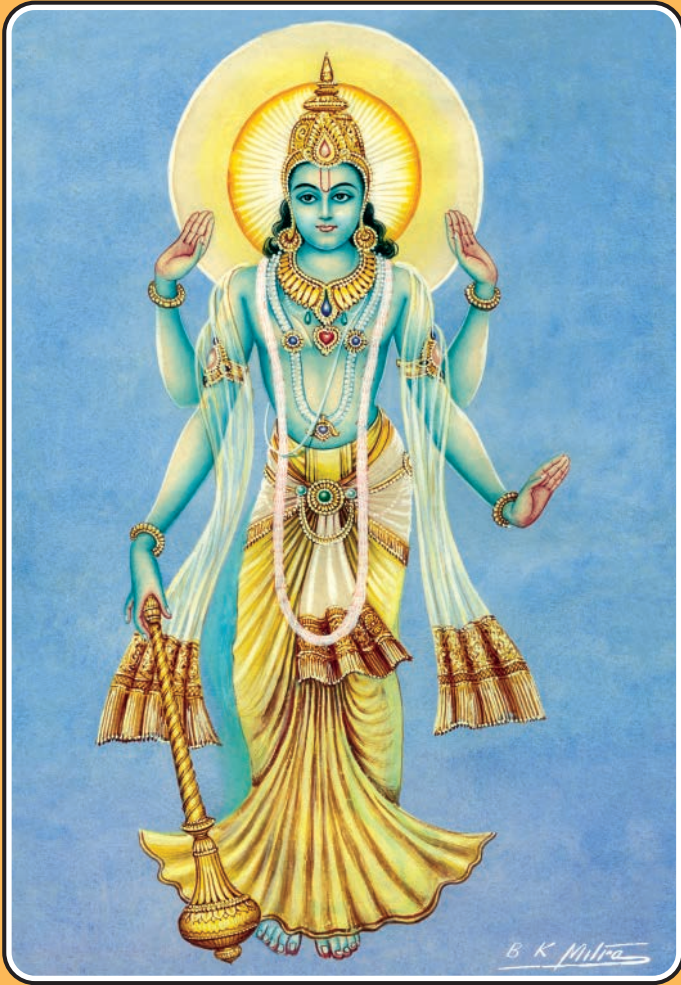


# Kalyana-Kalpataru

Price: ₹ 6



**Bhagavān Viṣṇu**

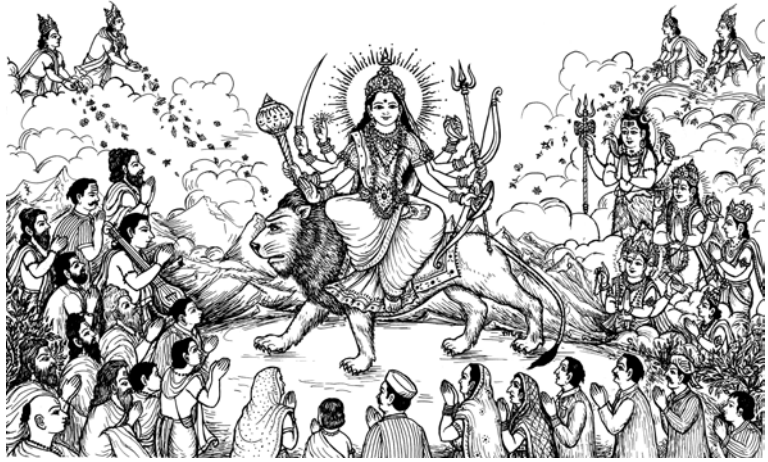
**Vol. 60  
No. 11**

**Gita Press, Gorakhpur**

**August  
2015**



ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



# KALYANA-KALPATARU

A MONTHLY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF SPIRITUAL  
IDEAS AND LOVE FOR GOD

Vol. 60

August 2015

No. 11

## Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Arjuna

हतो वा प्राप्स्यसि स्वर्गं जित्वा वा भोक्ष्यसे महीम् ।  
तस्मादुत्तिष्ठ कौन्तेय युद्धाय कृतनिश्चयः ॥

(Gītā II. 37)

Die, and you will win heaven; conquer, and you enjoy sovereignty of the earth; therefore, stand up Arjuna, determined to fight.

# C O N T E N T S

1. Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Arjuna	.....	3
2. A Story to Comprehend Divine Grace — <i>Brahmalina Sri Jayadayal Goyandka</i>	.....	5
3. Our Duty towards the Destitute — <i>Nityalilalina Sri Hanumanprasad Poddar</i>	.....	10
4. Selfless Service—the Worship of the Lord — <i>Brahmalina Swami Ramsukhdas</i>	.....	15
5. Karmayoga and Selflessness	.....	17
6. Dāmājī: A True Devotee	.....	18
7. Devī— <i>Swami Krishnananda</i>	.....	21
8. The Secret of True Prosperity— <i>Swami Jyotirmayananda</i>	.....	24
9. Prayer— <i>Dr. Girish Goel</i>	.....	26
10. Rāma Darśana— <i>R. Subrahmanian</i>	.....	27
11. Tranquillity of Mind	.....	31
12. Bhakti During the Vedic Period— <i>Dr. M. S. Manhas</i>	.....	34
13. Read and Digest	.....	43
14. Never be Dejected— <i>Swami Rama Tirtha</i>	.....	44
15. Self-Enquiry— <i>M. Hafiz Syed</i>	.....	45
16. Songs of Kabīra	.....	50
17. Manifest What You Are— <i>Swami Chidananda</i>	.....	51
18. Viveka: True Discrimination	.....	54
19. Smile in the Present Moment!— <i>Prof. Sudesh Gogia</i>	.....	60
20. Deliverance of Two Vilest Sinners — <i>Tridandiswamy B. S. Niskinchana</i>	.....	62

## ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Arjuna
2. Bhagavān Viṣṇu (Cover)

## Subscription

**Inland—**

Annual ₹ 120

**Abroad—**

Annual ₹ 1800

Air Mail US \$ 30

Bank collection charges US \$ 6 Extra

websites: 1. [www.kalyana-kalpataru.org](http://www.kalyana-kalpataru.org) | 2. [www.gitapress.org](http://www.gitapress.org)

e-mail: [booksales@gitapress.org](mailto:booksales@gitapress.org)

Editor—**Keshoram Aggarwal**

Co-Editor—**Dr. Prem P. Lakkar**

Printed and Published by **Jagdish Prasad Jalan** for Gobind Bhawan Karyalaya,

**Gita Press, Gorakhpur (India)**

# A Story to Comprehend Divine Grace

—*Brahmalina Sri Jayadayal Goyandka*

A story is reproduced below to enable us to comprehend fully the reality about the mercy of God. The story runs as follows—

