vachanaamrita* was joy to the ears, and gave tranquility to the mind.

As regards the Siddhanta that has been brought to light by Shree Bhagavatpada Shankaracharya Mahaabhaaga, Shree Akhandananda Saraswati used to say – ‘The Upanishad Siddhanta that has been declared in the *purvapaksha* (prima-facie argument) and *uttarapaksha* (refutation of the prima-facie argument) in different works of philosophy; these very doctrines have been illumined by Shankaracharya in the landscape of Siddhanta, with clear logic, and based on his profound personal experience. Therefore, only that interpretation of traditionally handed-down Upanishad Siddhanta is to be considered valid, which has been espoused by Bhagavatpada Shankara. The Vaishnava Acharyas, by not writing any commentary on Isha and other Upanishads, have tacitly accepted this.’

Doctor Swami Shree Govindananda Saraswati Ji has, with great faith and skill, collated a selection of discourses of Shree Swami Akhandananda Saraswati for his own inner joy, published them as a book titled as 'Ananda Rasa Ratnakar' (in Hindi language); and has now organized the translation and publication of this in English. By this, he has given us great happiness.

Sd/-

Swami Nischalananda Saraswati  
Shrimad-Jagadguru-Shankaracharya,  
Govardhan Peeth, Puri  
11-December-2020



## A humble submission

कथायां पीयूषं प्रवचनकलायां च पटुता।  
सुलेखे लालित्यं लसति किल यस्य क्षितितले।  
स्मरामि प्रातस्तं भवजलधिभीतैकशरणं  
अखण्डानन्दं श्रीगुरुवरमहं ब्रह्म परमम् ॥

(रचयिता : श्री ओंकारदत्त शास्त्री)

*He whose*

*Nectarous quality, in story-telling;*

*Excellence, in the art of discourse;*

*Charm, in good writing;*

*Shines supreme on earth;*

*He*

*Who is the sole refuge*

*Of those who are seized by the fear*

*Of the ocean of transmigration;*

*Him*

*The best of Guru-s, Supreme Brahman*

*Shree Akhandananda*

*I contemplate in my mind*

*First thing, in the waking-up moment of early morn.*

(Composed by Shree Omkardutt Shastri)

Some year ago, during the course of my daily studies, I was greatly drawn by a particular essay of Pujya Maharajshree, of title 'Sadhana ki anivaaryataa', which was a part of the book 'Bhakti Sarvasva'. I wrote down the important points of this essay in a separate notebook, for the purposes of my contemplation/meditation.

Thereafter, I continued this as a regular practice. Every week, for my own sake, I began putting together a page of material for contemplation/meditation, extracted from different books authored by Pujya Maharajshree.



During my sojourn in South India, I had the good fortune of coming across the book “*Shree Brahmachaitanya Maharaj Gondavalekar Pravachan*”. This book was a collection of *pravachan* (discourses) of the sage, meant for daily reading. The book was so arranged that there was one page of discourse for each of the 366 days of the year. Upon seeing this, there arose this desire in my mind that a similar collection could be made, of discourses of Maharajshree. The thought was to see if this could be done as a part of the ‘Birth Centenary Smrti’ – as a Satsang-blessing of Maharajshree himself, meant for daily reading by spiritual seekers.

In this manner, the weekly page compilation that I began in 2003, selecting material from different books of Maharajshree, was completed sometime in the beginning of 2010 CE, ahead of the birth centenary of Maharajshree. This collection of 366 pages, extracted from over 80 different books of Maharajshree, was first put together as ‘*Janm Shatabdhi Smaarikaa*’ (A Birth Centenary Remembrance), and then took the form of the book ‘**Ananda Rasa Ratnakar**’.

By the Grace of Pujya Maharajshree, the book was well received by learned readers. However, there also arose a request for an English translation for the benefit of those who do not know Hindi, and this request was persistently voiced.

For me it is a matter of pride that my close friend, Sri Kameshwar, in response to my gentle request, took this task upon himself, and now, the ‘First Volume’ is in your hands.

It is to be noted that Sri Kameshwar has been serving the cause of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi literature for the last many years. Among Sri Kameshwar’s writings, the most peerless offering is one that was released recently; a book titled – “*Essence of the Vedas – ‘Upadesha Saarah’ of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi, with ‘Tattvabodhini’ commentary in Sanskrit by Atmavidyabhushanam Sri Jagadeeshwara Shastri – English translation and notes – G Kameshwar*”.

The English translation of ‘Ananda Rasa Ratnakar’ comes across as a lucid and accurate rendering. You would yourself say this after perusal of the book.

To our greatest happiness, for this ‘Volume 1’ of the book, we have received the Srimukha, most auspicious words of benediction, from **Poorvamnaya Shree Govardhan Math Puri Peethadheeshwar Shrimat Jagadguru Shankaracharya Shree Swami Nischalananda Saraswati-ji Maharaj**. Our countless prostrations to Maharaj-ji.

Auspicious best-wishes for this publication have also been received from Shree Swami Sacchidanandaji and Shree Swami Shravananandaji.

Shri Alay and Shrimati Shilpi Shah (Vadodara) have offered the Seva for publication of all four volumes of this book, in memory of their parents, (Late) Shri Jitubhai and (Late) Shrimati Suhasiniben Shah, who were ardent disciples of Puja Maharajshree. May Puja Maharajshree’s blessings be with them always.

Our great appreciation for the beautiful printing carried out by Sri Rajeev Batra and Sri Ashish Batra.

Lastly, I humbly request learned readers to please let us know any errors that they notice in this edition, so that these may be rectified in the next edition.

Vrindavan  
Mahashivaratri, 2021

With humble Pranams  
Resorting to the lotus feet of Shri Guru,  
**Govindananda Saraswati**

## A brief note on Volume 2

The first volume of this series was released on 12th of July, 2021 – the holy occasion of the birth-centenary celebrations of Adi Mahant Ji Swami Omkaranand Saraswati Ji Maharaj of our Ananada Vrindavan Ashram. The date also happened to be the day of Jagannath Rath Yatra, and the book was released by Swami Shravananand Saraswati Ji Maharaj during the Shrimad Bhagawat Katha Mahotsav held as a part of the centenary celebrations. We are very happy that the book was well received by learned readers.

This Volume 2 of the series is being released on Sanyas Jayanti

Mahotsav of Parampujya Maharajshree Swami Shri Akhandananda Saraswati Ji. This volume covers the calendar of April to June. It may be noted that the month of June is entirely devoted to selections from Maharajshree's talks on Bhagavad Gita – especially his lectures on 'Purushottam Yoga' (Chapter 15 of Gita).

We are certain that learned readers will greatly benefit in their spiritual progress by studying and reflecting upon the selections covered in this Volume 2 of Ananda Rasa Ratnakar.

Vrindavan  
20<sup>th</sup> January, 2022

With humble Pranams  
Resorting to the lotus feet of Shri Guru,  
**Govindananda Saraswati**



## Translator's Note

At the outset, I would like to express my immense gratitude to Doctor Swami Govindananda Saraswati Ji, for being my bridge to Brindavan, taking me to the most blessed sannidhi of Maharajshree Swami Akhandananda Saraswati. For this, I am eternally beholden to him.

It was in the Asrama of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi at Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu, that I first met Swami Govindananda Saraswati. At that time, Swami Govindananda Ji was in his 'ajnAta vAsa', living incognito in South India. During the course of conversation, perhaps spotting some interest about Maharajshree in me, Swami Govindananda Ji took my address, and he mailed me a copy of "Pawan Prasang", the Hindi autobiography of Maharajshree. And this book opened my eyes to the great spiritual landscape of North India, the timeless presence of supreme sages like Swami Poornananda Teertha (Udiya Baba), Hari Baba, Karpatriji Maharaj and others. What a treasure of a book! I read, and re-read it many times. The simplicity of language, the musical Ganga-like flow of expression, the depth and sweep of spiritual topics addressed, the confluence of diverse paths of Karma-Yoga-Bhakti-Jnana, the constant "darshan" of supreme sages – all these and more made the book one of the most beautiful writings in spiritual literature that I had come across. That Vedanta could be written so beautifully in Hindi was a matter of great wonder for me. Indeed, I was drawn into the world of Maharajshree – by the magic of 'Pawan Prasang'.

Thereafter, thanks to Swami Govindananda Ji again, I had the good fortune of visiting Maharajshree's Ashram in Brindavan several times, and I could get to sip the life-giving amrita of his writings and discourses. To connect to any one of his books or talks is to connect to all sages, all philosophies, all spiritual paths, all Oneness, and more than all this, "all joy". His words are like a cool Himalayan breeze of compassion, bringing with them a wave of Ananda. It is the 'ahaituki kripa', the Causeless-Grace, of God Supreme.

And Maharajshree has been a prolific writer, his works extending across the whole landscape of spiritual literature. It is an ocean of knowledge, the ends of which cannot be gauged. It is our great good fortune that Swami Govindananda has selected, edited and compiled

a collection of Maharajshree's writings, extracted from across all his works, and brought it out as the Hindi book 'Ananda Rasa Ratnakar'. The book is structured as a daily reader, a collection of 366 articles of Maharajshree, to be read over one year. On Swami Govindananda's advice, an English translation of the book was decided to be brought out, as a series in four volumes. This first volume, covers the articles from January to March. It was at the gracious request of Swami Govindananda Ji that this task of translation was taken up by me, although with some trepidation. Firstly, the subject matter is profound. And then, the book is a compilation of writings taken from across 80+ different books and articles, and so each 'piece' has its own context and style. Also, in many cases, the style of writing is conversational, informal, and to get that style across in a translation is rather difficult. There is also the realization that not a single word of Maharajshree is redundant, and every nuance and emphasis matters. Therefore, it is desirable that the translation remains absolutely true to the meaning, tone and flow of every sentence of the original. Often, this makes the English rendering somewhat tedious in its construct. And last but not least, this translator's inadequacy of subject-knowledge, coupled with the challenges of expressing technical terms of Vedanta in a non-Indian language without overly affecting the flow, made the whole task a rather daunting challenge. But help was at hand. To get a better understanding of the subject matter, I could take the help of Swami Govindananda Ji, by listening to his daily discourses on 'Ananda Rasa Ratnakar', which are available in YouTube. And I could also send across my draft translations to him for his review, and get clarifications. And most of all, Maharajshree's words carry His blessings; and these encouraged me to chip away, slowly and steadily. Even so, in this work, errors and misprints are bound to be there, and it is my request and belief that learned readers shall pardon these.

For me, the task of translation is a process of Sadhana. To sit with a diary page of 'Ananda Rasa Ratnakar', to "listen" to Maharajshree's compassion filled voice, and to reflect deeply on His words, is a process of meditation; an inner journey in response to Vedanta's call of 'athAto brahma jijñAsa' – 'Now, therefore, the inquiry into Brahman (should be taken up)'.

As a most divine blessing, we have received a Srimukha for this book from His Holiness Jagadguru Shankaracharya of Govardhan Peeth, Puri, Swami Nischalananda Saraswati Ji Maharaj. Our prostrations to the most revered Jagadguru Shankaracharya.

I would also like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Sri Madurai Sridhar for the page-design and typesetting, and to Dr Sarada Natarajan for the beautiful cover design.

With prayers to the most compassionate God Ganesha, this book is offered at the Lotus Feet of Maharajshree.

All Glory to Sri Krishna! All Glory to Maharajshree! Prostrations to the dust of Brindavan!

With humble Pranams,  
G Kameshwar  
Chennai  
April, 2021

## **A brief note on Volume 2**

Mahatma Gandhi, writing in Young India, said:

*“When doubts haunt me, when disappointments stare me in the face, and when I see not one ray of light on the horizon, I turn to the Bhagavad Gita, and find a verse to comfort me; and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow. My life has been full of tragedies and if they have not left any visible and indelible effect on me, I owe it to the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita.”*

These words of Gandhiji, written in June 1945, are as well applicable to the talks and writings of Maharajshree. In this second volume of Ananda Rasa Ratnakar, covering the calendar entries of April to June, the entire month of June is devoted to selections from Maharajshree’s discourses on Bhagavad Gita. In the opening essay of that month, Maharajshree, sounding the bugle of Vedanta, exhorts all despondent seekers to pick up their weapons of *abhyAsa* (practice) and *vairAgya* (detachment), and aim for the highest. He says:

*“Any despondency or indifference that comes in one’s sAdhanA is*

*but a weakness of the mind. Indeed, this is what the Gita teaches us - क्लैब्यं  
मा स्म गमः पार्थ ... 'Yield not to unmanliness, O Partha'. Do not labour under  
the belief that weakness of mind is your character, your nature. Yoga-  
Vasishtha says – 'pressing one hand in the other, grinding teeth with teeth,  
apply yourself to your sAdhanA – you will achieve success'. No karma of  
yours, no wish of yours, will go in vain – Arise, awake, apply yourself in  
auspicious deeds; have the certainty that you will achieve success; for sure  
you will."*

This is the *abhaya-hasta* (raised hand, bestowing freedom from fear) that Maharajshree blesses us with. Prostrations to Maharajshree! Prostrations to Bihari Ji! Prostrations to the dust of Vrindavan and the waters of Yamuna-Kalindi!

With humble Pranams,  
Kameshwar  
Chennai.  
1-Feb-2022



## Approach to Transliteration

To give the reader a better appreciation of the pronunciation of some of the key Sanskrit/Hindi terms that have been used in the original, an attempt has been to transliterate these, and render in italics. The transliteration schema is adapted from the Harvard-Kyoto (HK) convention<sup>1</sup>, as follows:

a	A	i	I	u	U	R	RR					
अ	आ	इ	ई	उ	ऊ	ऋ	ॠ					
lR	lRR		e	ai	O	au	M	H				
ल	लृ		ए	ऐ	ओ	औ	अं	अः				
k	kh	g	gh	G	c	ch	j	jh	J			
क	ख	ग	घ	ङ	च	छ	ज	झ	ञ			
T	Th	D	Dh	N	t	th	d	dh	n			
ट	ठ	ड	ढ	ण	त	थ	द	ध	न			
p	ph	b	bh	m	y	r	l	v	z	S	s h	
प	फ	ब	भ	म	य	र	ल	व	श	ष	स ह	

Some freedom has been taken with the above, to make it easier for a normal English reading. For instance:

‘ee’ has been used instead of ‘I’ in a few places (as in ‘*jeeva*’ instead of ‘*jIva*’).

‘aa’ may have been used instead of ‘A’ (as in ‘*paramaArtha*’ instead of ‘*paramArtha*’)

‘v’ used interchangeably with ‘w’ (‘*Ishvara*’ or ‘*Ishwara*’)

‘jn’ has been used in place of ‘jJ’ (as in ‘*jnAna*’ instead of ‘*jJAna*’).

‘m’ or ‘n’ used in place of ‘G’ (as in ‘*ahamkAra*’ or ‘*ahankAra*’ instead of ‘*ahaGkAra*’)

‘sh’ may have been used in place of ‘z’ or ‘S’ (as in ‘*vishNu*’, ‘*gaNesha*’, ‘*paramEshvara*’ instead of ‘*viSNu*’, ‘*ganeza*’, ‘*paramezvara*’ respectively)...

‘oo’ may have been instead of ‘U’ (e.g., ‘*roop*’ instead of ‘*rUp*’)

However, transliteration may not have been done for every Sanskrit/Hindi term. For eg, common words like Veda, Atma, Paramatma, Ishvara, Karma, Upasana, Jnana, Avidya etc, may not have been transliterated.

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1 For details refer <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harvard-Kyoto>



# ANANDA RASA RATNAKAR



**Bhagavan Sri Nritya Gopal Ji**  
**Anand Vrindavan**

वृष्णात् परं किमपि  
तत्त्वमहं न जाने ।  
ऊर्वा षडाब्दे

## Jnananishtha Sri Ganeshanand 'Avadhoot'

Once, I was going from Haridvar to Brindavan, traveling on foot. I was accompanied by many young, healthy, handsome monks. On the way, there was a man, a *gRihastha* (householder), coming from the opposite direction. On seeing us, he asked – “*Babaji! From which farmland do you source the wheat that you eat?*” (a colloquial way of asking – “*How is it that you are all so healthy and fit?*”) To this question, Avadhoot Ganeshanand, who was one of the monks in our group, replied – “*Oh! We eat the wheat of carefreeness!*” The householder then asked – “*Whose house will you raid today?*” Ganeshanandji replied – “*Today, our raid is on your house!*” And that’s truly how it turned out to be. That day, all of us had our *bhiksha* (food) in that householder’s home.

During my childhood, on *EkAdashi*<sup>1</sup> days etc., I would go, along with my grandfather, for bathing in Ganga. The holy Ganga river flowed a few miles away from my village. Often, there was a handsome, healthy youth who came there for bathing. His name was – ‘Ganesh Prasad Rastogi’. As it happened, I got to meet him many times. He was a resident of Dhanapur village, and would usually be found sitting in his clothes-shop, reading books like ‘*Jnana-Vairagya Prakash*’, ‘*Panchadashi*’ etc. Even as a youth, his mind was filled with inclinations to Vedanta. He was a married man, and resided with his mother, wife, and sons. His clothes business was doing well. There was no shortage of anything. However, all this did not bring any pleasure to him. Often, seized by a mood of *vairAgya* (dispassion), he would leave his house, and go away. During those days, monks from ‘Peeli Kothi’ of Chitrakoot would go from village to village, sounding the drums of ‘*Shivoham*’ (Shiva am I). Ganeshanand was deeply impressed by this message and came to the firm view that this was a *satya-siddhAnta* (true conclusion of spirituality).

Although this truth was a firm conviction in his mind, he wasn’t able to settle into a life of complete Vairagya. At times he would weep, and some other times he would roar – ‘*Shivoham! Shivoham!*’ Once, he cried to me that his family attachment was a great cause of pain for him,

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1      *Ekadashi: The eleventh day of the lunar fortnight; a day that is revered as sacred*

and asked me to suggest a way by which he could be liberated from this bondage, once and for all. I told him of a method that was stated in the epic 'Vishnu Purana'. The way is this. A Sadhaka (seeker) should be careful not to criticize the ways of *satpurusha*-s (noble people); at the same time, he should do something unacceptable, which makes people denounce his conduct and shun him. Ganeshji accepted this idea. There was a house in the village, from where it was considered wrong to accept food. He went to that house for *bhiksha*, and ate the food offered. That news spread, and in a few days, all people denounced him as a fallen man. When he tried to enter his own home, his wife shunned him and his mother scolded him – “*Now, don't enter this house!*” He took a mud pot and left home, and became known later on as Ganeshanand 'Avadhut'.

After I moved to Brindavan, he came there and started staying with me. Once, speaking to me, he said – “In Devi Bhagavata, Lord Shiva says – ‘*O Parvati! People of tamOguNa (whose minds are clouded by the darkness of ignorance), flitter from one place of pilgrimage to another, gripped by delusion that ‘this is a teertha (holy place); that is a teertha (holy place)’, etc. But, teertha is one's Atma (Self) alone; and that, they recognize not!*” To this, I told him not to make such a statement in Brindavan, for people may beat him up. I even scolded him.

Often, he used to voice a verse of Kabeer :

पाया कहे सो बावरा खोया कहे सो कूर  
पाया खोया कुछ नहीं ज्यों का त्यों भरपूर ।

*pAyA kahE sO bAvarA, khoya kahE sO kUr*  
*pAyA khoya kuch naheen, jyon ki tyon bharpUr*

*“I have found”, says he, a crazy coot;*  
*“I have lost”, says he, indeed a fool.*  
*It can neither be lost, nor be found;*  
*It's always there, as it were; ever fully full!*

*virakta* (dispassionate) people had great respect for him. His faith in Advaita-Vedanta was very firm. In his mind, there were no distinctions





**Sri Ganeshanand 'Avadhoot'**

## April 1

of caste or creed.

He was independent and self-supporting. He made no disciples in his life of 85 years. He built no hut; no money did he keep. He did all his work himself. Till his last day, he used to say – “*Where is any object to see? Where, indeed, is a ‘body’?*” Even when his body was afflicted by any ailment or weakness, “*Shivoham!*”, he would say.

When someone asked him – “How should last rites be performed for your body?”, he replied – “No rites, no malady! *Shivoham!*”

Name and form had broken away. And *tattva* (reality) is *tattva* (reality), indeed!

(Pawan Prasang – p 79-86)



## Liberal view

If, in your life, you run into some distressing situation, try and be broad-hearted, liberal, in your views. Let not your outlook be narrow. For if you adopt a narrow view, then, even though the current distress may pass, another will pop up next. So, do not confine yourself within narrow bounds; take yourself towards the unbounded. Your liberal mind will do good for you.

In this context, let me tell you a small story. It is an actual incident.

In Brindavan, Sri Udiya Baba's Ashram was under construction. One day, there was such a heavy downpour that the shanty (of mud and stone) that Baba lived in started to break. To repair the damage, mud was urgently needed. Some devotees of Baba went and started digging some mud from a mound by the side of a pond. Now, that pond belonged to a Vaishnava *math*. Scores of Vaishnavas descended on the site, armed with *Lathi-s* (wooden sticks), demanding Baba's devotees to desist from taking mud from the site. Upon realizing that the Mahant (the *math* in-charge) of the Vaishnava group was also present there, some of the devotees ran to Baba and said – "Baba! It seems that a great ruckus is likely to happen there!" Baba said – "What of it! Just come back, all of you." Then the devotees told Baba that the leader of the Vaishnava-s had also come there. Upon hearing this, Baba got up immediately and came to the pond site. Reaching there, he roundly scolded his devotees who had gathered there to dig for mud. All of them were dumbstruck. Baba told them – "If you people need mud, then ask this Mahant-ji counsel as to where you can take mud from – and that you need it because your hutment is getting swept away in this heavy rain. Mahant-ji knows every single thing about Brindavan, and you may take the mud from wherever he tells you to."

Now, hearing this, the Mahant was so pleased that he hastened to help. Umbrella in hand, he stood there and pointed out – "Take mud from here; take it from there..." And until the need for mud was not completely fulfilled, he stood right there in the rain, making the people haul mud from there; and ensured that Baba's shanty was repaired properly!

The moral of the story is that the adoption of narrowmindedness

sometimes leads to ruin.

### A unique aspect

There are many teachings in the Srimad Bhagavatam, which are quite unique. For instance, take the case of a *gRihasta* (householder), who is emphatic about the persons in his family being pious. He wants his wife, children, brother and others, to be devout and religious. On the face of it, it would appear that this is a very noble person, preaching the path of Bhakti. However, Bhagavatam has a different view. Bhagavata Dharma (7.14.16) says – *“Without being anxious that ‘this is my son; this is my relative’ etc., let them all conduct themselves just as they please. Be attached to God alone. God alone is yours. By thinking of your relatives as ‘mine’, do not inflict your views on them. If you force your views upon your relatives, it implies that your attachment is to your son etc., and not to God.”*

You should realize that Bhagavan exists in their hearts as well; and it is He who impels their thoughts and actions. If they do not take the direct-path towards God, then He would smite them with a blow or two, and draw them towards Himself. Why do you need to distract yourself for this? Why should *you* expend energy towards this, and thereby lose time which you could have usefully spent in devotion to God?

However, I think that this approach is not easy for a *gRihasta* (householder) to adopt.

(Maanav Jeevan aur Bhagavat Dharm – p 196-7, 203-4)



## **The question of my preference does not arise at all!**

You may have heard of this story.

A Guru had two students. One was his son, and the other a disciple. The Guru told the two of them – ‘I would like each of you to construct a platform, one each, for me. I shall use that for my prayers.’

Both of them got on to the job straightaway. That evening, Guruji inspected their respective work and declared – ‘This has not been made properly. Break it up.’ The two platforms were broken, and on the second day, they built another two. The Guru again said – “This is not ok. Break it.” And this was repeated on the third day too.

After this, the Guru’s son said – “Father! You are never going to be happy with the platforms that we construct. And so, we shall stop this work. We will not build any more platforms.”

However, the disciple did not share that view. He continued working, and constructed one more platform. Seeing this, the Guruji asked him – “When you know that I do not like the platforms that you make, why did you make one more platform?” The disciple replied – “Maharaj! You told me to ‘make a platform’; and so, I made one.”

Guruji – “But then I rejected many a platform that you made. I did not like them.”

Disciple – “So what if you rejected my work? As your disciple, I am duty bound to obey you throughout my life. Your wish is my command. If I had desisted from making platforms, you would have given me some other work. Say, you would have said – “Go chop some wood and bring it here. Or, go build a wall there. Or, get me a load of wheat from there.” And in obedience to your command, I would have been busy doing one thing or the other. However, right now, you have asked me to build a platform for you. Why should I concern myself with any other work? I shall continue this work till I can do it satisfactorily. I am prepared to do this every day of my life; and if every evening you tell me to break the dais that I have made, I shall do so. The question of my preference does not arise at all!

## April 3

Am I doing this particular work for my personal enjoyment?"

That was the story.

Look here. In this business of '*karma*' (work), if you go around insisting that "I shall do this work only", or that "I will not do that work", then you will end up in much sorrow. If you insist – "This thing should be with me, and that thing should never be with me", then you will suffer. If you are keen that you should get a certain kind of experience of happiness, it may not happen as you wish. If you are keen that you only get salty savoury to eat, and not sweets; or that you get only sweets and not salty snacks etc., then you invite unhappiness. If you desire that your wife should remain youthful throughout her life, is it possible? It would be utter foolishness!

(Drig drishya viveka : p 65, 66)



## In life, develop a mix of *Karma* and *Upasana*

*karmEndriya* (organs of action) is *avidyA* (karma/activity, or rituals of *agnihotra* etc), and *jñAnEndriya* (organs of knowledge) is *vidyA* (conscious *upAsana*, i.e., worship or meditation)<sup>2</sup>. Life is a combination of these.

‘See’ using your eyes and ‘walk’ with your feet; this is an instance of the combination of *vidyA* and *avidyA*. This is called ‘*andha-pangunyaAya*’ – the logic of the blind man and the lame man.

In a village somewhere, there lived a blind man and a lame man. Once, the village was attacked by dacoits. While the other villagers began running away, these two men, being disabled, could not flee. They kept crying out aloud to the others to somehow take them along. All of a sudden, a wise man’s glance fell on these two men. Seeing their distress, he advised them – ‘The two of you should help each other.’ Heeding this advice, the blind man made the lame man sit on his shoulders. The lame man then started telling the directions to the blind man, who started walking as directed, carrying the lame man with him. In this manner, the two of them managed to get away to a safe place, elsewhere.

The Shruti (Veda) says that the people immersed in activities are, relatively speaking, in less darkness. It is possible that a man who is forever engaged in *avidyA-karma*, may get to realize the hollowness of that path. This can come about as a result of facing failure in the result of *karma*, or because of the injuries caused by some opposing force. By this, he may develop *vairAgya* (non-attachment) to *karma*, and start seeking to understand the ‘reality’, the actual truth that underlies life and phenomena.

Whereas, the Shruti says that those who are engaged in *upAsana* (worship/meditation) of Indra or other Gods, end up in greater darkness.<sup>3</sup>

2 Refer Shankara Bhashya of *Ishavasya Upanishad* verses 8 and 9 for the meaning of *Vidya* and *Avidya* given in this context.

3 Verse 9 of *Ishavasya Upanishad* – (Those who worship *avidyA* (rites) enter into blinding darkness; but into greater darkness than that enter they who are engaged in *Vidya* (meditation)). (Source: *Eight Upanishads*, Volume 1 – Translated by Swami Gambhirananda, published by Advaita Ashrama)

## April 4

As a result of *upAsanA*, they will attain *svarga* (heaven). There, they will get *amrit* (nectar of immortality) to drink, *apsarA*-s (celestial damsels) to enjoy, *gandharva* music to listen to, etc. It will be very difficult for one who is absorbed in such enjoyments to get freedom from there. Such enjoyments would only impel the person towards more *pravRitti* (worldly, desire-driven actions).

We have seen that the people who get into the worship of spirits or divinities tend to give so much credence to the power of such spirits/divinities and to the guidance they receive from them, that the power of their own self gets eclipsed. They end up becoming 'servants' forever, their lives under the control of some external entity.

That is why the Shruti (Upanishad) teaches us that we should not get enmeshed exclusively in *karma* or *upAsanA*. Develop a mix of both, Karma and Upasana, in life. Or else, strive for realization of 'Brahman', your own Self, which is distinct from both, Karma and Upasana.

(Ishavasya Pravachan : p 165 - 168)

## Go on filling every single moment of your life, better and better

Someone asked a Mahatma, ‘why do you do *bhajan* (prayer / worship)?’

The Mahatma replied that it had become a habit. We are bound by habit.

When I was in my village, I received *deekshA* (initiation into a mantra) from a certain Mahatma.<sup>4</sup> The *deekshA* was taken with the aim of realizing God/Self. It was not in the manner of receiving mantra-initiation as ordained by Shastra – a routine ritual from one’s family Guru. Rather, my *deekshA* was for the practice of devotion to God. So it was, that the Mahatma imparted the mantra to me, and said – ‘Son! You are now liberated!’ On being so told, I bloomed with happiness, for my Guru has declared that I have now attained liberation!

I then asked him – ‘Maharaj! Now that I have attained liberation, what need is there for doing *bhajan*? For liberation it is, which is the aim of *bhajan*!’

To this, Guru Maharaj said – ‘To fill Time! To fill the belly of *kaala* (the deity of time), do *bhajan*!’

In Vaishnava tradition, this is called as *kAla-kshEpa* (passing time).

In order to while away the time, they fill the belly of *kaala* with *bhajan*. They do not seek *mukti* (liberation), from God. They do not desire *vaikuntha*. They do not say – ‘God! Take me to your Kingdom! God, please bless me with *samAdhi* (total absorption of the mind in the contemplation of God). No, no! As regards our time – it is spent on speaking of God; serving God as the One who is in the form of all; dancing for God; weeping for God... That is how our time is going. And the belly of time is getting filled.’

Go on filling every single moment of your life, better and better. Well spent, the time that’s gone; great, the time that’s to come. If instead

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4 Swami Yogananda, who imparted him the Krishna mantra, and asked him to do a *purashcharana* (a rigorous practice of Japa of the mantra, till one reaches a certain count and attains realization of the deity of the mantra).

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you use your time in the furtherance of *rAga-dvEsha* (attachments/aversions), then *kAla* will shove you into demoniac wombs.

The fact of the matter is that in the path of Self-realization, one cannot progress even a single step without the guidance of a Guru. For the journey is a case of '*anmilA sAjan*' and '*anjAnA mArg*'! '*anmilA sAjan*' – the beloved whom we seek to reach, is not someone we know; we have not seen Him! '*anjAnA mArg*' – the path that we need to traverse is also not one that we have seen before! If we do not have a Guru to guide us at every step, we may well end up going for the wrong goal. As a result, we shall be deprived of the goal and miss the path. Such being the case, one needs to be a student; learn from a teacher.

(Dhyānāyog : p 32,37,38)



## To reform someone else, oneself must be correct

There is a young lady who is a very close devotee of ours. It so happened that when her husband got a raise in his salary, he took to drinking liquor, and started living with an Anglo-Indian woman. The young lady became very distraught and asked me what she should do. I advised her to serve her husband even more diligently. She may also tell her husband that he was free to do as he pleases. If he wished, he could bring that Anglo-Indian woman home, and keep her. I told her to shed all ego. And she should tell her husband – ‘I shall live with you as a servant; wash dishes, wash clothes, lay your bed etc. Because, as per Sanatan Hindu Dharma, I cannot leave your house and go away anywhere else.’

Narayan! She started following this advice. After some days, her husband was afflicted with a severe case of anal fissure. His Anglo-Indian girl-friend left him, and went away to live with someone else. And this man was admitted to a hospital, where he lay and moaned in pain. He had to remain in the hospital for two months. The fissure was grievous, and the man was in so much pain that he was moaning and screaming.

One night, when he was screaming very loudly in the hospital room, his wife said to him – ‘Look here! While you scream, God will do whatever he has to do; and so, as you are screaming in any case, why not utter the name of God? I shall also join you in chanting God’s name.’

So the two of them started chanting together - हरे राम, हरे राम, हरे राम – *harE rAm, harE rAm, harE rAM!* In a short while, he fell asleep. He was able to rest well that night, and the next morning he felt as if he was on the path of recovery. Then he started rolling the rosary, doing *japa* of *dwAdashAkshara mantra* (*Om namO bhagavatE vAsudEvAya*). He did this on his wife’s advice.

In a week or two, he recovered, and was discharged from the hospital. And then he came to see me. He received *mantra deekshA* from me, and did ritual *prAyaschitta* (atonement) of all his sins.

It was also agreed that he would hand over his whole salary to his

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wife as soon as he received it.

The fact is that a person who keeps his own heart cleansed shall remain successful in his *dharmā*, *bhakti*, and day-to-day dealings of life. Whereas the one who desecrates his own heart, ending up spoiling himself – how can such a person reform some other person?

To reform someone else, oneself must be correct. Isn't it?

(Dhyanyog : p 72-73)





## Ishvara has no objections at all to handing out happiness!

We people put even God in a difficult position, when we go on giving Him our own suggestions, one after another. Were we, instead, to say – ‘Ishvara! We want happiness!’ Then, there is no problem, for God needs no time at all to give anyone happiness. Because, being an ocean of happiness, He suffers no scarcity of joy. Indeed, Ishvara has no objections at all to handing out happiness! Even without your asking, He is ready to hand out his entire ocean of happiness to you!

Let me tell you a story about a certain gentleman. He had gone for darshan of our Vrindavan Bihariji. Bihariji kept standing in silence. You would know, that He, Bihariji, does talk to us people on occasion. But he does not talk with everyone... He just stands in silence. The gentleman who had gone to Bihariji, prayed to Him – *“I want happiness. No, Maharaj! Not just any happiness; I want a specific happiness. If I can have a child, a baby boy, on my lap, then I shall be happy.”* Upon this, Bihariji remained silent, and was thinking of checking the man’s *prArabdha* (events predestined for the man), to see if he was destined to have a baby boy or not. If it was there in his *karma*, then a baby had to be given. So Bihariji said – ‘Ok, let me think about it.’ The man said – ‘Please do not think etc. Just give me a baby within twelve months!’

Now, Bihariji was in a quandary. He pondered – ‘While this man seeks happiness, if he had sought happiness without qualifying it, then we could have given that to him, one way or the other. We could have given him the bliss of *samAdhi*; the flutter of happiness in his heart; hey! we would have risen in his heart and danced a bit, sung a bit; or given him a quick bear-hug; and he would have got happiness! But, no! He doesn’t want that sort of happiness. He specifically wants a baby to play on his lap, and that can only be given based on his *karma*.’

And so, Maharaj, Bihariji became silent. Even as he stood thus, the gentleman added – “Look here, Bihariji! That baby has to be as fair as snow; and somewhat strong.... On growing up, he should serve me in

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every way, and also earn a lot of money. Also, he too should have a baby boy.”

Now, Bihariji said to himself – ‘This chap is not asking for happiness. He doesn’t want happiness.’

Such is what is known as *sankalpa* – (specific desire; resolve).

Actually, this wish of yours to make Ishvara your servant; it is this that is your life’s sorrow. Your life’s sorrow is that you do not agree to go with Ishvara’s *sankalpa*. Rather, you wish that Ishvara should agree to your *sankalpa*, and do as you desire.

(Dhyanyog : p 86,87,88)



## Never denounce anyone

Once, someone wrote a letter to our Hari Baba Ji, saying – “On the one hand, you have got this *bAndh* (dam-embankment) constructed<sup>5</sup>, whereby people of seven hundred villages nearby have been saved and given a new life by you... On the other hand, these very people do acts of thievery, and indulge in acts of general misconduct and dishonesty... Why is it that you do not tell them to desist from such acts?”

Baba Ji replied – *“Look here, sir! Whatever is happening is happening in front of the Lord’s eyes. The Lord watches all this till he pleases. When it no longer pleases Him, then he will wrap it all up in one go. Why do we have to intrude into all this? It is all as God pleases. Let Him reform them or not; it is His sweet will and wish.”*

It is we people who, holding on to our self-importance, jump in to the middle of the affairs of others, and display our defiance. It is our desire that the views and values that we believe in, should be followed by others as well. They too should believe in these, and behave accordingly. Isn’t that so? So many *sabhA*-s (groups), *sansthA*-s (organizations) and missions have come about. For what? For the reason that whatever views/beliefs we hold, should be held by everyone else as well. In other words, we want to ram our own desires, values, knowledge etc., into the minds of others. Right?

The thing is that all of us proceed in life, holding on to some values and beliefs. So far, so good. But then, we want everybody else also to join our party/camp; and we denounce those who choose to be in other parties/camps. This is not right.

‘कपिलो यदि सर्वज्ञः कणादो नेति को प्रमाणः’ – *Just because Kapila is an all-knowing person, how can anyone say with certainty that that kaNAda is not?*

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5 Hari Baba got a *bAndh* (dam-embankment) constructed by the banks of Ganga, near the town of Anupshehr. This was to protect hundreds of villages nearby, which were getting regularly inundated by the periodic flooding of Ganga. In a divine manner, this *bAndh* was constructed by voluntary efforts of the villagers themselves, while continuously chanting the name of God.

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My dear man! What Kapila says is correct; and what *kaNA*da says is also correct.

The same All-Knowing Supreme-Lord resides in the hearts of all. The same God-Supreme is in the heart of Kapila; and also, in the heart of *kaNA*da.

In Gautama He is; in Patanjali too, it is He alone.

He is in Jaimini; and in Vyasa too, it is He alone.

Not just this... In Buddha too it is He; and He is in Mahaveera too.

He is the paramAtmA (Supreme-Self) residing in the hearts of one and all.

So, never denounce anybody.

(Rajavidya Rajaguhya-yog : p 81-82)



## There is great gain in doing *shrAddha*

*[Note: shrAddha is a sacred ritual, where one pays reverential homage to one's 'ancestors', especially to one's dead parents. The ritual includes offerings of water, pindA (balls of rice) and a traditional meal.]*

It is known from history that the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb had imprisoned his own father, Emperor Shah Jahan. It is said that he even fixed a quota for the amount of water that was to be given per day to Shah Jahan.

One day, when Shah Jahan felt the need for some more water, no attendant came forward to give it to him. The matter reached the ears of Aurangzeb. He told his father that “your daily quota of water has been consumed already; you shall not get any more water today”. Shah Jahan said – “Son! Look at the Hindus. They give water even to a dead father. And you are such a person that you are refusing to give water even to your ‘live’ father?”

Dharmashastra says that you should not worry about yourself or your children, as much as you should worry about your aged parents, who do not have that much energy or strength left in their bodies. You must first give them their food, and have your own food only after they have eaten. This point has been given so much importance and respect in the *shAstra*, that it is even extended to the after-life of one's parents – and it is ordained that one should offer food and water to, and in the name of, one's departed parents.

Indeed, there is great gain in doing *shrAddha*. By stressing the importance of offering respectful service to one's dead parents by offering *shrAddha*, the implication is that it is surely imperative to offer respectful service to one's parents when they are alive.

Also, if one feels a sense of sorrow that one could not serve one's parents adequately when they were alive, then, by offering *shrAddha*, one will get solace.

As per Hindu dharma, one's parents and forefathers, even after they die, do exist somewhere or the other. But if it so happens that they

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have attained release (*mukti*) from the cycle of birth and death, and if we perform *shrAddha* for them, then the fruits of such *shrAddha* is returned to us by God. It is like the case when the recipient of a money-order is not present in the address sent to; then, the money is returned to the person who sent it.

Overall, the importance of rituals of *shrAddha* etc., motivates Brahmana-s to study *karma-kANda* (the *shAstra* relating to religious rites).

In and around the region of our Banares, when the perpetuation of one's family lineage is threatened because of inordinate delay in the birth of a baby, the family is asked to perform *shrAddha* at *gayA*. Then, by the blessings of one's forefathers, one is blessed with a child, and the lineage continues.

As it is accomplished by acting with *shraddha* (sincere faith), it is called as *shrAddha*.

(Rajavidya Rajaguhya-yog : p 122-123)



## Bhagavan, Himself, pulled Sudama to Dwarka

We met Mahatma-s who were *karmayogi*-s (engaged in the path of work/activity/worship as service to God), and asked them – “The activities that we do are characterized by *alpashakti* (low strength), *alpajñāna* (paltry knowledge), and *alpākaraṇa* (meagre means/instruments). Such being the case, how can the *ananta-paramātmā* (Infinite, Supreme-Self) be attained by means of activity?” They replied – “Look here Punditji! Until one realizes *paramātmā* as being one’s own self, *paramātmā* remains as *saguṇa* (characterized as having limitations/attributes/forms). Pay attention to this fact!”

You say that the infinite *paramātmā* cannot be realized by means of your *alpajñāna* (paltry knowledge). That argument is correct. However, when *saguṇa-paramātmā* sees that this person is tossing and writhing, thrashing about, working hard – doing *karma* – to attain me... Then, can He not, pleased with your efforts, manifest Himself in front of you? Sure, He can.

Take the case of Sudama. He started from his house, journeying to Dwarka to see Bhagavan Sri Krishna. Bhagavan noticed that this ‘*lean Brahmana, mere skin and bones, is on his way here, walking with a stick for support. This poor fellow will simply die, walking over a hundred miles to reach here...*’ As it happened, when Sudama-ji took a break to rest, he sat under a tree, and began to doze. When he woke up, he found himself in Dwarka! What happened to all that distance? Well, Bhagavan, Himself, pulled Sudama to Dwarka!

Surely, we see this in our lives too. Take the case of a baby who is unable to walk, but is longing to go to his mother’s lap and be cuddled by her. He pleads to his mother, raising his hands again and again, and starts crying. While the baby does not have the capability to go to his mother on his own, his mother indeed has the capability to go to the baby and pick him up and cuddle him.

It is true that karma does not have the strength to take one to God. Neither does one’s hands have the ability to grasp God; nor our feet have the capability to walk to God! One’s tongue has not the ability to speak



## April 10

and describe God; nor the mind the ability to meditate on Him. However, when God sees that this 'jeeva' is orienting himself towards me, then He himself extends his Grace and fills the gaps in the seeker's *sAdhanA* (spiritual effort), and completes it. Therefore, do not pay attention to the 'meagreness'; rather, look at the great compassion of Bhagavan. A Mahatma once told me – *'When you take one step towards God, then God too takes one step on your behalf. Is there any doubt about this?'*

So, when you take one step towards God, and God takes one step towards you; even if your own stride is small, will not God cover you in *His one stride*? Just take one step and see! That is what is known as performing *karma* for attaining God. Hence, the Gita says – *'Make an effort for attaining God.'*

(Dhyanyog : p 102,103,104)



## ‘Bhajan’<sup>6</sup> is the mark of a man of virtue

चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन।  
आर्तो जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ॥

(Gita 7.16)

*chaturvidhA bhajante mA.m janAH suKR^itino.arjuna |  
Arto jij~nAsurarthArthI j~nAnI cha bharatarShabha ||*

*O Arjuna, foremost of the Bharata dynasty, four classes of ‘sukR^ti janAH’ (people of virtuous deeds) adore Me: the distressed, the seeker of Knowledge, the seeker of wealth and the man of Knowledge.*

न मां दुष्कृतिनो मूढाः प्रपद्यन्ते— *na mA.m duShKR^itino mUDhAH prapadyante* – (Gita 7.15)

Those who are *duShKR^ti* (doers of evil), do not resort to the refuge of Bhagavan. The weak ones among the evil-doers resort to the refuge of some worldly man (of superior might); and the strong ones (among the evil-doers) take refuge in their own ‘intelligence’, their own ‘I’.

Those who are *sukR^ti* (virtuous people), seek refuge with God; they do bhajan (worship/adoration) of God. The people who have done deeds of virtue in their present and earlier lives – i.e., those who have done good deeds, dharmic activities, acts of *puNya* (moral/religious merit) – (they) are the ones who are known as ‘*sukR^ti*’. For good *samskAra*-s (mental/psychological imprints) do not come about without the performance of deeds of virtue.

E.g., if one thinks of giving a man five rupees, and does not actually do it; then the *puNya-samskAra* that should imprint itself in one’s *antaH-karaNa* (mind/psyche) upon the act of gifting that money, does not come about. Whereas, if one gives five rupees to a poor person as a deliberate

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6 Bhajan: Acts of devotion/worship such as meditation, japa, kirtan, satsang and reading of holy scriptures.

act of virtue, then the *puNya-samskAra* arising out of that act will imprint itself in one's mind, and thereby one's *antaH-karaNa* will get purified.

Now, a *sukR^ta* (virtuous act) is different from *kR^ta* (ordinary act). The *samskAra* that forms upon the performance of *kR^ta* is ordinary, and does not purify the mind. Whereas, the *samskAra* that forms upon the performance of *sukR^ta* is special; it purifies one's mind.

An example of *kR^ta* is when we thrust a cow upon someone, telling them – ‘*here take this cow; we give this to you as a reward*’... This is totally different than the *karma* done when one gifts a cow to a worthy recipient, during a sacred time of *godAna-parva*<sup>7</sup>, in the proper Shastraic manner – where, under the guidance of a proper priest, one utters the proper *sankalpa-mantra* (Shastraic words to be spoken when one declares one's resolve to donate a cow), holding the tail of the cow, and then donates the cow to a Vaidika-Brahmana. This latter act (of proper, ritualistic, *godAna*) is a generator of Dharma.

Without the generation of *samskAra* or *apoorva*<sup>8</sup>, *dharma-rasa* (the sentiment of dharma) and pleasures that should be produced as a result of a *karma* (activity), are not produced.

A Dharmic ritual has six characteristics, viz., *dravya* (object that is offered in the ritual activity), *kriyA* (the ritual activity), *desha* (the place where the activity is done), *kAla* (the time when it is done), *pAtra* (a worthy recipient of the offering), *shraddhA* (faith in the ritual). When a person performs Dharma, with proper observance of these six characteristics, then the act of dharma results in purification of heart; and such a person is a *sukR^ti*.

Now, if it is asked – “Maharaj! How is one to recognize a *sukR^ti*?”

The Lord says that the distinguishing mark of a *sukR^ti* is – मां भजन्ते – ‘*they worship me!*’ A person who has been a *puNyAtmA* (a pure soul) and *dharmAtmA* (a Dharmic person) in his present and earlier lives, is certain to perform *bhajan* of God. Performing *bhajan* of God, taking refuge in God, contemplation/meditation on God – these and such are

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7 Holy/auspicious day (like *makara-samkrAnti*) when it is a great virtue to gift a cow to a worthy recipient.

8 *Apoorva*: a power that did not exist before the activity/ritual was performed, and which was generated by the act, and results in a remote or unforeseen consequence of that act (e.g., a specific religious rite performed, results in *apoorva* that makes the performer of the act attain heaven after his death) .

the distinguishing marks of a man of virtue. In contrast, a man of meagre virtue is one who has little or no faith in God's Name, God's *prasAda* (mercy/grace), and Vaishnavas (saints and devotees).

Indeed, Bhajan alone is the mark of a man of virtue.

(Jnan-vijnanyog : p 334,335,366)



## What is the object of your *ekAgratA* (one-pointedness), *buddhi* (discernment) and *preeti* (joy)?

If you say – “Look here. Everybody does bhajan (of someone or the other). Whose bhajan are you talking of?” To this question, Bhagavan says: “मां भजन्ते – *they do my bhajan!*”. Those who are *sukR^ti* (doers of good deeds; those who are *puNyAtmA* – pure souls); they do bhajan of God. It is true that no one can remain without doing bhajan (i.e., without adoring something or someone). This *antaHkaraNa* (mind) cannot remain without having some *jnAna* (knowledge of some object). For sure, there is always some *jnAna* or the other in it. Even in the state where it has no *jnAna*<sup>9</sup>, there is the knowledge that one ‘knew nothing’.

Since absolute Sat-cit-ananda is what our real ‘Self’ is, and because the *paramAtma-svaroopa* (Supreme-Self) pervades everywhere, it stands to reason that this pervades our *antaHkaraNa* (mind) and heart as well. And since *antaHkaraNa* (mind) is chiefly ‘Consciousness’, it always shines, spic-and-span, like a mirror<sup>10</sup>.

What happens is this. The reflection of *sacchidAnanda* (sat + cit + Ananda) in our *antaHkaraNa* is obtained in three forms

1. The reflection of ‘sat’ in mind/heart is known as ‘*ekAgratA*’ (one-pointedness).
2. The reflection of ‘cit’ is known as ‘*buddhi*’ (discernment / discriminative-faculty / intelligence)
3. The reflection of ‘Ananda’ is ‘*preeti*’ (joy / love).

In this manner, every creature’s life and mind is of the nature of a certain extent of ‘one-pointedness’, some ‘discernment’, and some ‘love’.

Now, what one has to see is, how does one utilize one’s one-pointedness, discernment and love? For one has no option but to utilize them.

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9 For instance, when one is in a state of deep sleep

10 The pure mind is like a clean mirror, reflecting ‘consciousness’ clearly. It is the dirt of ‘*avidyA*’ that stains it, whereby the reflection is dullened.

In the eleventh canto of Srimad Bhagavatam, there appears the story of Avadhuta Dattatreya and his twenty-four Guru-s. In that story, there is an episode about an Arrowsmith. An Arrowsmith was busy shaping and sharpening an arrow. At that time, the King of the land passed by, along with a big retinue, accompanied by the loud sounds of music-bands and general noise. Through all this blare and clatter, the Arrowsmith was so focused on his work that he did not notice any of this. Just see his *ekAgratA*, focus/one-pointedness! Also, the work demands a high degree of skill. Using his skills and '*buddhi*' (intelligence), he has to focus on the making of the arrow, designing it in a manner that it flies to a predetermined distance; and for that, how should the tail and feathers of the arrow be, etc. And then he beautifies the arrow, making it into a piece of art. The Arrowsmith also has the '*buddhi*' that enables him to design and make a very sharp arrowhead. And his '*preeti*' (joy) is in his engagement in this whole process of arrow-making!

The '*preeti*', '*ekAgratA*' and '*buddhi*' in the process of arrow-making is one thing. And '*preeti*', '*ekAgratA*' and '*buddhi*' that is directed towards the *nirvANa-svarUpa-bhagavAn* (God, whose very nature is absolute freedom), is another thing altogether. The person whose '*preeti*' is towards worldly objects as apart from God, remains far removed from God. His '*buddhi*' has strayed; wandered away elsewhere.

(Jnan-vijnanyog p 336-337)

## ***sakAma-puNyAtmA* should also do *bhajan* of Bhagavan**

*[Note: sakAma-puNyAtmA are those people who are virtuous by nature, but have worldly desires. sakAma means - 'having desires'. The opposite is nishkAma – having no desires.]*

Now then, in regard to doing bhajan of God, the following question has been posed:

Question: People say that God grants 'liberation' alone; he doesn't give anything else. He does not fulfil your worldly desires. If that is so, then why should people who have worldly desires worship God at all?

This query has been resolved by Bhagavan Himself, in Bhagavad Gita. He says:

*O Arjuna, foremost of the Bharata dynasty, four classes of people adore Me: the distressed, the seeker of Knowledge, the seeker of wealth and the man of Knowledge. (Gita 7.16)*

Virtuous people are of both kinds – *sakAma* (with desires) and *nishkAma* (desire-free).

So, is it that only *nishkAma* people should do bhajan of God, and not *sakAma* people? To this, the answer is – “No! Virtuous people, who have worldly desires, should also do adoration of God.”

Now, *sakAma* people are of two kinds. One, who are sinners, and the other, who are virtuous. As far as *sakAma*-sinners are concerned, their adoration is to the King, the wealthy man, women etc. The *sakAma*-sinner has no love or joy as far as God is concerned; he is attracted by some other object or entity.

Whereas, the case of *sakAma-puNyAtma* is different. A virtuous man, even if he has worldly desires, will not reserve his *preeti* (love/happiness) for the world; he does not apply his *buddhi* on worldliness; nor would he have *ekAgratA* (one-pointed attention) to worldly things. Rather, his *ekAgratA* is to Bhagavan. And that *ekAgratA* to Bhagavan does not arise from 'ignorance'; rather, it arises from his '*buddhi*', his sense of



discernment. And it is not just one-pointedness and discernment; he has love/joy too, as regards Bhagavan.

Now, consider that all these three are together, and are oriented towards Bhagavan. The mind is focused on God, the intellect has an understanding of God, and there is love towards God. When these three are present in your heart, then there is a confluence of *sadbhAva* (experience of truth), *cidbhAva* (experience of consciousness/awareness), and *AnandabhAva* (experience of happiness). Together, this is called *bhakti-bhAva*, the experience of *bhakti* (adoration). This is what is meant by the term भजन्ते (doing adoration). But these three – *ekAgratA*, *buddhi* and *preeti* – should be towards Bhagavan.

Now, let us examine the subject of desire-fulfilment. Of the four kinds of people of virtuous deeds – the first three are आर्त्त, जिज्ञासु, अर्थार्थी – viz., the distressed, the seekers of Knowledge, and the seekers of wealth. These three are *sakAma-punyAtmA*. In these three categories of people, there is a gradation of *puNya* (spiritual merit). Meaning, they have different levels of *puNya*, some more, some less. The fourth category – ज्ञानी (man of knowledge) is a *siddha* (one has already attained the highest goal). He is not in the category of a seeker. He transcends that.

( So, who is आर्त्त? ) In this world, the one who is hammered by distress, is called as आर्त्त . Gajendra, Draupadi etc., fall in this category. See how God helped them. If you are in distress and find no helping hand, then cry out for God. You will see yourself, that God will come to your rescue. He will save you.

( Next, the जिज्ञासु, the seeker of knowledge ) – Paramatma (Supreme-Self; God), in the form of a Guru, fulfils the desire of a seeker of knowledge.

(Now, the case of अर्थार्थी, the seeker of wealth ) – God granted the material desires of devotees such as Vibhishana and Sugriva. For Dhruva, He granted his worldly desires, as well as desires pertaining to the next world (heaven).

When it comes to ‘giving’, rich people tend to worry. They feel that their treasury is limited. They worry that if they start ‘giving’ to others, there would be nothing left for them. God is not like that. His treasury is limitless. By ‘giving’ whatever *sakAma* devotees desire, God loses nothing. Rather, He gets more fame and glory. Therefore, God gives liberally. He

## April 13

gives and gives.

So, do not fear. Do bhakti, without having any doubt or uncertainty. If you have desires, do *sakAma-bhakti*. And if you are desire-free, do *nishkAma-bhakti*.

(Jnan-vijnanyog p 338-344)



## Why should God alone be adored?

Question:

Brahman is but One; God is only One. That being so, why should someone, for fulfilment of many different aims, adore/worship God of many different forms? We have participated in many a *satsang*, and listened to the teachings of Vedanta/Upanishads. And in every one of these, what we heard is that '*All is Brahman alone*'. That being the case, can we not love/adore anyone we wish? Irrespective of who we adore, we shall cross-over (to the state of *brahma-jnAna*); if we love a woman too, we shall cross-over. For after all, all are God alone, right?! So, adopting the philosophical-view that '*All is Brahman alone*', we engage in adoration; indeed, why should one adore God only in the forms of Rama, Krishna, Shiva, Devi etc?

Answer:

*Narayan-Narayan-Narayan-Narayan!*

When the appearance (of the Absolute-Reality) is limited by the *upAdhi*<sup>11</sup> of a ghost, then a different kind of God is encountered; when approached as 'Bhairava', a different kind of God is met with; the *upAdhi* of an attractive woman is different; the *upAdhi* of money is different; the Gods met are different. Therefore, one must do bhajan of Bhagavan, by approaching that *upAdhi* which is *shuddha-sAtvik* (good, pure, auspicious).

To this, the questioner said – 'Well, I believe the mosquito to be God. Therefore, I shall worship the mosquito.' And the reply is – "Look here, brother. It is true that it is God who manifests as all. This fact is asserted by the Veda-s, Purana-s, Shashtra-s – indeed, all declare this to be the truth. But depending on the differences in *upAdhi*-s, there are differences in worship."

A *siddha-purusha*<sup>12</sup> who sees Paramatma (Supreme-Self)

11 *upAdhi*: A technical term used in Vedanta philosophy for any superimposition that gives a limited view of the Absolute and makes it appear as the relative. Jiva's *upadhi* is Avidya. Ishvara's *upadhi* is Maya – (Yoga Vedanta Dictionary, by Swami Sivananda, The Divine Life Society). By Maya, Ishvara appears differently, by different *upAdhi*-s – as Rama, Krishna, Devi etc.

12 *Siddha-purusha*: A sage who has realized the Supreme Brahman as his own Self

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everywhere; He sees all as Brahman – be it an ant or a bird or any other. Such a *siddha-purusha* has no need to offer any worship at all. However, the person who does not see all as Brahman; does not see Brahman everywhere; such a person should contemplate Paramatma only as endowed with *shuddha-upAdhi* (pure/auspicious appearance). Purity or impurity lies in the *upAdhi*. If you offer adoration to God having the *upAdhi* of a prostitute, the worship will not allow your heart to remain pure. Rather, it will make it dirty and despicable. If you offer adoration to God having the *upAdhi* of a wealthy merchant, the adoration will enable you to progress in business; it won't allow you to contemplate on God.

If a desire-driven person adores some woman and tells her – ‘You are the ruler of my life; you are the Queen of my heart; indeed, you are my God Supreme’ – then, it is not that such adoration will ever lead that person to the attainment of the *Eternally-existing, Pure, Ever-Liberated Paramatma*. Surely, that cannot come about. Depending on the nature of *upAdhi* with which one contemplates and worships God, one attains Paramatma of that very nature. This is one of the most secret tenets of Sanatana-Dharma. Those who do not realize this fact, end up getting embroiled in the world after listening to a few chats of Vedanta.

The point is this. Your love should be only for God.

(Jnan-vijnanyog : p 338,345,352)

## God's craftiness/cunning

Whatever the object, and however it's appearance – it is *Ishvara* alone who abides in it in the nature of *asti* (existence/beingness; 'sat'), *bhaati* (shine/consciousness ; 'cit'), and *priyam* (love/happiness ; 'Ananda').

What this signifies is this. While to attain *Ishvara*, one needs to cleanse one's instruments (mind, senses etc); and for that one needs to perform Karma. However, in order to have *anubhava* (actually experience) of *Ishvara*, *Jnana* (Knowledge) alone is needed.<sup>13</sup>

{Question) Now, if all objects are actually *Ishvara* in substance, then those who have attachment to worldly objects are, in actuality, entangled with *Ishvara*! Their attachment is to *Ishvara*, right?

(Answer) Well, that is not the case. For that's where *Ishvara*'s craftiness is to be understood and grasped. If you do not grasp it, *Ishvara* will give you a whole lot of pain. So, what is this craftiness/cunningness of *Ishvara*? Listen... A story...

In the olden days the *Kshatriya*-s<sup>14</sup> had a tradition. If the marriage of a couple was fixed, and for some reason the bridegroom was away on that day (say due to a war), then the groom's family would send a sword as a proxy, and the bride would go through with the wedding rituals with the sword in place of the groom – and the marriage of the couple was considered complete. Once, a princess was married in this manner, with a sword (in proxy for the prince). It was a big Kingdom. Now, the princess had never seen the man she got married to. The prince was away in some war. After the war was over, the prince, who was outside the Kingdom, decided to put his wife's fidelity and resoluteness to test. For this he

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13 *Karma in the form of karma-yOga or upAsana etc., needs to be performed in order for the seeker to attain that state wherein Ishvara anubhava is possible. But from there, for getting actual Ishvara anubhava, one needs realize/know Ishvara in real. And this knowledge is attained by the guidance/grace of Ishvara in the form of a sadguru – Swami Govindananda (YouTube pravachan ARR APR-15 <https://youtu.be/dkLIZf2cGtK> )*

14 *Kshatriya: Social class of people who are warriors/rulers*

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hatched a plan. The princess started getting some messages that another prince, a guest of the nation, was in love with her. She was told that the prince was very handsome, had noble qualities, and was very loving. And that he had seen the Princess and fallen for her so totally that he was in a near-death situation, pining away for her. If she did not consent to meet him, he would surely die. These pressing messages were conveyed to her, day after day. After a few days, she could hold back no more, and gave her consent to meet him.

And, the man who came to meet her was none other than her husband, whom she had not seen before. When he disclosed to her that he was not some lover committing adultery, but was her own husband, the girl just fell down dead. Shame took her life. Now, what was her crime in meeting him? After all, she had only met her husband, not some other man. Some other man had not wooed her; her husband it was that had called her for the tryst. What then was her transgression? What crime was she guilty of? The crime was this. She had consented to meet a man, who she knew as being someone other than her husband. Knowing fully-well that this lover was not the man she was married to, she had agreed to meet him. When her misdeed was found out, it led to such a great anguish that it caused her death.

That's the story.

Now, Mahatma-s tell us that all is Ishvara; all is Paramatma. Anyone we meet is but Paramatma in that form... (Without realizing it) We meet Paramatma, we laugh about Paramatma, we walk on Paramatma, we see Paramatma alone. This is Paramatma's craftiness; his cunning, surely! When we engage with the world, do we do that with the clear realization that we are engaging with Paramatma? Or do we do that with the belief that we are engaging with some pleasurable object, distinct from Paramatma, with the feeling that this is dear to me. If we recognize Paramatma as 'All', then 'जहाँ जहाँ चलौं सोइ परिक्रमा' – *wherever it is that I walk, I am circumambulating God*; 'जो जो करौं सो पूजा' – *Everything that I do, is the worship of God*.

But then, we do not recognize Paramatma as 'All'.

The implication of this is that 'getting' something is not as important as 'recognizing' what one gets. The reality is that God is met in every cell, every atom, every single moment. There is no place, no time,

no substance wherein God is not present. But then, where do we ever recognize 'all' as being God? Rather, we feel infatuated by someone; love towards some other; aversion to some other... Where do we recognize God in all of them? So, all this infatuation, love, aversion –is but our delusion. This is our *ajnAna* (erroneous knowledge; ignorance). And that then is the cause of our sorrow. It is the giver of grief.

(Jnan-vijnanyog : p 206,207,208)





### Hey, just recognize *Ishvara*!

Look, how unique/different is the ‘seeing of Ishvara’. For Ishvara is not hiding anywhere. He is absolutely visible.

In this context, I recall an incident from my childhood. There was a Mahatma who lived on the banks of Ganga, and many people visited him. He was considered to be a *siddha* (i.e., one who has attained God-realization). However, the Mahatma hurled abuses at those who came to see him and drove them away. Once, a person came to meet him. I happened to be there at that time. The Mahatma asked him – ‘*Why have you come? What work do you have here?*’ That man said – ‘*I desire to have darshan of God. I want to see Ishvara*’. Hearing this, the siddha-Mahatma started swearing, letting out a stream of invective. But the man was quite unmoved. He sat down right there and declared – ‘*I shall not leave this place without getting a vision of God*.’ So, he sat there in *satyagraha*. One whole day passed. Then another day. And another. He just sat in the same place, without having anything at all to eat or drink. He continued to sit there, in that open land by the banks of Ganga. Then, the Baba (Mahatma) picked up a stick, and told that man – ‘*Run away from here. What worship, adoration, service have you rendered to the seen-God, that you now seek to see the unseen One?*’

Baba then pointed to the Sun and said – ‘*Is what you see up there the Sun or not? It is! Bhagavan has declared “प्रभास्मि शशिसूर्ययोः - I am the radiance of the Sun and the moon! (Gita 7.8). I am the light of the Sun! Now, surely you see the resplendence of the Sun throughout the day. Has it ever occurred to you that you are actually seeing God? Did you ever think of folding your hands in prayer? Bow to the Sun? Did you resolve not to commit any misdeed in the light of the Sun, for God is seeing all that you do? Did you resolve not to speak ill to anyone; not to entertain any bad thoughts about anyone? Not to do bad to anyone? Have you ever worshipped the light of the Sun?*’

Saying this, the Mahatma gave the man such a whack with the stick, that it was as if the third eye of that man opened up. And lo! He started seeing Ishvara in the *virAt* form – massive, cosmic form!

It is indeed the truth, that in stationary objects, Ishvara abides as the (element) 'earth'. In flowing objects, He abides as the 'water' element. In burning objects, He abides as 'fire'. In moving objects, He abides as '*vAyu* – air'. And in the substances that bear all things, He abides as *akAsha* - 'ether'. In our sense-organs, it is He who abides as the 'mind' that entertains desires/thoughts. It is He who is the discerning 'intellect'. Arey! He is the one who comes in the form of 'death' as well. He alone is good; He alone is bad; death is He; and it is He who exists as *amrita* (ambrosia of deathlessness). Yes! So vast, immense, is He – manifesting Himself as the 'Self of All'! Hey, just recognize Ishvara!

(Jnan-vijnanyog : p 151, 152, 153, 154)



## All these states (of mind) have been sent by me

I had a friend who, at a certain point in time, had a great longing to have vision of God. I was around twenty years of age then, and he was around seventeen. And, Maharaj, when he discarded his clothes and rags and set off in his search of God, I too decided to join him. I had some five or ten rupees with me, meant for rent etc., and some *kurta-dhoti* dresses. Leaving all that in a Dharamshala, we set off, and crossed the Ganga River, somewhere near Neela-dhara (Haridwar). It was our resolve not to return until we attained God-vision. The two of us had a *dhoti* each. However, in terms of the desire to see God, his longing was a bit more intense, and mine a bit less. The reason for my longing being lesser was that I had been on this trail (of God realization) from much before; and I had a glimmering realization that I was on a satisfactory path.

After crossing the Ganga, we went some distance and then sat down and did some bhajan (worship/contemplation) of God. After that, for a while, we talked to each other about God. And then we started singing God's name – '*mukunda, mAdhava, gOvinda, krishNa; mukunda, mAdhava, gOvinda, krishNa...*'"

And even as we were engaged in this manner, tears started flowing from my friend's eyes; his body experienced goose-bumps; his mouth started to drool; and then, he fell down in a faint. And suddenly, his face turned black. His head was on my lap. Everything that I am telling you now is something which I saw, with my own eyes. His mouth was closed shut, and he had no signs of consciousness. Now, how do I get some water here? Ganga Ji was some two furlongs away. I left my friend and walked to the river. I had no vessel, no *kamandalu* (water-pot), nor even a glass – nothing at all, for bringing water in. So, I used the *dhoti* (cloth) that I was wearing. Dipping it in Ganga, I soaked water in it, brought it, squeezed some water into his mouth, and sprinkled some water on his body. Thereafter, resting his head on my lap, I started singing, doing *keerthan* - *gOvinda, mAdhava, mukunda, krishNa....* After some time, I noticed a change in his face. Like the moon or the Sun rising, his face started becoming brighter gradually, and then became resplendent even as I was seeing him. And

then, he slowly started speaking God's name in a feeble voice – *gOvinda, mukunda...* After ten minutes or so, he was up and about, sitting with me, and singing *keerthan* along with me. His health had recovered.

Now, the state of fainting that he had experienced, might appear to be *tAmasik*, on the face of it; but it is certain that it was something that was caused by God; for soon after, there was a sudden radiance, his face started shining etc. Now, this state could not have been attained without it being caused by God, surely. All this, I saw, with my own eyes. Later, my friend told me – “*I was blessed with the vision of God.*”

In general, when one experiences goose-bumps, thrills etc., when engaged in bhajan, then it is a sign of *sAttvik-bhAva*; if one dances and sings, then it is *rAjasik-bhAva*; and if one falls down in a faint, it is *tAmasik-bhAva*. Thus, Bhagavan says:

ये चैव सात्त्विका भावा राजसास्तामसाश्च ये।  
मत्त एवेति तान्विद्धि नत्वं तेषु ते मयि ॥7.12॥

*All these that are of the quality of sattva, and those things that are of the quality of rajas and tamas, know them to have sprung from Me alone. However, I am not in them; they are in Me!*

*(Bhagavad Gita 7.12)*

मत्त एवेति तान्विद्धि - All these states (of mind) have been sent by me. However, नत्वं तेषु ते मयि – I am not confined within these qualities/states. I can be seen even without these. However, all these qualities/states are in me, and by me they are sent (to all beings).

*(Jnan-vijnanyog : p 276,277,278)*

## Nothing is good or bad; all is Leela

Disciple to his Guru: 'O *bhagavan*! "X" person, although a *sanyasi* (renunciate), is engaging in material pursuits, accumulating stuff; and "Y" person, although a *grihastha* (householder), speaks disparagingly of Sanyasi-s. Causes me so much disturbance.'

Gurudev : 'Narayan! Narayan! You are afflicted by a great lack of understanding. Where Sanyasi and where grihastha? All this is but a notion of your mind. Actually, all this is but the drama of Lord Narayana! It's all a drama! It is He who is acting as a Sanyasi somewhere, and as a Grihastha elsewhere! Accumulating stuff is all drama; speaking disparagingly is drama too. You should, rather, keep your eyes focused on the 'Actor', i.e., Narayana. Be happy and carefree. Never allow the thought of any 'other' to rise at all!'

'When it has been established by means of *shravana*, *manana*, and *nididhyasana* that 'all is Paramatma', how does any view arise that 'X' is good, 'Y' is bad etc. While the view that such-and-such is 'good' is forgivable on occasion, the view that such-and-such is 'bad' is always perverse, i.e., erroneous/contrary knowledge. If one is unable to have 'evenness' at all times, and 'disparity' occurs, then one's mind should rather focus on the 'good' alone. Then again, why should one go about strengthening one's sentiments and convictions about 'good' and 'bad'? Rather, one should slacken them. If it appears that 'this or that' is good or bad, then it is but the play of Leela; it is merely drama. 'Bheema' in a drama, and 'Duryodhana' in a drama, are both for entertainment alone. Death, disease, or some harassment displayed in a theatre-stage is all for the purposes of experiencing '*rasa*' (taste) of the associated feelings/emotions; *adbhuta* (wonder), *raudra* (anger), *bhayAnaka* (fear), *beebhatsa* (disgust) etc., are all '*rasa*' alone. So why should one feel any disturbance when encountering these?'

Disciple : Yes Bhagavan! Indeed, all this is but a drama.

Gurudev : 'Even so, it is not a rule that one must see all this drama as being only that. When one sees a drama and gets lost in the story being enacted, forgetting that it is only a dramatization – then, that is

actually indicative of the great success and charm of that drama. (While that is fine) Even when such forgetfulness happens, one should have the unshakeable conviction that this is but a drama. And in the theatre of life, perform properly every role that you are allotted – and fulfil them with great success. If it happens that you are duty-bound to do some harsh deeds, like Bheeshma had to do when warring with Krishna, then do that with all sincerity. Even so, when the ‘scene’ on the stage is over, then one does remember that the drama which appeared as if it was really happening, was not so. It was only a drama; just acting.

Disciple : Indeed so, O Gurudeva! The phenomenal world is but a drama, and I am an actor in it, as well as a person in the audience. Nothing is good or bad; all is Leela. By your Grace, I have been blessed with infinite peace.

(Sadhana aur Brahmanubhuti : p 165)



## Stride forward in the path of Bhakti!

भयं द्वितीयाभिनिवेशतः स्यादीशादपेतस्य विपर्ययोऽस्मृतिः ।  
तन्माययातो बुध आभजेत्तं भक्त्यैकयेः गुरुदेवतात्मा ॥

(Bhagavatam 11-2.37)

By of the power of Ishvara's Maya, the man whose face is turned away from Ishvara forgets his true Self and reels under the delusion/erroneous-belief that – '*I am a mortal*'. And by his identification of the self with the body etc., he is subject to many fears – viz., old-age, disease, death etc. Therefore, the wise man should look upon his own Guru as his most-dearest *ArAdhya-dEva* (God, who is to be worshipped); and with undistracted Bhakti, he should offer worship to Ishvara in the form of his Guru.

Now, a question is raised – 'Whatever fear exists in this world is but imagination, arising out of *ajnAna* (lack of Self-Knowledge). And when one attains Self-realization, all these fears cease, on their own. So where is the necessity to do *bhajan* of Ishvara?'

(Answer) O brother mine! What you say is true. But, 'fear' being an outcome of Maya, it is the bounden-duty of a wise man to do *bhajan* of the entity whose Maya is the cause of all fear.

So, what does Maya do in all this? Here is what it does. When a man turns his back to Ishvara and has his face towards the world, then (due to Maya) he loses remembrance of his true Self. Look, you should have your face towards God, and your back to the world. Then Maya will not ensnare you. Otherwise, it will. People tend to be attracted by something other than God, and they go there and get trapped. And that's how people get entangled in the world.

Therefore, the wise man's duty is to offer *bhajan* to God, with undistracted bhakti. Having attained realization of the sole-'One', *Ishvara*, *sacchidAnanda paramAtmA*, one should remain in happiness in that alone.'

Question : O brother! Only if I am able to see Him, can I strive to



reach Him. When I cannot see Him at all, how am I to attain Him?

Answer : Keep seeking until you succeed in finding Him. And when you finally see Him – just cling to Him; wrap yourself around Him. If instead, you stop seeking Him, and start living with someone else (i.e., worldly pleasures), then your *sateetva* (fidelity / faithfulness / loyalty) would be no more.

Question: Ok. How does one make this happen – i.e., how does one go about seeking Him, and Him alone?

Answer: For realizing Paramatma (God, as the Self-Supreme), one needs to go about one's life in a correct manner. If you ask what that manner may be, the answer is –

Till you realize within your 'self' the Oneness of Atma (individual self) and Paramatma (All-pervasive, Supreme-Self), look upon your own Guru as Devata (Deity that you worship). See your Guru alone as your Atma (Self) as well. 'Devata' is one's desired '*tat-padArtha*'<sup>15</sup>; Atma is our most-beloved '*tvam-padArtha*'<sup>16</sup>. Until the time you do not realize the oneness of '*tat-padArtha*' and '*tvam-padArtha*' by attaining '*tattvajna*', see their oneness in your Guru. Have the conviction that '*He alone is Atma; He alone is Paramatma*'. As Paramatma, there is *mahattA* (greatness/ majesty/ venerableness); and as Atma, there is *priyatA* (lovability/ adorability). For one loves the Atma (one's self), and one has great respect/veneration for Paramatma (God, the Self-Supreme).

Therefore, until one attains true and proper *bodha* (knowledge of one's Self), one should look upon one's Guru as being the very form of true *bodha*. In this way, verily, one should stride forward in the path of Bhakti.

(Mukti skandh : p 83-86)

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15 '*tat-padArtha*': In the Mahavakya '*tattvamasi*', '*tat*' signifies God, the Supreme/  
Distinct Reality

16 '*tvam-padArtha*': '*tvam*' signifies the individual self; the "I".

## Align your views with those of God

People who recognize God in the form of Satyug<sup>17</sup> and not in the form of Kaliyug, are condemned to spend their lives beating their heads, crying out – ‘The times are bad! This is bad, that is bad – today, it happened like this; yesterday, it happened like that...’, etc. Keep crying your whole life; what’s the point? If you think that the new generation of kids are all going bad, know that your father too may have held a similar view about you, and cried – ‘My son has taken to bad ways!’ And his father too might have thought similarly of him – ‘O! My son has taken to bad ways!’

Actually, when people look at someone who is younger by twenty-five or fifty years, and the differences that have come about in time (in terms of people’s outlook and behaviour), they are not ready to accept it. The traditional mother-in-law’s veil that covered her head and face, was a hand-length; her daughter-in-law’s veil covered her head alone; and the next-generation daughter-in-law does not wear Saree at all, so where is the question of a veil? Seeing all this, people just say – ‘Oh! Kaliyug has come.’ Crying *Kaliyug-Kaliyug*, their life gets spent. One should rather have the attitude to accept the things as they are; whatever it is that is coming from God, go on accepting all that with an open mind and heart. Align your views with those of God. Know, that there is no such thing as sorrow.