A *Kṣatriya* boy was studying in a college with the state help and under state control. His parents always impressed upon him the fact that the ruler of that kingdom was a man of wisdom, *Yogī* and an exalted soul of a high order. He was unaccountably kind and compassionate and was exceptionally kind to them. If they were to die, he had no cause to worry; for the king was far more kind to him than they. The boy believed exactly as he was taught by his parents. His parents died in due course; but the boy did not feel sad. His fellow-students in the college approached him and said, “How is it that even though your parents are no more, there is no sign of grief on your expression? Who is going to support you now?” The *Kṣatriya* boy replied, “Why should I be sorry! The king, who is my greatest well-wisher, is more kind and affectionate to me even than my parents. He is a man of wisdom and an exalted soul of a high order. I solely depend on him.” The principal of the college was struck with wonder when he heard these words of the boy through his fellow-students, and admired his reverence for and devotion to the ruler of the kingdom. The principal happened to be a member of the State Council too. He attended a subsequent meeting of the Council. The king too was present in that meeting. He said, “If there is any orphan boy in the State, he should

be reported to me, and excellent arrangements made for his maintenance by the State.” More than one members of the State Council named that very boy. Thereupon with the concurrence of all the councillors the king made all arrangements for his boarding etc., and ordered his mud hovel to be converted into a pukka one. As regards his education it was already being conducted at State expense.

After a few days when, under orders of the king, his men were demolishing his cutcha house in order to convert it into a pukka one, a class-fellow of the said *Kṣatriya* boy went running up to him and informed him that the king’s men were razing his house. The boy was immensely delighted to hear this report and said, “Oh! the king is very gracious to me. In all probability he will get a new house built for me after demolishing the old one.” The principal of the college belt amazed at this remark of the boy and thought, how firm the boy’s conviction was and how strong his faith in the king’s goodwill.

On another occasion when the principal of the college attended a meeting of the Council, the king told the councillors that he had grown old, and was issueless. He, therefore, wanted to know the sense of the councillors as to whom he should nominate as his successor worthy of the office. At this the principal said that the *Kṣatriya* lad excelled all in point of merits, right conduct and education. He was loyal and had unlimited faith in His Majesty. The other members of the Council also gladly supported this proposal. With full consensus of opinion the king thereupon decided to appoint that very *Kṣatriya* lad as his successor.

The next day the king’s minister and some other high officials of the State called on the boy at his residence. Seeing them come the *Kṣatriya* boy received them with great honour and attentions and said, “Of what service can

I be to you.” The officials told them that the king was extremely kind to him. The boy said, “I am already aware of the fact that I enjoy the unbounded grace of His Majesty. It is for this very reason that you too are so kind to me.” The officials said, “We are your servants and as such seek your favour.” The boy replied, “Pray, do not put me to shame by uttering these words. I am your humble servant. That His Majesty is kind to me is very well known to me.” The officials said, “His kindness far exceeds your estimate about it.” The *Kṣatriya* boy wanted to know whether His Majesty had arranged his marriage. “Not only that,” they replied; “He is excessively kind to you.” The boy asked again, “Has His Majesty been pleased to make a formal grant in my favour of a few villages?” The officials replied, “This is nothing as compared to his actual grace on you, the extent of which cannot be gauged by you.” The boy thereupon said, “Pray, tell me, then, what his graciousness on me is like.” They replied, “He has appointed you to be his successor; hence we seek your favour.” Hearing this the *Kṣatriya* boy was beside himself with joy.

Now let us try to understand the spiritual significance of the above parable. The enlightened and exalted soul in the person of the king is no other than God. The *Kṣatriya* boy represents the faithful seeker of enlightenment. The parents are the preceptors. The class-mates of the *Kṣatriya* boy stand for the fellow-seekers on the path of knowledge. The principal cum councillor symbolizes a loving *Mahāpuruṣa*. The arrangement of the boarding of the *Kṣatriya* boy at State expense should be taken to be a symbol of favourable circumstances, while the demolition of his house by the State should be regarded as symbolical of unfavourable circumstances. The boy’s remaining cheerful

in either case regarding both the events as a favourable gesture on the part of the king illustrates how a devotee having faith in God rejoices under all circumstances, viewing every occurrence as a benign dispensation of God. The boy's absolute dependence on, unquestioning faith in and profound reverence for the king based on his conviction about the latter being his true well-wisher should be regarded as symbolical of a devotee's resignation to the will of God.

From the above illustration we should derive a lesson, viz., that the measure of Divine Grace we enjoy far exceeds our estimate of it. We cannot even gauge the extent of divine mercy extending on us. If we come to realise that mercy, our joy, like that of the *Kṣatriya* boy of the parable, will know no bounds, and we shall forget our very existence.

Therefore, remembering God at all times, we should ever remain steeped in joy, regarding whatever comes to us through our own will or through the will of another or without either as a benign dispensation of the Lord and looking upon our own actions as God's work and as the greatest service to Him.

In this way through the practice of devotion to God the mind of the striver is filled with delight, his hair stands on end and lachrymation sets in. His heart blooms with joy, his voice begins to falter and throat gets choked. When as a result of continuous practice, however, a man wins perfection—realizes God, he transcends all hilarity, festivity and delight etc., and attains supreme peace and joy. When a pie is fried in a pan containing ghee, it leaps and tosses about—displays special activity—only till it is not completely fried. But as soon as it begins to get fried its jumping decreases and when completely fried it becomes quiet and



stationary. Similarly, during the period of *Sādhana*, so long as the *Sādhana* is unripe, the striver jumps and bursts into joy brought about by his *Sādhana*, which seeks expression through horripilation, lachrymation and choking of the throat etc. But when his spiritual practice begins to ripen the ebullition of emotions like joy begin to slow down; and when his *Sādhana* is fully ripe, the striver becomes free from emotional fluctuations and gets supremely peaceful. Getting fixed and stabilized in God, he then attains God, the very embodiment of supreme peace and highest bliss.



*Ātmā* is above the purview of the consciousness of doership. Consciousness is the Nature of *Ātmā*. Hundreds of activities are going on automatically due to Its presence, e.g., respiration, circulation of blood, creation of saliva, digestion of food and so on. It bestows power to the mind to think. Just as tongs can hold anything, but not the fingers which work them (tongs). So, too, the intellect can hold and analyse all the problems of the world but it cannot grasp or comprehend *Ātmā*, which activates it (intellect). In other words, the mind (through consciousness and sensibility), which controls all the sense-organs, is incapable to attain mastery over *Ātmā*, or the Soul. The Soul is metaphorically the fingers, which operate the tongs, remaining beyond its grasp.

—Swami Rama Tirtha

## Our Duty towards the Destitute

—*Nityalilalina Sri Hanumanprasad Poddar*

The Lord is the refuge of the man in distress calling for succour. He befriends the poor and cordially fraternizes with the destitute. One who is utterly helpless and powerless, and has no means or resources of his own, naturally invokes the aid of a benefactor and cries for his help. But who befriends the destitute? Really speaking, there are only two helpmates of the sufferer—the Lord and the saints. It is they who feel for him, befriend him and, lending a helping hand, offer him spontaneous and cordial fellowship. Sincere fellow-feeling for the distressed and cordial love for the destitute are to be found only in the Lord or the saints. These are ideal qualities, and one who can imbibe them can make one's life blessed.

A mother's very nature compels her to love and serve her child; and she never boasts of doing any service to it. It is the child's birthright to receive motherly affection and service and it has an exclusive claim on them which nobody else has. There lies their real significance. Similarly the Lord's and saints' natural and spontaneous merciful love is the legacy of the down-trodden, poor, afflicted humanity. Being generous by nature, the saints never feel as if they are doing good to others; and they are not presumptuous enough to think that they are putting a man under an obligation by rendering any service to him. They never look upon anything as their own. All that they have is the Lord's. Their learning, wisdom, power, wealth, property, house, everything they have, belongs to the Lord.

It is their very nature always to use everything in the service of the Lord. Their service of the poor suffering man is, therefore, the service of the Lord Himself, and it is not rendered to put anybody under the burden of an obligation. They are always prompted by the feeling that they are rendering to the Lord what is really His own. On the contrary, one who accumulates things and looks upon them as his personal possessions and does not render to God what is God's is a thief and deserves punishment. Such a one is guilty of appropriating for one's own use what belongs to the Lord. Nārada says in the *Bhāgavata* (VII. 14. 8)—

यावद् भ्रियेत जठरं तावत् स्वत्वं हि देहिनाम् ।  
अधिकं योऽभिमन्येत स स्तेनो दण्डमर्हति ॥

“One's right to things is limited to the means of sustenance. One who claims more is a thief and deserves punishment.” It follows, therefore, that all one's possessions should be looked upon as owned by the universal Lord, and one should use them, as circumstances require, in the service of the needy, the indigent and the helpless. This is duty; this is virtue.

There is, however, one thing which man should certainly imbibe. Whatever he possesses—learning, wisdom, wealth, prosperity, house, even his body, mind, senses and faculties—should always be available to satisfy the needs of others. This is virtue. On the contrary where there is a desire to accumulate riches to gratify one's own sense of possession and ownership, there is vice. To augment possessions is a sin; not to accumulate them is a virtue.

We should become accustomed to make a proper use of our circumstances, means and possessions. What we own is not meant for our enjoyment or to be kept stored.

Stagnant water becomes foul and breeds germs. Similarly things not put to proper use lose their value and become unfit for use. Meat alone is not taboo; food belonging to others is also prohibited. To deprive others of what is rightly theirs is a sin. Once a king enquired of a saint the nature of honestly earned livelihood. The saint advised the king to consult an old woman in the town. The king approached her and begged for a roll of bread honestly earned. The woman said, "O king! I have a piece of bread half of which is honestly acquired and the remaining half dishonestly." When further asked to explain her meaning, she said, "One day I was plying my spinning-wheel when evening fell and it became dark. Instead of lighting my lamp, I span, half a sliver in the light of torches accompanying a procession which just then happened to pass that way. Flour was bought by selling the yarn and bread was prepared. Thus half the bread is honestly earned, and the other half rightly belongs to the master of the procession." This illustrates how scrupulous men were in discriminating between what was their own and what was not. They considered it a great sin to take anything owned by others as it amounted to stealing.

Now no heed is paid to such considerations. The tendency is to hoard, disregarding the just claims of others; and this is sinful. A saint told me once that it was difficult to find an honest man from whom he might beg alms. The mind is moulded according to the quality of the food taken. And the purity of food depends upon the mode of earning it. The way in which money is earned to procure food largely determines its quality. Ordinarily that food is supposed to be pure which is prepared by clean persons in a clean place and consists of pure *Sāttvika* things. The cleanliness of the place where it is cooked and of the

persons who touch it are important elements in keeping the food pure. But there is another fundamental factor, which if impure, vitiates the food and makes it impure; and that is the impurity of the money which has acquired it. Food bought with stolen or dishonestly earned money is always tainted and impure. Thus the purity of food is largely determined by the kind of money which acquired it.

It should always be borne in mind that whatever one possesses is not solely one's own, because it is the fruit of the cooperative effort of many persons. They have their own share of it and everyone of them has a claim upon it. Consequently our riches must be used generously and with a pure motive wherever needed without humiliating the beneficiary or assuming superior airs. Even a liberal gift will not please a man if given in an insulting manner. Sweet and soft words have an importance of their own and are rarely out of place. They delight every heart, just as harsh words wound everyone. Bitter words of insolence, humiliation and hatred hurt a poor man to the quick more than they affect a rich man. You will not dare to strike a strong muscular athlete; and if you do give him a blow, either he will not mind it or pay you back handsomely. But if you struck a blow to a poor weak man he would simply smart under it and in his helplessness feel anguished at heart. If you say something unpalatable to a big man, he would lend no ear to it, because he has a number of persons to sing his praises. Your feeble voice of censure would be drowned in the loud acclaim of others. But if you say something harsh to a poor man, it would hurt him poignantly and he would feel it very much. That is why it has been said that when a friend is in trouble a hundred times more affection should be showered upon him than

was done ordinarily in the normal condition. A poor man is completely overwhelmed by his troubles and afflictions. His heart weeps all the time and he tries to conceal his tears. Sometimes he utters a sigh and bemoans his lot; but often, afraid of the frowns of others, he conceals the anguish of his heart. His sufferings alter his temperament and he becomes a different man, because he is convinced that there is none to hear his tale of woe. One who can sympathize with such a sufferer, wipe away his tears and feel for him is really a magnanimous and generous person. He is worthy to be called a man who hears the poor man's tale of woe or an orphan's pitiable plight and tries his best to remove his distress.

*(To be continued)*



Why should God be angry with anybody? Anger is caused when something stands in the way of a keenly desired objective. Is there anything which He desires, or which He has yet to obtain, or which He cannot obtain? And who is there to put obstacles in His way? He expects nothing from us. It does not matter the least to Him whether we call on Him or remain forgetful of Him. The gain or loss, pleasure or pain, good or bad, appertains to ourselves alone.

—*Swami Virajananda*

When you see everything as the manifestation of the Lord, can you see anything else but the Lord? Surely you cannot see the world (*Samsāra*), or your family, separate from Him.