(Is it that) When God ‘gives’, it is wonderful; and when he ‘takes away’, it is very bad? No. Rather, when God gives us things – it is out of his love and compassion for us. And when He takes things away, he is freeing us from responsibility (towards these things). We should be happy. His ‘giving’ is ok; his ‘taking’ is ok too.

Those things which are of no further use for us, will go. My grandfather renounced a few things. Some things, my father renounced. And then, I left a few things. The next generation of my family will leave a few things. And the next, a few other things. Whatever is not purposeful at that time, will get dropped. There is no need to cry over it. Whatever

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17 *Yuga is a division of time. Time is seen as a recurring cycle of four yuga-s. The first is satyuga, and the fourth is kaliyuga. We are currently in kaliyuga.*

comes from God, just bow your head, and accept it gracefully.

Whatever God does, in that alone is happiness. Align your views with those of God; do not beat your head against a rock. No one can stop the passage of time. However virtuous a man may project himself to be; however great a *dharmAtmA* he may appear to be to others; when he looks honestly at his own self, he would realize how he is deceiving others, or is deceiving his own self. There is *dharmadharma* (virtue and vice) in everybody's life. There is no one who is absolutely bathed-in-milk (stainless), nor anyone who is purely soaked in slime. This is a fact of life; and without accepting this fact, no one can maintain equanimity amidst happiness and sorrow, nor have a uniform approach when dealing with friends and foes; nor have equipoise when faced with *dharmadharma* and *adharma*; nor remain the same in knowledge and ignorance. To realize this truth is a must in life.

But, one thing. However much this world has changed, God has remained totally unaffected, unchanged. The things that come and go in life are like scenes of a movie. Yes, the world has changed. But Paramatma is ever the same. Therefore, (in this changing world) recognize that substance, which changes not.

(Gita Darshan, Part 1 – Gita 11<sup>th</sup> Chapter : p 141, 142 and 146)

## What ‘*Namaskara*’ means

‘तं वन्दे द्विपदां वरम्’ (*Bow to him, the greatest of men*) - We bow to that Guru, who is Purushottama, the greatest of men, and is the source of our Jnana (Knowledge) etc. In other words, when we stand before the Guru, we become *namra* (reverential/submissive/humble; i.e., we bow). Becoming *namra* implies that we do not think of ourself as being apart from the Guru. To do ‘*namaskAra*’ means – becoming *namra*. And becoming *namra* means the abandoning of *ahamkAra* (egotism/self-conceit).

What this (abandonment of *ahamkAra*) signifies is that:

Our work is not different from his (the Guru’s) work

Our intellect is not apart from his intellect.

Our thoughts/volitons are not apart from his. And our *svarUpa* (real nature/actual self) is non-different from his *svarUpa*.

Actually, being non-different from Guru implies that whatever Jnana the Guru has, the disciple too has that Jnana alone (and nothing else). If a disciple makes it out that his knowledge is different from that of his Guru, then that is not ‘*namaskAra*’ at all.

Some people say – “Our Gurudeva is a Jnani all right. However, he doesn’t understand some ‘x’ matter; and so, as regards that ‘x’ context, we have our own school of thought, which differs from his.” Or they say – “Our Guruji has a great understanding of *paramArtha* (Absolute Reality; Highest Truth), but he does not understand *vyavahAra* (worldly matters); so, when it comes to *vyavahAra*, we are not on the same page.”

Such an attitude belongs to the *samskAra* set<sup>18</sup>; i.e., it adds to one’s worldly bondage. It does not belong to the *jnAna* set (the truly spiritual side; the side of knowledge), surely!

(True spiritual realization is...) Just as the Guru knows himself to be non-dual, so too should we realize our Self to be. We should know that ‘*the non-duality which is my Gurudeva, is what I am too*’. That which is the non-dual Paramatma (God/Supreme-Self) is what is the non-dual Atma (individual Self) as well. The non-dual Brahman is verily the same as the

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18 *samskAra*: mental impressions; memories; habituations

non-dual 'I'. Indeed, '*namaskAra*' is nothing but the complete reversal/cancellation of all '*difference*'.

A devotee of Rama says that 'Rama is greater'; Krishna's devotee says 'Krishna is greater'; the one who takes refuge in Ganesha says 'Ganesha is greater'. Which is right? Who is greater? Now, such devotees hold on to particular names and forms of God and proclaim – "This Rama! This Krishna! This Ganesha!" etc. The fact is that all of these are one in substance (they are the same reality in seemingly different forms). Do not fight over different forms of sweetmeat, saying that you want an elephant or a horse shaped sweet; eat and relish the 'sugar' that makes up these sweets. This is what is known as *advaita-darshana* (true perception of Oneness). This is what erases *rAga-dvEsha* (attachment/aversion) from our hearts. If a *satsangi*<sup>19</sup> - i.e., one who participates in a spiritual group meeting – displays *rAga-dvEsha*, then one should realize that this *satsangi* has misused the *satsang*. (His 'me' and 'mine' have come to the *satsang* with him) His wife/brother/nephew etc., have come there along with him; his views of 'us' and 'them' have surfaced there too.

Did you set out to do *sAdhanA* (spiritual practice), to cleanse your heart, or did you set out to desecrate your heart? Why did you come to the presence of the Guru? Why did you do *japa*? Why did you do *sAdhanA*? Why did you do *svAdhyAya* (study the scriptures)? To cleanse your heart or to corrupt it?

True *darshana* (spiritual practice/philosophy) is only that which erases *rAga-dvEsha*.

(Mandukya Karika Alatahanti : p 22,23,27,28)

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19 *satsangi*: One who attends *satsang*; one who participates in gatherings of people who meet for some spiritual purpose

## Attachment, to what extent?

In the beginning, we tend to believe that our work is in our control; that *'Whatever work I do, I do as per my sweet will; and I can give it up too, whenever I wish. This work has been called for by me. I believe in it; and, yes, it is in my control.'*

But what happens is this... After some time, one's work becomes a well-practiced routine; and then this work becomes a habit; and that becomes very difficult to give up. And if it so happens that in this work, some other person is also collaborating with us, then the attachment to that work becomes even stronger. So, one should be careful about the kind of work one takes up. We should allow only that kind of work to become a habit, which we are capable of doing throughout our life, with total commitment. That which you love, you should be able to love throughout your life. The work that you do, you should like to do till your last breath, devotedly, as a matter of faith. And whatever activity is such that it does not measure up in your scale of devotion; and so, is not possible for you to do, faithfully, throughout your life; such *'nishiddha karma'* (prohibited activities)<sup>20</sup>, you should desist from doing. If per chance you are doing such 'prohibited' activities, and a call to 'cease and desist' comes from some quarter, then you should heed the call and give up that activity forthwith. It doesn't matter from which agency the call comes – be it the Shastra, or one's Guru, or the society at large, or even one's own intellect/conscience. If one is asked to cease doing that activity, then just drop it. Hesitate not; linger not...Do not hold on. Drop it; stop it. *[The first teaching is : Do not engage in activities that are prohibited by Shastra].*

Now, when it comes to the activities that you engage in, is it that you do not derive happiness and satisfaction from those activities? Is it that you are not doing it for the joy of it; rather, you are doing it because you desire the fruits of that work? If that is the case, then your work is

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20 *Nishiddha karma: The Shastra-s classify activities into two kinds. One is 'vihita karma' – or those activities that the Shastra mandates you to do. The other is 'nishiddha karma' – or those that are forbidden to do. The former are 'prescribed' activities; the latter, are 'prohibited' activities.*

not worth even a dime. For, the fruit becomes the primary motive; the work itself, secondary. *[The second teaching is: Do not work with the main motivation being the desire for the fruit of that work.]*

All right; let us take it that it is not the fruit that you desire; that, in your work, you do not have attachment to the fruit. Great! Thank you! But is it that you feel compelled to complete that work? Think...Is the completion of that work entirely in your hands?

Know, that 'work' is not done purely for the sake of completing it. And completion of work is not entirely in our control. Work is done to fill time. Just go on doing work; keep going forward. *[Third teaching is: Keep working. But know that the result of your work is not in your control.]*

Ok; you realize that 'completing' of work is not in your hands. Even so, you are always engaged in working. For, working has become a practice; a habit. And you cannot remain without working. If this is the case, then you should realize that your sense of 'doership' has become very strong. And this will result in much distress, when you are no longer able to do that work.

*[Fourth teaching: Do not have pride of 'doership'.]*

So, it is necessary to have the belief that one is a non-doer. Having said that, don't carry this sense of non-doership as a burden upon your head. For this sense of non-doership is also a form of conceit. *[Fifth teaching: Do not have pride of non-doership.]*

(Four kinds of attachment) *phalAsakti* (attachment to fruits of activity); *karmAsakti* (attachment to activity); *kartRitvAsakti* (attachment to doership); *akartRitvAsakti* (attachment to non-doership). You will be able to find release from these four, only when you attain the realization of *pUrNatA* (Allness/Fullness/Completeness) of the *AtmA* (Self).

Now, come along with me. (Indeed yes,) You are *pUrNa* (full/complete).

(Anand Ullas : p 14,15)

## **Where does your happiness lie?**

Why do you want to get your old jewellery, bracelets etc., melted down and remade into new forms and styles? Why do you wish to wear a Saree once, and then go for a change? When you have made friends with someone, why do you seek friendship with someone else?

Things change, all the time. No object remains dear to us, in the same way, for a long period of time. Objects are subject to dance and difference – i.e., their very nature is to change. They cannot keep you happy all the time. The inherent power of the sense-organs to consume and enjoy sense-objects does not remain constant; it becomes less and less with time. Objects change; so does the vitality of sense-organs. When the youthfulness of 17-18 years changes and goes on to reach the age of 25-35, and then 55-75, the whole form and colour of life changes. While one's teeth, lips, skin, voice, strength, manliness etc., change for sure, one's taste in enjoying sense-pleasures also does not remain as before.

If someone wishes – “I should have incessant enjoyment of sense-pleasures, and may I work for this all the time” – then, it is an impossible wish. One needs rest, recess, break. One needs restful deep-sleep. How long can we remain a *bhoktA* (enjoyer of sense-pleasures)? The limbs will become weary, the mind will become helpless and go to sleep. And by these very objects, sense-organs, tastes, pride of enjoyership etc., you wish to make yourself happy, and always remain so. How ironical this is!

For your happiness, why do you choose to go for these external things? Wealth is something that remains forever external. Happiness in money is something that is a matter of imagination. The happiness of sense-enjoyments is something which is in the mind. It is somewhat internal, but is transient, momentary. The happiness of egotism/pride is something which is more inner than happiness of sense-enjoyment; it exists in the ‘intellect’. But it is to be noted that every sorrow in the world affects this ego/pride alone. It is the egotistic man that gets one slap after another, repeatedly, in life. It is the egotistic man who receives sorrow, delusion, fear... Sorrow about the past, delusion about the present, and fear of the future – all these find their refuge in pride alone. How then



is one to get release from all these problems and attain *paramAnanda* (the highest of happiness)? The answer: '*Freedom from problems*' and '*Supreme-bliss*' are alternate names of one's *Atma (Self)*. In *Atma* there is no dependence on any object, instrument, mind, intellect etc. As it is, wherever it is, whenever it is, however it is, it (the Self) is *paramAnanda-svarUpa* (of the nature/form of Supreme-Bliss). And this (happiness) is not something that pertains to *paraLOka* (heaven). In this very world, in this very life, to this very person who sees/hears, the Self is known *pratyaksha* (directly), and one attains liberation. So, *paramAnanda* (Supreme-bliss) is right now, right here, verily this, verily you. This experience, verily, is the 'state of being' of Self-realized sages. Would you too like to attain this experience? Then do not go away anywhere; return to your own home, your Self. That's it; you'll see that your Self has no veil/cover; you alone are; all is you.

(Anand Ullas : p 19-20)



## In Creation, what is good, what is bad?

Your question – ‘Some people do *puNya-karma* (deeds of spiritual merit) and some others, *pApa-karma* (sinful deeds). How can we view both with an even eye?’

Resolution : Doership of *puNya* or *pApa* deeds is associated with *antaHkaraNa* (mind). And for all beings, the material basis of the mind is *Ishvara* alone. That being the case, what is *pApa-puNya karma* (deeds, sinful or meritorious) and what is *pApa-puNya vAsanA* (seeds of desire, sinful or meritorious)? Indeed, no *jeeva* (individual being) is an independent doer, nor is anyone an independent enjoyer. Every *jeeva* is under the control of *Ishvara*. It is *Ishvara* who manifests in the form of the ‘mind’ in all people. It is He alone who is performing the Leela of *pApa* and *puNya*. Just as a mother takes one baby in her lap to feed it milk and sends another child out to play; in the same manner, *Ishvara* impels different *jeeva*-s to do different activities. In this, no fault can be ascribed to the *jeeva*. So, when you maintain an even mind towards all people, (it means that) *Ishvara* is calling you towards Himself. Yes, you may well show a greater regard for a devotee of God; by that, the heart will gain further devotion to God. And, you may well not show any regard towards bad people. However, do not speak ill of anyone. All is the sport of *Ishvara*. In this, nurturing love or hate is pointless.

When we see a person doing some good work or some vile deed, his *karma*, of course, remains with him alone. The question is, what about your ‘seeing’? Does your sight extend only to the deed he performed? Or to the words he spoke? Or does it see his *antaHkaraNa* (mind)? Does it extend to his *jeeva* (soul)? Does it go till *antaryAmi Ishvara* (the indwelling *Ishvara*) in him? Or does it go right to the *Atmatattva* (the true nature of the Supreme-Self)? The thing to be observed is – ‘how sharp is your sight?’

When we meet any person, there is no necessity for us to see the positive and negative aspects of his body. To see the predilections and passions of his mind is also unnecessary. Rather, the *Ishvara* within the person is what you should see and derive happiness from! Extend your

sight to the core-principle (the true nature of the Self). When you buy an ornament made of gold, do you see only the form, art, and skill of workmanship? Or do you also check the (purity and weight) of the gold? If you buy the ornament without checking out the gold, you may end up being cheated. Similarly, the *chEtan-Atmatattva* (Alive/Conscious Self), which all of 'Creation' is composed of – it is that *chETana* (Consciousness) which needs to be recognized and seen. When you do that, what then is good or bad in Creation? All are Paramatma (Supreme-Self; *Ishvara*). All are in Paramatma. Paramatma is in all.

Why is it that this fact is not understood by all people? That's because this is not at all meant to be understood by all. Sri Vedanta Desikacharya<sup>21</sup> has said – '*This is not to be done by all*'. 'समबुद्धिर्विशिष्यते।' (He excels, who has sameness of view – says *Bhagavad Gita*)<sup>22</sup> - This view of sameness is only applicable to those who have reached the final stage of excellence in Yoga; i.e., '*Those who are at the brink of attaining the state of samAdhi*<sup>23</sup>; it is they who will be in this stage (of sameness of view towards all)'. And until one reaches such a stage, one will not be able to achieve the state of Self-Abidance; nor attain *samAdhi*; nor attain union with God.

(Anand Manjusha : p 257,258)

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21 The great sage/philosopher of Vishishtadvaita school of Vaishnava philosophy

22 This reference is to *Bhagavad Gita*, Ch 6, verse 9 – "He excels who has sameness of view with regard to a benefactor, a friend, a foe, a neutral, an arbiter, the hateful, a relative, good people and even sinners." (Adapted from translation of Swami Gambhirananda from <https://www.gitasupersite.iitk.ac.in/> )

23 *samAdhi* : The final stage of Ashtanga Yoga. *Samadhi* is oneness with the subject of meditation. There is no distinction, during the eighth limb of yoga, between the actor of meditation, the act of meditation and the subject of meditation. *Samadhi* is that spiritual state when one's mind is so absorbed in whatever it is contemplating on, that the mind loses the sense of its own identity. The thinker, the thought process and the thought fuse with the subject of thought. There is only oneness, *samadhi* - (Source: Wikipedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashtanga\\_\(eight\\_limbs\\_of\\_yoga\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashtanga_(eight_limbs_of_yoga)))

## Who is afraid of dying?

Fear of death is absolutely a weakness of the mind.

Poets say that death is a sweet dream. Bhakta-s (devotees of God) say that – ‘After death, we will be in the embrace of our beloved (God). Now, when we are alive, God is in Vaikuntha, in Goloka; and we are far away from him. We are his lovers; we adore him. After death, we shall clasp him to our hearts; cling on to him.’

Dharmatma (virtuous) people say – ‘After death, we will go to heaven. There, we shall have beautiful gardens to stroll around in; many-many Apsara-s (celestial women) too. We will have a body that will be equal to Devata-s (celestial beings) in terms of the power of *bhOga* (enjoyments of pleasures).’

Jnani folks say – ‘Where is all this coming and going? There is no going or coming anywhere. *paripUrNa-brahman* (Full/Perfect/Complete *brahman*) alone exists.’

Then, which set of people are worried about what will happen to them after they die? If you people do not count yourself as being in that set, then I shall tell you the answer.<sup>24</sup> (You are all not of that set, surely.) For you listen to Vedanta; you are people of virtue; you are doers of good; you contemplate on matters relating to God; you know the difference between the Self and the non-Self...

Fear of death afflicts only those people who are ardent devotees of their own body-identification (i.e., the materialists, who believe that the self is the body alone); and are sinners. The sinner’s anxiety is – “After death, I will go to hell...”. And the materialist, who strongly identifies his self with the physical body, worries that – ‘all this that is mine (my accomplishments, properties, money, fame etc.); all this will be lost when I die.’

Once, I saw a man who was weeping even as he was eating. He was crying – ‘*I am eating such delicious food today; who knows what I shall eat tomorrow?*’ Now, do not laugh at him; look to your own self and laugh (for you too may be doing just this). Eating now, and crying for

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24     *Maharajshree was addressing an audience in Mumbai, at that time.*

tomorrow... What this means is that he gets no happiness from the food that he is eating now. God has given him something; and he is gaining no happiness from that. All this sorrow and poverty is an outcome of our forgetting (our real self). This (identifying one's self as the body) is a delusion; and this delusion is removed only by gaining true-understanding; by *shravaNa* (hearing and understanding the teachings of Vedanta). Vedanta gives that kind of 'understanding', by which your fear of death, fear of coming and going to heaven/hell, keenness/greediness to go to Vaikuntha/Goloka, delusion, desire/lust, anger, *avidyA* (ignorance of one's real Self) etc., are all erased. Therefore, for attaining this understanding, do *shravaNa* (hearing of teachings of Vedanta), *manana* (reflecting on the teachings), *nididhyAsana* (profound meditation); this is the way to attain true knowledge (of the Self).

(Drig Drishya Viveka : p 200, 201)



## The manifestation of Non-dual *Sat-Cit-Ananda* in *Sadhana*

The shruti says:

नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः ।

*This Atma cannot be attained by one devoid of strength*

(Mundaka Upanishad – 3.2.4)

A person devoid of ‘strength’ cannot attain Self-Realization. So, what is ‘strength’? Firstly, ‘strength’ is that which works on the body (i.e., it enables a man to control his body); then, it is that which works on one’s sense-organs (enabling one to control them); next, it works on one’s mind; works on one’s intellect... (If it does all these) Then, it is ‘strength’; otherwise, it is a case of ‘निर्बल के बल राम!’ – ‘*For the weak one, ‘Raam’ (God) alone is his strength.*’

‘निर्बल के बल राम’ implies that one should have the strength of faith/trust (in God). A weak man can stick nowhere. No one in the world will trust him.

(Strength is demonstrated in self-control) If you have some *niyama* (the practice of observing some specific self-restraints), and if a certain thing that you are not supposed to partake of (say, eat or drink) is right in front of you, you would avoid it. Right? The most wonderful of things comes in front of you, and you leave it untouched, with the reasoning – ‘No, having this would be contrary to my *niyama* (rules of restraint).’ By sticking to one’s *niyama*, *Atmabala*<sup>25</sup> (strength of Atma) dawns in one’s life. This is called ‘strength of character’.

In whatever *Sadhana* (spiritual practice) you do, there should be: 1) Firmness; 2) Radiance (of understanding); and 3) Contentment.

‘Firmness’ is an outcome of ‘*sat*’ (‘Is-ness’; Eternal existence). ‘Radiance of understanding’ is the outcome of ‘*cit*’ (Consciousness). And

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25 *Atmabala: Strength of one’s own self; strength of mind/will/resolve/character*

‘contentment’ comes from ‘*Ananda*’ (Bliss). The seeker should become so absorbed in his Sadhana, that he becomes non-apart from it, one with it; so much so that he should not even be aware that he is doing any sadhana. His Sadhana should just go on as *sahaja-svabhAva* (a natural state of being). When that happens, then ‘*advaya sat-cit-Ananda*’ (Non-dual Existence-Consciousness-Bliss) manifests in his sadhana. It is palpable. This is what is known as ‘*Atmabala*’ (strength of one’s Self).

‘Firmness’ is imperishable ‘*sat*’. When one has ‘Radiance of understanding’, then there is no idling or lack of attention; no *ajnAna*, ‘ignorance’. ‘Contentment’ is happiness. ‘Happiness’ and ‘Knowledge’ are both the characteristics of ‘*sattva-guNa*’ (qualities of virtuousness). ‘Firmness’ too is a characteristic of *sattva-guNa*; *sahaja-svabhAva* (unstrained, natural, state of being) is also a characteristic of *sattva-guNa*.

(Then, after being established in *sattva-guNa*, one needs to transcend even that. And for that ‘fearlessness’ is needed.)

Fear not. Whatever new things you encounter in life, just go ahead, and accept them; take them in your stride; be fearless. The future cannot spoil anything of yours.

Now, in whose life does such ‘fearlessness’ manifest? He who has ‘strength’; it is in his life that ‘fearlessness’ comes about. For going forward God’s path, *Atmabala* (strength of one’s self) and fearlessness is needed. God is your aide; no one can cause any harm to you. Be fearless.

(Drig Drishya Viveka : p 267,8,9)

## Mental Renunciation

If a *grihastha* (householder) has a *kAma* (sensuous desire) urge, or feels some anger towards his wife, or with his children; no sin accrues to him. Even if he does something like that, it is accepted as being quite ok. And the *grihastha* is generally considered to be a peaceful man, endowed with '*shama*' (self-control), who doesn't take enmity with anyone, does not indulge in any unethical deeds – indeed, he is someone who is praiseworthy.

However, if the person in question is a *jijnAsu* of Vedanta (a seeker of the Self-knowledge), and he/she has come to the Guru to study Vedanta, then his/her mind should be engaged purely in *vichAra* (spiritual inquiry). He/She should not have thoughts of *kAma* towards his/her wife or husband. And if it so happens that the *jijnAsu*'s family members cause some problems, and he/she does not become angry with them, then it will be said that this person is endowed with '*shama*'. For, in this context, where one has to engage in *vedAnta-vichAra*, if one is seized by 'lust' or 'anger', then, to do *vedAnta-vichAra* will not be possible at all.

Thus, the rules of '*shama*' for a *jijnAsu* are stricter than those for a *grihastha* – this is what we intended to convey. For a *grihastha*, sensual-desire, anger, greed, and delusion are permitted in different situations. However, as far as a *jijnAsu* is concerned, there is no provision for his/her mind to have any of these.

One kind of '*sanyAsa*' (renunciation) pertains to the body, where one wears certain clothes that signify *sanyAsa*. This is 'external *sanyAsa*'. And then there is the other kind of *sanyAsa*, viz., 'mental *sanyAsa*', where one totally renounces all attachment to *karma* (activities) and fruits thereof. If you are able to grasp the meaning of '*sanyAsa*' as 'mental *sanyAsa*', then I can explain openly, accompanied by the beating of drums<sup>26</sup>, that, without becoming a *sanyAsi* (renunciate) it is not possible to realize Paramatma (God). The point is this – for attaining God, devoted adherence to renunciation is essential.

If your focus/insistence is on some separate object, how will the

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26     *Hindi proverb that signifies: Saying emphatically, with no hesitation at all*



realization of *akhaNDa-paramEshvara* (undivided Lord-Supreme) come about? Mind cannot attain knowledge of two different objects at the same time. He whose mind is focused on knowing some trivial object will not be able to gain knowledge of *akhaNDa-vastu* (Allness; Undivided Existence); and from one who attains knowledge of *akhaNDa-vastu*, trivial-objects will drop off automatically.

And so, if you wish to progress towards God, then you have to renounce worldly thoughts/attachments; and if instead, you hold on to worldly thoughts/attachments, then God will slip off.

Therefore, abandon worldly attachments and proceed towards God.

(Mundak Sudha – p 187,188, 201,202,203)



## Relationship alone is bondage!

All the sorrows of the world arise when we forge some relationship with someone or something. One man cries – “Oh, I did not get any *kheer* (rice pudding) to eat today!” This means that he has attached himself to *kheer*. Another man cries that his friend has not come to meet him that day... This indicates that the man has attached himself to his friend. Another cries – ‘Oh! I have earned nothing today!’; which means that he has attached himself to money. Until and unless you attach yourself to some ‘other’, you can never be afflicted by sorrow. For, largely, people do not cry over themselves. Rather, they cry about some ‘other’ – “Oh! I’ve lost that!”

A person ‘X’ had gone to another man Y’s house for lunch. In that house, ‘Y’ had spread an old carpet on the ground. The carpet happened to be torn here and there, and was dirty. It was, perhaps, a hundred years old or more. ‘X’ asked ‘Y’ – “My good fellow! Surely you have a *dhurrie* (a thick blanket or bed-spread) that you use for lying down to sleep? Why don’t you spread that instead of this old, ragged, carpet?” ‘Y’ replied – “Arey! This carpet was procured by my grandfather... In those days, we were so prosperous; our house was so posh...” Saying this, he started weeping, tears pouring from his eyes.

Another man, ‘Z’... His wife died forty years ago. After all these years, even now, when he sits down to eat, he cries – “Oh! The one who used to feed me is no more!” It is not that he needs food; he needs someone who can feed him!

So, where does the world’s sorrow come from? It comes from attachment; from forging relationships.

We relate ourselves with the physical body too! My nose should be so shaped; my braid should not be cut short; no boil/abscess should afflict my hand; my mind should not be agitated... These kinds of attachments, ‘**my** this; **my** that’ etc., which we foster; it is from such ‘relationships’ that bondage and sorrow arise.

Many years ago, I had a practice of going every day to Manikarnika Ghat in Kashi, and sitting there to watch corpses being cremated. My

thought was that watching the bodies burn will deepen my sense of 'vairAgya' (non-attachment to one's own body and worldly associations). Every day, scores of bodies were brought there and burnt. On one occasion I saw a corpse brought there by people who were my friends and relations. I enquired – 'Who has died?' And I was told – "Oh, he is so-and-so." I knew that man well. He was a really good man; now dead? And so, my mind was filled with sadness. The inference is evident... When someone related to us is being cremated, we feel sorrow; and when some stranger is cremated, we feel no sorrow. Therefore, this sense of 'mine-ness' that we have with our body, is indeed what is 'bondage'.

Actually, this 'thinking' is also not mine; this mind too is not mine. Just as a mosquito is not mine; in the same way, the mind, too, is not mine.

So, relationship/association alone is 'bondage'; and it is something which is but a product of our imagination.

(Mandukya Karika pravachan – Alaatahanti : p 116-117)



## An elephant does not serve the purpose of drawing plough!

Mahatma Gandhi was requested by someone to travel in First-class. Gandhiji replied – *“Where a poor man cannot afford to sit, I shall not sit. To sit along with poor people gives me happiness. And so, I shall travel by third-class.”* In this manner, Gandhiji expressed his resolve to travel with the common man.

And then there was the rich merchant in Mumbai. (When told about Maharajshree’s satsang being held in ‘Prem Kuteer’, a public satsang hall) He said – *‘Am I expected to go to premkuteer for attending a satsang? Ram-Ram-Ram! There, one has to sit down on the ground with other people; everyone’s breath mixes with ours! Swamiji, may I request you to come to my place instead, now and then, for satsang? We are so fond of satsang.’*

If one is fond of something, but is unwilling to exert himself for it, then how will it work out? Many *sAdhaka*-s (spiritual seekers) tend to become proud of their own greatness – *“Our antaHkaraNa (mind) is extremely pure. Our knowledge of spirituality is very high.”* Seized by vanity, they abandon all basic *sAdhanA*-s (spiritual practices). Actually, being gripped by conceit, such people are not at all qualified to be graded high in the field of *sAdhana* (spiritual practice). For being gripped by conceit, they overlook the basic spiritual practices completely. For instance, by chanting ‘Rama-Rama’, your tendency to use swear-words drops away. Generally speaking, your tongue will not feel like speaking ill of anybody. Similarly, by cultivating ‘*prEma*’ (deep love) towards God, you will cease having *prEma* towards any woman or man. The defects and vices that are overcome by performing such simple spiritual-practices, are not overcome by vain people who pursue higher spiritual-practices alone. When such people meditate, they proclaim – *“I am pure Brahman! I am merely the witness! I am neutral/indifferent to world’s flow; I am the changeless, immovable, supreme Self; I am peaceful/serene”*, etc. But when they step into the world, they get agitated by the most trivial of

things and display feelings of attachment, abhorrence, confusion/delusion etc. The many minor-defects that reside in them are not removed. And why is that so? That's because these people consider these preparatory spiritual-practices to be trivial, and have scant respect for them. And they have to reap the fruits of that act of disrespect, and suffer the whole of their life.

The 'big' (advanced/high) spiritual-practices do not annul those defects that 'small' (basic) spiritual-practices do. An elephant is not of use for drawing plough.

Jnana annuls *ajnAna* alone. Yoga ends '*vikshEpa*' (inattention/distracted/confusion) alone. Bhakti ends '*vAsana-s*' alone, and *dharma* puts an end to immoral-conduct. If you do not abandon immoral-conduct, and, instead, exert yourself purely in the practices pertaining to the annulment of *vAsana*, then you may go around saying – '*I am vAsana-free. If immoral-conduct still remains in me, let it be. That's a lesser issue.*'

The implication is that a seeker has to progress step by step in the ladder of spirituality. Otherwise, the defects (obstacles to one's progress) cannot be overcome. And so, each of you should examine your life, test yourself in each step, as you go forward.

(Dhyan aur Gyan : p 35,36,37)

## Rare is the *jijnAsu* (seeker of Self-knowledge)

One day, I was going somewhere by train, and a small group of *vichArak-s*<sup>27</sup> got together. As such, it is quite rare to meet *vichArak-s*. The discussion this time got around to the question of how a *jnAni*<sup>28</sup> is.

Different views were expressed – ‘*Jnani is like this; Jnani is like that; he has these characteristics; such and such are his qualities*’ etc.

When all opinions had been expressed, I said to them – “It seems to me that the Jnani that you have characterised, is one whose *chitta* (mind) has not yet ceased. The delusion that ‘*This mind is I*’, has not ceased, as of now. It seems that your Jnani believes himself to be a *brahma-jnAni* (knower of *brahman*), whereas his mind still has ‘*this quality*’, or ‘*that quality*’... He is holding on to his relationship with his mind, which identifies itself as being a specific individual (a certain man). Friends! A Brahmajnani is one who is abiding in that place where Maya does not exist; nor does Avidya; nor their effects (in the form of the seen world); nor their instruments (sense-organs etc.). A *jnAni* has no truck with these – he is not holding on to them. Look here! It is the renunciation of *chitta* (mind), which is, in reality, the renunciation of *samsAra* (world of ‘I’, ‘mine’, ‘this’ and ‘that’). That which is the *adhishtAna* (real ground) on which this *avidya* (erroneous-knowledge) appears as a superimposition; it is by attaining true knowledge of that *adhishtAna* that erroneous-knowledge (*avidya*) ceases.<sup>29</sup>

The primary characteristic of *mOksha* (liberation) is the annulment of *avidya* by means of *brahmavidya* (knowledge of *brahman*). Tell me this. In your mind, is there fear of this *avidya*, in the same manner as there is fear of death? Do you have a greater fear, a more intense feeling, as regards this *avidya*, than what you have towards death? Yes, or no?

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27 *vichArak*: ‘thinking’ people; people interested in inquiring to truth

28 *Jnani* – A sage, who has attained Self-Knowledge

29 For e.g. : In darkness, a rope is mistaken for a snake. Thinking that it is a snake is erroneous. The only way to get rid of this erroneous-knowledge is by focusing light on this object, examining it, whereupon one clearly sees that it is a rope. Here, knowledge of the rope (*adhishtAna*), results in the annulment of *avidya* (erroneous-knowledge) that it was a snake.

Do you fear death or not? Yes, you say. Indeed, you do love yourself; there is *Ananda-bhAva* (the feeling of ‘happiness’), in you. You are afraid of sorrow, right? But then, in comparison to your fear of death, your fear of sorrow is lesser. For you feel – ‘Arey! If sorrow comes, we will somehow bear it. It is not death, after all.’

And then, there is the *cit-bhAva* (the sense of awareness/consciousness) in us... It is the sense of light, radiance, shine, within us. What is its opposite, its counter-sense? It is *ajnAna* – ignorance. But then, you are not as afraid of *ajnAna*, as you are of sustained-sorrow or death. Actually, it is only when your fear of *ajnAna* is as intense as your fear of death or sorrow, that a proper foundation for *avidyA-nivRitti* (removal of erroneous-knowledge) gets laid. That which is sorrow, and that which is death, is what is *ajnAna* (ignorance). That which is ‘*sat*’ (eternal-existence; reality) and ‘*cit*’ (awareness/consciousness), is what is *Ananda* (bliss). The reverse of ‘*Ananda*’ is sorrow; and the reverse of ‘*cit-bhAva*’ (consciousness/awareness) is *ajnAna* (ignorance); (and the reverse of ‘*sat*’ is death). Other than as *ajnAna*, there is no such thing as sorrow or death. When *sat*, *cit* and *Ananda* are non-different, their reverse states are non-different too.

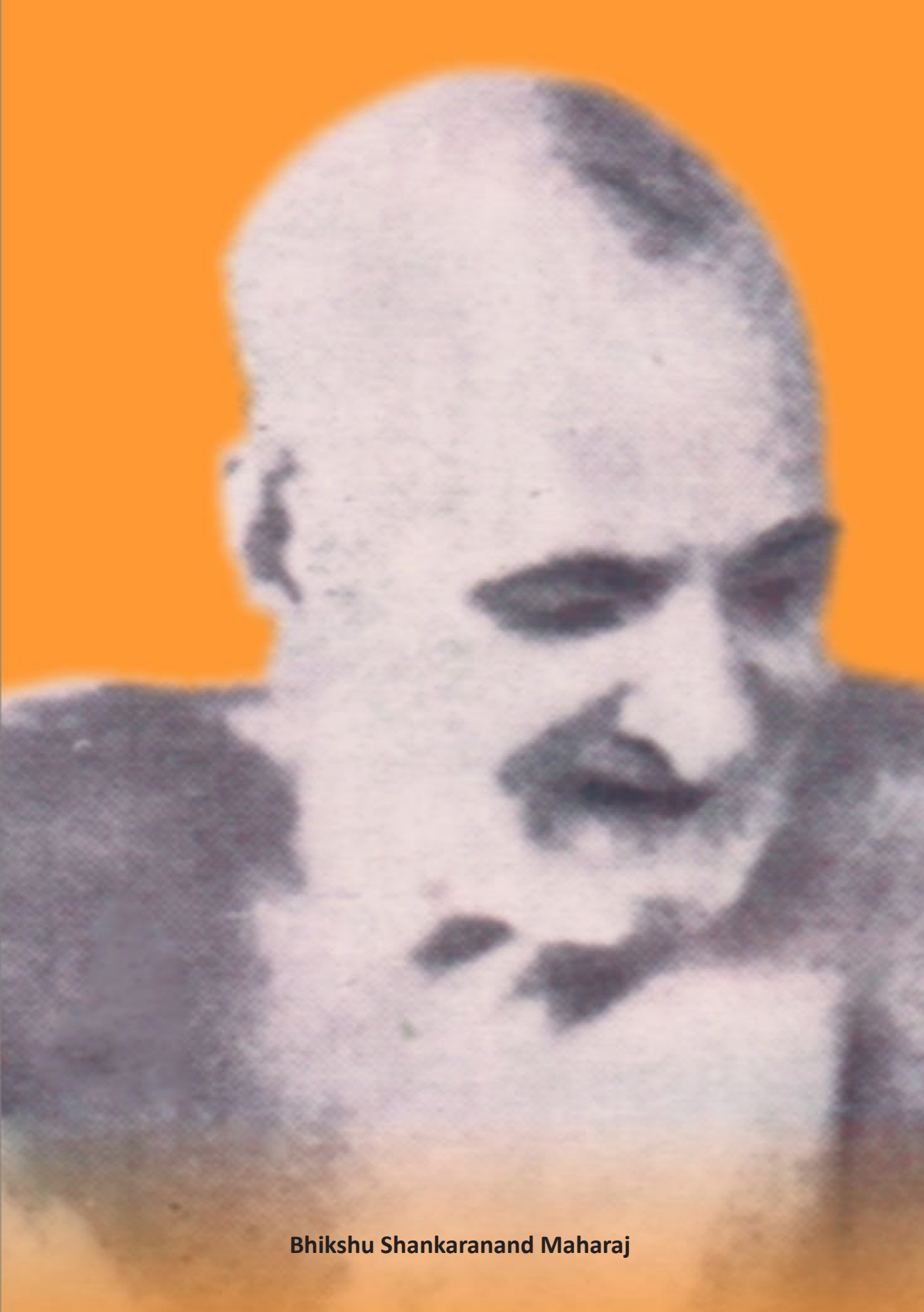
So, what is the real nature of a *jijnAsu*? A *jijnAsu* is of the nature wherein he fears *ajnAna* to the same measure as he fears sorrow or death. And just as he partakes medicines etc., to ward off death; and exerts himself to earn money etc., in order to ward off sorrow; in exactly the same manner, he should exert himself for removal of *ajnAna*. It is then that one may say of him – “*Indeed, he is a jijnAsu*”.