—*Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*

# Selfless Service—the Worship of the Lord

—*Brahmalina Swami Ramsukhdas*

Even a servant, who is paid wages, renders service to his master, even when his service is limited to actions and fixed hours. But it cannot be called, real service. When a man considers others venerable, either through birth, learning, caste or stage of life, capability, status or virtues, he has only one central idea, how they should get comfort, and how they should be pleased. To render service to them, according to their will and taste, for their pleasure is called, real service. The servant, in such service has no self-interest and ego. He looks, only at the interest of the people, he has to serve—this is real service. Real service involves the feelings, of a devotee. His only aim is to please the Lord, keeping in mind only His taste. The same service, if rendered with hearty devotion, becomes adoration. Smearing the forehead with sandalwood paste, offering flowers, garlanding and offering of prayers, and praises and such other activities of devotion, are included in adoration. When a devotee, either beholds his master, or the Lord, touches His feet, his body is thrilled, and he feels much delighted. When he is thrilled, there may be a bit of slackness in his service to his master, (preceptor or the Lord), but it purifies his heart and enables him to behold the Lord or to realize Him. When, this devotion enhances, a devotee attains God-realization immediately. Such a devotee, always thinks how to provide happiness and comfort, to his master, preceptor or God, without thinking of his own happiness and comfort, at all. By doing so, he is highly delighted.

All the activities of such a devotee, whether these are performed, with his physical, subtle or causal body, become worship of the Lord. Even his daily routine, and his eating, drinking etc., becomes the material for his worship.

As a follower of the Discipline of Knowledge, always thinks, that he does nothing, similarly a staunch devotee worships, God by performing several duties, only for God's sake, and in that state, his egoistic notion, is renounced.



दुर्लभं	त्रयमेवैतत्	देवानुग्रहेहेतुकम्।
मनुष्यत्वं	मुमुक्षुत्वं	महापुरुषसंश्रयः ॥

“Verily, these three are rare to obtain and come only through the grace of God—human birth, desire to obtain *Mokṣa*, and the company of the great-souled ones.” The first thing needed is *Manuṣyatva*, human birth, because it only is favourable to the attainment of *Mukti*. The next is *Mumukṣutva*. Though our means of realisation vary according to the difference in sects and individuals—though different individuals can lay claim to their special rights and means to gain knowledge, which vary according to their different stations in life—yet it can be said in general without fear of contradiction that without this *Mumukṣutva*, realisation of God is impossible. What is *Mumukṣutva*? It is the strong desire for *Mokṣa*—earnest yearning to get out of the sphere of pain and pleasure—utter disgust for the world. When that intense burning desire to see God comes then you should know that you are entitled to the realization of the Supreme.

—Swami Vivekananda



## Karmayoga and Selflessness

Actions done on purely selfless basis purify the mind and are called *Karmayoga*. The actions done by yielding to the temptations of the mind trap us in fetters of *Karma*. If anything untoward happens, we beat our heads wailing *Karma*. *Karma* is the first step to purify and elevate the mind to realize *Ātmā* and is called *Karma-patha*. It is one among the three paths, the others being *Bhaktiyoga* and *Jñānayoga* leading us to liberation. It is not performing actions according to the dictates of the mind under the influence of senses, but conducting ourselves as prescribed by Dharmic scriptures. Such *Karma* is not done expecting any benefit but without any selfish interest. It is 'disinterested' action but not 'uninterested' action. It has to be done carefully ensuring utmost perfection. There should be however the desire to attain the real *Ātmā*. It can be called *Ātmakāma* or *Akarma*, wherein the only longing is for union with God by merger into *Ātmā*. Such desire to merge with *Ātmā* is not tainted by selfish aims. The self should disappear just like the camphor burning away without leaving any trace. Not looking for personal benefit leads to the biggest gain. Selfless action can be for the benefit and welfare of fellow beings and the society. Such philanthropy and charity should not aim for fame and name. Even if one's public service does not get public applause, the doer should not mind it. That is *Karmayoga* whose basis is selflessness.

*From—Sayings of Sri Kanchi Mahaswamy*

## Dāmājī: A True Devotee

Dāmājī was a great devotee of Lord Pāṇḍuraṅga of Pandharpur. He flourished in the thirteenth century. He was the Dewan of Mangalvedya, in the kingdom of Bedar, Golkonda.

Once a severe famine hit the people. Dāmājī opened the royal granaries and distributed the corn to all the poor, without the Nawab's permission, and saved millions of people from starvation.

The jealous manager reported to the Nawab that Dāmājī had distributed all the corn to the poor without his permission. The Nawab became angry and ordered the commander to arrest Dāmājī and bring him to his presence. While Dāmājī was being taken to the capital of the Nawab, he asked the Nawab's men to take him through Pandharpur, so that he might have the last *Darśana* of Viṭṭhala. The Nawab's men agreed to Dāmājī's request.

To save his devotee, the Lord now took the form of a Mahar. He appeared at the Nawab's Durbar in a black blanket and with a stick in hand. The Nawab questioned the intruder, "Who are you?" To which the intruder replied, "My name is Viṭṭū. I am a Mahar. I am a servant of Dewan Dāmājī. My master distributed all the grain from your Majesty's stores to the poor people who were suffering from starvation during the severe famine. But he has sent me with the price of the grain so distributed by him. Please receive the money and let me have a receipt for the same." The Nawab said, "Take the money to the treasury and I will sign the receipt."

The Nawab was very much attracted by the charming personality of Viṭṭū. Viṭṭū went to the treasury. The treasurer emptied the money bag of Viṭṭū into the money box. The bag was again seen refilled with money. This occurred several times until the whole amount due from Dāmājī was paid into the treasury. The treasurer was struck with wonder. Viṭṭū obtained the receipt and came back to the Nawab. The Nawab signed the receipt and handed it over to Viṭṭū. It was written in the receipt: “Received in full the price of the grain of my stores at Mangalvedya.”

There was so much lustre and attraction in the servant of Dāmājī that the Nawab thought that the man must be a divine being. The Nawab became quite restless. He desired to see Viṭṭū again. He cried, “Viṭṭū, Viṭṭū, where are you Viṭṭū?” He commanded his officers to find out Viṭṭū, but Viṭṭū was nowhere to be found.

The Lord did some more fun also. He took the receipt and kept it in the *Gītā* owned by Dāmājī. Dāmājī took his bath in the Candrabhāgā river and wanted to go through the *Ślokas*. To his great astonishment, he saw the receipt of the Nawab. He knew that it was all due to the grace of Viṭṭhala.

In the meantime, the Nawab himself went in search of Viṭṭū. He met Dāmājī on the way. He said to Dāmājī: “O venerable saint! Pardon me. Forgive me. I did a very heinous sin. Show me your servant Viṭṭū now.” Dāmājī was quite astonished. He said to the Nawab, “My revered master! I have no servant by name Viṭṭū. I do not know who this Viṭṭū is. If your Majesty can give me some signs of identification, I may find him out.” The Nawab replied, “He is the Mahar Viṭṭū, your servant, who brought me the money, the price of the grain. He wore a black blanket and had a stick in his hand. He was of dark complexion

with lustrous eyes and charming face.”

Dāmājī thought of the receipt that was placed in his *Gītā* and began to dance in joy. He shed tears profusely and said, “O Lord Viṭṭhala! O Pāṇḍuraṅga! You acted the part of a Mahar for my sake. Blessed is the Nawab! He had Thy sweet *Darśana*. Thou art the Supreme Lord of this universe. Why didst Thou take all this trouble for me? The Nawab could do nothing more than take my life. I was quite prepared to meet the worst.”

Dāmājī began to cry, “O Pāṇḍuraṅga, O Pāṇḍuraṅga!” The Lord once more appeared to bless His devotees, Dāmājī and the Nawab, and blessed them both. How merciful is the Lord! Glory to *Bhagavān* Kṛṣṇa! Rādhāvallabha, the beloved of Rādhā! Dāmājī immediately resigned his post of Dewan and spent the remaining few year of his life at Pandharpur in devotion to Lord Viṭṭhala until he became one with Him.



He who lives for others treads an open, but unfrequented path to immortality.

—John Howard

Remember that one day even those dearest to you will be taken away not to punish you but to remind you to give your love to all beings as your own.

—Paramahansa Yogananda

If you must be mad, let it not be with the things of the world but be mad with the love of God.

—Sri Ramakrishna

## Devī

—Swami Krishnananda

Viṣṇu, Śiva and *Devī* may be regarded as the chief deities universally worshipped in Hinduism. The concept of *Devī*, often identified with *Durgā*, has a very ancient origin. Reference is made to the great goddess in the *Ṛgveda* and the *Mahābhārata*. The hymns devoted to her in this *Veda* extol her as the embodiment of divine Power by which the Universe is sustained. The great Mother sung in the *Veda* appears as *Umā* of golden hue in the *Kenopaniṣad*. In the *Mahābhārata*, she is mentioned as the sister of *Kṛṣṇa* and thus bears a relation to Vaishnavism. She is also adored by *Śaivas* as the consort of *Śiva*. *Yudhiṣṭhira* offered prayers to *Devī* for relief from suffering and for protection in distress. *Kṛṣṇa* asked *Arjuna* to pray to her before the commencement of the war. But the most famous scripture which sings the glories of *Devī* is the *Devīmāhātmya* or *Saptaśatī*, regarded almost on a par with the *Bhagavadgītā*. The *Saptaśatī* is a part of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*. *Devī* is referred to as *Caṇḍī*, *Durgā*, *Kālī*, *Lakṣmī* and *Sarasvatī*. She is often indistinguishable from *Pārvatī*, the divine consort of *Śiva*. The goddess is annually worshipped in a nine day festival called the *Navarātra Pūjā*, during the first nine days of the bright half of the month of *Aśvayuj* (September-October). The adoration of *Devī* grew into a philosophical and mystical worship of *Śakti* as the inherent power of the Absolute, which transcended the exoteric ritualism of the *Veda-Samhitās* and *Purāṇas*.

In the *Devīmāhātmya*, the goddess is described as having manifested herself in three significant forms,—Mahākālī, Mahālakṣmī and Mahāsarasvatī. In the first form she woke up Viṣṇu from his cosmic sleep, to encounter the *Asuras*. Madhu and Kaiṭabha, who had risen in the cosmic ocean. In the second form she met the forces of the demon Mahiṣāsura and slew him with his forces. In the third form she destroyed the *Asuras* Śumbha and Niśumbha with their forces and brought peace to the gods in heaven and to the world of men. These three forms of *Devī* are identified with the revelations of Divinity through the primordial qualities of *Tamas*, *Rajas* and *Sattva*, respectively. They are also equated with the manifestations of the Universal Powers of action (*Kriyā*), Desire (*Ichchā*) and knowledge (*Jñāna*). The hymns to *Devī* in the *Devīmāhātmya* are charged with a fervour of feeling and charm of expression which are rarely seen in religious literature.

Durgā, Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī are the spouses of Śiva, Viṣṇu and Brahmā, respectively, inseparable, from their Lords, as heat from fire, which hints at the truth that the manifestations of the *Śaktis* are ultimately God himself in action. Durgā rides on a lion. Sometimes she is depicted as riding on a tiger. Though her abode is Kailāsa, with her Lord Śiva, she manifests herself everywhere in creation as the beloved saviour of her worshippers. She is said to have eight hands and holds the various weapons of the gods. She is the goddess of transformation, destruction, war and pestilence, of disease as well as its medicine. She is the *Samhāra-Śakti* or the all-destroying power of God as Śiva or Rudra. Lakṣmī is worshipped as seated on a lotus and also holding lotuses in her hands. She is the protective and sustaining power of God as Viṣṇu. She is the goddess of prosperity, wealth, fortune, peace and plenty. She is the

preservative power of God and, being the consort of Viṣṇu, is also worshipped as Sītā, the wife of Rāma and Rukmiṇī, the wife of Kṛṣṇa, as also Rādhā, the favourite of Kṛṣṇa in his early life. Lakṣmī is regarded as having her particular presence manifested in cattle, grains and gold. Sarasvatī is the creative power of God as Brahmā and is portrayed as seated on a swan and holding a lute (*Vīṇā*) and a book in her hands. She is hailed as *Vāk* or speech, in the *Ṛgveda Samhitā* and is the presiding deity over all fine arts, especially music and literature. She is the favourite deity of students, writers and musicians.

The *Śāktas*, or worshippers of *Śakti*, adore *Devī* as Tripurasundarī and Rājarājeśvarī, the great reality of the Universe.

The *Devī-Sūkta* of the *Ṛgveda*, the *Śākta Upaniṣads*, the *Mahābhārata*, the *Devīmāhātmya*, the *Devī-Bhāgavata*, *Lalitopākhyāna*, the *Śākta Āgamas* and the works of Bhāṣkararāya glorify *Devī* in her various aspects.



The main cause of the fact that *Vedānta* appears to be difficult is that most of the people do not possess the capability to probe into the secrets of Divine Knowledge. A small child is not able to understand the meaning of the great poem 'Meghadūta'. However, as he grows older and older, he develops the capability to understand all the dramatic compositions of Kālidāsa. Similarly, a worldly man needs preparation and training to understand and appreciate *Vedānta*. For this, it is essential to purify his heart and when it is purified, the Light of Divinity will be clearly reflected in the stainless mirror of the untainted heart.

—Swami Rama Tirtha

# The Secret of True Prosperity

—*Swami Jyotirmayananda*

When you are greedy, your will becomes weak. As a result of this weakness, you may not be able to get the very objects that you greedily desire. Or if you do get them, they will become a source of pain.

There is a strange law operating in the Divine plan. If you do not deserve an object towards which you have developed greed, that object will repel you. Even if you succeed in possessing it, that object will be painful because it will create many mental complexes.

Thus, you will not really be happy if you get an object because of greed. On the other hand, if you do not have greed, then all the objects that you need in your spiritual evolution will come to you automatically. An interesting parable is told to illustrate this point.