Rare indeed is the *jijnAsu* of *brahmavidyA* (knowledge of *brahman*); rare is the *jijnAsu* of *brahman* (the supreme, absolute, non-dual, reality).

(Shvetashvatara Upanishad : p 6,7,8)

वृष्णात् परं किमपि  
तत्त्वमहं न जाने ।  
ऊर्ध्ववत् । १०६





**Bhikshu Shankaranand Maharaj**

## Bhikshu Shankaranand Maharaj

It was sometime around 1930 CE. In Kankhal, on the opposite side of Suratgiri Bungalow, there was a place in ruins, which was owned by Atal Akhaadaa<sup>30</sup>. Bhikshu Shankaranand Ji used to stay here, sitting on a sackcloth spread on a platform of sorts. His body was clad with a loin-cloth alone. He had no hair on the frontal part of his head, and his large forehead would shine with a spiritual glow. (When I first met him there) With a joyous laugh, he asked me – “*What brings you here?*” “*To have your darshan*”. I replied. His laugh became even more pronounced. He said – “*Do darshan of your own self. (Know that) You alone are. For this, where is the need to come and go anywhere?*” I had a background and fondness for Vedanta. And what he said appealed to me.

Right from his childhood days, he was a firm adherer to the truth. Anything that he said once was etched in stone, and he would always keep his word. I came to know that he ate but once every twenty-four hours.

Bhikshu Shankaranand Ji studied *shruti* (Vedas/Upanishads) and *darshana-shAstra-s* (different schools of philosophy) from many Mahatma-s of Haridwar and Kankhal. For his studies, he had no hesitation in approaching anyone at all. He had no pride about his own greatness. Indeed, vanity keeps a man denied from acquiring the highest knowledge. In this spirit of learning, he asked me too to narrate to him the seventh and the eleventh cantos of Srimad Bhagavatam; and later, he heard the Raasa-Leela episodes as well. He liked it a lot. And for my service of narrating Bhagavatam, I received *dakshiNA* (fee) too, which was in the form of *jnAna-sandEsha* (instruction about the highest knowledge). That *jnAna-sandEsha* was – “***You are yourself the shuddha-buddha-sacchidAnandaghana advaya tattva (pure, enlightened, non-dual, absolute truth/reality, dense-fullness of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss). Henceforward, be firm in your determination that you are not a jeeva (i.e., you are not an individual being, separate, apart from other beings, world, and God).***” And something miraculous happened; you would be amazed to know that from that day onwards, I was never under any

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30 One of the ancient organizations of Sanyasi-s (renunciates)

delusion that I was a *jeeva*.

Bhikshu Shankaranand Ji would enunciate *tattva-jnAna* (knowledge of supreme reality) only in association with *satsang*, *vichAra* (inquiry) and *chintana* (meditation/contemplation). He did not like the line of discourses of Kalyan magazine, where God keeps manifesting himself in front of his devotees at every turn, for every ‘this and that’ matter. His view was that such preachings are obstacles to independent thinking/inquiry, and the seeker goes astray.

Once, when I went to Kankhal, I found that he was not in his usual place of stay in the ruins. He was now residing in a small garden that was by the side of a water-channel that branched off from the big canal. He was extremely ill and had become very feeble and thin. Upon meeting him, I came to know that some jealous/spiteful man had given him poison in his *bhikshA* (food given as alms). Good hearted people had then moved Shankaranandji from the ‘ruins’ and brought him to this safe place. After that, he stayed in this garden for six months or so, and ate nothing except *parval* (pointed-gourd; green potato). Even for assuaging thirst, he took water mixed with the essence of *parval*. Parval has the amazing power of being able to counter poison. He ate that to the extent his health allowed. Slowly and steadily, his health improved. He used to say – “*This illusion of a body; what does it matter if it stays or goes. Attempts to retain it or renounce it are both rooted in ajnAna (ignorance)*”. Even in that state of ill-health, his forehead would shine with the glitter of a mirror in the sun; and bliss would always be dancing in his face.

A few months before the dropping of his body, he became extremely frail. His knees were afflicted with great pain. He could somehow manage to get up and walk with the aid of a bamboo stick. Even in these circumstances, his face was constantly lit up by a divine glow. His eyes had the same shine that he always had, and his demeanour, the same humour and laughter.

Indeed, he was an amazing saint. His life was *ekarasa* – of one, unchangeable, flavour.

(Paavan Prasang : p 145-165)

### The aim of *Shastra*

When Srimad Bhagavatam or any other *Shastra* is being enunciated, if the speaker or the listener gets deluded that all that is being spoken of here is solely for the purposes of making a man a *Sadhu* (renunciate) – i.e., it is meant for inculcating *tyAga* (renunciation), *vairAgya* (dispassion) alone; then, he/she will be unable to grasp the real secrets, the true teachings, of the *shAstra*.

In reality, all *Shastra*-s prescribe different duties for different individuals, based on each individual's maturity/competence; be he a *Brahmachari* (celibate student), a *grihasta* (householder), a *vAnaprasthi* (one who is in the third stage of life, viz., retirement to the forest), or a *tyAgi* / *sanyAsi* (renunciate). To take one and all down the same path, even if it goes against the competence of the person(s) concerned, is not the aim of the *Shastra*.

(*The Shastra's prescribe*) He who is competent to do *karma* (activities), may do *karma*; he who is fit to do *adhyayana* (study) should do *adhyayana*; he who is strong, powerful, may take up the job of protecting others; he who is competent in providing food/clothes to people, may do that. All *Shastra*-s guide people at large to take up different paths, based on their individual competencies/ qualifications.

It is only in the last two or three thousand years that the *Shastra* enunciations tended to go down a single-track; as if everyone was to become a *Sadhu*, everyone to roll a rosary, all people to anoint themselves with sandal-paste... By this, neither does the society get regulated properly, nor does the nation get adequate defence protection, nor do people have any commitment to perform their prescribed duties. If all people become monks, roll rosaries, and commence drinking the raw juice of spinach, then, who will do the job of serving in the army? If everyone decides to do the same thing and sit down in one place, determined not to budge from there, then how will business and commerce happen? How, and from where, will people buy or get things that they need?

Therefore, *Shastra*-s need to be enunciated from the view-point that the nation and the whole of humanity should function in an orderly

manner.

In the lineage of Dhruva, there was a King named Anga. Anga's son, Vena, turned out to be a wicked person, a tormentor of his people. Raja Anga made all attempts to reform and refine his son (but to no avail). At the root of all the defects of Vena was the fact he did not accept Ishvara's existence as being real. All this made King Anga feel very hopeless. However, being born in the lineage of the great devotee Dhruva, one night, a great light manifested in the King's heart. King Anga could see and realize that – *'God had given me a son who always goes against my wishes. This is actually an act of great mercy on me. Had my son been a good person, I would have got trapped in my attachment to him. Now, (I have no attachment to him. And so) I shall do bhajan (acts of devotion/ worship) of Bhagavan.'*

In this manner, to find some goodness in every act of God, is the sign of a true devotee. It is his very nature.

(Bhagavata Vyanjan : p 81,86)

## Family-lineage too has its own greatness

There are these odd people, who keep dropping the name of their family-line, to state how great a lineage they are born in.

(Response) Well, yes, you have been born in a great lineage; but by yourself, you are a nobody.

(To which they say) My father, grandfather, great-grandfather were Kings, Nawabs. I am born in the family-line of Nawabs.

(Response) Oh! That's good. But what is it that you do?

(Reply) *bhai*, I do tailor work; weaving work.

Well, those who think highly of themselves, purely based on the lineage that they happen to be born in; in them, true greatness does not exist. A man does not become great merely because he has a great amount of wealth. He does not become great because he occupies a high post/position. Nor because he wears great clothes. A man's greatness is truly reflected in how little is the extent of sins he has committed in life.

Let me tell you about an error I committed in my days of youth. I came to a Mahatma who was staying in Karnavas, on the banks of Ganga. I was around 18 years of age at that time. I used to serve the Mahatma in various ways. Whenever any well-read person came to the Mahatma, he would speak highly of me to them – that *'this boy is from a great family; he is a high-born Brahmana: he is a scholar; he is a man of high renunciation; he is free of attachments...'* etc., etc. Upon hearing this, a thought occurred to me that this Mahatma wants to convey that – *'considering that such a noble person is serving me, what a great person I must be.'* My mind was finding faults in him. I thought that he wanted to tell these visitors – *"when the servant is so good, how great his Master must be.'* Later, I felt great remorse for this fault-finding thought of mine.

What happens is this. *[The relationship of a disciple and the Guru is one of love – the disciple is the prEmee (lover) and the Guru, the priyatam (beloved).]* When the *priyatam* (Guru) sees his *prEmee* (disciple), he sees only good qualities in him. And sometimes, he is so overwhelmed by the goodness that he sees in his disciple, that he is unable to contain himself; and words of praise force themselves from his lips. He does not say these

out of any selfish motive; nor is such utterance of praise anything wrong. The Mahatma praises us only in order to motivate us; to enthuse us to have greater renunciation, more detachment; to study more, and offer more devotion to God... It is for this that he praises us. So, my ascribing selfish motives to him was a grave mistake that I committed.

(But then, there is also something good about a noble family lineage) Those who are from a noble lineage, adhere firmly to their family values, traditions, and practices. It is a matter of prestige. They do not, time and again, stray from their position or purpose. They say – *“Aha! We are from such a noble family... How can we just drop our stand on this issue? Over this very question, our father, grandfather etc., put their very life on the line.”*

Indeed, one’s family-lineage too has its own greatness.

(Purushottam Yog : p 247-249)





## Forgiveness should be towards others, not oneself

When Sri Rama had attained victory in Lanka, and Hanumanji had gone to give the message of Sri Rama's victory to Janaki Ji, he also made a humble request to her. He said – "Mother! These *rAkshas*-s (demonesses) have been giving you a lot of trouble. So, if you so command me, may I tear them with my nails, crush them under my feet, and kill them? Considering that these demonesses have inflicted so much torment on you, we too should pay them back in their own coin; I need your command, O Devi!"

Upon hearing this prayer of Hanuman Ji, the reply that Janaki Ji gave is worthy of being inscribed in golden letters. She said – "*Oh Hanuman! What are you saying? This is not the way noble people, honourable people, conduct themselves. May your tongue never utter any such thing, ever again. For people would say 'Sri Rama's servant attacks even women; his mind is driven by the thirst for revenge!' Tell me, will this add to Sri Rama's good name? No! Far from bringing more honour to him, it would actually be a blot on his reputation. While it is true that these demonesses have committed misdeeds, there is no one in Creation who can be said to be wholly innocent of any misdemeanour.*"

Sita Ji went on to say – "*Look here Hanuman! Even I am an offender. When Mareecha, at the point of death, called out for Lakshmana in deceit (imitating Rama's voice), Lakshmana could see through his trickery. He did not want to respond to the call, leaving me alone in the Ashram. But I was so agitated that I uttered harsh words to him, causing him much distress. Is this offence less grave than any other? The fruit that I reaped because of my misdeed, you can see right in front of you. It is the consequence of that offence that Ravana came to the Ashram disguised as a monk and I was unable to recognize him. He started speaking words of praise about my beauty and sweetness, and I kept listening. And I offered him hospitality too. Thus, my utterance of harsh words to Lakshmana, and my sentiment of hospitality towards Ravana, are surely sins that I committed.*"

She further said – "*Hanuman! The reality is this. Anyone who*



*disrespects a satpurusha (a noble person), reaps the kind of fate that I have."*

Indeed, all people commit misdeeds. There is not a single being in Creation, who has not committed some wrong or the other in life. What transpires is that when the offence is committed by others, then we rush, rod in hand, to punish them; whereas, when the offence has been committed by us, we desire to be forgiven. Our attitude should be otherwise...When the offence is committed by us, then we should seek to punish ourselves; and if the offence is by someone else, then we should forgive them for that misdeed.

Forgiveness should be towards others, not oneself.

(Srimad Valmiki Ramayanamrit : p 16-18)



## Bhaiji's proficiency in worldly dealings; and his 'seeing' God everywhere

In those days, the office of 'Kalyan' magazine (in Gorakhpur) was near the temple of Gorakhnath, in a garden bungalow. After coming into contact with Bhaiji Sri Hanuman Prasadji Poddar, my affection/association with him kept growing.

*(Let me tell you an episode about Bhaiji's worldly dealings)* There was a Brahmana from Uttar Pradesh, who was employed as a '*bhaiyA*' (odd-job man) by a *Seth* (a wealthy merchant) in Mumbai, who was a friend of Bhaiji. One day, the '*bhaiyA*' happened to lose ten-thousand rupees of office money. The Seth told the man that he would deduct the loss from his salary. He started deducting 150 Rupees every month, which was half the salary being given to the man. When Bhaiji came to know of this, he asked the Seth whether the '*bhaiyA*' was worthy of his trust or not? The Seth replied that this man had been working in his office for many years, and had never been known to commit any act of dishonesty. Bhaiji told the Seth – "If he is not a dishonest man, then it is sheer injustice to cut his wages. And if he is dishonest, then it is totally inappropriate to employ him in any position of trust. So, take a firm decision, one way or the other." The Seth said – "This *bhaiyA* is an honest man."

Bhaiyaji was called. The Seth conveyed his decision to the *bhaiyA*, and returned to him all the money that he had deducted so far. The brahmana *bhaiyA*, then and there, prostrated full-length on the ground to God, and said – "Indeed, this is but the great compassion of God-Almighty. The only reason that I was continuing to work here was to repay the debt that I owed. Now, I shall leave, and become a Sadhu." It was this *bhaiyA*, who came to the banks of Ganga, became a Sanyasi, and became well-known as Swami Krishnanandaji of Bombay.

*(Now, an episode relating to Bhaiji's 'seeing' God everywhere)* This is a scene that I sometimes see "Live" on the screen of my mind. This is about a big fire-episode that happened in Gita-Vatika, when a festival of *akhanDa-keertan* (non-stop songs of devotion) was being held. In the

festival venue, some eighteen or twenty make-shift cottages had been constructed, which were made of thatch. In these cottages, *sAdhak*-s (spiritual practitioners) from different parts of the country resided, observing silence, living on fruits and roots, and doing their *sAdhanA*. They would chant God's name alone, and utter no other word whatsoever. Service and worship of God was also done by all. One night, a fire broke out. There was a great tumult, and everyone scrambled for safety. Money, clothes, goods etc., were all burnt; items of God's worship, God's pictures, and the books of spiritual studies were all reduced to ash. Even as this fire broke out, Bhaiji, coming out of his room, said – *"It is God who has come here in the form of 'Agni' (fire). Get lots and lots of ghee and fine sugar powder from inside, and offer it to God who has come in this form of Agni!"* That was carried out, as ordered by Bhaiji. I was wonderstruck seeing this sentiment of Bhaiji. Truly, throughout his life, Bhaiji followed this very principle that everything is the Leela of God. In his words and deeds, it is the 'seeing' of God that was in evidence everywhere.

(Paavan Prasang : p 267,268,275)



## Debt from one's past-birth

*(My first meeting with Bhaiji)*

In those days, I used to read the 'Kalyan' magazine, and was deeply influenced by the deliberations therein on topics related to Vedanta, Bhakti and Dharma. In particular, I found the writings of Bhaiji Hanumanprasad Ji to be very endearing. One day, I journeyed from Varanasi on foot, and walked all the way to Gorakhpur (where 'Kalyan' was published). There, I met Goswami Sri Chimanlalji. He was all praise about Bhaiji, and told me many things about his greatness. That very day, in the evening, I had the occasion to meet Bhaiji. Even in that first meeting, I was delighted and moved upon seeing his great humility, simplicity, and goodness. During our conversation, Bhaiji asked me – "*Panditji (I wasn't a Sanyasi then)! What is it that you seek?*" I heard myself say – "*Bhajan (worship) of God. That is all I want. Nothing else.*" Upon hearing this, tears started streaming from Bhaiji's eyes. He said

उमा राम सुभाउ जेहिं जाना। ताहि भजनु तजि भाव न आना॥३१

*(Lord Shiva tells Parvati) Uma, he who has come to know the true nature of Rama can have no relish for anything other than His worship.*

Saying this, he was lost in that mood of absorption (in God consciousness). (That mood of his found echo in my heart) And I found God-thought and chanting of God's name spring up spontaneously in my mind. This effect remained with me for a period of time. For sure, the state of my mind at that time had become quite extraordinary.

During that visit, I stayed there for two or three days.

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*(On another occasion with Bhaiji)*

Once, something very unique happened, the likes of which is rarely seen in daily life. A stranger came to meet Bhaiji, and told him – "I was journeying to Nepal, when I had to stop here as my wife fell ill. She has

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31     *Ramacharitamanas, Sundarkaand, 5.34. English translation from Gita Press, Gorakhpur publication of Sri Ramacharitamanas, First Edition, 1997*

been admitted to the Government hospital here. She is in such-and-such room-number. I have no money to spend on her treatment. What am I to do?" Hearing this, Bhaiji gave him some 200 or 250 Rupees. That man came again after three or four days, and told Bhaiji – "My wife's condition has become serious. She has to undergo an operation. Some more money is needed." (Bhaiji gave him the required money.) He came again after another three or four days, and said – "My wife died. I have to perform her funeral and related rites". The people of the Kalyan family told Bhaiji – "This chap seems to be a thug. Please do not give him anything".

Bhaiji replied – "I found out about him on the first day itself, when I phoned up the hospital. There was no record of any person corresponding to his wife's particulars, admitted there. When his wife wasn't there at all, how could there have been any expenditure on treating the illness, medicines, surgery, funeral rites etc. Actually, when this man came and met me the first time, I had this feeling that I owe some money to him from some previous birth of mine, and I felt that it was my duty to clear my debt. How does it matter to me whether his need for money now is based on a real reason or is a lie? My heart is persuaded to give this man some money, and it is in order to assuage this pain in my heart, that I gave him whatever I did. My decision to give was not based on the truth or falsehood of whatever he said. Speaking truth/lies is the trait of all people. Our own heart should always be filled with good intentions. In the process of helping some needy or distressed person, even if it be that the person that we help happens to deceive us, the help that has been rendered indeed stands as an expression of nobility, kind-heartedness."

(Paavan Prasang : p 265-266, 272-273)

## In life, observing traditional fasts is very necessary

It is a curse of contemporary science that the eternal/timeless prescriptions of Dharma-Shastra are not respected any more.

For instance, take the case of observance of *vrata*, i.e., traditional fasts. If we feel motivated to observe them as a means of giving happiness to God, or for self-cleansing, and in the nature of following the precepts of *dharma*, then these practices will stand forever. Observe *vrata* on days such as the two *ekAdashi*-s every month; *amAvAsya*, *pUrNimA*; Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays etc. And then there is the month of *bhAdrapada* when there are at least ten days meant for *vrata* during the waxing fortnight. These days include the festival of *hartAlika*, *gaNesha chaturthi*, *Rshi panchami*, *IOlArka shashthi*, *durgA saptami*, *rAdhA ashthami*, *vAmana dvAdashi*, *ananta chaturdashi*, and *pUrNimA*. These are not optional/provisional observances. One should observe these fasts always, year after year. In the month of *kArthika*, one should eat only once a day, throughout the month. Similarly, one should eat only once a day during the month of *mAgha*, and the month of *vaishAkha*. These are known as *vaishAkhavrata*, *mAghavrata* and *kArtikavrata*, correspondingly.

The Muslims observe *rOZA* (fast), for pleasing God, self-cleansing... And so, they are firm in their beliefs, and observance of *rOZA*. It becomes attached to one's very life, for ever.

Therefore, practice *vrata*, taking it as your *dharma*. In life, observing traditional fasts is very necessary. By observing *vrata*, the body remains healthy, the mind has happiness, and one's *dharma* is upheld. God is pleased, and it is an act of *tapasya* (asceticism; self-denial). By this, we progress towards attaining God. Indeed, to keep a fast is very good deed.

If, for any reason, one is asked to fast – say, if some relative has died, and so one is asked to fast for a day – then, one should keep a fast on that day. One needs to understand this principle clearly.

An undesirable offshoot of 'scientific' approach nowadays is that

people feel that they can keep a fast whenever they wish. If one keeps a fast because of a doctor's dietary advice, it does not amount to the observance of a *vrata*. To term '*remaining-hungry*' as '*observing a vrata*' would be wrong!

What is necessary is this. In a month, one should observe *vrata*, at least two or four times. But do it for upholding dharma; for inner-cleansing.

So, whenever it is needed, one should observe *vrata*. When it becomes necessary to fast from a 'body' point of view (say, as per doctor's advice) then surely one has to necessarily fast. But such a fast, which is brought upon oneself because of helplessness, is not a generator of *dharma*. Only that *vrata*, which is done with faith (in line with the prescriptions of Shastra), is a generator of *dharma*.

(Vibhuti Yog : p 135,136)



## Had I been alert, I wouldn't have allowed him to err

Seeing Jatayu wounded, and hearing from him about the kidnapping of Sita, Bhagavan Sri Rama was tormented by grief; and becoming overwhelmed, he started crying.

Q: Why did Bhagavan become stricken by so much grief?

A: Look! Take the case of a man of special qualities – qualities that excel what is generally seen in the world. If such a man does not feel any distress upon seeing another man's suffering, then what virtue does the man possess?

In Srimad Bhagavatam, it has been said – *'By the meritorious souls of renown, this much is recognized as the imperishable dharma: dharmic is the soul who laments over the distress of other living beings and feels happy upon their happiness.'* (Bhagavatam 6.10.9)<sup>32</sup>

(Let us see an example from daily life) Take the case of a mother and a child. A mother is feeding her child, who is seated on her lap. Suddenly, she notices that the child's bracelet is missing. In alarm, she asks the child – 'Son, where has the bracelet gone? It was a gold bracelet; where is it gone?' Now the child starts crying. The child is distressed and cries – 'Oh my bracelet is lost! My bracelet is lost!' The mother is even more distressed than the child because she knows the value of gold; she knows that it is a very expensive bracelet. The child, naturally, doesn't understand all that. While the child is at fault for losing the bracelet, it is the mother's inattentiveness that is to be held responsible for the child's error. It was the duty of the mother to take care of the child properly, and she should not have allowed the child to be careless and lose the gold bracelet. Be that as it may. Seeing the child cry in distress, the mother too starts crying.

All the beings of the world are like the child in the story above, and

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32 एतावानव्ययो धर्मः पुण्यश्लोकैरुपासितः  
यो भूतशोकहर्षाभ्यामात्मा शोचति हृष्यति

Translation source : <http://www.srimadbhagavatam.org/canto6/chapter10.html>



God is like the mother. When we, God's children, commit any mistake, God says – "Look. Had I been alert, I wouldn't have allowed the child to err. This mistake is not the child's. It is mine." A mother feels double the distress that a child feels. When her child slips and falls, she cries, 'Oh. How did he fall?' 'Oh, how did he cut his hand? How did he burn his hand?' etc., etc.

In the same manner, Sri Rama is saddened upon seeing the suffering of any being in this world. (And so it was that he felt stricken by grief, upon seeing Jatayu in great pain).

The characteristic of '*karuNA*' (Compassion) is this... Upon seeing the suffering of others, one's own heart should melt in empathy. Just as one stakes one's '*all*' to remove one's own suffering; similarly, in order to remove the suffering of others, one should stake one's '*all*'.

(Valmiki Ramayanamrit : p 45, 46)



## Hari *kathA* (story) alone is *kathA*; all else is *vyathA* (pain)!

[Note: This essay is taken from Maharajshree's commentary on the 10<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Bhagavad Gita, appearing in the book 'Vibhuti Yog'. The context of this particular essay is the 9<sup>th</sup> verse in the chapter, viz.:

मच्चित्ता मद्गतप्राणा बोधयन्तः परस्परम्।  
कथयन्तश्च मां नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च॥

*With minds fixed on Me, with lives dedicated to Me, enlightening each other, and always speaking of Me, they derive satisfaction and rejoice.<sup>33</sup> ]*

Sri Anandamayi Ma says : 'Hari *kathA* is *kathA*; all else is *vRithA* (*vain*); *vyathA* (*pain*)...' Meaning, God's story alone is worth hearing; all else are stuff that give pain, and are a waste.

There is a saying :

रसना साँपिनि बदन बिल जे न जपहिं हरिनाम !<sup>34</sup>

*(That tongue in the body is a snake, which does not chant the name of God)*

This mouth is a pit, where the tongue resides like a snake. If God's name were not there, then this poisonous snake would bite someone or the other. If the tongue does not engage in talking of God, it would end up causing pain to someone or the other. It would utter words that are sweet on the outside, but are biting and poisonous within. And speaking in this manner repeatedly, man becomes habitually perverse.

कथयन्तश्च (*in the Gita verse 10.9*) : Thus there is the description in Srimad Bhagavatam that – (why talk of ordinary devotees) *Even Jnani*

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33 Translation by Swami Gambhirananda – Source <https://www.gitasupersite.iitk.ac.in/>

34 Dohavali of Tulsidas

*Mahatma-s (enlightened sages), who have no purpose to be achieved in this world, desire to speak of God alone. They say – ‘There is this tongue; how long can one keep it under check? The tongue will utter something or the other. So set a boundary for it to roam within; set a rule, that it speaks of God alone.’*

Till today, whatever God related gain anybody has had, has been from *bhagavat-kathA* alone. No one, to date, has attained God by means of wealth, nor by enjoyment. Whereas, by hearing *bhagavat-kathA*, hundreds of thousands of people have attained God realization.

बिनु सत्सङ्ग न हरिकथा तेहि बिनु मोह न भाग।  
मोह गएँ बिनु राम पद होइ न दृढ़ अनुराग॥

*Without the association of good/pious people, one does not get to hear Hari-kathA. Without listening to Hari-kathA, delusion does not flee. Without delusion’s demise, firm devotion to Sri Rama’s feet does not arise.*

मिलहिं न रघुपति बिनु अनुरागा।

*Without Bhakti (devotion), Sri Rama is not met.*

बिन देखे रघुवीर पद जियकी जरनी न जाय ।

*Until one has a vision of Rama’s feet, one’s heart-burn does not subside.*

Therefore, कथयन्तश्च मां नित्यं – Always discuss and hear/tell stories of God.

(Vibhuti Yog : p 249-250)

## Do not have a fault-finding attitude towards anything in Creation

Manu<sup>35</sup> had two sons – Uttanapaada and Priyavrata. Priyavrata was very fond of Brahmacharya *vrata* (vow of celibacy). He would say – *“I shall devote myself to hearing the stories of God’s Leela and stay with Guruji (Devarshi Narada). I shall not have anything to do with samsara (worldly life).”*

Manu Ji and Brahma Ji, both, came to Priyavrata and tried to make him change his mind. They said to him – “Priyavrata! This decision of yours, to become a monk even during your childhood, is totally wrong. There is an orderly scheme in God’s creation; do not find fault in that. Do not insist that *grihasthAshrama* (the order of life, where one is a married householder) has defects. Look here. Whatever defects there may be, they do not exist outside us. Defects of *kAma* (lust/desire) etc., are not outside. Our pleasures/pains, attachments/aversions, associations, delusion/enchantment – all these reside inside us – in our heart.”

Brahma Ji said – “Son! Please understand this point. All of Creation obeys God’s command; no one can violate His laws. If you have the view that entering into the order of life of a householder will result in you becoming afflicted by the defects of attachments/aversions etc., and that such defects will not happen if you retire to the forest, then you are totally mistaken. If a man tends to fall prey to laxity/negligence, then there would be opportunities to be lax/negligent in the forest as well. Are there no women in the forest? When a person goes to the forest, he takes his enemies (lust, anger etc.), which are sitting inside him, along with him, to the forest. Whereas, if a person is deeply devoted to the Self, has subjugated his senses, and is discerning/sensible, then what does he stand to lose by staying at home? This, my son, is a fight of the fortress. First, fight from the fort and bring your enemies under your control, and then proceed to the forest thereafter.”

Brahma and Manu told Priyavrata – “Son! Do get some experience

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35     *Manu was the first man; the progenitor of all humanity*

of the world as well. In our life, whatever God has given us, is not meant for renunciation alone; it is also meant for being utilized, and for enjoyment too. To the extent that even obstacles such as desire/lust, anger, greed, delusion/attachment etc., that afflict our life, are not meant to be totally eliminated. If these were meant only for destruction, then, in God's Creation, they would not have been made at all. Even these are utilized for good purposes from time to time. For instance, 1) Purity is something that is worthy of being '*desired*'. 2) In order to prevent defects such as bad-conduct, vices, negative-emotions etc., we are well advised to be '*angry*' with our own self when these defects raise their heads in our heart. That would be a good use of '*anger*'. 3) One can have '*enchantment*' towards someone who is our well-wisher, who cares for our welfare. 4) In order to lead a virtuous life, one may well have a sense of *pride in 'I'*; and one can also be '*greedy*' in order to nurture and deepen good qualities in oneself.

In this manner, whatever emotions, sentiments, moods, notions etc., exist in God's Creation, it is indeed desirable to utilize these for good purposes. There is no object or emotion, which, in some specific context of time, place and person, does not become something that is useful or *dharmic*.

The intent of what is being said is this – *do not have a fault-finding attitude towards anything in Creation*. Do see how it can be used for good purposes. It is possible that a particular thing is not meant for you; maybe it is purposeful for someone else. Nothing wrong with that."

When Brahma Ji and Manu Ji explained thus to Priyavrata, he was convinced. He returned home, got married, and went on to rule the whole earth.

(Maanav Jeevan aur Bhagavat Dharm – p 162, 163,166)

## Wait; and stay hopeful

Once, I asked Udiya Babaji Maharaj – ‘What is *siddhi*<sup>36</sup>?’ He replied – ‘To be able to put up with suffering; to endure; to bear – that is what is *siddhi*.’

Any object becomes mature/sweet only upon being roasted/cooked on fire/heat. If the object refuses to put up with heat, and says – ‘I refuse to be put on the fire’, then how will it mature/ripen? So, if you wish to ripen your heart, then allow it to be roasted; let it cook; fear not.

Sri Vallabhacharya and Sri Ramanujacharya have said – “When a man’s life is afflicted by heat (of suffering), then that suffering becomes an elixir (medicine)’. Unless *manthan* (churning) happens, how will *amRita* (ambrosia) surface in the heart? Until the fire of poison is not expelled; until the heart is not brought to boil; until then, how will coolness be experienced? Only he who is ready to bear pain gets to attain peace and happiness. Have courage; wait; and stay hopeful.

आशा-बन्धः समुत्कण्ठा नाम-गाने सदा रुचिः ।

*Hope-bound (confidence in God), longing (for the Lord), ever relishing the singing of Lord’s Name.*

[Sri Bhakti Rasamrita Sindhu 1.3.26 ]

Shabari’s mind was secured with hope, and she was absorbed in waiting – that Rama will come now, now He will come...

There is a Bhojpuri song that goes

शबरी देखय ले सपनवा आजु रामा घर अइहँ ना ।

Meaning : Shabari would dream, every single day, that Rama would be visiting her home that day. So, you too should keep the faith – that you will see God; you will achieve Bhagavan’s Bhakti. Bhagavan will be seen with these very eyes, and Bhagavad-tattva, the Divine-Reality, will be realized. It is because of weaknesses of your mind that you tend to lose hope, and you feel as if you are fickle-minded, and that your mind

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36 *siddhi*: Success; fulfilment; skill; complete attainment; maturity

has *vAsanA*-s (seeds of desires). Even if it be that your mind happens to have *vAsanA*-s, bide your time; wait. The time will come soon when the storm of *vAsanA*-s and restlessness will subside. Keep faith and wait for that time, when your mind will have no disorders, no *vAsanA*-s, no fickleness. That day is not far when your mind will become clean, peaceful and stainless, like the waters of Lake Manasarovar; and God will manifest there. That moment will come very soon in your life.

(Uddhav Vrajagaman – p 211, 212)



## In every act of *Ishvara* and *Sadguru*, there is but love; and love alone

Yesterday, I was reading a book, in which there was an episode about two persons who had gone to Tirumala-Tirupati for Darshan of Balaji (Lord Venkateshwara). As the two of them chatted, one of them said to the other – “What kind of God is this Lakshmipati Narayana? When a devotee, praying for something, promises to donate some offering ‘X’ (some article or money) to the temple if his desire is fulfilled, the Lord does get the devotee’s work done. And after the work is done, if the devotee fails to keep his promise of donation, then the Lord collects the promised ‘X’ along with penalty/interest charges. What kind of Bhagavan is this?”

The other person replied – “Look here. You do not understand God, in reality. *ratnAkar-samudra* (the ocean, a treasure of gems) is Narayana’s father-in-law. Chandrama (moon) is His brother-in-law. Lakshmi (the Goddess of Wealth) is His wife. The Divine-Jewel Kaustubhamani is worn around His neck. *Kalpavriksha*, the celestial wish-fulfilling tree, was born by His will. With all this, if He still condescends to accept our offering after fulfilling our prayer, then it is only a manifestation of His boundless compassion. For when a devotee comes with a prayer for something, the Lord considers him as His own, and not only does He fulfil his prayer, he also condescends to accept the small offering that the devotee makes. So, don’t see His act as being at fault; rather, see His Grace, His kindness. For when He has no aspiration, or need, or desire; when He has no want whatsoever; even so, out of affection and compassion for His devotee, He accepts the devotee’s prayer. This is His mercy, His compassion; people do not understand His kindness.”

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What I am telling you is a true story. At one time, I was staying with Swami Yogananda Ji Maharaj. It so happened that the great sage Sri Udiya Baba Ji Maharaj was camping somewhere in the vicinity. A desire arose in my mind that I should go and have darshan of Baba. But Swami Yogananda Ji declined my request, and said – “*Don’t go.*” He gave



me no reason; merely refused to permit me to visit Baba. I did feel a bit aggrieved. Then I thought of a plan. I thought I would take permission for a few days of leave, for going home. My idea was that I could drop in to see Baba on the way home. Well, Swamiji granted me permission to go home. But then, he gave me some additional work, which made it imperative that I reach home the very next day. Due to this, my plan of meeting Baba went awry. After some days, the thought arose in my mind that the refusal of Swamiji to allow me to visit Baba, was actually an act of compassion for me. For in those days, I was practicing the path of 'devotion'; I was walking a certain path of faith, doing some specific *japa* and worship, doing *sAdhanA* for a vision of *saguNa-sAkAra* Bhagavan (God with form; having auspicious qualities); and Udiya Baba was a *fakkad* (a carefree, unfettered, renunciate; free of all concerns/notions); and if I had gone and met him, who knows what he might have said to me?<sup>37</sup> (And if something he said had disturbed my *sAdhanA*) It might have created obstructions in the way in which Swamiji was moulding my life; the way in which he was shaping my heart. So, in not permitting me to meet Baba, there was no selfishness in his part; it was actually an act of compassion. In every act of Ishvara and Sadguru – there is but love; and love alone.

(Kathopanishad Pravachan – 1 : p 250-251)

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37 *As Baba was a fakkad, abiding in the natural state of Self-Abidance, which transcends all notions; even that of God. A sAdhakA in the path of devotion may get disturbed if he hears any statement that is not in line with his practice and faith.*

## Two aspects of Bhakti

It is a fact that we feel no pain upon committing sin, nor are we distressed about our *ajnAna* (ignorance)<sup>38</sup>. What actually causes us distress is our attachment to external objects and relationships, which occupies our mind – *‘Oh! We cannot survive without that person; we cannot exist without that work; we cannot live without that enjoyment, etc.’* So glued have we become to the world, that this adhesion doesn’t seem to lessen by any means.

This attachment to objects, which is consuming our lives, cannot be eliminated unless we develop attachment for Bhagavan – Sri Rama, Sri Krishna... i.e., unless our heart is engaged by attachment in the form of Bhakti, our attachment to sense-objects will not wane. The cessation of love can be accomplished only by love. A diamond can be cut only by another diamond.

Look here. There are two aspects of Bhakti:

1. When we develop attachment to one object, then our attachment to another object diminishes. For instance, when a bride develops great fondness for the bridegroom, then her attachment to her parents becomes less. So, my dear fellow, develop attachment to Bhagavan. And the first aspect of Bhakti is that by attachment to Bhagavan, one’s attachment to the world drops away; and this is known as **‘vairAgya’** (detachment; dispassion).
2. The other aspect of Bhakti is: Whoever we have devotion for, whoever it is that we love, we should know that person well; in fact, we should have complete knowledge about our beloved. Let us say that some particular person has great affection for me. He invites me to his house for lunch and serves the best of delicacies – Halwa, Poori, Kheer, Kachaudi etc. While that person has great love for me, he does not know that I suffer from diabetes, and that I have a heart problem as well. He does not know that I do not

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38 *ajnAna : Ignorance of Self*

eat sweets or fried stuff! What this means is that his love for me is incomplete. For, if one loves a person, then one must acquire knowledge about the person – e.g., what is good for him; what is his nature; how does he conduct himself; etc., etc. So, the second aspect of Bhakti is having '**jnAna**' (Knowledge) about the true nature of one's object of adoration.

Now, a question – How do these two aspects come about? The answer is this. When one is devoted to Krishna, then the attachment to the world drops off; i.e., one attains '**vairAgya**'. And when there is love for Krishna, then one gets to know Krishna; i.e., one attains '**jnAna**'.

(Anand Ullas : p 225,226,227)



## Easiness of Bhakti

अन्यस्मात् सौलभ्यं भक्तौ – *In comparison to other paths (of spiritual practice), Bhakti is easy.* (Narada Bhakti Sutra – 58)

1. The path of Bhakti is simple and easy. In Bhakti, it does not matter if you do not know how to read/write, or do not know the Shastraic way of offering worship to God. You may just chant God's Name(s). The 'Named-entity' (God) is but under the sway of the 'Name'. If you are unable to do even this, then you may listen to the *bhagavad-kathA* (stories of God's Leela).

श्रवणं कीर्तनं विष्णोः स्मरणं पादसेवनम्।

अर्चनं वन्दनं दास्यं सख्यमात्मनिवेदनम् ॥

*Hearing, singing, thinking, service to the feet,  
offering worship, servitude, being a friend and  
surrendering one's self.*

(Srimad Bhagavatam 7.5.23)

All these are but different ways of Bhakti unto God. There is no distinction in Bhakti in regard to the worthiness/competence of a devotee. Every single person is qualified to practice Bhakti.

2. Bhakti can be done at all times, and at all places.
3. Bhakti is danger-free. God does not deceive you; He will not take your wealth; He will not spoil your Dharma; nor will He separate you from your kith and kin.
4. In fact, every single thing you do can become an act of Bhakti (service to Bhagavan); the only thing needed is a change in the attitude with which you do it. Walking is Bhakti, if we have the attitude that we are going for darshan of Bhagavan, or for doing some service for Him. Cooking food is Bhakti, if we are of the mind that we are preparing some offering for Him. Applying soap while bathing is Bhakti; for we are to present ourselves before Him. Basically, what is to be

seen is this – what is the motivation behind every activity of yours? Your putting on make-up and adornments; your running around, and taking on the heat of life; your worry and toil; you do all this, for what reason? For who?

5. In Bhakti, nothing new is to be done. God has (already) planted love in everyone's heart. So, there is no need to ask for love, even from God. Just as God has given us eyes, ears etc., he has given us love as well. The issue is that instead of bonding this love to the right entity, it is attached elsewhere. Actually, every person is a *bhakta* (devotee); just that someone is a *mantri-bhakta* (devotee of some powerful minister), another, a *sEth-bhakta* (devotee of a wealthy businessman); someone, a *sthree-bhakta* (devotee of a woman); another a *dEha-bhakta* (devotee of his own body/senses). It is like this. The telephone is in one's hand; but one is not connected to the right person at the other end. What one has to do is to connect to the right number; i.e., one has to change the direction of one's love. Where we are attached to progeny, spouse, wealth etc., we have to place God instead.
6. Bhagavan is an ocean of compassion. When we have the desire to chant his Name, He takes the form of the 'Name' and dances on our tongue. When we go to a temple to have His darshan, then He, whom we desire in our hearts, we get to see with our eyes (as the Deity there).
7. Bhakti does not need special articles. For Bhakti, even a spoonful of water and two leaves of Tulasi<sup>39</sup> are sufficient.
8. In Bhakti, one always gets God's support. In Bhakti, God, Himself, leads the devotee by the hand. Just as a child is dependent on his father when walking along with him, the devotee is dependent on God. The burden of protecting the devotee from obstacles lies with God.
9. When a devotee takes one step towards God, spends one moment for God, then it becomes incumbent upon God to take one step towards the devotee, spend one moment for

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39 Tulasi: Holy basil plant

**May 14**

him. But then, in one step of God, all distance is eliminated; and in one moment of His, the entirety of Time is contained. The truth is this – that we do not care to take even one step towards God. Had it been otherwise, Bhakti has this simplicity and ease that God Himself comes seeking the devotee.

The point is this. If you do not engage in Bhakti of God, then you will get enmeshed in the world. Therefore, Bhakti must be done.

(Narada Bhakti Darshan : p 322-331)



## In our life, may *Bhagavata-Dharma* dawn

Whereas people are dying for money and glory, there is Kunti who says – “Hey Jagadguru Krishna! May calamity strike my life again and again – always, continuously, one after another.”

Sri Krishna asks – “Aunty! Why are you making such a contrary wish? No one in this world has such a desire.”

Mother Kunti says – “Krishna! Whenever it is that we are struck by disaster – on every such occasion, to protect us from the calamity, *you come in its wake*. That disaster, because of which we get your *darshan*, is far more valuable than hordes of wealth/property.”

Indeed, this is something invaluable. For, it is not in the hands of man to maintain his hoard of wealth/property for perpetuity. There is no man in this world, whose life is not visited by pain/suffering. So much so that Srimad Bhagavatam (11.10.19)<sup>40</sup> has said that those people who consider themselves to be so wise that they declare – “*we shall not permit sorrow to enter our life; our life shall have happiness, and happiness alone*”; even such people do not know any means by which death can be put off.

That thing which comes to us without our thinking of it; without our wishing for it; without any effort on our part; despite all that we do to prevent it coming into our life; such a thing is called calamity, suffering, adverse circumstance. In such circumstances, may we be blessed to have some treasury, some protector, which does not leave our side even during the worst of calamities, gives us comfort/assurance, keeps us peaceful, makes us happy. If there is any such thing in man’s life, it is ‘**Bhagavata Dharma**’<sup>41</sup>.

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40 यदि प्राप्तिं विघातं च जानन्ति सुखदुःखयोः ।  
तेऽप्यद्वा न विदुर्योगं मृत्युर्न प्रभवेद् यथा ॥

*Even if people know how to achieve happiness and avoid unhappiness, they still do not know the process by which death will not be able to exert its power over them. (Source: Bhaktivedanta Vedabase <https://vedabase.io/en/library/sb/11/10/19/>)*

41 Pronounced bhAgavata dharma

## May 15

Actually, no one in Creation can snatch away the happiness and peace of a man who is blessed with the vision of God even during a disaster. What this means is – Our mind and body should get completely attached with *ananta-sattA* (boundless Being); our life should get linked with a boundless, division-less, bliss, which does not abandon us even during calamities, or even at death. Such a ‘Being’ is Bhagavan. And the man who bears Bhagavan in his heart becomes a **Bhagavata-Dharmi**<sup>42</sup>. For every problem, disorder, in man’s life, or even death, the Rama’s-arrow<sup>43</sup>, the one infallible medicine, is this – that ‘*in our life, may Bhagavata-Dharma dawn.*’

(Manav Jeevan aur Bhagavata Dharma – p 6. 24. 25)



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42    *Pronounced bhAgavata dharmee*

43    *Proverbial usage in Hindi. Rama’s arrow never misses the target.*



## The love of Gopika-s is primarily *samarpaNa*<sup>44</sup> based

Bhakti-siddhanta (the doctrine of devotion) says that a devotee's armour consists of his faith, his conviction, his surrender to God. In war, in forest, in solitude, in crowds, in all places, and in all circumstances, it is 'surrender' that protects a *jeeva*. This is the uniqueness, greatness, of *bhAgavata-siddhAnta*. As per this *siddhAnta*, there is no place at all where God is not protecting us.

In this context, I have to surely tell you something related to Gopika-s; for without that, Bhagavata (story of Bhagavan) remains incomplete. So, here it is.

Mother Yashoda's love for Krishna is primarily *snEha* (motherly affection) based. The cowherds' love for Krishna is primarily *maitri* (friendship) based. The love of Gopika-s for Krishna is primarily *samarpaNa* (surrender) based.

Indeed, the love of Gopika-s has many special aspects.

Firstly, Gopika-s have a thirst for Krishna prior to meeting Him; and this thirst is satiated upon his *darshana*. Secondly, Gopika-s keenly observe Krishna's beauty, and His playing the flute. Thirdly, for obtaining Krishna, they observe *vrata* (fasting, as a prayer).

If a man has a desire to achieve something, but is unwilling to put in any effort to achieve it, how can his desire be fulfilled? If he turns around and says – '*Maharaj! What indeed can we do, for realizing God? Whenever God wishes to meet me, He will come, on his own, to me.*' Meaning – '*My desire has no weight. God alone has to desire.*' Well, if a man desiring the attainment of some high object leaves it to chance, or leaves it to God, then where is his own mind's yearning? Does his mind have a longing for that object, or not?

Love is nothing but longing. Love makes a devotee long to meet the beloved, and also feel a yearning that it should come about quickly. Such a longing in one's mind will not permit one to remain in peace; and

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44 *samarpaNa*: Completely handing over oneself to God; total surrender;

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therefore, one makes an effort to meet one's beloved. That is why the Gopika-s make up some excuse or the other to step out and seek out Krishna. It was when Gopika-s made an effort to meet Krishna – when they offered worship to Goddess Katyayani, praying to obtain Krishna – that Krishna manifested before them.

Krishna decided to test their love. He thought – 'Let me go there and check if they can put up with injustices that I mete out to them? For, if one is walking the path of true love, then even injustices meted out by one's beloved, feels as if it is pure love.'

The reality is simple and straightforward. The love of Gopika-s is such that they have no eye for Krishna's injustice; they see His love alone. Sri Krishna observed that the Gopika-s, in the end, declared – "We are your slaves. O beloved Krishna! Whatever it is that you ask us to do, we are ready to do."

So, there is Krishna's attraction that draws the Gopika-s. And on Gopika-s part, there is *sanyAsa*, the renunciation of everything but Krishna. Renunciation of wealth; abandonment of one's *kuladharma* (familial duties and propriety); relinquishment of one's kith and kin; indifference to one's body, beauty; indifference to food; renunciation of all desires of this world and the next. For one who desires to see God, if the mind is fixated on other trivial things, how can God be attained?

(Maanav Jeevan aur Bhagavata Dharma : p 258, 264, 265, 266, 267)

## Engage your mind with thoughts of God

When a *jeeva* gets absorbed in contemplation of God, then God too gets engrossed in thoughts of the *jeeva*, devotee. This fact is something absolutely worth grasping in your life, and brought to actual experience. However severe be the extent of suffering that you are undergoing in life; even if it be that your mind is in distress at this point in time; this very minute; right now, even as I am speaking with you, not before or after... Whatever be the cause of your pain; whether it is because of suffering defeat; or due to some domestic quarrel; or due to money; or due to fear of death; whatever the distress may be, *turn your mind and think of God for just one minute*. Breaking your mind's links to the external world, connect it to Divinity; associate it with the world of Godliness. In your heart, Murali Manohar (the charming flutist), Pitambaradhari (the yellow clad), Shyam Sundar (dark and beautiful), Sri Krishna Himself, is standing; a gentle smile playing on his lips. All you need to do is to think of Him for just one minute – and I guarantee you that there will be no distress in your heart for that one minute. And when you know this method of driving out suffering from your heart for one minute, then you know how to do that for five minutes as well; and for five hours as well. So, what you need to do is to apply your mind to thoughts of God.

If there is no *vairAgya* (dispassion) in one's mind, doing *japa* of '*nEti-nEti*' (Not this; not this), a million times over, will not remove one's suffering. I know the secrets of Advaita-Vedanta, and so, in this open assembly, I tell you this – '*nEti-nEti*' is not a mantra or a magic incantation. What it signifies is the process by which, in a heart devoid of passion/attachment, the whole of Creation is negated as being unreal; whereupon, one is freed from all suffering, and one realizes bliss as a result of the knowledge of Brahman as being non-apart from one's own, individual consciousness.

But then, what you can do is to focus your mind on Sri Krishna for just five minutes; chant His name; chant Bhagavan's name; think of God. If there is any medicine or method that can bring a transformation of your heart, evicting the worldliness that your heart is filled with, it is

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Bhagavata-Dharma alone.

Let me tell you about the doctrine of Bhagavata-Dharma. Dharma (the way of *sAdhanA*) for each person varies based on the maturity/competence/ripeness of the *antaHkaraNa* (mind; intellect; heart) that is engaged in *dharmAnushThAna* (spiritual activity). This is known as *adhikArl-bhEda* (differentiation based on the competence of the spiritual aspirant).

It has been said in Srimad Bhagavatam that a person with *vairAgya* (non-attachment) in his heart has to practice a different dharma, as compared to a person who has *rAga* (attachment) in his heart. The Dharma to be followed by each is different. When *sAdhana* is done in line with the state of *antaHkaraNa*, then that *sAdhanA* attains success quickly. There are many *sAdhanA*-s that are such that they attain fruition immediately, in a moment, if they are in total conformance with the state of the *antaHkaraNa* of the *adhikArl* (qualified spiritual seeker).

An *adhikArl* should be a 'desirer'. (But the question is) Does he genuinely desire God? And to attain that objective which he really desires, does he have the necessary ripeness in his *antaHkarana* for experiencing the enabling *sAmarthya-vRtti* (the mental state and thought that makes one succeed in the *sAdhanA*)? Does he properly understand the teaching that is told to him? Or, by any chance, is he a person who is totally unqualified to enter this path? Keeping these things in mind, a man should be given instructions on the Dharma that he should follow.

(Maanav Jeevan aur Bhagavata Dharma : p 27, 28, 29)

## Love's nature

In love, there is no need for 'knowledge'. God attaches no special importance to your knowledge. Rather, he hungers for your emotions of love. Enraptured by your love, he Himself unveils his *jñAna-svarUpa* (Knowledge-Self) to you. The success of your judiciousness lies in this, that you direct your heart's love towards God who is the everlasting abode of happiness.

*bhagavat-prEma*, love of God, is amazing in its greatness. Look! I am afflicted with diabetes. I've been having it for over 25 years. And there are many devotees of mine who have great love for me, but do not know about my having diabetes. They are totally unaware that I am not supposed to eat anything that has sugar; and quite innocently, with great love, they do bring some sweets for me to eat. They have no inkling that sweets are harmful to my health. When I politely decline the sweets, they respond, saying – 'Maharajji! These sweets are all home-made... I made it with my own hands. Surely, they will cause you no harm at all....', etc. And so, heeding to their loving entreaty, I end up taking a bit of their sweets.

When a person has such a sentiment of love, then, in the face of that love, God does not concern Himself with the person's knowledge or lack of it.

Suppose, instead of me, it was God who was afflicted with diabetes, and his devotee offers him some sweets... Can you imagine God saying – "*Go away! Go! You do not have any knowledge about me. You are totally unaware that I have diabetes, blood-pressure, heart-trouble. My good fellow! You say that these sweets are made in your own house; so, what of it? You have made it with your own hands; so, what of it? Does the sugar in the sweet vanish? No! Not at all! Our doctor has forbidden us from eating any food that is made with oil, ghee, sugar, or milk. Should we accede to your humble prayer, or should we rather heed the advice of our doctor? Go, my dear chap! Go away from here. Your knowledge about me is zero!*"

Now, tell me! Does such a response reflect well on God's loving nature?

Love is the sole bonding with which God can be tied. God has no fondness for your offerings of *poori*, *kachaudi*, *mAlpuvA* etc. Your offerings of *rasagulla*, *gulAb-jAmun* etc., are of no use to him. Material offerings do not give God pleasure. It is love that pleases God. My dear chap! God does not look to '*whether this jeevAtmA (individual) has acquired knowledge about me or not*'. God sees that this person has brought me this thing with great love.

What is the problem if the *jeevAtmA* has no knowledge of *paramAtmA*? Is Love of no value? Is *jnAna* (knowledge) alone everything? Narayan!

हरि व्यापक सर्वत्र समाना, प्रेम तें प्रगट होहिं में जाना

*For aught I know Sri Hari is present everywhere alike and is revealed only by Love.*<sup>45</sup>

(Anand Manjusha : p 288-289)



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45     *Ramacharitamansa, Balakanda 184.3 : Text and Translation from Gita Press, Gorakhpur edition.*

## Devotion to God is essential

If your heart overflows with joy upon hearing any talk of God, in the manner of the happiness you get upon the birth of a son or when you have a great gain in wealth; If your eyes fill with tears; if you have horripilation, your voice chokes, and your heart melts, then know that you are progressing well in Bhakti.

Prahlada has explained the science of this.

By enchantment of the world, attachment to the world, and by grasping objects of the world, man's mind becomes hardened. Just as when we grip an object in our hands, our fist becomes hard; in like manner, when we grasp the objects of the world to our heart, then, in order to hold them, we need to become hardened, our hearts have to become hard. Due to delusion and 'mine-ness'/attachment, our heart has indeed become hard; it is filled with hard stones of desire and anger; *vAsanA*-s are growing there in the manner of grass in a field. Therefore, there is a need to soften the heart.

When will our heart become soft? It will become soft when there is yearning for God; when some anguish, some pain, some hurt, is born in it, for attaining God. Any hard object of lead, copper etc., will melt only when it is heated. Likewise, it is only when the heat of *viraha* (separation) from God rises in one's heart that the heart softens, melts. And when the heart melts, the *vAsanA*-s (seeds of desire) and *rAga-dvEsha* (attachments and aversions) in one's heart are reduced to ashes! And it is then that, in that soft heart, God manifests; and it is when God's form manifests that our heart becomes one with that God form.

What happens then? When our heart is God-filled, then it becomes free of *samsAra* (worldliness) and *vAsanA*; and attains realization of that Paramatma, Supreme-Self, which is beyond the reach of all *pramANa* (proofs) and knowledge born of sense-organs.

Therefore, in order to soften our world-hardened heart, devotion to God is essential.

(Bhagavat Vyanjan : p 122-124)

## **‘mAmEkam sharaNam vraja’**

[Note: This is in reference to verse 18.66 of Gita

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज।  
अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः॥

*Abandoning all forms of rites and duties, take refuge in Me alone. I shall free you from all sins. (Therefore) do not grieve.]<sup>46</sup>*

Until *jeeva* does not say to God – ‘*tvamEva sharaNam mama*’ (‘You alone are my refuge, O Lord’), God too does not say – ‘*mamEkam sharaNam vraja*’ (‘Take refuge in Me alone’). When the devotee has no refuge other than God, then God’s compassion pours on the devotee; and when that happens, what more is needed? By the Grace of God, the devotee’s delusion is destroyed. He attains *tattva-jnAna* (Knowledge of Reality), which is of the form of *nirantara-smRiti* (constant remembrance of the Self as the sole reality). His mind becomes free of all doubts. Obedient to the commands of God, he carries on with his life. A devotee’s life, thus, becomes that of an automaton, a machine, that works as per the will of God.

Where there is God and God alone, there, there is no room for any inauspiciousness.

Where there is a devotee’s enthusiastic campaign; and God is present as the devotee’s mentor, impeller, director, and the dispenser of fruits of his life and activity; there, for sure, is the residence of Goddess Lakshmi; there is victory and glory; and there is everlasting justness. Where there is a devotee’s undeviating desire (of God) and surrender to God, there, the fullness of auspiciousness, happiness and peace truly resides.

Now, I shall tell you a particular thing about myself. When someone

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46 English translation by Swami Gambhirananda



comes seeking refuge in me, I examine whether his devotion is *ananya* (undeviating; having me as the sole refuge). When someone comes to me seeking some advice, I tell him – ‘Look! Apply your mind, think through properly, and then act accordingly.’

And, if he replies – ‘Maharaj! My mind, my intellect, doesn’t work. I am not able to understand anything.’; then I tell him – ‘Look! There is this person ‘X’ who is very knowledgeable about this subject; he stays in such-and-such place. You should go and meet him. Take his advice’.

If he is not satisfied even on my saying this, and replies – ‘Maharaj! I have no refuge in this world, except for you. Enough! For me, you alone are worthy of surrendering to; you and you alone.’

Then, I say – ‘All right! So that’s the way it is! You have come to me with the feeling of *ananya-sharaNagati* (unswerving surrender). Look! Narayan! Do not feel sad or hopeless. Be absolutely happy. Be totally free of worry; be in joy. We shall crush your worries and reduce it to pulp. Go! Be anxiety-free and have great fun. Go about happily. You are now mine. So, now, where is any fear for you, and where is any anxiety?’

This is an example of ‘*mAmekam sharaNam vraja*’. The truth is this, that *without ananya-sharaNa* (total, undeviating, surrender to God), God’s power of Grace does not manifest forth. It is only when there is complete *sharaNagati* (surrender) that one gets the direct experience of the cool shade of God’s Grace.

(Anand Bindu : p 38, 39, 40, 41)

## Uniqueness of *Sharanagati*

Whatever are the *laukika* (worldly) and *vaidika* (spiritual) affairs of the world, their controller is Ishvara. It is He who drives them all. As the in-dweller, it is He, who, remaining within, shows the right path to people. It is when we stop listening to His voice that we end up straying.

The way it happens is this. Ishvara's voice rises within, reaches the mind, and thereafter reaches the ear; i.e., it's a three-stage process... First, the voice of Ishvara. Second, it reaches our mind. And third, it reaches our hearing faculty. In this process, what happens is that when Ishvara's voice reaches our mind, the *vAsanA* within our mind wraps itself to the voice. E.g., let us say that Ishvara's voice says – '*You **must not** do this activity*'. And our mind has keen *vAsanA* (mental predilection) to do such activities. And the mind is very anxious. So, what happens is that the *vAsanA* drowns the word '***not***' from God's command of '*You **must not** do this activity*'; and what one hears is '*You must do this activity*'. Why does this happen, when Ishvara has forbidden the activity? Well, caught in the flow of our *vAsanA*, God's voice is not heard properly.

We do not have a clear recognition of God's voice. How is one to know whether Ishvara's words are getting mixed up with one's *vAsanA*, or if it is the pure voice of God alone? It is usually the case that it is *vAsanA* that is talking, and people say that it is the voice of God. I know of a man, who draws chits to decide whether to do something or not. Let us say, for instance, that he was deciding whether or not to go to Banares. So, he made two chits, one with 'Yes' and another with 'No'. Upon choosing, the answer turned out to be 'No'. Then he said, 'I shall try again'. The second time too, he drew the same 'No' chit. Even when he tried a third time, he got a 'No' again. So, what happened at end? The man thought – "Well, Ishvara is saying 'No'. But then, let me see who is greater than Ishvara. Now, the sage is greater than Ishvara. So let me check with a sage." Incidentally, this is a true story, which I saw with my own eyes. So, finally, he went to a sage, and asked him the same question. The sage said – "Baba! When Ishvara has said 'No' three times, you have not heeded his voice; and, instead, you have come to me with the same question. And

my answer is – ‘*By all means, yes, you may go to Banares.*’ What it means is this. Your *vAsanA* is so strong that Ishvara’s voice does not serve any purpose!

And then again, this *jeeva*, such as it is, is not short of cleverness. The *jeeva’s sharaNAgati* too is animated by *vAsanA*.

The doctrine of *sharaNAgati* is indeed quite unique. What am I to say! Until the time the little ‘I’ (ego) remains, so long does the *jeeva* wish to drive (his life) keeping his *sharaNAgati* and *vAsanA* in separate compartments. True *sharaNAgati* happens only when the *vyashthi-aham* (individual ‘I’) becomes calm/still and abides as one with the *samashthi-aham* (the cosmic, universal ‘I’). In other words, the ‘I’ that is the individuality of the ‘*jeeva*’, upon becoming still, unites with Ishvara, who is the ‘I’ of the entirety of the universe-aggregation. Thereupon, the *jeeva* gets the power of Ishvara (the individual gets the entire strength of God). This extinguishing of the individual ‘I’ (ego) is an amazing event in the life of man. In all cases, for sure, when the individual ‘I’ becomes still, then the entire power of universal ‘I’ (Ishvara) comes running to you, and manifests in your life.

(Garbha Stuti: p 18, 20, 21, 23, 24)

## The extraordinary compassion of Guru-s

Have that kind of bond of Love with God, which is such that it does not break because of give and take of things, nor because of doing or not doing something or the other. Let not your Love be subject to performance of *karma* (rituals). Let not your love be dependent on any material thing. Let not your love be dependent on *bhAva* (mood / emotion).

Have the certainty that **‘Our God is He; and we are His’.**

बिना ममत्व एकत्व न होई ।

*Without deep attachment (mine-ness), oneness does not happen*

प्रभुजी, मैं तेरा, तू मेरा ।

*Lord! I am yours, and you are mine.*

It is this that is called ‘बद्ध सौहृद्’ (staunch love)<sup>47</sup>. Tie yourself in a firm knot with God and sit down in peace; with the unshakeable intent that *‘my faith in you, O God, will never waver’*.

*(Now, Maharajshree shares an episode from the life of Guru Nanak Sahib).*

You may have heard of this story. There was a *bhakta* (devotee) of Guru Sahib, whose marriage ceremony was taking place. At that time, he received a command of Guru Sahib – ‘Come to me.’ The *bhakta*, without completing the ceremony of taking the bride’s hand in his, left the marriage rituals halfway, and rushed to reach the presence of Guru Sahib! Guru Sahib was somewhere far away. Now, this *bhakta* had so much love for Guru Sahib that he had quit his wedding halfway. However, on the way to Guru Sahib’s place, he had to halt overnight at some place. Near that place was the house of a prostitute. That night, the *bhakta* was stirred by longings of lust, and he got ready to go across to the prostitute’s house. When he went there, he found a man guarding the door, stick in hand. That guard drove away this *bhakta*, saying – ‘Run away! There is no chance right now; no chance at this time.’ The night elapsed thus. In the morning, the *bhakta* ran to meet Guru Sahib. Upon reaching, he told Guru Sahib – ‘Maharaj! I left my wedding ceremony halfway and have come

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47 The context of this essay are verses 32 and 33 from Garbha Stuti, the tenth canto of Srimad Bhagavatam. The words बद्ध सौहृद् occurs there.

*running to meet you.’ Hearing this, Guru Sahib laughed. The bhakta asked – ‘Maharaj! Why do you laugh?’ Guruji replied – “My dear brother! I had to stand guard the whole of last night, stick in hand, outside a prostitute’s house!” So, what does this indicate? It was God Himself, who, in the form of the Guru, saved this bhakta from a great fall! See this. The bhakta has such staunch love for Guru Sahib that he leaves his marriage ceremony unfinished. And the Guru has so much love (for the bhakta) that he stands, stick in hand, keeping awake the whole night!*

*(Next, an episode from Maharajshree’s own experience. This happened when he was traveling by train, and found that there was just one other co-traveller in the coach; a woman, who appeared to be of ill intentions. This was at the time when Maharajshree had not yet taken sanyAsa.)*

I too have seen a similar incident. In my life, an event occurred, where I was alone, there was no protector; and as I brought to mind my protector (my Guru)<sup>48</sup>, the train stopped, all of a sudden. What I am telling you is a true incident, from my life! The running train braked to a halt, and some Mahatma-s got into the coach that I was in. I do not think that they were actually anywhere in the vicinity; perhaps not even within 100 or 200 miles from where we stopped. What I am telling you is this. *‘Faith’ that a devotee bears in his mind, and the ‘Compassion’ that Guru-s have towards devotees – these are indeed remarkable.*

(Garbha Stuti : p 125-126)

## What happens when *sarkAr* is attained?<sup>49</sup>

*[Note: This discourse was delivered during the birth-centenary celebrations of Brahmamurthi Sri Udiya Babaji Maharaj. Here, Maharajshree explains the view of Baba about the attainment of highest rung of spirituality. Babaji's view is in line with Advaita siddhanta of Shankara Bhagavatpada. The highest rung of spirituality is referred to here as the attainment of 'sarkAr' – i.e., the realization of Parameshwara, or the realization of the Supreme-Reality. This is attained by ascending the five steps of the ladder of spirituality, as explained by Maharajshree.]*

1. Until such time as *dharmAnusThAna* (the proper performance of *dharma* as prescribed in *shAstra*) has not entered our hearts;
2. Until *vairAgya* (dispassion) towards the world has not arisen;
3. Until Bhakti, devotion, to God has not arisen;
4. Until one's *antaHkaraNa* has not attained purity;
5. Until the time that one has not contemplated deeply the teachings of the Upanishads;

Till that time, true attainment of God-realization/Self-Realization will not come about. (i.e., *sarkAr* is not attained.)

When does actual 'Realization' come about? (It will come about only by ascending each and every step of the spiritual ladders, described above.) Each step of the above ladder is linked to the other. From *yajnOpaveeta-dhAraNa* (investiture of sacred thread) and performance of *sandhyA-vandana*<sup>50</sup> (as *dharmAnushthAna* activities of the first step), right upto *brahma-sAkshAtkAra* (Realization of Brahman, the final step),

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49 *sarkAr* here refers to Supreme-Reality of Vedanta, which is same as the God-Supreme of Bhakti Marga

50 *Sandhyavandanam* (lit. 'salutation to (Goddess) Sandhyā' or 'salutation during the time of Sandhyā') is a mandatory religious ritual supposed to be daily performed, traditionally, by those initiated through the sacred thread ceremony and instructed in its execution by a Guru who is qualified to teach Vedic ritual. It is considered as a path to attain salvation (*moksha*). [Source: Wikipedia]

each step of the ladder is essential; he who removes even one step, ends up breaking the whole ladder.

Let me tell you an episode – a very sweet one.

Once, I had visited a Mahatma, and asked him this very question – ‘*What happens when sarkAr is attained?*’

Here in Vrindavan, God, as Radha-Krishna, is known as *yugal-sarkAr*, the Divine-Duo. And in Ayodhya too, God is called *sarkAr*.

*[Note: Mahatma’s reply below is couched in the language of prEma (the path of love of God). This devotion is in the nAyakA-nAyakI bhAva, i.e., where the devotee is a maiden and God is her lover, whom she yearns to attain. The maiden beautifies herself by performing proper sAdhanA, and earns the eligibility to have a tryst with her Lord.]*

The Mahatma replied – “Look here. What you need to do is to beautify yourself properly, and then go to His palace and knock on the door. When the door opens; when the Master of the palace admits you in, locks the door, and takes you inside the palace; after that, he may do anything with you. Whether he makes you naked, or keeps you famished, or beats you up; or he gives you a seat to relax; or makes you his beloved; or makes you his female-servant; (he may do anything he wishes;) why are you concerned with that? Rather, what you may ask me is this – ‘*how does one get the palace door to open?*’ Let the door open, and then after you enter, He will do as per his sweet will and wish; remember, it is we who are going to him. And after you enter, if you wish to convey some preconditions to Him that ‘you can keep us, provided you do this or that’; if you wish to dictate terms to Him, then don’t. When we get married, and enter the bridal chamber on the first night after the wedding, then what do we know what He will do or not do? If you have any reservations about this, then, *bAbA*, stay quiet and do not tap on the door. Do not unnecessarily poke or play with Him.”<sup>51</sup>

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51     *The idea here is that a devotee may not have the necessary worthiness to attain supreme realization. While his sAdhanA may have been sincere, he may be having some defects that he cannot remedy by himself, whatever effort he puts in. Yet, if his bhakti is true, God may open the door of realization for him. And God will remedy any shortcomings the devotee has. This process of correcting the defects of the devotee may involve anything; it may be painful, rough, or simple, smooth. What is to be done is known only to God. And so, upon entering the ‘door of the palace’, the devotee should simply surrender to the will of God.*

This is what the Mahatma told me.

Shri Udiya Babaji Maharaj used to say – ‘Bhakti is good for all; useful to all; useful to all *sAdhakA*-s, whatever their *avasthAna* (i.e., whatever step of the spiritual ladder they may be in). So much so, that if it is present in the life of a *jeevanmukta*<sup>52</sup> (Self-realized sage), it increases the bliss of his *jeevanmukti* (state of liberation) by many times.

But if you say that Bhakti is the ultimate step, and that there is no Parameshwara higher than that, then you will fall from your own *siddhAnta* (doctrine and goal). Who is higher than Bhakti? Parameshwar! – This is the clear position of Udiya Babaji.<sup>53</sup>

(Brahmamurthi Shri Udiya Babaji)



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52 *Jeevanmukta* : One who has attained liberation while still alive

53 What is being said here is that *abhinnata* (the state of non-difference from God or Supreme-Reality) is the highest state. Bhakti is a means to that state, which is God-ness. This is the Advaita position of Shankara Vedanta.



## Of all things, one's *Atma* (Self) is the most invaluable

Those people who, in their waking state, seeing the external world of objects, get enticed by their names and forms and remain absorbed in their contemplation...They, who, getting entangled in names and forms, surrender themselves at the altar of the 'waking-state world of objects' – sacrificing their '*I*' (*self*) for the sake of '*this*' (*objects*)... As a result of which, they become agitated in their pursuit of worldly objects... So agitated, that in such pursuit of objects, they speak lies, commit acts of fraud and treachery, do dishonest things; they torment themselves for the sake of worldly objects and experiences... Suffering pain themselves, they inflict pain on others as well... (They do) All this for what? For the sake of all these (unreal) names and forms, which are seen only as a result of magical illusion...

My dear fellow; of all things, the most invaluable is one's *Atma* (Self).

Now, people may say – 'if we value the Self so much, and do not attribute much value to the world, *then do we not end up being selfish?*' Such a doubt does arise in the minds of many people. The resolution of this doubt is something that you need to grasp firmly in your mind... And it is this. When we speak of '*Atma*', we do not refer to a thing that is tied to a physical body of three and a half cubits height. The seers of Vedanta gave an explanation of '*sva*' (self) or '*Atma*' as being so big that the whole of Creation became its body. 'That' which has the whole of Creation as its body; 'that' which has *svapna-jAgrat* (waking state and dream state) as its body; the happiness and self-interest of 'that' becomes the happiness and self-interest of the whole of Creation.

Now, if you reflect upon this, you will realize that the people who hold their own individual self to be precious – i.e., those who are '*paricchinna AtmavAdee*' (i.e., they believe that each person has a separate *Atma*), and believe the world to be real/eternal; such people, in face of the mental duality arising in their lives, in pursuit of their personal happiness

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and self-interest, become ready to stray from truth and honesty; ready to cause harm to others, and thereby, cause harm to Creation. What it means is this – when one attributes significance to the individual/personal ‘I’, then that results in negligence and harm of Creation; and one does see in the world that it is extremely difficult to overcome this.

However, where the ‘I’ is non-divided; where it is fullness; where it is one with Paramatma (the One, Supreme, Non-dual Self) – there, there is no favouritism/bias; no violence; no falsehood; no dishonesty. There, the ‘Self’ is pure, and one’s life becomes pure too. So, we attain the supreme objective of being saved from the violence arising from assigning significance to the individual/personal ‘I’; when we realize the *pUrNata* (fullness/non-duality/completeness) of our ‘Atma’.

(Mandukya Pravachan : Agama Prakaran – p 330, 331, 332)



## In my experience

Let me tell you something from my personal experience – during my early years, I gained a lot from this.

Look! This *antaHkaraNa* (mind)<sup>54</sup> and body; do not mingle your ‘Self’ with either of these. This body-ego combination does many different things; just keep watching it. But, one thing; you need to keep just one thing in mind – ‘*do not mistake the mind and body to be the cidAtmA (Consciousness-Self)*’. You are *taTastha* (neutral/unconcerned), *kUTastha* (immutable), *asanga* (non-associated), *udAsIna-drashThA* (indifferent witness), *sAkshI-sarvAvabhAsaka* (all-illuminating witness), *svayamprakAsha-cidAtmA* (self-luminous Consciousness-Self). Do not mingle your ‘Self’ with the ego; absolutely not. And as regards the different states of the *antaHkaraNa*, do not associate these with your ‘Self’. This body-ego combination does many different things; just keep watching it. The *jnAnEndriya-s* (organs of knowledge) and *karmEndriya-s* (organs of action) may be vigorous at times, and at times dull; your knees may be strong sometime and it may have some pain at some other time; the *antaHkaraNa* may be peaceful at one time, and agitated at some other time... (*None of these pertains to your actual ‘Self’*).

Now, if you say – ‘Maharaj! One has desires.’

Reply : Look! I shall tell you... If some desires arise in your mind, do not say that these desires pertain to me, and are troubling me. Say that this desire has raised its head because of the *samskAra-s* (mental impressions/tendencies) arising out of the *vAsanA-s*<sup>55</sup>; and when *samskAra* cools down, the desire too will cease. Neither have I ‘desired’; nor are the desires in me; and no outcome of these desires can stick to me.

So, Narayan! Just as you observe a clock on a table, observe your physical body and *antaHkaraNa* combination in the same manner. This body-mass plus *antAHkaraNa* is just like a clock on a table.

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54 *antaHkaraNa*: Internal instrument; fourfold mind; mind, intellect, ego and subconscious mind (Source: Yoga Vedanta Dictionary by Swami Sivananda)

55 *vAsanA-s* : Subtle sub-conscious desires that we have, because of our prior experiences in this birth and our previous births.

Therefore, the point is just this... The ego that is working in your *antaHkaraNa*; this ego, along with the intellect, mind, subconscious mind and *prANa* (vital-energy/life-breath), is a separate object, like a clock that is ticking away on a table. Do '*dhyAna*' (deep contemplation) that '*I am not this, nor is this mine*'. Just keep watching it.

If you say, 'the clock has stopped'; i.e., the body has died... Well, let it be! And if you say – 'hey, the clock is running now', then, no problems! Let it run! When the clock is not yours at all, how does it matter if it stops or runs? If you say – 'The clock is running wrong. It's running ahead or behind'... What does it matter to you? Just as you see a clock on the wall of a shop when you walk down a street, this body-*antaHkaraNa-prANa* lump too is the same. This too is just another clock – a ticking contraption, marking time.

Now, if you turn around and say – 'Let it be so, as far as other clocks are concerned. But my own clock should run properly', then I say – '*Stop! Hold it, right there! There, you have got caught!* This (that you have expressed) is indeed what is known as *granthi* (the knot of ignorance)!' You have mixed up your 'Self', i.e., the self-luminous *cidAtmA* (Consciousness-Self) with the clock-contraption of the body-based, personal, 'I'. The *granthi* is nothing but the belief that – 'This body and *antaHkaraNa* are mine...'. Actually, the *antaHkaraNa*-body aggregate is but a *dRishya* (a perception of the senses, which has no basis in reality); do not thrust your 'Self' into this. Just keep observing it. Undo the *granthi* that makes you believe that – '*this antaHkaraNa is mine; this body is mine*'. In truth, this *granthi* too is unreal; it does not exist at all. It is just an imagined belief.

This *dhyAna* (that unties the knot of ignorance), is a great help in your life in the cessation of *ajnAna* (ignorance) and for the dawn of *jnAna* (Self-Knowledge). This is my experience.

(Dhyan aur Jnan : p 238-241)

## Closed doors will open

(1)

Observe *nishEdashAstra* (the doctrine of negation) – ‘**Not this; Not this; Not this;**’. Paramatma can be spoken of in this manner alone.