A devotee was practising meditation and had a strange vision when he invoked Goddess Lakṣmī—the Goddess of Prosperity. The Goddess, whom he expected to appear before him in a luminous and radiant form, appeared with Her forehead badly bruised and Her feet terribly sore. The devotee, seeing Lakṣmī Devī in this strange condition, asked, “Oh Goddess, how is this possible? How can you, who are the giver of prosperity to all, have your forehead bruised and your feet swollen and sore?”

The Goddess replied, “Oh devotee, I will answer your question and reveal to you a great secret. There are so many worldly-minded people who crave for Me and pursue Me, and yet do not deserve Me. And I have to go on kicking



them from morning till night. Imagine how much my feet hurt because I must go on doing that day after day?

“And then there are some rare souls who have truly renounced greed and who tread the path of spirituality. They are so dispassionate that they don’t want Me at all. In the Divine plan, however, they must have some of My wealth in order to help mankind. So I go to their doors and, adopting the Eastern method, I repeatedly bow and strike my head against the thresholds in order to persuade them to accept Me. This goes on day after day, so that now My forehead has become terribly bruised!”

The parable shows that if you are devoid of greed, you attract the Goddess of Prosperity, Who wants to bestow Her blessings. On the other hand if you go after objects through greed, then the Goddess of Prosperity goes on kicking you, as it were. Crave wealth and wealth will renounce you. Renounce craving and all the wealth of the world will pursue you.



A teacher should teach only those things he has practised and experienced.

Don’t want to be a teacher. That status often gives one the consciousness of knowing much when one knows very little.

# Prayer

—Dr. Girish Goel

सिन्दूरारुणविग्रहां त्रिनयनां माणिक्यमौलिस्फुरत्  
तारानायकशेखरां स्मितमुखीमापीनवक्षोरुहाम् ।  
पाणिभ्यामलिपूर्णरत्नचषकं रक्तोत्पलं बिभ्रतीं  
सौम्यां रत्नघटस्थरक्तचरणां ध्यायेत् परामम्बिकाम् ॥

May we meditate on the Divine Whose body has the red hue of vermilion, Who has three eyes, Who wears a beautiful crown studded with rubies, Who is adorned with the crescent moon, Who face sports beautiful smile indicating compassion, Who has a beautiful limbs, Whose hands holds a jewel studded golden vessel filled with nectar, and in the other a red lotus flower.

ॐ अरुणां करुणातरङ्गिताक्षीं  
धृतपाशाङ्कुशवाणचापहस्ताम् ।  
अणिमादिभिरावृतां मयूखै-  
रहमित्येव विभावये भवानीम् ॥

I meditate on the great empress. She is red in colour, and Her eyes are full of compassion, and She holds the noose, the goad, the bow and the flowery arrow in her hands. She is surrounded on all sides by powers such as *Aṇimā* for rays and She is the Self within me.

## Rāma-Darśana

—*R. Subrahmanian*

Sugrīva, the ex-king of Kiṣkindhā spent restless days and nights on his mountain shelter at R̥ṣyamūka in mortal fear of his brother Vāli who not only snatched his kingdom as also his wife Rumā. On one such ominous early dawn Sugrīva saw the silhouettes of two mighty human beings slowly and steadily moving hitherwards. He became agog with excitement, suspicion and almost certain that they were agents of Vāli. Their bearing was royal and majestic but their hair was all matted and they were clad in barks of trees. They were each armed with a mighty bow and a deadly sword. Sugrīva became all jittery and panicked. Sugrīva told Hanumān that his mortal enemy was close at hand disguised as humans to attack him. They were not his enemies, said Hanumān to Sugrīva for they had been forbidden to tread the region of Mataṅga-Āśrama. At any rate Sugrīva asked Hanumān to meet them in person, secretly watch their talks and behaviour and ascertain what their mission there was. The ever resourceful Hanumān started on the mission appearing as a Bhikṣu and as he came near to them he felt the electrifying influence and he prostrated before them and rose as a *Vānara* with folded palms. In a perfectly well modulated voice and in a soft and most pleasing language—

“O, Ye strangers! How have you two ascetics of exceptional vigour, unflinching prowess, most austere vows and excellent appearance come to this region? You look a couple of royal sages or Gods—“*Rājarṣi-devapratimau*”—“*Samśitavratau.*”

You are causing fright to the herds of deers and the denizens of forests. You are keenly observing as if you are searching for something lost. Your presence adds to the charm of sparkling waters of the lake—“*Śobhayantau tapasvinau*”—Who are you, of charming arms, clad in bark garments and possessing a shining and charming complexion and lustre? You, of remarkable fortitude, are sighing and causing discomfort to the creatures by your presence—“*Dhairyavantau suvarṇābhau*.”

Wielding a pair of bows shining brightly like rainbows, how have you two heroic jewels amongst men visited this region; you who are endowed with the gaze of lions and look possessing great might and prowess, are capable of destroying your foes. You are full of glory and splendour and endowed with beauty. Further you are distinguished with the noble gait of a bull, and possess arms resembling the trunk of an elephant—“*Simhaviprekṣitau*” .... “*mahā-balaparākramau*....*Śrīmantau rūpasampannau vṛṣabha-śreṣṭhavikramau*.”

The yonder Rṣyamūka stands gracefully illumined by your effulgence. You are worthy of sovereignty and shine brightly like gods. What is the purpose of your visit? “*Yuvayoravabhāsitaḥ*”, “*rājyārḥāvamaraprakhyau*”—Having eyes resembling the petals of lotus and wearing a rounded mass of matted hair you two gallant men match only each other. You seem to be heroes come down from heaven—“*Padmapatrekṣaṇau*”-*jaṭāmaṇḍaladāriṇau*”—With broad chests you two heroic men possess the personality of gods. It appears as if the Moon and the Sun have reached the earth by the will of providence. Having shoulders resembling those of a lion of extraordinary vigour, you look like a pair of intoxicated bulls. Your arms are long and perfectly round and resemble a pair of clubs.

Why are they not adorned though they deserve to be embellished with choice jewels—“*Sarvabhūṣaṇabhūṣārḥāḥ kimartham na vibhūṣitāḥ.*”

I consider you both as fit to protect the entire earth with its oceans, forests and mountains. These wonderful, charming and strangely gilded bows of yours shine like Indra’s thunderbolt decorated with gold. Besides your charming quivers are filled to capacity with blazing sharp-edged arrows capable of terminating one’s life. These swords of considerable length and enormous size and decorated by refined gold, shine brightly like a pair of serpents that have shed their sloughs.