Once, a seeker (S) asked a Mahatma – ‘We have no idea how to recognize God. So, if some entity comes and tells us – ‘*I am God*’, then that would be deceiving us, right? So how do we protect ourselves from this?’

The Mahatma (M) with whom this conversation was taking place, said – ‘Ok. So you do not know how to recognize God. But you can recognize a human being, right?’

S: ‘Yes, I can surely recognize a man.’

M: ‘All right, then! Reject the belief that a human being is God. Know that the right method for recognizing God is through negation of that which is not God. Whichever entity you recognize as being apart/separate from God – i.e., you recognize that the entity is not God – then, remove your mind’s attention from that entity. We do not say what God is or what God is not. What we say is this – when your mind, intellect, eyes, leads you to the conclusion that such-and-such entity is not God, then, take away your mind’s attention from that entity.

Now, tell me. Do you believe money to be God?’

S: No, I don’t.

M: All right. Remove your mind from money. Do you believe your friends and relatives to be God?

S: No, I don’t.

M: Then, detach your mind from them. Do you believe your intellect, your sense-organs, your ego to be God? Or do you not?

S: I do not.

M: If you do not, then remove your mind from these. Make a firm decision that you will remove your mind away from every item that you do not recognize as being God. Indeed, this is the formula for God-realization. When God sees that you are not drawn by anything other than Him; that nothing else interests you at all; then how long can He

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keep Himself hidden from you? Closed doors will open; and you will attain God-realization as a personal, clear, direct knowledge.

(2)

All right... How then is one to attain Self-knowledge? How is one to know the Self?

Well... If a man has to evaluate two diamonds (to decide on their genuineness, purity etc.), then both diamonds have to be placed in front of him. And until he examines both of them, how can he recognize their value? When he examines one diamond carefully, then he will recognize its value; and when he examines the second one carefully, he will recognize its value also.

One is unable to clearly see even two fingers in one glance. And here you are, wishing to recognize both Brahman (Supreme-Reality) and Creation, at the same time?

It is when you remove your eyes from Creation that you may be able to realize Brahman (Supreme-Reality); and when you recognize Brahman, then you will realize the actual truth about Creation – as to what it really is; for this (latter) realization is a *phala-dRishThi* (i.e., this realization comes about as a fruit of Brahman-realization); *sAdhanA-dRishThi* (realization of the means) is that which happens when you remove your attention from Creation, and hold on to Brahman (alone).

(Mandukya Pravachan – Aagama Prakarana : p 468,469) and  
(Kathopanishad Pravachan Part 1 : p 386)

## Bringing wholeness to our life, let's go forward

Listen! When you get up in the morning, prepare a list of all tasks that you have to do till the evening of that day. And when you do any task, do not mix one task with another. Whatever task you do, give it due importance – do it with the conviction that *'this is indeed the best of tasks.'* Let the objective of doing this task be – *'for the pleasure of God.'* There is no need to recall what you did yesterday, or bring to mind what you will do next after the completion of the current task. In the present moment, attach your entire mind-focus to the task at hand. However, remember one thing. The completion of the task is not in our control; and neither is the result of the task. Also, at one point in time, only one task can be done. Therefore, for every task being done at every point in time, bring wholeness of your body-mind-speech in whatever you do; do it with all your strength; do it with all your zest and joy. If you do every task in this manner, then every such activity will be known as *'brahma-karma'* (Gita 4.24).<sup>56</sup>

While doing one work, if we think of some other work, then the poor task at hand feels slighted. Let me share an incident. This happened when I visited Gondal (Gujarat). I was doing a *bhAgavata-saptAha*<sup>57</sup> there. One day, when I had completed the narration and was getting up, a certain gentleman invited me to his house and took me there. On reaching his house, he gave me a seat, and then went away somewhere outside. Now, I had just finished a three-hours long narration of Bhagavatam that day, and I was afflicted by hunger and thirst. Now, this gentleman did not enquire about anything, and just went away somewhere on the road. When I asked where he had gone, I was told that the Gondal Maharaj Sahib, the King of

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56 ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्महविर्ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम्।  
ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना॥4.24॥

*Brahman is the oblation; Brahman is the melted butter (ghee); by Brahman is the oblation poured into the fire of Brahman; Brahman verily shall be reached by him who always sees Brahman in action. (Translation by Swami Sivananda www.gitasupersite.iitk.ac.in)*

57 Narration of Srimad Bhagavatam over a period of seven days.

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Gondal, was coming that way, and that this gentleman was standing by the road, waiting to pay his respects to him. This behaviour of that gentleman did not please me at all. Such conduct is tantamount to disrespect. When doing one work, if we think of some other work, then the importance of the work at hand gets annulled. So, O brother mine, to begin with, the main aim of any work that we do must be to please God. God's pleasure implies Universal pleasure; i.e., it pleases the whole of Creation. And that work should be such that it does not cause harm to anyone; it should bring happiness to all concerned. So, firstly, the objective of our working should be pure; and, secondly, when we are performing that work, we should experience wholeness of zeal and joy, as if in that very piece of work, God is manifesting in front of us.

So, keep infusing happiness (in your work) and thereby keep pleasing God. Keep God happy, and keep enjoying the *rasAsvAdana* (delight of existence; nectar of happiness; tasting the essence of bliss). Every cell of your being, every moment of your life, will be filled with Supreme-Bliss. The right way of working is not that we need to complete that work, nor that we get the fruit of that work. The right way of working is this => giving happiness to God, tasting delight in one's own work, bringing wholeness to our life, let's go forward.

(satya ki khoj mein: p 71, 72)



## Distinguishing marks of a *Jeevanmukta*<sup>58</sup> – 1

In daily life, from time immemorial, distinctions have been made as regards what is good and what is bad; between sinners and people of virtue; and Mahatma-s and Duratma-s (sages and scoundrels). Without making such distinctions, day-to-day dealings in the world cannot be feasible. In such a context, it becomes a must that we articulate a proper definition of who is a Mahatma and who, a Duratma. For maintaining decorum in society, and for the sake of *mumukshu*-s (seekers of liberation), this is essential.

However, when we go about this task of articulation, we should bear one thing in mind. The definition delineating the marks of a Mahatma, is not meant for Jeevanmukta Mahatma-s; for they always remain in their natural state of being – i.e., they are, just as they are always. They have no need to understand what their own distinguishing marks are. They are not confined within the bounds of these marks. Far apart from these marks, completely transcending them, they sit on the throne of the Infinite-Self.

Knowledge of these marks is meant for us ordinary human beings, who, tormented by the sin and swelter of worldly life, seek to find repose in some cool, pleasant, dense shade; and erasing our stress, fatigue and delusion, we seek the tap-tap of some soft hands on our back, so that we may lie down and sleep forever in the lap of *ananta-shakti* (God, of infinite-power).

But we are not going to be able to escape from the terrifying abyss of Maya by being adamant and arbitrary (about how to go about it). But having been slaves to our *vAsanA*-s in life after life, we find ourselves completely entangled in the same situation (of our unyieldingness) and have become habituated to be just so. So, wherever we encounter something that is contrary to our own belief or liking, we tend to despise it, or avoid it. We believe that alone to be the truth, which is accepted by our limited intellect; and in that process, we remain forever deprived of the real Truth.

And there is one other thing. We have become sick and tired of

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58 *Jeevanmukta* : One who is liberated while still alive;

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forever rotting in the quagmire of desires and sense-pleasures. Crushed by the claws of sins, sinners, and their pimps, we have been broken to pieces. We have become totally vexed by their deceits, traps, and frauds. That being the case, if we again end up getting caught in the clutches of these kind of people, and once again come to a bad end; then that would be a fine reward (sarcastically speaking) for our progressing in the path of God and liberation.

(For all these reasons, it is important that we find the right Mahatma to guide us in the path of liberation.)

It is true that the people who view someone else as a non-Mahatma are non-Mahatmas themselves. That's because, as far as a Mahatma sage's view is concerned, it is not just that everyone else is a Mahatma too; rather, they are all but God. However, we are discussing something that is of relevance to us non-Mahatmas, right? And therefore, we should now deliberate on the definition of a true Mahatma or Jeevanmukta; by what marks should we recognize a true sage, approach him, seek his refuge, and undertake *sAdhana* for our spiritual progress. Even if it is rather courageous to view a sage within our definition of who a Mahatma is, it is to be remembered that this limitation does not bind the sage; it is only for the guidance of us seekers of knowledge. And therefore, there is no harm in it.

(*Sadhana aur Brahmanubhuti* : p 55. 56)

## Distinguishing marks of a *Jeevanmukta*<sup>59</sup> – 2

In Yoga Vaasishtha, in reply to a question by Sri Rama on the distinguishing marks of a Jeevanmukta, Sri Vasishtha delineates several marks. Let us deliberate on these, one by one.

(For a Jeevanmukta) The Creation that has been made by God, remains just as it is (*i.e., the Jnani perceives the universe in just the same way as any ordinary being does. He sees the world as we see it*). This Sun-moon, stars-planets, day-night – all these are seen by him, just as they are. His own body and senses too appear to him just as they would to anyone else. Vedanta does not erase the world appearance.

One who is a jeevanmukta is not tied to anything – not to red robes, nor to *tilak* (religious marks on the forehead), nor to any specific place or province... He is bondage-free. He is a *mukta* – absolutely free.

Right! He has his *samskAra*-s too (*i.e., - he has his own bent of mind; his own tendencies*), and he lives in a manner that is natural to him (based on his *samskAra*-s). However, he has no inclination to make others act in accordance with his own *samskAra*-s; nor does he want to have a cult of followers. Yes, he has clear awareness of the external world; he is not unconscious. Even so, his mind/intellect are not weighed down by his personal *samskAra*-s/*vAsanA*-s (mental dispositions).

As regards the Universe/Creation, which is seen manifesting in the light of your *chidAkAsha*<sup>60</sup> (pure consciousness; Self; Heart); the goodness and badness that you ascribe to different aspects of this universe do not arise out of the universe itself. Rather, they arise from your own outlook/ views/beliefs. This is what is known as *AdhyAtmika-dRShThikONa* (mental outlook).

The jeevanmukta sees the world from a pure mind. His pure/ stainless outlook does not see goodness or badness in any object that he

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59 *Jeevanmukta* : One who is liberated while still alive;

60 *Yoga Vasishtha* talks of three kinds of *AkAsha* – *bhutAkAsha*, *chittAkAsha*, *chidAkAsha*. *bhUtAkAsha* encompasses the material world; *chittAkAsha* is the world of the mind, where we see dreams etc. And *chidAkAsha* is the pure consciousness, which is non-different from Brahman. It is the same as *AtmA* – the Self.

perceives.

(Let me tell you about something that happened).

There was a very loving Sindhi devotee who lived in a village. Once, he invited Sri Udiya Babaji Maharaj, along with all of us, for lunch. When we were eating, he served rice using a ladle, and happened to stir the rice on someone's plate after serving. And then, he served rice to the next person and used the ladle to stir the rice in that plate too. Now, tell me. Hasn't the whole of the food being served become defiled?<sup>61</sup> Yes, yes! The whole thing became defiled. Now, this Sindhi gentleman had no idea that the food had become polluted. In his community, they did not have this belief of food getting defiled in such a situation. Now, my good sirs, all the holy men who were eating became angry – for the food had been polluted. Sri Udiya Babaji Maharaj intervened, and said – “Brothers! Today, we have all become Sindhi-s. Now, come and see how it feels! I am sure none of you have experienced the fun of Sindhi-hood! Enjoy that experience today!” Ok?

And Sri Udiya Babaji remained sitting just as before, continued eating, and by his merriment he made the lunch so enjoyable. This is how a *jeevanmukta's* outlook is.

When some cause of pleasure/happiness presents itself to him, his face does not get a greater shine; and when some cause of pain/sorrow presents itself, his face does not droop. The radiance of his face remains just the same. Actually, it is his Self's *ekarasatA*<sup>62</sup> that is reflected as the radiance of his face.

(Jeevanmukti Vivek : p 344, 352, 353, 359, 360, 361-363, 387-388)

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61 झूठा होना – *defiled; when food is made or served without taking traditional precautions in terms of hygiene etc., it is considered as spoilt. The food then is not considered fit for eating.*

62 *svarUpa kI ekarasatA: abiding solely in the joy of the Self, whereby one has the same happiness and temperament irrespective of the external circumstances.*

## Distinguishing marks of a *Jeevanmukta*<sup>63</sup> – 3

In accordance with one's *prArabdha*, one may experience occasions where one is honoured with flower bouquets, or faces losses in terms of wealth or kin, or encounters hurt and humiliation. In such situations of happiness and distress, a *jeevanmukta*'s face neither flowers nor fades. Whatever comes his way without any special effort on his part, he remains at peace in that. As such, occasions like these do not crop up in his life as he is ever firmly poised in the Self; and even if these were to appear for a short period of time, there is no scope for any happiness or distress, because, due to the firmness of his Jnana (Self-Knowledge), he has no notions of '*this is acceptable*' / '*this is not*'.

Here, it is worth keeping in mind, that *prArabdha* bestows only the *causes* of happiness and distress; not the actual experience of happiness or distress corresponding to each such cause. The reason is this. While events in life keep happening as predestined by *karmachakra* (wheel of karma), the actual experience of happiness/distress (after the event) is based purely on our depth of attachment. For instance, *prArabdha* may create a situation where we do not get food on a certain day; *prArabdha*'s work is to this extent. But the pain that we feel because of that situation (of hunger) is an outcome of our attachment alone; and attachment is caused by *ajnAna* (ignorance). It is only as a result of our ignorance about the nature and workings of *samsArachakra* (wheel of destiny) that we develop attachment to some place, time, or object, and end up experiencing happiness/distress. For what reason at all, would a *jeevanmukta* become happy or sad in response to events? This, indeed, is the distinctiveness of a *jeevanmukta* (which distinguishes him from other people).

(However) From the point of view of ordinary people, the *jeevanmukta*'s behaviour too seems to be enjoined with attachments, aversions, fear etc. – like that of any other man. For instance, his preferences in terms of bathing, cleanliness, food etc., makes it appear as if he is acting based on some 'attachments' (*rAga*). He partakes only *sAttvika* food. His renunciation of *tAmasikata* (indolence), common/

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63 *Jeevanmukta* : One who is liberated while still alive;

perverse behaviours, and bad-company makes it appear as if he is acting based on some 'aversions' (*dvEsha*). In like manner, if a snake happens to suddenly fall on his lap, he would react like anyone else and throw that snake away immediately – thereby acting as if he is struck by 'fear'. Due to *bAdhitAnuvRitti*<sup>64</sup> and *purvAbhyAsa* (past practice / prior habits), such acts do happen (even for a *jeevanmukta*) when the mind is in an outgoing state; however, as his *antaHkaraNa* is completely pure, it does not get defiled in the least (by his activities). Just as, in our eyes, the sky is seen to have dust, clouds etc; whereas, in reality, the sky itself remains pure and unstained altogether; in the same manner, the heart of the *jeevanmukta* too remains pure and stainless, always and everywhere.

(Sadhana aur Brahmanubhuti : p 58,59)

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64 *bAdhitAnuvRitti* : The seeming appearance of something that has been negated, and is known to be unreal. For instance, one knows that the oasis seen in a mirage is unreal. But one sees it nonetheless. 'bAdhitAnuvRitti' is a technical term of Vedanta. Anandagiri, in his 'teekA' of Mandukya Karika 3.36 says - .  
अविद्यादशायामेव सर्वो व्यवहारः, विद्यादशायां च अविद्याया असत्त्वात् न कोऽपि व्यवहारः । बाधितानुवृत्त्या तु व्यवहाराभाससिद्धिरित्यर्थः ।

(All *vyavarhAra* is in the state of *avidyaa* alone, in the state of realization, as *avidyaa* is no longer there, there is no *vyavahara* at all. However, owing to the continuance of the 'samskaara vega', called *bAdhitAnuvRitti*, there is a semblance of *vyavahAra*.)

And, this *bAdhitAnuvRtti* is admitted by Shankara in the *SutrabhAshya*. What Shankara says in His commentary on the *Brahma sutra* 4.1.15 is worth quoting here: "The knowledge of the Self being essentially non-active destroys all works by sublating wrong knowledge; but wrong knowledge – comparable to the appearance of a double moon – lasts for some time even after it has been sublated, owing to the impression it has made. (Source: Sri V Subrahmanian in [www.advaita-vedanta.org](http://www.advaita-vedanta.org) )

## Distinguishing marks of a *Jeevanmukta*<sup>65</sup> – 4

Worldly people get quite upset when they see something that might cause them any kind of harm, or see something that is contrary to their own views or conduct. Mumukshu-s (seekers of liberation) too, when they see people weighed down by jealousy, hate etc., and their attachment to the world, get quite upset. However, as far as a *jeevanmukta* is concerned, no one thinks of him as being an outsider (i.e., a person who is not from 'our' group). He is 'family' for everyone, and there is no one who has any apprehension of an undesirability or contrariety from him. So, why would anyone be afraid of him? And as far as the *jeevanmukta* himself is concerned, his own *sAdhanA* suffers no setback upon seeing the worldly attachments of other people; for his *sAdhanA* is his very nature – it just goes on continually. And therefore, he has no fear of any one.

He has attained everything. So, he doesn't feel any thrill upon getting some object. He has no adversary; and so he has no anger. Actually, fear exists only in duality. One gets frightened only by others. But then, for the *jeevanmukta* there is no one who is apart from him; where then is there any room for fear? He ever remains *Atmarata* (devoted to the Self), *AtmatRipta* (contented in the Self) and *AtmatushTha* (joyous in the Self).

A *jeevanmukta*'s mind is undistracted by diverse distinctions/notions such as honour/insult, enemy/friend etc. He is calm and peaceful, by nature. Due to the strong practice undertaken prior to the attainment of Jnana (Self-Knowledge), he remains ever absorbed, wholly, in contemplation of the Self. Because of this, even as his mind is still existing, he remains totally free of anxieties. Ever abiding in *ekarasa* (One-essence) *paripUrNa* (totally-full) *Atmatattva* (Self), the *jeevanmukta*'s heart remains cool in all circumstances.

Such an *AtmanishTha* (one who is firmly poised in the Self) *mahApurusha* (great person), who is in body still, is one who we speak of as a *jeevanmukta*; and taking refuge at his feet, we attain the greatest of gains. And when his body drops, he becomes a *vidEhamukta* (one who is liberated, upon death). What, indeed, can be said about him!

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65 *Jeevanmukta* : One who is liberated while still alive;

Yes, this state of *jeevanmukti* is attained only when ‘*vAsanA-s are erased*’ and ‘*Self-Knowledge is attained*’ through the ‘*destruction of the mind*’. All three are needed – one alone is not sufficient. The fact of the matter is that these three are interdependent – without the one, the other cannot be attained. Therefore, with great intent and application, one should practice all three simultaneously. By *nishkAma-karma*<sup>66</sup>, (i.e., by renunciation of desire-driven activities, and deeds that are prohibited by Shastra), and by assiduous performance of *nityakarma*<sup>67</sup>, one should spurn all deeds that are not approved by Shastra. By *bhagavad-bhajan* (devotion to God) one should destroy the entirety of one’s *vAsanA-s*, and render the mind *bhagavadAkAra* (completely divine). And thereafter, by means of a pure *antaHkaraNa*, free of stain and distraction<sup>68</sup>, one should do *shravaNa*, *manana*, *nididhyAsana* of ‘*tat-tvam*’ *padArtha*; and thereby acquiring *tattva-jnAna* (Self-Knowledge), destroying the *AvaraNA* (the veil that covers the Self), one should attain the abidance of *jeevanmukti*.

In this manner, there is an auspicious and beautiful convergence of the paths of *karma*, *bhakti* and *jnAna*; and there is no denunciation of, or opposition to, any school of philosophy. Every school is made use of appropriately. This state is spoken of as being devoid of argument and opposition. It is he who is firmly abiding in this state, whom we speak of as being a *jeevanmukta*; and it is by taking refuge in his feet that we achieve the purpose of life.

(Sadhana aur Brahmanubhuti : p 61, 62, 63)

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66 *nishkAma karma* : work done without desiring the fruits thereof

67 *nityakarma*: Activities that are obligated by Shastra; these are mandatory activities

68 *avidyA* is the stain that veils the Self; and *Maya* is the distracting force that projects the outer world





बृष्णात् परं किमपि  
तत्त्वमहं न जाने ।  
ऊर्वा षडाब्दे

## Have the certainty that you will achieve success

Yesterday, a person was telling me that he had been trying for many years to overcome some shortcomings/defects of his. And that despite all his efforts, these faults were not going away for good; somehow or the other (even if overcome for some time) they come right back. He also said that he felt sometimes that the nature/character that sets in during childhood, never leaves you.

So, we do see that man when he is born, brings a certain nature along with him. While it is true that all banyan trees are of one nature, all grapes are of a certain nature, all bitter-gourds are of a certain nature; however, by means of irrigation, manuring, pruning, grafting, etc., many changes can be brought about.

One of my friends planted a mango tree. He was a wealthy man, and so he irrigated the sapling with milk... This happened some thirty or forty years back... For ten years or so, the tree was irrigated (watered) with milk alone. It turned out that the mango fruits that grew in this tree had the taste of milk. The seed of the tree was that of mango; but the fruit had the mixed flavour of mango and milk. My friend would send some mangoes to me occasionally – I have eaten these mangoes.

What this signifies is that if we prune our lives properly, manure it, irrigate it, mix it with different virtues etc., then changes can be brought about in our life. The hopelessness that comes about in some people, that *'my nature just cannot be changed'* – such a despondency does not befit a *sAdhaka* (seeker of God-realization). A *sAdhaka* should always be firm in mind that – *'either I shall achieve my goal, or I shall die in my attempt to achieve it'*.

Any despondency or indifference that comes in one's *sAdhanA* is but a weakness of the mind. Indeed, this is what the Gita teaches us - क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ ... *Yield not to unmanliness, O Partha (Gita 2.3)*.

Do not labour under the belief that weakness of mind is your character, your very nature.

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69 Note: The whole of the month of June is dedicated to Maharajshree's expositions of Bhagavad Gita.



## June 1

Yoga-Vasishtha says – *‘pressing one hand in the other, grinding teeth with teeth, apply yourself to your sAdhanA – you will achieve success’.*<sup>70</sup>

No karma of yours, no wish of yours, will go in vain – *‘Arise, awake, apply yourself in auspicious deeds; have the certainty that you will achieve success; for sure you will.’*

(Dainik Jeevan mein Gita: p 117-118)



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<sup>70</sup> Conquer your mind first, by pressing the palm with the palm, grinding the teeth with the teeth and twisting the limbs with the limbs. (Yoga Vasishtha Sara 4.17)

## Gita, Thou art mother mine!

*‘matsthAni sarvabhUtAni’ – ‘All these beings, all these things, exist in me!’ and ‘na ca matsthAni bhUtAni’ – ‘Nothing exists in me!’ – how strange are these mutually contradicting sayings!<sup>71</sup> First saying that ‘All beings exist in me’ and then saying ‘Nor do the beings exist in me’.*

But then, these are the direct words of Bhagavan, which, while appearing mutually contradictory, are actually self-same. When ‘jnAna’ (Knowledge) and ‘bhakti’ (Devotion) stood in front of Bhagavan, He asked them what they wanted to say. *[As it happened, Bhakti and Jnana had contradictory views on Bhagavan, which they wanted Him to resolve.]* Bhakti said – ‘All is in You!’ Jnana said ‘No, in You, there is nothing’. Bhagavan said – ‘Both of you are correct!’

*[Maharajshree, now refers to an incident from Krishna’s childhood]* You would recall the episode of Krishna eating mud. The cowherd-boys tell Balarama that this Krishna has eaten mud. Here, you should note this. When, in the eyes of the cowboys Krishna has eaten mud, Krishna agrees, and says – ‘Yes, I have eaten.’ He says – ‘sarvE-amithyAbhishamsinaH’ – ‘all these boys are speaking the truth’. And when Yashoda asks him, ‘Now, tell me! Why did you eat mud?’, Krishna, from his own perspective, says – ‘nAham bhakshitavAn amba’ – ‘Mother mine! I did not eat mud!’; ‘sarvE-mithyAbhishamsinaH’ – ‘all these boys are speaking untruth.’<sup>72</sup>

Thus is Bhagavan of Gita! Thus is Bhagavati Gita!

Gita is *kAmadhEnu* (wish-fulfilling divine-cow), and Bhagavan is *kalpavRiksha* (wish-fulfilling divine-tree). Whatever mood/wish you carry with you when you approach it, they will get fulfilled. Tell mother Gita – “Mother! Give me some duty to perform.” She will reply – ‘Child! Perform karma! That alone is your duty!’ However, if your inclination is not towards *karma*, and you tell Gita that you wish to follow the path

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71 *Bhagavad Gita 9.4 and 9.5*

72 *‘sarvE-amithyAbhishamsinaH’ (all speak the truth) and ‘sarvE-mithyAbhishamsinaH’ (all speak lies) differ only in the letter ‘a’ (before mithyA). However, in Sanskrit pronunciation of this phrase, this letter ‘a’ is silent, and so, the words, when spoken, are identical in sound.*

## June 2

of *prEma* (devotion/love), then, mother Gita will tell you – ‘*Fine! You may do prEma alone!*’ If, instead, you say – ‘I shall close my eyes and do *yogAbhyAsa*’, she will say – ‘*That’s fine. Do just that.*’

And if, on the other hand, you say – ‘I shall analyse *ghatAkAsha*, *matAkAsha* etc., and based on logical proofs, I shall arrive at the truth, and thereby my misconceptions will be dispelled’, then she’ll say – ‘*Absolutely! Do just that!*’

Mother, she is. Whichever the child, and whatever the child’s wish, she will fulfil it, in the very manner desired by the child. That is why devotees proclaim – ‘*amba tvAm anusandadhAmi*’ – ‘*Gita! Thou art mother mine! I am looking to you! I am contemplating you!*’

(Gita mein Bhakti-Jnana samanvay: p 44-45)



## Parabrahma alone is the Supreme Truth

ऊर्ध्वमूलमधःशाखमश्वत्थं प्राहुरव्ययम्।  
छन्दांसि यस्य पर्णानि यस्तं वेद स वेदवित्॥

*The Blessed Lord said: They (the wise) speak of the indestructible peepul tree having its root above and branches below, whose leaves are the metres or hymns: he who knows it is a knower of the Vedas. (Bhagavad Gita, 15.1)<sup>74</sup>*

That (tree) whose root-cause is Parabrahma, above; that (tree) whose branches are seen going below (i.e., manifesting as the workings of the root-cause above); such a Peepul tree (the tree of *samsAra*<sup>75</sup>) is spoken of here as being imperishable, ever flowing. The Veda-s are the leaves of this tree; they enhance its Grace. He who knows such a *samsAra*-tree along with its roots, he alone knows the actual meaning of the Veda-s.

Here, God is hinting at something. For ‘*parOksha priyA hi dEvAH*’ – ‘Gods love indirect methods (symbolisms)!’ They like to hide meanings in their utterances in such a manner that ignoramuses may not understand them, while wise people may experience great joy, discovering the hidden truths. Gods dislike expressing things openly and directly. In one place in Srimad Bhagavatam, it has been said that when Mahavishnu incarnated as *vAmana*, he told his mother Aditi – “*Look here Devi! Let no one in this world know that it is I (Vishnu) who has been born in the form of your son!*”

Matters pertaining to *dEvatA*-s (Gods) succeed based on the extent of secrecy that is maintained about these. For instance, if someone has

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73 Note: The expositions from June 3rd to June 21st June are taken from the book ‘Purushottam Yog’ of Maharajshree. These pertain to Maharajshree’s discourses on Chapter-15 of Bhagavad Gita.

74 English translation by Swami Sivananda

75 *samsAra*: the world of our perception, characterized by happiness, sorrow, desires, aversions, birth, death etc.

## June 3

a vision of a *dEvatA*, and immediately tells that to someone else, then that *dEvatA* becomes angry. He thinks – ‘*Arey! This fellow suffers from indigestion. He is not able to keep anything secret.*’ Incidentally, in case you experience any miracle internally or externally, do not go around talking about it. Only those people go around speaking of such experiences, who seek to gain something by speaking about it.

So, Bhagavan Sri Krishna indicated a secret to Arjuna, saying – ‘Just as a Peepal-tree is a form of Vasudeva, upon dawn of *jnAna* (Self-Knowledge) it is realized that the symbolic *samsAra*-Peepal-tree is also but a form of Parabrahma Paramatma. Just as all is Brahman alone, in the same manner, this entire Creation is but a manifestation of Paramatma.’

Now, what indeed is the secret that Krishna has indicated here? He reveals the secret later (in this chapter of Gita).

(First cue:) वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यः - *I alone am the object to be known through all the Vedas. (Gita 15.15)*

Now look at the second cue: वेदविदेव चाहम् – *I alone am the knower of the Vedas. (Gita 15.15)*

In other words, ‘*Krishna alone is known through all the Vedas; Krishna alone is the object of *jnAna*; and at the same time, Krishna is the knower too.*’

Which means it is Paramatma who is worthy of being discussed by the Vedas; and it is Paramatma who is the knower of the Vedas, and as indicated earlier, it is Paramatma who manifests as this universe (the Peepal-tree). In other words, there exists nothing apart from Paramatma Parabrahma.

Paramatma alone is the object of *jnAna*; Paramatma alone is the substratum of *jnAna*; Paramatma alone is *jnAna* itself.

(Purushottam Yog: p 1 – 17)



## If man wants, he can attain *Ishvara* too

This *dharma*<sup>76</sup> is a way of cleansing, refining, *karma*<sup>77</sup>. This *upAsana*<sup>78</sup>, is a way by which *samskAra*<sup>79</sup> is cleansed/refined, by refinement of *vAsana*-s<sup>80</sup>. Yoga, is the path by which mind is controlled. Narayan! (But one thing.) However much you refine *samskAra*, the fact is that *vAsana* will flare up from it, sometime or the other. However much you refine *vAsana*, *karma* will flare up from it, sooner or later. And however much you refine *karma*, some *samskAra* or the other will be formed in it. Therefore, these paths of *karma*, *upAsana* and *yOga*, cannot bring about a total and permanent cessation of *samsAra*. For the complete cessation of *samsAra*, once and for all, ‘दास कबीर जतन सो ओढ़ी, ज्यों की त्यों धर दीनी चदरिया’ (*Das Kabir wore his body-blanket with such care, that when he cast it aside, it was just as it was when he got it first*)<sup>81</sup>. By leaving *karma*, *vAsana*, *samskAra* in the same state as you got them, when you rise above them, then you will be able to escape from this cycle of *samsAra*. And for doing that, *vairAgya* (non-attachment) is needed.

अधश्च मूलान्यनुसन्ततानि कर्मानुबन्धीनि मनुष्यलोके ॥ (15.2)

*Its branches extend both above and below, nourished by the Gunas. Their shoots are sense objects. And their secondary roots extend downwards, resulting in acts which bind in the world of men.*<sup>82</sup>

In the previous verse (15.1), Bhagavan gave us a vision of the *samsAra*-tree. Now, (in verse 15.2) Bhagavan says – ‘*The (secondary) roots*

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76 *Dharma: path of virtue, as defined by Shastra*

77 *Karma: the activities that a person performs, good and bad, based on which Ishvara bestows fruits*

78 *Upasana: Worship. Meditation etc*

79 *Samskara: Mental impressions, good and bad, that push a jivA to action*

80 *Vasana: Inherent tendencies,*

81 *A famous composition of Kabir Das, ‘chadariya jheeni re jheeni’*

82 *Bhagavad Gita, verse 15.2; English translation by Swami Adidevananda ( <https://www.gitasupersite.iitk.ac.in/> )*

## June 4

*of this samsAra-tree spread upwards and downwards, resulting in actions in the world of human-beings, and binding them accordingly.'*

'(Secondary) Roots' signify the *vAsanA*-s (latent tendencies) that result in attraction, aversion etc. These roots of *vAsanA*-s, spread downwards all the way to *pAtAla* (lower world), binding all beings, including even creatures like ants and mosquitoes; and spread upwards all the way to Brahma himself; and these roots, irrigated by *karma* (actions), exist eternally as a constant flow; and these '*karma*' manifest in the world of human-beings. Why? (Why only humans?) Because, in nature, the potential for realizing fullness is available to human beings alone; not to any other being. The human brain alone is capable of making all kinds of new inventions. It is the human being alone who seeks to attain brand-new joys. No other creature eats food after cooking it. Other than humans, no creature makes savouries and sweets such as *samOsA*, *kachOrl*, *cham-cham* etc. He makes such fine dresses; wonderful houses; new cars, new trains, new rockets, new planes... Human-beings alone make all these. What this means is that the potential to overcome 'nature' too may lie with humans. The topic of cutting these very roots (of *vAsanA*-s) by means of the strong axe of non-attachment, comes later in Gita. The sense being conveyed here is this – Man, if he chooses, is capable of extricating himself from this wheel of *samsAra*, and attaining Ishvara.

Srimad Bhagavatam says that upon seeing a person, it is possible to say where he has come from (before this birth), and where he will go in his next birth. If the person is of a dirty mind, then he has come from hell; and if his mind has holiness, purity, stainlessness, then he has come from heaven.

How is your preparation and readiness for going ahead? A person who is on his way to become a *jeevanmukta* (attain liberation while alive), will see *vAsanA*-s decrease as life proceeds. So, Narayan! It is only in human-life that there is the capacity to attain liberation; as does exist the capacity for *bhagavad-bhakti* (devotion to God) and *bhagavad-prApti* (God realization). No other life-form has this capacity. That is why Gita has used the term 'मनुष्यलोके – *manushyalOkE* – in the world of men', in this verse.

(Purushottam Yog: p 18 - 23)

## Cut down the *Ashvattha*-tree and remain in continuous contemplation of *Paramatma*

असतो मा सद्गमय ।  
तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय ।  
मृत्योर्मा अमृतं गमय ।

In order to :

Leave *asat* (the unreal phenomenal world), and go to *sat* (Reality; eternal-existence; Self);

Leave darkness (of ignorance), and go to the Light (of Self-Knowledge);

Leave death, and go to immortality (of eternal Self-abidance);

‘असङ्गशस्त्रेण दृढेन छित्त्वा’ (Bhagavad Gita, 15.3) – (with the strong axe of non-attachment), renounce the spreading-roots of deep-attachments. One has *mamata* (a sense of ownership/ attachment) to the physical-body; *mamata* to the relatives of the physical-body; *mamata* to material objects... All these are attachments; renounce them.

Srimad Bhagavatam asks us to erase our *vAsanA*-s (sub-conscious tendencies) by means of devotion to Guru and God.

तुलसी दास हरि गुरु करुना बिन, विमल विवेक न होई।  
बिन विवेक संसार घोर निधि, पार न पावै कोई ॥

*O Tulasidas! Without the Grace of Hari and Guru, one cannot attain pure discernment. And without discernment, no one can go across this terrible samsAra-sea.*

Until such time as one receives the Grace of the Guru, know that one has not overcome *abhimAna* (pride / ownership). Because Guru’s compassion encompasses all beings, but returns un-received when it goes to a proud person. While the Guru wishes the welfare of all beings, the sap and flow of his Grace does not linger on a proud man. And Hari’s

## June 5

Grace, His compassion, flows and falls on one and all; but returns unreceived from those people who are entangled in enjoyment of sense-objects. Is there any shortage in God's compassion? Not at all! God sees that 'this person is happy experiencing sense-pleasures; why should we move him from that!'

It is not as if Bhagavan's Grace does not have the power to move him though.

रघुपति-भगति-बारि-छालित-चित, बिनु प्रयास ही सूझै।

He who has washed/cleansed his mind by means of the waters of Bhakti, will attain God-realization even without any effort on his part. And he who has not cleansed his mind by the waters of Bhakti; he whose heart is weighed down by dirt, desire for objects, and desire for sense-pleasures; he will not be able to realize God.

‘असङ्गशस्त्रेण दृढेन छित्त्वा गुरुपासनया शितेन’ – Sharpen the axe of non-attachment by means of devotion to Hari and Guru; and by means of that (axe), cut down that *samsAra*-tree which has the roots of *vAsanA*-s, ever so many of them, spreading above, below, everywhere; cut down that *ashwattha*-tree and remain in continuous contemplation of Paramatma.

(Purushottam Yog : p 25-26)

## ***suvirUDhamUlam – Well developed roots, firmly rooted***

न रूपमस्येह तथोपलभ्यते नान्तो न चादिर्न च संप्रतिष्ठा।  
अश्वत्थमेनं सुविरूढमूलमसङ्गशस्त्रेण दृढेन छित्त्वा।।15.3।।

*Its form is not perceived here as such, neither its end nor its origin,  
nor its foundation nor resting place: having cut asunder this firmly  
rooted peepul tree with the strong axe of non-attachment...*

(Bhagavad Gita 15.3)<sup>83</sup>

‘न रूपमस्येह तथोपलभ्यते’ (Bhagavad Gita 15.3). (*the samsAra-tree’s form is not perceived here as such.*) This world, which appears to be sweet, pleasurable, juicy, and fun – if we inquire into it, we shall find that all this gold is just the outer covering. Beneath the gold-plating, it is all just brass. Inside the bag of skin<sup>84</sup>, there is just a whole lot of filthy matter. And then, there is no fixedness of its form in terms of time. You see a child, and soon the child is a grown-up man; you see a man, and soon he is an old man; you see an old man, and then he is dead. Upon inquiry, you will see that this world is not what it appears to be. It is decaying, wasting away, every single moment.