When he received no answer even though he spoke at a great length, Hanumān continued to reveal his own identity by introducing himself. Sent by that high-minded Sugrīva, the king of leaders of monkeys, I am a monkey named Hanumān. The pious-minded Sugrīva seeks your friendship. Know me to be his minister, son of Vāyu. I have come to convey Sugrīva’s message and know your reactions. I have arrived disguised as a recluse from Ṛṣyamūka in order to oblige Sugrīva, having been endowed with the capacity to go wherever I want to and to do as I please—“*Vānaram pavanātmajam.*”

Hearing this captivating speech of Hanumān, Śrī Rāma full of smiles spoke to Lakṣmaṇa thus paying tributes to Hanumān which may be considered “*Śrīrāmakṛta hanumat stotra*”—O Lakṣmaṇa, reply in sweet words and with affection to this monkey, who is a minister of Sugrīva and who knows how to speak “*Vākyajñam*”—and is also a tamer of foes—“Arindamam—” To speak in the way he has done is possible only for one who is a master of *Rgveda*, *Yajurveda* and *Sāmaveda*, which is reflected in his humility, memory and erudition. He has studied the entire range of

grammar in many ways as it is clear from the fact that nothing has been wrongly worded by him even though he has spoken at length. No fault of expression was noticed anywhere in his face nor even in his eyes, forehead or eyebrows nor in anyone of his limbs. His sentences were never verbose but brief and to the point. At the same time he was very clear and sure. His voice was neither too harsh nor too feeble. It was well-modulated, hearty and sincere. The expressions used by him were so refined, inspiring and exciting that they marked the level of his high culture. His sweet delivery was as perfect as it enrapturing to the heart. O! Lakṣmaṇa! who will not be captivated by listening to his words gurgling with such tuneful harmony of body, mind and intellect. Even his arch enemy will shed his animosity the moment he listens to his persuasive words. Is there anything impossible for one who has such an accomplished messenger to convey his message? Fulfilled are all the desires of the lucky king who is fortunate to have such a resourceful, well-versed, cultured messenger. This is the first impression Lord Rāmacandra had of Hanumān on meeting for the first time. The first impression that both had of each other developed into a mutual attraction binding them together for life in a saga of selfless service, sacrifice and devotion. The incredible transformation of Hanumān was not only at the physical level. In Rāma he found his beloved Lord for total mental surrender in pure *Bhakti* and the ideal spiritual *Guru* for intellectual identification and contemplation.



## Tranquillity of Mind

(Continued from July, Page 61)

Bhīṣma continued, 'The serpent directed by *Mṛtyu* having said this, *Mṛtyu* himself appeared there and addressing the serpent spoke thus—

*Mṛtyu* said, 'Guided by *Kāla*, I, O serpent, sent thee on this errand, and neither art thou nor am I the cause of this child's death. Even as the clouds are tossed hither and thither by the wind, I am like the clouds, O serpent, influenced by *Kāla*. All attitudes appertaining to *Sattva* or *Rajas* or *Tamas*, are provoked by *Kāla*, and operate in all creatures. All creatures, mobile and immobile, in heaven, or earth, are influenced by *Kāla*. The whole universe, O serpent, is imbued with this same influence of *Kāla*. All acts in this world and all abstentions, as also all their modifications, are said to be influenced by *Kāla*, *Sūrya*, *Soma*, *Viṣṇu*, *Water*, *Wind*, the deity of a hundred sacrificer, *Fire*, *Sky*, *Earth*, *Mitra* and *Parjanya*, *Aditi*, and the *Vasus*, *Rivers* and *Oceans*, all existent and non-existent objects, are created and destroyed by *Kāla*. Knowing this, why dost thou, O serpent, consider me to be guilty? If any fault attaches to me in this, thou also wouldst be to blame.'

The serpent said, 'I do not, O *Mṛtyu*, blame thee, nor do I absolve thee from all blame. I only aver that I am directed and influenced (in my actions) by thee. If any blame attaches to *Kāla*, or, if it be not desirable to attach any blame to him, it is not for me to scan the fault. We have no right to do so. As it is incumbent on me to absolve myself from this blame, so it is my duty to see that no blame, attaches to *Mṛtyu*.'

Bhīṣma continued, 'Then the serpent, addressing Arjunaka, said— Thou hast listened to what *Mṛtyu* has said. Therefore, it is not proper for thee to torment me, who am guiltless, by tying me with this cord.'

The fowler said, 'I have listened to thee, O serpent, as well as to the words of *Mṛtyu*, but these, O serpent, do not absolve thee from all blame. *Mṛtyu* and thyself are the causes of the child's death. I consider both of you to be the cause and I do not call that to be the cause which is not truly so. Accursed be the wicked and vengeful *Mṛtyu* that causes affliction to the good. Thee too I shall kill that art sinful and engaged in sinful acts!'

*Mṛtyu* said, 'We both are not free agents, but are dependent on *Kāla*, and ordained to do our appointed work. Thou shouldst not find fault with us if thou dost consider this matter thoroughly.'

The fowler said, 'If ye both, O serpent and *Mṛtyu*, be dependent on *Kāla*, I am curious to know how pleasure (arising from doing good) and anger (arising from doing evil) are caused.'

*Mṛtyu* said, 'Whatever is done, is done under the influence of *Kāla*. I have said it before, O fowler, that *Kāla* is the cause of all and that for this reason we both, acting under the inspiration of *Kāla*, do our appointed work and therefore, O fowler, we two do not deserve censure from thee in anyway!'

Bhīṣma continued, 'Then *Kāla* arrived at that scene of disputation on this point of morality, and spoke thus to the serpent and *Mṛtyu* and the fowler Arjunaka assembled together.'

*Kāla* said, 'Neither *Mṛtyu*, nor this serpent, nor I, O fowler, am guilty of the death of any creature. We are merely the immediate exciting causes of the event. O Arjunaka, the *Karma* of this child formed the exciting cause



of our action in this matter. There was no other cause by which this child came by its death. It was killed as a result of its own *Karma*. It has met with death as the result of its *Karma* in the past. Its *Karma* has been the cause of its destruction. We all are subject to the influence of our respective *Karma*. *Karma* is an aid to salvation even as sons are, and *Karma*, also is an indicator of virtue and vice in man. We urge one another even as acts urge one another. As men make from a lump of clay whatever they wish to make, even so do men attain to various results determined by *Karma*. As light and shadow are related to each other, so are men related to *Karma* through their own actions. Therefore, neither art thou, nor am I, nor *Mṛtyu*, nor the serpent, nor this old *Brāhmaṇa* lady, is the cause of this child's death. He himself is the cause here. Upon *Kāla*, O king, expounding the matter in this way, Gautamī, convinced in her mind that men suffer according to their actions, spoke thus to Arjunaka.'

Gautamī said, 'Neither *Kāla*, nor *Mṛtyu*, nor the serpent, is the cause in this matter. This child has met with death as the result of its own *Karma*. I too so acted (in the past) that my son has died (as its consequence). Let now *Kāla* and *Mṛtyu* retire from this place, and do thou too, O Arjunaka, release this serpent.'