Well may you ask – ‘*Will this ever end? Will it merge/dissolve in Brahman?*’ Bhagavan says – ‘नान्तो न चादिर्न च संप्रतिष्ठा’ – My dear chap, this trifling world will not merge in Brahman. When the son of a childless-woman dies, where will he be absorbed? Will the water in a mirage disappear into the desert sands? Will the blueness of sky cease by merging into the sky? In like manner, this *samsAra* too (being unreal) will not be merging into anything, anywhere. If you ask – ‘*Has it emerged from some place?*’ Well, tell me the name of the son of the childless-woman. Bhagavan says – ‘न च संप्रतिष्ठा’ – this is merely an *adhyasta* (a superimposition, an unreal attribution), on the *adhishThAna* (base reality) [*Like a snake is*

83 English translation by Swami Sivananda

84 The human body

## June 6

*adhyasta when seen, and believed to be, on what is actually a rope*]. On the *adhishThAna* (*brahman*) this (*samsAra*) has no real existence.

अर्थे ह्यविद्यमानेऽपि संसृतिर्न निवर्तते। (Bhagavatam, 11.22.55)

Though the objective world is unreal (it does not exist), one's (experience of) *samsAra* does not cease. Why is that?

(Because) 'सुविरूढमूलं' – (For it is firmly rooted; has well developed roots). You see, we are meditating (as it where) on the *samsAra* all the time. Indeed, this *samsAra* is but a ghost conjured up by *dhyAna* (attention/contemplation). Meaning – by constant contemplation, this unreal world became real and has manifested in front of us. Of this *samsAra*, *vAsanA*-s are the roots.

If you start believing that 'without this (world of 'me' and 'mine') I will die', then you'll die for sure; if you think – 'Without this, I will be very unhappy', then unhappy you will be... Then again, if you think that 'all this is nothing; what is there in all this?', then, truly, there is indeed nothing in all this. Actually, the lowliness, deficiency, filthiness etc., that we seem to be characterized by, are all just make-believe; we have accepted these as true. Granting it acceptability, we have invited 'deficiency' inside us. We do not realize that we are actually sitting under the *kalpavRiksha* (divine, wish-fulfilling tree).

So, Narayan! On this *kalpavRiksha* (Divine wish-fulfilling tree) of God, having imagined a *samsAra*-tree (of 'I' and 'mine') - मानि मानि बन्धन में आयो – and constantly believing it to be real, man has come into bondage. Our beliefs, our *vAsanA*-s, our *karma-samskAra*, have all become very strong. To cut these down, there is one way –

‘दास कबीर जतन सो ओढ़ी, ज्यों की त्यों धर दीनी चदरिया’<sup>85</sup>

*Das Kabir wore his body-blanket with such care,  
that when he cast it aside,  
it was just as it was when he got it first...*

(Purushottam Yog : p 27-28)

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85 A famous composition of Kabir Das, 'chadariya jheeni re jheeni'

## A fine way to eliminate sorrow!

(As regards the words असङ्गशस्त्रेण दृढेन छित्त्वा – with the strong axe of non-attachment), Do not think that you have to go around with an axe to cut down the *samsAra*. Reasoning, reflecting about non-attachment, is what is meant by the phrase ‘axe of non-attachment’.

This Atma that exists, **is not** made of bones, flesh and skin; it is not made up of sense-organs; it is not composed of thoughts; it is actually the *dRishTHA* (Seer), *chaitanya* (Absolute Consciousness), and *sAkshi* (Witness). The ‘axe of non-attachment’ is one’s reflection about Atma’s non-attachment; discrimination about *Atma*’s non-attachment; the knowledge of Atma’s non-attachment...

[The path explained above seems to apply to a *sAdhaka* who is on the path of *jnAna/vichAra*. What about one who is on the path of *Bhakti*? Anticipating this question, *Maharajshree* says: ]

Oh brother mine! Although you are a portion of *Ishvara*, you are still stuck in such petty worldly things? Actually, you are insulting your own father (*Ishvara*)! So, *Narayan*! (As a *bhakta*) Being the son of *Ishvara*; being *Ishvara*’s friend; being a part of *Ishvara*; being *Ishvara*’s loved one; if you still get attached to petty/trifling things of the *samsAra*, would it befit *Ishvara*, who is your father, friend, Lord? No, no! That would be totally contrary to *Ishvaratva* (*Ishvara* nature).

असङ्गशस्त्रेण दृढेन छित्त्वा (Bhagavad Gita, 15.3)

As *Ishvara* is non-attached, his child (i.e., the *bhakta*) is non-attached too.

This *samsAra*-tree is seeded by *vAsanA*-s (latent desires), and *vAsanA*-s are seeded by *rAga-dvEsha* (love-hate; attachments-aversions). If there is a *vAsanA* to acquire something, then there is *rAga* (attachment) in that; and if there is a *vAsanA* to reject something, then there is some *dvEsha* (aversion) in that. What then is the way to give up *vAsanA*, and the world that is made up of *vAsanA*-s? To the extent that *rAga-dvEsha* decreases, to that extent the world (*samsAra*-tree) made of *rAga-dvEsha* too gets chopped. For completely uprooting the *samsAra*-tree, the *rAga-dvEsha*, being the basis of *vAsanA*-s, must totally cease. Surely, *samsAra*

## June 7

does not cease for a man who harbours *rAga-dvEsha*.

So, Narayan! It is not that pain/sorrow is handed out by 'nature'; nor by God; nor by the world. If there is such a thing that actually gives pain/sorrow, it is the *jeeva*'s (individual being's) sense of 'I' and 'mine'; his *vAsanA*-s. This *jeeva* (individual) has applied so much glue all over his body, that wherever he goes, he gets stuck there. This 'sticking' is what is known as 'attachment'. So, if we have to cut down *vAsanA*-s and the Creation (*samsAra*-tree) made of *vAsanA*-s, we need to cut down 'attachment' in the form *rAga-dvEsha*. What happens because of that? The pain/sorrow that you experience because of *mamata* (sense of ownership, that this is 'mine'); the pain/sorrow that you experience because of *ahantA* (egotism); the pain/sorrow that you experience because of meetings and separations; the pain/sorrow that you experience because of not getting some material gain; all such pains/sorrows will cease. So, there we are! We have a fine way of eliminating sorrow!

(Purushottam Yog : p 29-30)





**No one can swindle you out of your *prEma*,  
*vairAgya*, *shraddhA*, *sAdhan*<sup>86</sup>**

निर्मानमोहा जितसङ्गदोषा अध्यात्मनित्या विनिवृत्तकामाः।  
द्वन्द्वैर्विमुक्ताः सुखदुःखसंज्ञैर्गच्छन्त्यमूढाः पदमव्ययं तत्॥ 15.5॥

*Those who*

*Are free from pride and delusion;  
Are victorious over the defect of association/attachment;  
Dwell constantly in the Self (ever devoted to spirituality);  
Have completely turned away from desires;  
Have attained freedom from dualities that are known as  
pleasure and pain;*

*They, the undeluded ones,  
Reach that goal eternal.  
(Bhagavad Gita, 15.5)*

It is not that *vEdAnta-vichAra* (reflections on Vedanta) comes about only after one is free of pride and delusion. (*It is actually the other way.*) It is by *vEdAnta-vichAra* – i.e., by discriminating between Self and non-Self – that one becomes free of pride and delusion. If one thinks that one should seek the refuge of a Guru only after one's *sanga-dOsha* (defect of association/attachment) is erased, then one is deluding oneself; rather, it is by surrendering to the Guru that one is freed of *sanga-dOsha*. Likewise, it is not that *bhakti* is to be done only after desires get erased; it is by doing *bhakti* that desires get eliminated.

Any number of people speak of *tyAga* (renunciation) alone. They do not speak of any *Ashraya* (support/refuge). Actually, it doesn't work that way. Without a support, renunciation doesn't happen. It doesn't happen because it is extremely difficult to renounce something without holding on

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86 *prEma* – Love; *vairagya* – Non-attachment; *shraddhA* – Faith; *sAdhan* - Spiritual means

## June 8

to some support or base. Thus, by taking support of *vivEka* (discernment), one may renounce pride and passion; by the Guru's support, one may renounce *sanga-dOsha*; and by leaning on *Ishvara-upAsana* (devotion to God), one may gain victory over one's desires. Having done this, when one approaches *Ishvara*, then, on the way itself, one attains the fruit of freedom from pleasurable and painful dualities.

Incidents, situations, that are distressful for worldly people, give happiness to those who are *virakta* (non-attached). And those things that makes a worldly person bloom with happiness, are considered worthless by the *virakta* (non-attached) people.

Let us say that someone tells you – 'Avoid going to Sadhu-s (holy men)'. Surely, he is a well-wisher of yours and his idea is to safeguard your money (from being spent on Sadhu-s). From a worldly perspective, his advice is sound. But then, in place of faith, he has planted doubt in your mind. In place of *Ishvara*, he has reinforced importance of money. However, no one can swindle you out of your *prEma* (love), *vairAgya* (non-attachment), *shraddha* (faith), *sAdhan* (spiritual means). Why would a seeker who aims to attain God-realization give such importance to wealth, that out of fear of being cheated of money, he remains deprived of the company of holy men? Such scepticism is but an outcome of insufficient *vAirAgya* (non-attachment).

One *avyaya-pada* (undecaying state; eternal goal) – i.e., *paramArtha-tattva* (Ultimate-Reality) – alone manifests as the threefold forms of *Ishvara* (God), *jeeva* (individual being) and *jagat* (world). That *avyaya-pada* is attained, experienced, by *अमूढाः* (undeluded souls) – i.e., by Jnani-s (those who have realized the Self).

(Purushottam Yog : p 40, 51, 52, 55)

## Hey, may you become a mouse again!

न तद्भासयते सूर्यो न शशाङ्को न पावकः।  
यद्गत्वा न निवर्तन्ते तद्भाम परमं मम॥ 15.6॥

*Neither the sun nor the moon nor fire illumines 'That';  
having gone where they return not;  
'That' is My supreme abode.*

*(Bhagavad Gita, 15.6)*

If one attains Ishvara, then one has no rebirth; this is certain. What then becomes of those who do not attain Bhagavan? Elsewhere in Gita, Bhagavan says – “O destroyer of foes! Those who have no faith in this dharma (knowledge of the Self), do not attain me; and are subject to repeated birth and death.” Alas, alas! it is a matter of great distress... Having been born as a human, you could have developed *vairAgya* (non-attachment); you could have surrendered to a Guru, taken refuge in him; you could have attained realization of *paramAtmA-svarUpa* (God, who is the Supreme-Self)... Even though you had gained the competence/qualification required for attaining Ishvara, you did not attain Him. And you returned just as you were before.

There is a story of a Mahatma. There was a mouse living in his house. One day, the mouse came to the Mahatma, and wept. The Mahatma asked him what his trouble was. The mouse said – ‘Maharaj, a cat is tormenting me.’ The Mahatma said – ‘All right! Go! May you become a cat!’ And Lo! The mouse became a cat! A few days later, he came crying again. On being asked, he said that a dog was troubling him now. The Mahatma said – ‘All right! Go! May you become a dog!’ And he became a dog! A few days later, he came crying again. On being asked, he said that a wolf was troubling him. The Mahatma said – ‘All right! Go, become a wolf!’ And then one day, he came crying again, saying – ‘Maharaj! I am terrified of the lion!’ The Mahatma said – ‘All right! Go, become a lion!’ Upon becoming a lion, he thought – ‘Well! I am a lion made by this Mahatma.

## June 9

If the Mahatma gets cross with me for anything, he will not allow me to remain as a lion. So, let me eat him up.' And with a loud roar, he sprang on the Mahatma. Then, the Mahatma said – '*punarmUshakO bhava!*' – 'Hey, may you become a mouse again!' And he became a mouse again.

So, Narayan! God, out of great compassion, made a blade of grass into a human being. Why did he do that? So that, being born a human, he may attain God. But then, having attained the human form, this chap started saying – 'We have no faith in Ishvara. We are not devotees of his. Indeed, we shall eat up Ishvara.' And so, the consequence – '*punarmUshakO bhava!*' Bhagavan said – 'Be born again in this world, and die!'

**Therefore, upon attaining this human birth, worship Ishvara, and extricating yourself from this world, take yourself to Bhagavan so that you may not be subjected to further births!**

(Purushottam Yog : p 55, 64-66)



## Also, it is important to understand *bandhan* (bondage) first

ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः।  
मनःषष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति॥15.7॥

*The individual soul (jeeva) that comes and goes in this world and the next, is verily an eternal part of me. It is that, which, abiding in nature, draws to itself the (five) senses and the mind (the sixth).  
(Bhagavad Gita, 15.7)*

Now the *jeeva* (individual soul) is described.

Many people propagate a wrong understanding of Vedanta. Without having any understanding of *bandhan* (bondage), they go around saying that there is no such thing as bondage or liberation. As a consequence, one undertakes no effort to overcome bondage; no *shravana-manana* (hearing, understanding, and reflecting upon the teachings of Vedanta), no *bhakti* (devotion), *antaHkarana* (four-fold mind) remains impure, and no *sAdhan-bhajan* (spiritual practices; acts of devotion). (And the result...) The same low-down nature, same hankering for worldly objects, same absorption in sensual pleasures, and the same *samsAra* (of “I” and “mine”).

One day, I had gone to the house of a Seth (a rich merchant). He said – ‘Maharaj, all this business of heaven-hell etc., is a pack of lies, and rebirth does not happen at all.’ And I replied – ‘Yes Sethji! Indeed, all these are lies. A bundle of currency notes alone is real and true!’ Narayan, in fact, this is the sort of Jnana that Virochana<sup>87</sup> had. The Jnana of *daitya* traditions was that one should have constant sensual pleasures, for these are real and true; whereas, hell-heaven, rebirth etc., are all lies.

So, Narayan, never commit the mistake of misunderstanding Vedanta. And to get a proper perspective, one should first get a correct

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87 Grandson of Hiranyakashipu; son of Prahlada

## June 10

understanding about bondage.

With great affection, Bhagavan says – “O brother mine! This *jeeva* is verily a part of me!”

Just see the compassion of God! He is saying that ‘You are indeed mine!’ He, who is the overlord of all Creation, is telling you – “You are verily a part of me!” Just as a father may tell his son – ‘You are verily a part of me!’, so too is Bhagavan’s declaration. So, (O *jeeva*) establish your association with Bhagavan.

(Now, a question) What kind of parts does *chEtana* (Pure Consciousness) have?

All-pervading, indivisible Brahman has no parts. It is only for the purposes of illustration that *jeeva* is conceptualized as being a part of Brahman. What this implies is that, in actuality, *jeeva* is of Bhagavan’s nature, but, out of ignorance, he labours under the belief that he is only a portion of Brahman. In other words, he thinks of himself as a *jeeva*, whereas he is not.

Sitting in the heart, this *jeeva* binds himself to the tools of sense-organs and mind. When the *jeeva* comes to this world, he brings his instruments (the subtle-body) along with him. And when the *jeeva* departs from this world, he leaves the shell (gross-body) behind, and takes the tools of enjoyment (the subtle-body) along with him. This is described by Bhagavan in the next verse (of Gita).

(Purushottam Yog : p 77-84)

## To shed one's individual-identity is very difficult!

Now the question that arises is – What exactly is the nature of *jeeva*, that he is caught in the *samsAra* cycle of coming-going (birth and death)?

So long as you wish to experience the pleasures arising from the mind and senses, you will have to remain as a person (a distinct individual), accept those sense-organs (as being your own self), and experience the joys you seek through them. It is impossible for those who have *vAsanA* (inherent desire) for worldly pleasures to shed their sense of individual-identity.

In reality, coming and going is not inherent in a *jeeva*'s nature; it appears to exist because of the *jeeva* identifying itself with the *upAdhi*-s (limitations imposed by some external conditionings). This topic, with discernment, is explained very clearly by the Gita :

शरीरं यदवाप्नोति यच्चाप्युत्क्रामतीश्वरः।  
गृहीत्वैतानि संयाति वायुर्गन्धानिवाशयात्॥15.8॥

*Whichever body this all-capable jeeva obtains or leaves; in all cases, he takes the mind and senses along, just as the wind takes along the fragrance from different flowers, etc., that it touches.*

*(Bhagavad Gita 15.8)*

*[Now, Maharajshree explains what happens to different types of jeeva-s – viz., the pure sinners, the virtuous, and those who have a mix of sin and virtue.]*

If at the time of death, the *jeeva* remembers the sins that he has committed in life, then he cries – ‘*Alas! Alas! The messengers of yamarAja have come to take me!*’ The *jeeva* becomes so deeply identified with his ‘living soul’ that even the thought that – ‘*My physical body is lying on the cot*’, drops away. Attaining a *yAtanA-shareera* (a special body, that is

designed to experience the tortures of hell), he extricates the senses and mind from the body that he has left behind on the cot. The *jeeva* takes these senses and mind along to his new body, in the manner of the wind that takes along the fragrance from a jasmine flower that it passes over.

Or else, if at the time of death, the *jeeva* remembers the acts of virtue that he has done, then he hears melodious sounds, and it seems as if some air-chariot has come from heaven to take him there. And in that chariot, the messengers of Gods are welcoming him lovingly, saying – ‘Welcome! Welcome!’ Imagine that these messengers of Gods are holding one’s hand, lovingly applying sandalwood paste and garlanding one’s subtle-body, and thus taking one along to heaven.

Or else, if at the time of death, the *jeeva* remembers some items of food or drink, or has thoughts of his wife and family, then he will obtain another body just as he has now (i.e., a human birth), which is visible within him. So, a new dream has come on stage, and the old one has gone. Now, how long will this new dream carry on? It will carry on till the time your *karma-samskAra* (the sense of doership and enjoyership) remains.

If you get to understand the real nature of *jeeva*, then this coming-going (birth-death) will cease; else, it will not. Therefore, for one to attain liberation from birth-death cycle, it is imperative to realize one’s true nature.

(Purushottam Yog : p 85-93)



## Did your eyes see holy men or sensual pleasures?

श्रोत्रं चक्षुः स्पर्शनं च रसनं घ्राणमेव च।  
अधिष्ठाय मनश्चायं विषयानुपसेवते॥15.9॥

*Presiding over the ear, the eye, touch, taste and smell, as well as the mind, it enjoys the objects of the senses.*

*(Bhagavad Gita 15.9)*

Ears : What is your inherent tendency in terms of what you like to hear? What kind of sounds do you listen to? Have you been largely hearing dirty songs, abusive words etc., or have you been hearing songs and talks about God? What you hear has an effect on you.

Eyes : What have you been seeing in life? Have you seen Bhagavan? Have you been seeing holy men, holy deeds of dharma, or have you been seeing sensual pleasures?

Sense of touch : What do you like to touch? Objects of sensual pleasure? Or objects that are sanctified by offering to God?

मनश्च – And mind : What kind of thoughts, desires do you have? By च (And), is included questions such as – ‘what have you been doing with your organs of action? What have you done with your *prANa* (vital energy)? What you have been doing with your *buddhi* (intellect)? What *vichAra* (spiritual inquiry) have you done?

With this subtle-body that is made up of seventeen *tattva*-s<sup>88</sup> (elements), what have you done? By अधिष्ठाय is meant ‘grasping, presiding over’. What this means is that the presiding entity is different from the entities being grasped, presided over.

Narayan! In reality, Atma (Self) does not have the *dharma* (characteristics and functions) of the *budhhi* (intellect); nor that of the

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88 The seventeen elements are: 5 *prANa*-s, 5 organs of action, 5 organs of perception, mind, and intellect.

mind; nor that of *prANa* (vital energy); nor that of the organs of perception; nor that of the organs of action. When this *jeeva* attaches to the sense-organs, mind and intellect; becomes their master; ascends their chariot; believes that they are his own, and exists by relating to them as 'I' and 'mine' – then the Self has identified itself with the non-Self; and it is because of this (wrong identification) that the *jeeva* is forced to enjoy objects (of sound, touch etc). 'Doer' he became, because of association with sense-organs; 'Enjoyer' he became because of the same reason; and his coming and going (birth, death, rebirth etc.,) is but '*aupAdhika*' in nature (i.e., it is an illusory feeling of limitation induced by *jeeva*'s seeming association with the body, mind, intellect). That is why the Vedanti-s say that it is only due to the association of *upAdhi*<sup>89</sup> that the Atma (Self) appears to be sinful or virtuous – i.e. becomes a 'Doer'; it is only due to the association of *upAdhi* that the Atma (Self) appears to experience pleasure and pain – i.e. becomes an 'Enjoyer'; and it is only due to the association of *upAdhi* that the Atma (Self) appears to be coming and going in this world and next, caught in the cycle of birth, death, rebirth etc.<sup>90</sup> It is only when one attains Self-Knowledge that one is freed of *upAdhi*. And until Self-Knowledge does not dawn; until the delusion of duality (of separateness) remains; till that time, the phenomena of coming-going (birth-death) will go on and on; sin and merit will continue to accrue; pleasure and pain will continue to be experienced. Till such time that you do not realize your Self as being of the nature of the One Undivided Brahman, the delusion of dividedness will remain. This is declared by Bhagavan in the next verse : "... *this, the ajnAni-s (ignorant ones) are unable to see. Whereas, those who have obtained the eye of Knowledge, are able to see.*" (*Bhagavad Gita 15.10*)

(Purushottam Yog, p 94-96)

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89 *upAdhi* : A technical term used in Vedanta philosophy for any superimposition that gives a limited view of the Absolute and makes it appear as relative. (Source: *Yoga Vedanta Dictionary* by Swami Sivananda).

90 *The Jivatva of the Jiva is a consequence of the jive's false sense of identity, which consists in the wrong identification of the Self with the individual's body and in the development of the self-sense in the bodied being; this is the upadhi that gives an illusory limitation to the real nature of the Atma.*

## They alone see, who have, by the Grace of the Sadguru, obtained the 'Eye of Knowledge'

उत्क्रामन्तं स्थितं वापि भुञ्जानं वा गुणान्वितम्।  
विमूढा नानुपश्यन्ति पश्यन्ति ज्ञानचक्षुषः ॥15.10॥

*Even when it is leaving the body, or while living in it, or when enjoying experiences while being associated with qualities, the ajnAni-s (ignorant ones) are unable to see it. Whereas, those who have obtained the eye of Knowledge, are able to see.*

*(Bhagavad Gita 15.10)*

Fools have no knowledge of the pure Self. They only see the 'self' that is associated with *upAdhi-s*.<sup>91</sup>

Now, who is it that (really) sees? Look here, Narayan!

He, who,

*Having done lots of lots of bhakti to Bhagavan;  
having crushed desire-anger-greed and having attained  
vairAgya (non-attachment) towards the world;  
having taken refuge in the sadguru;  
having been continuously absorbed in inquiry into the  
substance of Vedanta;  
With the disappearance of doubts and misconceptions,  
having attained Knowledge of the Self, and thereby, he  
whose ajnAna (spiritual ignorance) has ceased;*

Such a one,

Sees!

He sees how this game of God is proceeding. This game of becoming

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91 *upAdhi* : A technical term used in Vedanta philosophy for any superimposition that gives a limited view of the Absolute and makes it appear as relative.  
(Source: Yoga Vedanta Dictionary by Swami Sivananda).

dull (*tamOguNa*); or becoming outward and distracted (*rajOguNa*); or becoming calm (*sattvaguNa*) – all this is but the play of *guNa*-s (qualities) that come and go; all this sport is being carried out in the stadium of *upAdhi*-s. As far as *nirupAdhika* (*upAdhi*-less) Paramatma is concerned, He remains immutable, ever the same.

Just look at *jeeva*'s stupidity! He who is entangled in the world of sense-objects, and is unable to leave them, is known as a *mUDha*, a fool. Actually, Sri Krishna is not so much worried about a *jeeva* getting entangled in worldliness and forgetting God. For He thinks – “*All right, my son! Even if you have forgotten me, I remember you; I think of you. However, what is really sad is that you have forgotten your own Self; what a tragedy that is!*”

Narayan! These foolish people think of money as the be-all and end-all of life. They are willing to die for it. They are willing to take any risk – be it boarding some faulty aircraft, cheating, stealing... They do not fear being publicly disgraced; they do not fear being beaten up; they do not fear being jailed. So drowned are they in the pleasures of the world that they have forgotten their own self. That is why they are called – *vimUDha*<sup>92</sup> – deluded fools. They have the intelligence to earn money; they understand money; that's fine. But for who is this money – the one who experiences the joys of money – him, they do not know. That is why it is said नानुपश्यन्ति – ‘*they do not see.*’

By the Grace of the *sadguru*, those people with pure *antaHkaraNa* (four-fold mind) who have attained the eye of Knowledge -- the knowledge that has been propounded by the Veda -- they see that this *jeeva*, even while abiding in the body, is not limited by the body; it does not die with the death of the body; and even as it appears to be experiencing the pleasures via body-senses, it does not experience them. And even when happiness, distress, distraction, delusion etc., affects (the mind), it has no association with them. पश्यन्ति ज्ञानचक्षुषः – *This, those who have obtained the eye of Knowledge, are able to see.*

(Purushottam Yog : p 96 - 100)

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92 In his *Bhashya*, Shankaracharya describes *vimUDha* as ‘persons who are diversely deluded as a result of their hearts being forcibly attracted by the enjoyments of seen and unseen objects’.

**A *jijnAsu* should be *kRtAtmA* and *sachEtA* !  
(A seeker of knowledge should be self-  
controlled and discriminating!)**

यतन्तो योगिनश्चैनं पश्यन्त्यात्मन्यवस्थितम्।  
यतन्तोऽप्यकृतात्मानो नैनं पश्यन्त्यचेतसः॥15.11॥

*The Yogins striving (for perfection) behold Him dwelling in their Heart; but, the scatter-minded people of impure hearts, even though striving, see Him not.*

*(Bhagavad Gita 15.11)*

Even among all the yogis, he who adores Bhagavan with his mind fixed on Him and with faith, he is best of the yogis (Bhagavad Gita, 6.47). Thus, the Yogi who strives to, sees God '*Atmani*' – i.e., in his own heart.

Whereas, the *akRtAtmA* people – i.e., those of unrefined minds (who do not have self-control), and those who are *achEtasaH* (unconscious; unintelligent; inattentive), do not get a vision of God, even if they strive to.

*akRtAtma* means this... You have nurtured and decorated your gross-body; whereas, you have not nurtured/decorated your subtle-body, the *buddhi* (intellect), using which God is realized, and have not dedicated your *buddhi* to the feet of God.

Buddhi (intellect) is the one that is wedded to Ishvara. One has decorated that which is wedded to 'man', and has not decorated the one that which is wedded to Ishvara. One has not made that a bride. When one makes the gross body the bride, then skin weds skin. Whereas if one nurtures and adorns the intellect, then that (intellect) weds the Omniscient Ishvara. However, those of unrefined intellect– i.e., those with mind seized by delusion of Doership and Enjoyership – are unable to see God.

So, Maharaj, the mind that is bereft of its parents goes wandering

from house to house. (*So, the mind should be trained to remain in a proper dwelling.*) For instance, a girl has two dwellings that are right for her – one is the house of her husband, and the other is that of her father. As far as *buddhi* is concerned, its father is Guru, and its husband is God. Until such time as our *buddhi* does not reach the house of the Omniscient God, it should remain in the house of the Guru, conducting itself as per the directions of the Guru. This is what is meant by the term '*kRtAtmA*' (control of the self/mind); this is what is adornment of *buddhi*.

Now, who is *achEtasaH* (unintelligent)? He who has no faith in the teachings of Bhagavan is *achEtasaH*. Carelessness, negligence, unconsciousness, inattentiveness – all these are signs of '*achEtas*'.

He who has not abandoned bad conduct; he whose mind remains agitated by lust and anger; he who is interested in gaining supernatural powers; he whose mind is fickle; such a person, even if he is a Pundit, will not be able to attain God.

The attainment of a material object is possible even for a man who has no self-control, or the unintelligent (non-discriminating) person. But for the attainment of *paripUrNa-chaitanya-tattva* (the Supreme-Fullness-Consciousness-Reality) that is non-different from the Seer (the individual-consciousness), it is necessary for the seeker to be self-controlled and discerning. So, Narayan! He who cultivates the *buddhi* in accordance with the directions of the Guru and the Shastra-s (scriptures), attains God. The precondition for attaining *paramArtha-jnAna* (Supreme Knowledge) is that the *jijnAsu* should be *kRtAtmA* and *sachEtA*.

(Purushottam Yog, p 101 to 110)

## That which is seen by the eyes, is the *tEjas* of Paramatma

यदादित्यगतं तेजो जगद्भासयतेऽखिलम्।  
यच्चन्द्रमसि यच्चाग्नौ तत्तेजो विद्धि मामकम्॥15.12॥

*That tEjas (light /brilliance) in the sun which illumines the whole universe, that in the moon and that in fire, know that brilliance as Mine.*

*(Bhagavad Gita 15.12)*

It is said that one should get the vision of Paramatma (God; Supreme-Self). ‘सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म’<sup>93</sup> [All this is surely brahman] – Mahatma-s see, with open eyes, Ishvara (Brahman) everywhere, as all forms.

‘एकं सत् विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति’<sup>94</sup> [That which exists (Truth/God) is ONE; sages speak of that variously.] Indeed, there is only one *sat* (Existence; God; Truth); the *brahmajnAni*-s (sages) describe it in many different ways. While the methods of description differ from each other, there is no distinction as far as the *paramArtha-tattva* (Supreme-Reality), which is the object of description.

Srimad Bhagavatam says (3.32.33)<sup>95</sup> :

Let us say that a flower is held in one’s hand. Through the medium of the eye, the flower appears red in colour; through the medium of the skin, it appears soft to touch; by the medium of the tongue, its taste is known; and by the medium of the nose, one knows its fragrance. One object, a flower, is known differently based on the differences of sense-

93 *chhAndogyopaniShad*

94 *Rig Veda 1.164.46*

95 यथेन्द्रियैः पृथग्द्वारैरर्थो बहुगुणाश्रयः । एको नानेयते तद्ब्रह्मगवान्शास्त्रवर्त्मभिः ॥ A single object is appreciated differently by different senses due to its having different qualities. Similarly, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is one, but according to different scriptural injunctions He appears to be different. (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.32.33, <https://vedabase.io/en/library/sb/3/32/33/>)

organs. The base object is but one. In just the same way, 'Bhagavan' – if worshipped in the manner prescribed by the Shastras, is obtained as the 'Compassionate One'; if one does Yoga, He is obtained as the 'Unattached Self' (*asanga AtmA*); and if one pursues the path of *tattva-jnAna* (Inquiry into the actual nature of Reality), then the duality (separateness) of Self (Atma), God (Paramatma), and the world (Jagat) is erased, and God is obtained as the 'Non-dual' presence. Based on the differences in paths for seeking God, He is seen to be of many different forms. The underlying object, the core substance pervading all Creation, has no inherent duality (divisions) whatsoever.

Sri Ramanujacharya Maharaj says that the brilliance seen in the Sun/moon/fire is actually the radiance of Paramatma (God) shining in their form. The deities – Sun, moon and fire – in their previous lives, had worshipped Bhagavan, and had sought *tEjas* (light; brilliance; radiance) from Him. They had prayed to Him for a long period of time – '*tEjo-asi, tejO mayi dEhi; balam-asi, balam mE dEhi*' – "O Bhagavan! You are *tEjas*; please grant us a small amount of your brilliance." The moon prayed – "You are of the nature of delight! Please grant me the light that is of the nature of your delight!" Agni (Fire) deity prayed – "Lord! The *tEjas* in you that is of the nature of that which burns, please grant me that!" Pleased by their worship, the Lord granted them His *tEjas*. Thus, the brilliance shining in the Sun. moon and fire is verily of the Lord. These deities have, by their worship of Bhagavan, received *tEjas* from Bhagavan, and that is how they shine. The light that is seen in them is of Bhagavan. The One, Indivisible *tEjas* – Light – is what is shining as radiance in them.

(Purushottam Yog : p 111 – 113)



## What is surprising is that where there is no joy, people are getting entangled there!

Such are the imaginations you have dreamed up about Ishvara that they are completely contrary to what He really is. Because of this converse conceptualization, you are unable to recognize the Ishvara who is right in front of you.

Brother mine! Ishvara it is, who manifests as all! Gita says – “यदादित्यगतं तेजो” – i.e., that capability of all our sense-organs, which illumines the objects of the senses; “यच्चन्द्रमसि” – i.e., that capability of our mind, which enables thought, decisions, doubts etc.; “यच्चाग्नौ” – that power, which enables our faculty of speech; who or what is that? Indeed, it is He that is Ishvara – “तत्तेजो विद्धि मामकम्” – He it is, who sees; He it is, who speaks; He it is, who thinks. My dear friend! Without Him there is no earth; no water; no fire; no wind; no ether; and no mind either.

The Gopikas say – “Dear sakhee! Sri Krishna keeps playing with me, all the time! When we go to the watering ghat, he is there! When we go to gather gobar (cow-dung), he is there! When we make rOti, he is there! When we churn curds he is there! But then, do you know what happened? My beloved came; he wandered around the courtyard; but, I, naïve girl that I am, was fast asleep.” And that was the reason that he could not be recognized. In Vedanta, this is what is called as ‘ajna’ (ignorance)... For (due to ajna) we are unable to see Ishvara, of whom it is said – ‘The Lord Supreme, neither near nor far, is all and everywhere (is all-pervading)’.

Narayan! Consider this. One attains a human form; gets good intelligence; has satsang (the company of good people); and yet does not attain Ishvara... This is but a sign of intoxication. This is what is known as pramAda (inattentiveness; negligence). The night is over; the day has gone; life is fleeting; moment after moment is being wasted; and Ishvara, even as He is right in front of us, we are unable to see. Ishvara is the surging ocean that is Complete, Indestructible, Life; Absolute Consciousness – Eternal Knowledge – Eternal Radiance; Bliss wherein there is not even a

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*trace of distress. 'आनंद सिंधु मध्य तव वासा, बिन जाने कस मरसी प्यासा'*  
Goswami Tulasidas says – *'You are living in the middle of the ocean of bliss; and without realizing that, you are dying of thirst.'*

Ishvara abides right in our very middle – as our Atma (Self), and mind – इन्द्रियाणां मनश्चास्मि (*Among sense-organs, I am the mind – Bhagavad Gita 10.22*). Who is it that is abiding as our *buddhi* (intellect)? बुद्धिर्बुद्धिमतामस्मि – (*I am the intellect of the intelligent ones – Bhagavad Gita 7.10*) – Aye, it is He who abides as the *buddhi*. Who is the Light of the sun and the moon? It is He alone. Thus, that Paramatma is not far from us at all.

One Acharya has said:

*'The sad thing is this... While the whole of Creation is floating on the bliss-ocean of Paramatma, no one is drinking the rasa (ambrosia), nor even giving it a full glance... What is surprising is that in this world, which is as false as the surface water seen in a desert-mirage, and which has no 'real existence', no greatness, no happiness; in a world such as this, people are getting entangled.'*

(Purushottam Yog : p126-128)

## In one form or another, your God has performed some magic!

गामाविश्य च भूतानि धारयाम्यहमोजसा।

पुष्णामि चौषधीः सर्वाः सोमो भूत्वा रसात्मकः॥15.13॥

*And entering the earth I sustain the beings through (My) power; and nourish all Oshadhee (plants) by becoming sOma (moon), which is of the nature of rasa (nourishing sap).*

*(Bhagavad Gita, 15.13)*

Once, it so happened that Arjuna and Hanuman met somewhere. Both of them started chatting about their personal God with each other. Arjuna, during the course of the conversation said – “What of it? Sri Rama, after all, took the help of apes to bring rocks and hills, and then got a bridge built over the sea. Had I been there, I would have shot arrows one after another and built a bridge of arrows; and all the apes could have used that bridge to safely go across.”

Hanumanji replied – “Brother! In this yuga of Dvapara, humans are small in size. Whereas, during Treta-Yuga (when the bridge was built), we apes were huge in size. Had we stepped on your arrow-bridge, it would have broken.”

Arjuna countered – “Ha! How huge could the apes have been? Oh, you too were one of them. Look! I shall make an arrow-bridge across this rivulet; and you may stand on it and test its strength.”

Now, Arjuna took the name of Sri Krishna, and quickly created an arrow-bridge across that rivulet; and Hanuman, taking Sri Rama’s name, climbed on to it. No sooner did he do that than the bridge simply collapsed.

Arjuna was very disheartened, and he prayed to Sri Krishna – “O Krishna! Please come to my help!” Sri Krishna manifested himself there immediately, and told Arjuna to try once more – build another arrow-bridge. Arjuna then told Hanuman – “I wasn’t fully focused the first time around. Now I shall construct another bridge, and you may climb on to

it.” When Arjuna made that arrow-bridge, Hanuman Ji stepped on it, but the bridge did not break. After creaking a bit, the bridge merely sagged somewhat. Hanumanji laughed, and said – “O Arjuna! Your arrows do not have so much strength as to be able to bear my weight. In one form or another, your God has performed some magic!”

Then, from below the bridge, Sri Krishna emerged, smiling. It could be seen that his upper back was bruised. Both, Hanuman and Arjuna, bowed to him, and asked about the bruise. Bhagavan Sri Krishna told them that he had been bearing the bridge on his back. So, Krishna had entered the bridge unseen, and had borne the bridge on his back; and it was then that the bridge got the strength to bear the weight of Hanuman.

Narayan! Look at the earth! So many huge Himalayan mountains; such birds and beasts; so many trees, rivers, living creatures; and the gravitational pushes and pulls of so many stars and planets; with all this, if Bhagavan had not entered the earth and borne it, the earth could not have lasted. “पुष्णामि चौषधीः सर्वाः सोमो भूत्वा रसात्मकः” (*I nourish all the Oshadhee-s (plants) by becoming sOma (moon), which is of the nature of rasa.*) Oshadhee is that which removes defects and enhances vitality. Food (Oshadhee), when consumed in the body, clears the accumulated waste inside, and infuses vitality to all parts of the body. The moon is sOma, and it nourishes all plants by infusing its own sap of vitality into them. Thus, it is Bhagavan alone, who nourishes all plants by becoming the moon that is of the nature of *rasa* (sap of vitality).

(Purushottam Yog : 129-131)]

## The nature of the world

[ This selection refers to the following three verses of Bhagavad Gita.

द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च।  
क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते॥15.16॥

उत्तमः पुरुषस्त्वन्यः परमात्मेत्युदाहृतः।  
यो लोकत्रयमाविश्य बिभर्त्यव्यय ईश्वरः॥15.17॥

यस्मात्क्षरमतीतोऽहमक्षरादपि चोत्तमः।  
अतोऽस्मि लोके वेदे च प्रथितः पुरुषोत्तमः॥15.18॥

*There are two kinds of personas (Purusas) spoken of in the Sastra - the perishable (kshara) and the imperishable (akshara). The perishable is 'all things' and the imperishable is called the kUtastha (unchanging).*

*But distinct is the Supreme Purusha called the highest Self, the indestructible Lord, who, pervading the three worlds, upholds them.*

*As I transcend the perishable and am even higher than the imperishable, I am acclaimed in the world, as well as in the Veda, as the purushOttama (Supreme Person).]*

In the Vrindavan life of Sri Krishna, there are ever so many juicy stories. There is a story that on one occasion, Sri Radharani became upset and sat down sulking. Distraught she was, and even when Sri Krishna tried to pacify her, she remained stubborn, refusing to be appeased. After making a lot of effort in vain, Sri Krishna hit upon a plan. He rendered

himself into two different forms. One form he took was of a bumblebee buzzing around, and the other was his own form as Sri Krishna, standing there quietly. When He, as the bee, flew towards Radharani, she got scared that the bee may sting her! And terrified, she ran to He, Sri Krishna, and clung to him. And then the bee vanished, and Radharani's stubbornness was broken!

Bhagavan alone is '*purushOttama*' (the supreme person). It is Bhagavan alone who becomes the perishable person, manifests as this universe, and creates fear for the *jlvAtmA* (the individual being). If there is no distress in the world, no separation, no poverty, no inertness, no destructibility – then, why would anyone turn his face away from the world and look towards God? God, therefore, has manifested a perishable form, namely, this world; so that, people may, on their own, develop love towards God. The Upanishad states – “नात्र भोग्यं पश्यामि” – ‘*We have looked everywhere, and there is nothing in this world which is worth enjoying.*’ Where there is *bhOga* (enjoyment), there is *rOga* (disease). Take the case of saliva. The saliva that is spat out is considered extremely impure. However, when tasting food, the same saliva is considered to be pure, and one relishes the taste. This is not just about food alone. It is about every enjoyment in this world. No enjoyment is possible which is unmixed with some contamination, some vice, some sin. There is no worldly pleasure that is devoid of adulteration, or unmixed with sorrow. There is no life in this world, that is not linked to some lifeless object. Without falsehood, there is no worldly truth; without death, there is no life in the world. This is the nature of the world.

In this manner proceeds the perpetual sport of *jeeva* and *Ishvara*; eternal, beginningless, endless. The imperishable one in the form of *parA-prakRti*<sup>96</sup> is what is known as *jeevAtmA* (the individual soul); and Bhagavan, in the form of *purushOttama* (Supreme-Person) is Sri Krishna. The imperishable Atma (*jeeva*) should have pure love for God. When the *jeeva*, instead, is sitting forlorn, looking away from God, then God takes a *kshara* (perishable) form and comes to the *jeeva*. This world is of a *kshara* (perishable) nature. Why does God come, manifest himself, taking a perishable form? The reason is this... When a person's vision goes towards

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96 *parA-prakRti* : the higher *prakRti* (Nature), of the form of individual souls, by which this world is upheld. (Refer Gita, verse 7.5)

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the world-bumblebee, then he realizes that the bee will sting him... And then, that's it – he rushes and clings to Krishna!

(Purushottam Yog : 174-176)



## Do not get too entangled with this body!

‘क्षरःसर्वाणि भूतानि ...’ (*ksharaH sarvANi bhUtAni - Gita 15.16*) An object that is born (comes into being) and dies (ceases to be) is what is known as ‘*bhUta*’. A thing that is born in the world is seen to be existing; and if one thinks that this thing, which has come into being, will never cease to be – then, that notion is completely wrong. It’s like our mistaking a tree stump to be a ghost; the ghost (the wrong notion) disappears upon close examination. Or one sees a snake in a rope, which (snake/notion) disappears on closer look. Or like a dream that came, and then ceased. Tell me – do the objects of the world remain forever? Just as objects seen in a dream cannot be recreated, people who are dead cannot be created once again. What is so special about the waking state? After death, all the objects of the world vanish, just as objects of a dream disappear. When you die, can you bring along same currency notes that you had before? Can you bring along the people you lived with? Can you bring along the same gold and silver (that you had)? It is this that is called ‘*kshara*’ (perishable). Just as a seed of gram grows into a plant that produces gram, a drop of water has produced this body that is made of water bubbles. However much you try to keep this pot (body) strong forever, it won’t hold water; it will fall apart. This body will not remain. This is what is known as *samsAra* – i.e., that which is fleeting.

In Sanskrit, the word ‘*shareera*’ (body) means an object that withers away.

In Persian, ‘*shareera*’ means naughtiness. That which commits mischief is known as *shareera* (body). However much you command the body to desist from dying, it does not obey. It cannot but die. You may well teach it all kinds of things, make it practice Yoga diligently, practice meditation, apply fragrances, adorn it with garlands... But this body will not refrain from mischief. It will not heed your commands. From being a child, it will become a youth; from a youth, it will become an old man; from a state of good health, it will become afflicted by disease; and then it will die. For this body is ‘*kshara*’. So, do not get too entangled with it!

Bhagavan Sri Krishna desires to make us realize His true nature. May



the 'jeeva' not stagnate, identifying with the '*kshara-purusha*' (perishable body) as 'I'; may it not stagnate, taking the *akshara-purusha* (*jeevAtmA* – the seed of the *kshara-purusha*)<sup>97</sup> as 'I'. May this 'jeeva' attain me, the *purushOttama* (Supreme Person). Sri Krishna, the ocean of compassion, is giving this explanation, for the welfare of all living beings, for calling them to His presence, for making them one with Him...

(Purushottam Yog: p 185, 186)



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97 That which is the receptacle of the impressions of desires, actions, etc. of countless transmigrating creatures is called the *akshara-purusha* (Sri Shankaracharya's commentary on Gita verse 15.16)

## My beloved is in my heart; what perturbation is there for me?

All objects pertain to the world, and whatever affinities or associations there are (with these objects), are but of the mind. Think about this – since any association you make is but a mental one, what is the gain in associating yourself with this world of death and burden? Why don't you establish a mental bond with God instead! (If you do that) All good fortune will come to you! All your sorrows will cease.

ऐसे बर को के बरूँ, जो जनमे और मर जाय ।  
बर बरिये गोपाल जू , म्हारो चुड़लो अमर हो जाय ॥

*Why should I marry such a man, who is born and then dies? Marry Giridhar-Gopal shall I, so that my good-fortune deathless abides.*

What is the point in choosing a bridegroom who is subject to birth and death? Marry such a man that after marriage, your marriage remains forever firm, and your good fortune eternal! Now, which husband is like that? The only such spouse is Paramatma (Bhagavan Sri Krishna). Indeed, what is there in any worldly relationship?

Once, two children were playing in the sands in the banks of Ganga river. One of them said to the other – *'Come! Let's eat some make-believe sattoo (powder of parched gram).'* The other kid replied – *'When we have to eat something imaginary, why eat sattoo? Why not eat some imaginary laddoo instead?' Come let's eat some false laddoo, some false halwa, some false poori. Why eat sattoo at all?'*

When you have to forge make-believe mental relationships with the world – (such as) *this is my baby; this is my brother; this is my husband's elder brother's wife; that is my husband's younger brother's wife; this is my friend etc.*, – then why do you not forge these relationships as being with God instead? If you do that, then you will not be affected by the demise of your worldly relatives and associations. That is because He (God) always abides in your heart. And so, there is no room for the sorrow of separation from Him. He will never betray you; never deceive you.

जो बिछड़े हैं पियारे से भटकते दर-बदर फिरते ।  
हमारा यार है हम में हमन को बेकरारी क्या ?

*Those who have separated from beloved, they wander from place to place, life to life;*

*My beloved is in my heart; what perturbation is there for me?*

As our beloved is in our heart, we feel no impatience of any kind at all! Without fear, without delay, we can play with Him, speak with Him! (Whereas) All associations of the world are untrue, imaginary.

So, any entity that dies, is not a real one; any entity that is subject to change is not real either. Only that entity is real, which has no death, no change. And that entity is what is called as Purushottama (Supreme Person). He is superior to entities that perish, change.

What this means is that all entities which are subject to change and death are unreal; and Purushottama alone is real.

(Purushottam Yog: p 17-198)

## Act wisely

At the end of Chapter 15 of Gita, Bhagavan Krishna conveys the great benefit that the ‘Knowledge of Purushottama’ bestows – ‘एतद्बुद्ध्वा बुद्धिमान्स्यात्कृतकृत्यश्च भारत’ – *‘O sinless Arjuna! Any man or woman who gets a proper understanding of this, becomes a jnAni (Self-realized sage), and for him, no further duty, whatsoever, remains to be done.’*<sup>98</sup>

In this verse, what does the word ‘*buddhimAn*’ signify? Gita verse 7.10 says - बुद्धिर्बुद्धिमतामस्मि - *buddhimatAm* – Of those who are intelligent; of people having the power of discrimination; Bhagavan it is, who is abiding as *buddhih*, the intellect, the power of discrimination. Therefore, here the word *buddhi* signifies *bhagavadAkAravRitti* (the mind state that has taken the form of God Himself), *brahmAkAravRitti* (the mind state that has taken the form of brahman, the Non-dual, Pure-Consciousness)<sup>99</sup>. So, *brahma-jnAna* is what is meant here by the term *buddhi*. Thus, the person who attains knowledge of Purushottama is a *buddhimAn* – and he is someone who has no further duty remaining to be done (for he has accomplished life’s highest purpose).

This is indeed an amazing topic!

One should realize that every person has some duties to perform. All such activities that we need to do are known as ‘*kRitya*’. Narayan! The list of such duties that need to be done is so long that no ordinary man can finish doing them even in a whole lifetime. And since he is unable to complete the tasks on hand, he dies lamenting – “*Alas! Alas! So many*

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98 इति गुह्यतमं शास्त्रमिदमुक्तं मयाऽनघ। एतद्बुद्ध्वा बुद्धिमान्स्यात्कृतकृत्यश्च भारत॥ -  
‘O sinless one, this most secret scripture has thus been uttered by Me.

Understanding this, one becomes wise and has his duties fulfilled, O scion of the Bharata dynasty.’ (Gita 15.20, Translation by Swami Gambhirananda)

99 *Brahmakara vritti* is a state of mind that involves “thoughts that have the shape of the Divine [Brahman].” *Brahmakara vritti* is equated with *samadhi*, which is enlightenment and the mind’s ultimate state of being. *Samadhi* is the eighth and final limb of Patanjali’s eight-step path of yoga. The mind no longer perceives plurality and duality. Its existence has become limitless consciousness, both timeless and spaceless. Individuality no longer exists. (Source: Yogapedia <https://www.yogapedia.com/definition/9491/brahmakara-vritti>)

*duties that I should have completed in my life, remain undone. Alas!"*

So, Narayan, know, understand, the topic that has been covered in the 15<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Gita. 'एतद्बुद्ध्वा बुद्धिमान्स्यात्' (*After understanding this, man becomes a buddhimAn – a man of wisdom*). Act wisely – act with understanding. If you get a proper understanding of the topic covered in this chapter, you will have nothing further to accomplish – no duty that remains to be performed. All duties drop away. And by this cessation of duties, all problems drop away. Why is that? It's because a man ends up committing *pApa* (sin) only in the process of performing his duties. When one is doing something for someone, one may neglect someone else, insult someone, commit some violence etc. Thus, duty is inevitably associated with some defect, some demerit. It is the doctrine of Gita that 'सर्वारम्भा हि दोषेण' – '*All undertakings are enveloped by defects*' (Gita , 18.48). Whatever work one undertakes in life, it is always associated with some defect, some evil. No work is possible that is totally free of defects.

So, the best thing to do is to reach such a state where there is no quarrel about any duties to be done. Thus, Sri Krishna has said - एतद्बुद्ध्वा बुद्धिमान्स्यात् – '*When you understand this properly, you will become a buddhimAn (man of wisdom)*'. Knowledge of *paramAtmA* (Supreme-Self) that is non-different from one's own *AtmA* (individual Self) is what is true wisdom. And without that knowledge one cannot become a *kRitakRitya* (a person who has successfully completed all his duties, and has realized the highest purpose of life).

(Purushottam Yog : p 258-261)

**A *durAchAree* too can become a *dharmAtmA*  
(A person of bad conduct too can become a  
man of virtue)**

अपि चेत्सुदुराचारो भजते मामनन्यभाक् ।  
साधुरेव स मन्तव्यः सम्यग्व्यवसितो हि सः॥

(Gita – 9.30)

*Meaning: Even if it be, that a man who worships Me with one-pointed devotion is someone of very bad conduct, he is to be considered a Sadhu (a good person); for he has resolved rightly.*

Now, a question comes up – ‘If a *durAchAree* (person of bad conduct) turns to God, what will God do? Will He reject the *durAchAree* or keep him in his hold? For there are instances of devotees of God, who fall from good conduct at times. Their *jnAna* (knowledge of God) too may be incomplete. What would be God’s view regarding such people? Well, God will not concern Himself with that person’s knowledge or conduct. What He will see is that person’s devotion, his love. In fact, God doesn’t see anything except for a person’s love towards Him.

Earlier, God’s eyes used to notice everything; but then, he put on a lens made of his devotee’s love, which blocks any vision of His devotee’s deficiency in *jnAna* or lapse of conduct. He sees his devotee’s love alone.

Bhagavan just cannot see any defects in his devotee. He is blind as far as devotee’s defects are concerned. While He keeps his eyes open when it comes to noticing a devotee’s virtues, He shuts His eyes when it comes to noting his faults.

A devotee (who was earlier of bad conduct) made a vow – ‘*From now on, I shall serve God alone; and no one else.*’ Whereupon, God proclaimed – ‘*O Mahatma-s! Note this! Henceforth, you should not call this devotee a *durAchAree*. Know him to be a wholly good man.*’

A man’s life is not formed by his deeds; rather, it is formed by his resolve; his intent. Do not assign too much value to *karma* (deeds). Assign

greater value to his *nischaya* (resolve); what has he resolved?

Look here. When a man is walking somewhere, it may happen that he meets some accident, has a fall. Once, we were on our way to Badrinath. It was a hard climb, and by the time we reached Devaprayag, we were totally worn out; our state was such that we could not walk any further. We halted there for five or six days. We took medicines as per Doctor's advice, recovered our strength, and then proceeded ahead towards Badrinath. The point is this – just because one has a fall, or one becomes so tired that one staggers on trembling legs, the journey should not be cancelled. If you have resolved to reach somewhere, then brave the challenges that you face. If the going is so tough that you are staggering at every step, let it be. If you stumble and fall, let it be. Each time it happens, get up again, walk again. Falling down is not a crime. Wrongdoing is when you cancel the journey because of a fall. Your faith should not falter. Remain firm in your resolve that – *'I shall reach the destination, come what may.'* – सम्यग्व्यवसितो हि सः (... for he has rightly resolved).

Do not think that a *durAchAree* cannot become a *dharmAtmA*. If he was not to become a virtuous man, how could he have proceeded towards God at all? (And one more thing...) The fruits that he will receive for his Godward journey will also be defect-free. For Bhagavan Sri Krishna declares (in the very next verse) : क्षिप्रं भवति धर्मात्मा शश्वच्छान्तिं निगच्छति – *'He soon becomes possessed of a virtuous mind and attains everlasting peace.'* (Gita 9.31)

(Sri Gita Rasa Ratnakar : p 412-414)

## God is not a businessman!

ये तु धर्मामृतमिदं यथोक्तं पर्युपासते।

श्रद्धाणा मत्परमा भक्तास्तेऽतीव मे प्रियाः॥12.20॥

*But<sup>100</sup> those people endowed with faith, who, having accepted me as the Supreme Goal, resort to the aforesaid nectar of dharma (virtue, conducive to immortality) with love and without any selfish desires; those devotees are extremely dear to me.*

*(Bhagavad Gita, 15.13)*

Bhagavan's words here are worthy of contemplation. He who is a *jnAni-bhakta* (a devotee who has attained Self-Knowledge); who is endowed with the virtues beginning with अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां listed by Bhagavan in the earlier verses (Gita 15.13 and 15.14); he has been spoken of by Bhagavan as being '**priya**' (**dear**) to Him. Whereas, that devotee, who is devoid of these virtues, but is putting in efforts to cultivate them in his life; who is seeking God, but is yet to attain Him; who, based just on faith, has accepted Bhagavan as the Supreme Goal; such a devotee is being spoken of by Bhagavan as being '**ateeva priya**' (**exceedingly dear**) to Him. This declaration seems to be somewhat topsy-turvy. However, if we think about this deeply, it becomes clear that such a devotee (who is but an aspirant, yet to cultivate the virtues necessary for realizing God) is like a child; a toddler who is making attempts to walk. Such a devotee has a greater need for encouragement and love (than the one who has already attained the Supreme Goal).

He who is a *jnAni-bhakta*; who has attained God realization; who constantly sips the nectar of God's beauty and sweetness; if such a devotee has great love for God, what is special about it? If such a devotee does not have love for God, then it will be a matter of astonishment. Virtues such as '*advEsha*' etc., have become a part of his very nature. He has to make no extra efforts to attain these. If he who sees God in one and all does

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100 Tu (but) is used to distinguish those who have attained the highest Goal from the aspirants. (Source : Swami Gambhirananda in his translation of this verse)



not bear ill-will towards any one, what is so great about it? Whereas, a devotee who has not seen God; who has not sipped the nectar of God's beauty and sweetness; has merely heard of God's greatness; has put his faith on what he has heard and has surrendered to God, accepting Him as his Supreme Goal, and has started loving Him; towards such a devotee, surely, God should have exceeding love. This devotee does not see God in his enemy; he sees an enemy as just an enemy. But having heard that God abides in all beings, he is attempting to eschew ill-will towards that enemy. Such a childlike, striving, faithful devotee is exceedingly dear to God.

A *sAdhaka-bhakta* (a devotee striving to attain God realization) is like a small child. While parents love all their children, they do have more love towards the youngest one; this is quite natural. God loves a *jnAni-bhakta* too; but He has exceeding love for a *sAdhaka-bhakta*. An ordinary person may find it quite contrary that God has less love towards a devotee who is ripe in bhakti (devotion); and has more love towards a devotee who is on the path to attain bhakti. But then, God is not a businessman, measuring the weight of bhakti on his shopping-scale and handing out his love accordingly. What he sees is – '*For whom is greater encouragement necessary?*'

(Bhakti Yog: p 355 – 357)

## Gradations of vision of Bhagavan

भक्त्या मामभिजानाति यावान्यश्चास्मि तत्त्वतः।  
ततो मां तत्त्वतो ज्ञात्वा विशते तदनन्तरम्॥18.55॥

*Through devotion, he comes to know Me fully - who and what I am in reality, who I am and how I am. Knowing Me thus in truth, he forthwith enters into Me.<sup>101</sup>*

In this verse, Bhagavan has conveyed the position very clearly. He says भक्त्या मामभिजानाति – I may be known through Bhakti (devotion). One cannot know me by merely seeing me. It is by serving me (with devotion) that I am known.

Every day, during deep-sleep, the Atma (Self) remains as a non-doer and non-enjoyer. Indeed, every person remains in this state for several hours a day. But does one get *brahma-jnAna* (Knowledge of Brahman) because of this? In deep-sleep, there is no experience of happiness-sorrow, doership-enjoyership etc., and all associations, identities are dissolved. Even so, *brahma-jnAna* does not come about. The fact is that until *shravana-manana-nididhyAsana* is not practiced, *brahma-jnAna* will not be attained. Therefore, just vision of Paramatma is not enough; one should know Him with certainty.

भक्त्या मामभिजानाति – A devotee knows Bhagavan through Bhakti. There are several grades of vision of Bhagavan.

1. One has a vision of Bhagavan; a glance; but there was nothing spoken.
2. Bhagavan was seen; spoken with too; but God did not ask the devotee to seek a boon.
3. God asked the devotee to seek a boon; granted the boon; but He did not tell the devotee that ‘*You are mine.*’
4. God did all the above, including accepting him as His own; but He did not tell the devotee that ‘*I am yours.*’

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101 English rendering by Swami Adidevananda <https://www.gitasupersite.iitk.ac.in/>

5. God did all the above; accepted the devotee as belonging to Him, and declared Himself as belonging to the devotee. But He did not tell the devotee that – ‘*You and I are non-different*’.
6. God made the devotee non-different from Himself. It is this state that is spoken of in Vedanta as *AvaraNa-bhanga* (removal of the veil of ignorance).

Upon *AvaraNa-bhanga* (cessation of ignorance), the brahman-filled thoughts that abide in *jnAni* all through His life, is what is known as Bhakti.

Bhagavan Sri Krishna’s discourse on *bhakti-yOga*, which began in Chapter-12 of Bhagavad-Gita, is concluded in this manner, here, in the 18<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the Gita.

(Bhakti Yog : p 367-369/373)



## The joy of *Ishvara*-worship is stain-free

भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम्<sup>102</sup> - Connect your love with God.

With love, worship God in your heart. Relish the taste of *Ishvara*. How does one taste *Ishvara*? His taste comes into the *bhOga* (the eatables that you offer Him as a part of worship). Indeed, the purity/holiness of *Ishvara* comes into the *bhOga* offered to Him. Here, one is not referring to the *bhOga* offered ostentatiously or just for the sake of ritual. It is when *bhOga* is offered with one's love that the taste of God permeates it.

There was a man who used to perform a lot of worship; rolling the *japa-mAlA*<sup>103</sup> constantly, doing his *mantra-japa*. When offering worship, his eyes would be streaming tears, and he would experience horripilation. I asked him whether he felt pleasure when he offered worship. He answered in the affirmative. Then I asked him – ‘Well, compare it with the pleasure that you get when you eat some sweet, say a piece of jaggery. When you do *bhajana*, do you get happiness in equal measure (as when you taste jaggery) or not?’ He said that he would have to think about it before answering. He then asked for some jaggery and tasted it. And he told me – “I feel greater pleasure when I eat jaggery; but I feel a sense of impurity, an element of stain in that. Whereas the pleasure that I experience when I do *bhajana*, gives me a feeling of purity, cleanness.”

When one does *bhajana*, there is no interaction of sense-organs and sense-objects. And therefore, there is no impurity. The happiness that one gets when offering worship is as if pure water is dripping from a glacier in one's heart, streaming, flowing. The heart becomes so pure, so glacial that *amrita-ganga* (nectar of Ganga) flows from there. It is so cool and delicious – sages of yore used to actually drink it.

रस गगन गुफा में अजर झरै |

Kabirdas says that in the cave of heart-space, there is a perennial

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102 तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम्। ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते॥ - To them who are ever devoted and worship Me with love, I grant that possession of wisdom by which they reach Me. (Gita 10.10 ; Translation by Swami Gambhirananda)

103 Rosary of beads, used to count one's recitation of mantra

flow of nectar... A stream of *amrita-ganga* (river Ganga of the form of nectar) flows in the heart, and that stream comes and falls on Lord Shiva of the form of effulgence. Look! What joy one feels! A joy that is completely free of any stain!

And as regards worldly pleasures – e.g., after a meal one has to wash one's hand and mouth. If there is no uncleanness, why would it be necessary to wash and wipe? After enjoyment of sense-pleasures, one has to clean-up. Whatever be the object enjoyed, there is always some uncleanness.

If one applies perfume on the body, and does not wash it off with soap the next day, the body becomes dirty after a few days. One has applied perfume! But there is dirtiness too! There is uncleanness in worldly enjoyment. Whereas the joy of Ishvara is stainless, pure, holy.

(Vibhuti Yog : 264-265)



## Double Compassion

तेषामेवानुकम्पार्थमहमज्ञानजं तमः।

नाशयाम्यात्मभावस्थो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता॥10.11॥

*Purely out of compassion for my devotees, I, residing in their hearts, destroy the darkness born of ignorance with the luminous lamp of Knowledge.*

Here, Bhagavan Sri Krishna is Himself giving a description of the special compassion that He bestows to His devotees. Normally, good etiquette requires that if one does someone a favour, one should not speak of it. One should not tell that person – ‘*Look! I have done you this special favour.*’ But this is a different context. Here, the compassion that God is bestowing on His devotee, the love that He is showering on him, is such that it is difficult for most worldly people, devotees, to clearly comprehend it. And until the devotees get to understand it, they do not stand to gain from it.

Thus, this description about Bhagavan’s compassion to devotees, which has been shared voluntarily by Him, is a further act of compassion on His part. In other words, it is ‘*double compassion*’. Because, for those who do not have an understanding of God’s compassion, God’s love – the compassion and love bestowed on them by God does not bear any fruit. The reason is that the barrenness, hardness, of their heart, is not conducive to that. That is why God, out of His compassion, Himself explains this to them.

Bhagavan sees His devotees, and thinks – ‘*These devotees of mine! They dance for me, sing for me, play musical instruments; they fix their mind and intellect in me, speak of me, attach themselves to me at all times. Now, my devotees do all this by putting in a lot of effort. They have to apply themselves to this task by relying on their sense of doership. They hold on to me by means of a great effort on their part. Now, I should bestow such compassion on them that it is not necessary for them to put in so much effort, while I too remain constantly available to them.*’ This, the

dawn of *jnAna* accomplishes. That is the uniqueness/greatness of *jnAna*.

Bhakti's specialty is that a devotee holds on to his beloved Bhagavan by means of his mind, intellect, speech, karma (activities).

Seeing such a great effort being put in by his devotees, the ocean of compassion in God's heart swells, and He says – 'Let me do something by which there is no need for them to exert themselves to hold on to me... Out of compassion for them, let me do that by which they are freed from the hard labour of *sAdhanA*.'

That is why, Bhagavan, in order to remove the notions of *sAdhan* (means) and *sAdhyA* (object to be attained), axes the very notion of '*not having attained the objective*'.

In this manner, Bhagavan, purely out of compassion, destroys the delusion of *sAdhya-sAdhanA* (i.e., removes the mistaken notion that there is an object that one has to attain and that one needs to exert oneself to attain it.)

(Vibhuti Yog : p 295-296)



## Manifestations of Bhagavan's Glory are indeed divine!

Look! For a person who has had a vision of Sri Krishna even once; for a person in front of whom Sri Krishna's beauty has manifested even once; for him, who has had even one glance of Sri Krishna's glorious presence; such a person can never be entangled by the opulence of *samsAra* (worldly things). For he has now got hold of such a magic; he has received a secret-spell that is so wonderful that the world can offer nothing which betters it. Why would he then be enticed by any object of the world? This God's *vibhUti* – meaning, Glory – is indeed divine. And none other than Bhagavan can reveal this, nor speak of it. Because, the secret behind this is known to Him alone.

Let me share a personal experience. Once, when I was staying in Vrindavan, I became very saddened by something that happened. So, I said to myself – *'I shall go away from here. I'll never come here again. After all, what is there in Vrindavan?'* Seized by anger, I picked up my *daNDa* (monk's wooden rod) and *kamaNDalu* (water-pot); *kamaNDalu* in my left hand, *daNDa* in my right, I set off to exit Vrindavan. Now, I had no bag or bundle; no idea where I would go to; no money to buy a ticket to anywhere. When I was crossing the boundary of Vrindavan, walking past the temple of 'Luteriya Hanuman', I came to a canal, across which there was a bridge; and that area abounded with shrubs and trees. My eyes fell on the greenery. And I felt that these were not just trees and plants. Absolutely golden leaves; resplendent, golden branches; branches gently swaying in the wind; I felt as if they were pacifying me, asking me – *'Hey! Where are you off to?'* This is a manifestation of Sri Krishna's glory! So, on that occasion, Vrindavan manifested its glory; and when that pacified me in Vrindavan, I returned back.

This *vibhUti* (glory) of Bhagavan can be seen in this very world. Sometimes it manifests in the form of sages, and sometimes in the form of divine deities. In places like Himalaya, banks of Ganga, Vrajabhoomi, many such glorious manifestations can be seen.



याभिर्विभूतिभिर्लोकानिमांस्त्वं व्याप्य तिष्ठसि॥10.16॥ – In all the worlds that there are, pervading all these worlds by His own divine glories, exists Bhagavan.

Yes! Wherever you see, Bhagavan is there! Wherever you see, there is manifestation of Bhagavan's glory! It is but the shortcoming of our vision, defect of our eyes, that we are unable to see this!

(Vibhuti Yog : p 407-409)



## Come to me and I will give you rest!

Keep an eye on your self-satisfaction and remorse. If you do something bad, you would definitely feel remorseful; you will feel miserable, for sure. Whereas, if your activity is filled with self-satisfaction, then you will gain the fruits of your good acts then and there, in the form of gladness, happiness. Think about it yourself; when you happen to reprimand someone, don't you feel regretful afterwards? And if you bring a smile to a crying face; bring cheer to a gloomy man; make a sorrow-stricken man happy even once; then this is indeed a great work accomplished by you.

This Bhagavad-Gita of yours is set to grant you supreme joy, right now. This Bhagavati-Gita – this Goddess Gita – is a flowing stream of music, handing out joy to one and all, giving *rasa*<sup>104</sup>, granting *jñāna* (Knowledge), handing out *life* itself. Gita says that Ishvara resides in your heart, and that Ishvara is '*puṇyagandhaḥ*' (of sweet fragrance)<sup>105</sup>. By means of His presence, a sweet fragrance emanates from your heart and spreads outside. '*raso-aham-apsu kaunteya*'<sup>106</sup> – Ishvara is *rasa*. There is a fountain of *rasa* springing from your heart. Ishvara is the repository of beauty and sweetness; and so, your life is bursting with beauty and sweetness.

Ishvara is very soft, very tender hearted. He is full of mercy, love, compassion, fondness. Therefore, all these virtues should manifest in your life too. Ishvara has infinite prowess. And so, there is a powerful force, a tremendous prowess, inside you as well; by means of which you are capable of turning this whole world upside-down. Indeed, you are a part of that Ishvara who is filling the whole of Creation with satisfaction and happiness.

Mother Gita has come, in order to distribute this *jñāna* (Knowledge),

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104 *Rasa stands for anything that is a means of satisfaction, i.e., a source of joy. E.g., a sweet juice. At the highest level, Gita hands out Self-Knowledge, which is the source of eternal happiness.*

105 *Refer Gita 7.9*

106 *Refer Gita 7.8*

this 'life' – which is 'sat' (eternal existence), 'cit' (life/consciousness), and 'ananda' (joy).

Earlier, I used to read a line in the Bible, which said – “Come to me, all of you who labor and are heavy laden, and I shall give your rest.”<sup>107</sup>

Then again, there is a verse in Gita, where Bhagavan makes a similar declaration.

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं ब्रज।

अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः॥18.66॥

*Abandoning all forms of rites and duties, take refuge in Me alone. I shall free you from all sins. (Therefore) do not grieve. (Gita 18.66)*<sup>108</sup>

Indeed, the words of assurance of Bible resonate with this declaration of Gita. In our Gita, Bhagavan has said – ‘Do not depend on anyone else; put your faith in Me alone. I shall free you from all sorrow.’

(Gita mein bhakti-jnan samanvay : 107-109)

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107 Mathew 11.28 : New King James Version. Alternate reading - “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavily burdened (by religious rituals that provide no peace), and I will give you rest (refreshing your souls with salvation)” [Source: Amplified Bible <https://www.bible.com/bible/1588/MAT.11.28.AMP>]

108 Translation by Swami Gambhirananda

## Bhagavan is the Crest-Jewel of those of good heart!

Gita is for the lowly; Gita is for the noble; Gita is for all.

Whatever religions there are, they all say that *he who does not agree with our scriptures, does not belong to our religion*. Surely, you would have heard such assertions – e.g., he who does not have faith in the Bible, what kind of Christian is he? He who does not have faith in the Quran, what kind of Muslim is he? Even Vaidika people say that ‘he who does not have faith in the Veda, is expelled from all dharma; what is there to speak of him?’

However, Gita has cast its eye on this topic, and commentators have had to apply their mind on it. I am sure that you have read the Gita; if not, then do surely read it. If you do not want to read it much, make it a practice to read just two verses a day. In this manner, you will be able to complete one round of Gita in about a year’s time.

Have a look at this verse.

ये शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य यजन्ते श्रद्धयाऽन्विताः।  
तेषां निष्ठा तु का कृष्ण सत्त्वमाहो रजस्तमः॥17.1॥

*O Krishna! What is the state of those who perform adorations– offer worship, perform sacrifices, donate wealth etc. in honour of Gods and others – while setting aside the injunctions of the scriptures, but nevertheless with implicit faith? To what category does such faith belong - sattva, rajas or tamas?*

It’s a fascinating question. And the kind of answer that has been given to this question by the Gita, cannot be found in any other religion or path in the world. What can I tell you about the meaning of the word ‘*utsRijya*’! It signifies something that is in opposition to the teachings of Acharya-s! Well, ‘*utsRijya*’ means – ‘*intentionally abandon*’. You can see for yourself... Take any religion that is book-based; if any person belonging to that religion intentionally abandons the injunctions of the book, it is

considered a great offence. Even if such a person has *shraddhA* (implicit faith in whatever worship he is doing), it is not considered as a *sadguNa* (virtue). However, it is the stated position of Gita that – ‘We see the heart of the devotee, wherein *shraddhA* resides’. Bhagavan sees the heart. In this world too, people of good-heart see only the heart. And Bhagavan is the crest-jewel of those of good-heart! And He says that those who are endowed with implicit faith; even if they abandon the injunctions of scriptures, their faith will lift them and take them forward. *shraddhA* (faith) is the mother of *bhakti* (devotion). From faith, Bhakti begins. ‘आदौ श्रद्धा ततः साधुसंगोऽथ भजनक्रिया’<sup>109</sup> – first there is *shraddhA* (faith); then one has *satsanga* (association with virtuous people); then one performs devotional service<sup>110</sup>.

When you repeatedly contemplate on Bhagavan – with *shraddhA* (faith), *ruchi* (taste) and *preeti* (love) – why will Bhagavan not reveal Himself in your heart?

(Gita mein bhakti-jnana samanvay : p 35-36)



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109 Sri Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu (1.4.15-16)

110 Different forms of bhakti such as shravana, kirtana, smarana, pada-sevana, archana, vandana, dasya, sakhya and atma-nivedana.

## Make your heart *shOk*-proof<sup>111</sup>

तं विद्याद् दुःखसंयोगवियोगं योगसंज्ञितम्।  
स निश्चयेन योक्तव्यो योगोऽनिर्विण्णचेतसा ॥6.23॥

*That in which there is severance (viyOga) of contact (samyOga) with sorrow (duhkha), is what is to be known by the term 'Yoga'. This Yoga has to be practised with perseverance and with an undepressed heart.*

‘तं विद्याद् दुःखसंयोगवियोगं ...’ – Here, Bhagavan Sri Krishna is intentionally drawing your attention to the phrase दुःखसंयोगवियोगं – ‘severance (viyOga) of contact (samyOga) with sorrow (duhkha)’. There arises a question. Is severance of sorrow itself *yOga*? If sorrow itself is cut off – meaning – if sorrow goes away to some foreign land, i.e., one just throws sorrow far away from oneself so that one part of it goes off towards America and the other part towards Europe – is this what is *yOga*? No! Yoga is not absence of sorrow. Rather, it is the severance *of contact* with sorrow, which is called Yoga. Sorrow may well be there – but one severs contact with it – meaning, one does not allow it to stick to oneself. Well may one face birth and death; lose one’s wealth; see one’s house destroyed; and there may well be many other sorrows that one continues to encounter; but these sorrows should not stick to us. Do not attempt to rid a pond of all leeches first; rather, apply some medication by which the leeches do not stick to you while you bathe or swim there.

So, let the world remain just as it is. Do not try to erase it. Let those who die, die; let those who part, part; let that which drops off, go; but bear this in mind – do not let any suffering stick to you. Saving oneself from the sticking of sorrow is what is the work of Yoga.

There is a story of a woman whose baby died. In the manner of a mother-monkey that carries her dead baby and refuses to put it down – this woman carried her dead baby everywhere, pleading with the world

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111 *shOk: Sorrow*

– ‘Please make him alive! Please make him alive! Please make him alive!’ People said that she has gone mad. Then, some people thought of a mischief, and told her to take her child to Buddha. They told her that he was a great Mahatma who was capable of bringing her baby back to life. This woman went to Buddha and asked him – ‘Baba! Please make my baby alive!’ Buddha told her – ‘Mother! I shall make him alive. But, for me to do that, you have to go and get me a handful of mustard-seeds from such a house, where there is a family that has not had no deaths at all in their lineage.’ The woman went here and there, but found no such family anywhere – and returned without mustard seeds.

In like manner, if you are someone who wishes that no one who is dear to you should die, and then alone will you be happy – then such a desire is a misplaced one. Let one who dies, die. But let the sorrow of that death not pervade you. Rather than making your heart shock-proof, make it *shOk*-proof (sorrow-proof).

In the second-half of the verse, two things have been said. First - निश्चयेन योक्तव्यः – *one must engage in this Yoga, with a firm resolve*; and the second – अनिर्विण्णचेतसः – *with an undepressed heart, no despondency*. One should not lose heart, saying – ‘Hey! I have been doing sAdhanA for a long-long time, but to no avail.’ One should be firm in one’s resolve, and practice Yoga with perseverance and with an undepressed heart.

(Gita Rasa Ratnakar – p 295-297)

वृष्णात् परं किमपि

तत्त्वमहं न जाने ।

ऊर्ध्वपडाब्दे





**Parampujya Sri Poornananda Teertha**  
**Brahmamurti Sri Udiya Baba-ji Maharaj**