Bhīṣma continued, 'Then *Kāla* and *Mṛtyu* and the serpent went back to their respective destinations, and Gautamī became consoled in mind as also the fowler. Having heard all this, O king, do thou forego all grief, and attain to peace of mind. Men attain to heaven or hell as the result of their own *Karma*. This evil has neither been of thy own creation, nor of Duryodhana's. Know this that these lords of Earth have all been slain (in this war) as a result of acts of *Kālas*.'

# Bhakti During the Vedic Period

—Dr. M. S. Manhas

*Bhakti* (devotion) is defined as an ardent attachment with the Supreme Being. This is one of the means to develop an unswerving faith in and intense love for the Lord. *Bhagavān* Kṛṣṇa (*Gītā* XII. 2) defines *Bhakti* by saying, “Those who worship Me with mind fixed on Me, are ever steadfast and endowed with supreme faith, in My opinion are perfect in *Yoga* (*Bhaktiyoga*).” He (*ibid.* XII. 8) further elaborates this by saying, “Fix your mind on Me alone, let your thoughts dwell in Me, you will thereafter live in Me. There is no doubt about this.”

Nārada, a great devotee of *Bhagavān* Viṣṇu, says in *Nārada-Bhaktisūtra* (16) that *Bhakti* consists in offering one’s everything to the Lord and feeling intensely distressed in forgetting Him. Several ancient *Ṛṣis*, such as, Vyāsa, Garga, Śāṅḍilya, Śuka and others have also defined *Bhakti* using similar words. The defining words change with time and *Ācāryas* (spiritual teachers), but the essence remains the same, namely, unqualified love and selfless devotion for the Supreme *Puruṣa*. In more recent times, *Swāmīs* Śāṅkarācārya, Rāmānujācārya, Madhvācārya, Vallabhācārya, Caitanya Mahāprabhu and others have also spoken about *Bhakti* in more or less similar language, in which the devotee humbly surrenders and dedicates his/her whole being in the service of *Paramātmā*. *Bhakti* is a religious and moral duty of a devotee without even the thought of any recompense. The attachments of Rādhā of Barsana, Mīrābāī of Chittor, and Āṅḍāl of Tamilnadu with the Lord

are prime examples of selfless, dispassionate, and intense love. This type of attachment is designated as *Mādhurya Bhāva* (sweet and fervent feeling) and is the highest form of devotion in which the devotee is unmindful of his/her own existence but enjoys divine bliss in contemplation about the Lord.

In *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (VII. 5. 23), Prahlāda gave a very comprehensive definition of *Bhakti*, where he said:

श्रवणं कीर्तनं विष्णोः स्मरणं पादसेवनम्।

अर्चनं वन्दनं दास्यं सख्यमात्मनिवेदनम्॥

“*Bhakti* consists in hearing about Viṣṇu (God), chanting His glories, remembering Him always, serving and meditating on His feet, worshipping Him, praying to Him, considering oneself as His eternal servant, loving Him as a friend, and surrendering everything to Him.”

This ninefold *Bhakti* was also taught to Śabarī by *Bhagavān* Rāma in *Guru Mataṅga's Āśrama* (hermitage). This definition brings in different mental attitudes of devotees to express their concept of loving devotion for their *Iṣṭa Devatā* (desired Divinity). This also takes into consideration the way members of society, based on their gender, creed, stage in life, intellectual background etc., express their emotions in worshipping the Lord. Each one of them has a unique way of declaring his/her love, devotion, and service to the Almighty. In all cases, however, the common thread that unites all of them with the Lord is their selfless love and total devotion through their mind, body, and intellect. An excellent example of this ‘love for the sake of love’, that one experiences in everyday life, is that of a baby who, while seeking its mother, is not pacified no matter what inducements are offered to distract its attention.

This emotional intensity in Lord's worship is not related to a devotee's intellectual acumen. In fact misdirected intellect can prove to be a hindrance in a devotee's single-minded devotion. God dislikes the proud but loves the humble. What is needed in *Bhakti* is His mercy not a display of devotee's intellectual sophistication. Dr. Mahādevan in his introduction to Swāmī Vidyāraṇya's *Pañcadaśī* says, "*Tarkyatām mā kutarkyatām*—let logic be employed that follows one's experience, but not bad logic". This is one of the reasons why Nārada says, "A person, who renounces even the *Vedas*, obtains exclusive and uninterrupted attraction for God." Even *Amṛtabindu Upaniṣad* (18) says that after studying the *Vedas* the intelligent one, who is solely intent upon acquiring knowledge and realization, should discard them altogether. *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (I. 2. 23) says that this Self cannot be known through much study, nor through intellect, nor through much learning. Swāmī Vidyāraṇya says in *Pañcadaśī* (VI. 56) 'श्रुतियुक्त्यनुभूतिभ्यो'—the nature of the Truth can be expounded on the triple basis of scripture, reasoning, and experience'. These statements by the ancient seers do not denounce the scriptures but reflect their use and the help of preceptors for learning about the right path. Scriptural knowledge is the means not an end. The help from the scriptures, however, should not be considered as the end. The seeker, after acquiring the necessary knowledge, has to put it into practice through his/her thought, word, and deed. Ceaseless worship of the Lord and renouncing sense gratification are essential steps in the path of devotion.

### **Bhakti in the Vedic Period—**

*Vedas* are impersonal and reflect the cultural and religious life of Indians. They were revealed to the ancient seers, who passed them on to the rest of society. It is

commonly believed that all actions in the Vedic period revolved around the performance of *Yajña* (sacrifice, *Havana*). *Yajña* was the medium through which the world was created, sustained, and annihilated by the Supreme Being. All ceremonies, *Samskāras*, and other religious rites were performed according to different *Yajñas* appropriate for the occasion. The *Devī-Devatās* (shining ones), such as, Indra, Yama, Varuṇa, Agni, Vāyu, Sun, Moon, Pṛthvī, etc., were propitiated by performing *Yajñas* prescribed in the holy texts. In short, every phase of society, from conception to death and beyond, was intimately tied to *Yajña*.

The *Vedas* provided philosophical and spiritual basis for their *Dharma*. Vedic *Dharma* should not be equated with the word ‘religion’ for which it is used as an equivalent. *Dharma* controlled the material, moral, social, economic, and religious life. *Atharvaveda* (XII. 1. 17) defines *Dharma* as ‘*Pṛthivīm dharmaṇā dhṛtām—Dharma* upholds the universe’. It does not teach fundamentalism but emphasizes humanism. The role of *Dharma* transcends moral and spiritual guidance of an ideal citizen. It also encompasses the cosmic order of all sentient and insentient bodies that are a part of this universe.

Of the four paths (*Jñāna*, *Niṣkāma Karma*, *Bhakti* and *Dhyāna*) used for establishing communion with the Lord, the path of *Bhakti* is found to be the easiest to follow. All of them are well described in the *Vedas*. *Bhakti*, however, does not require any sophistication in Vedic philosophy or special activity to reach the Goal. All that is demanded from a *Sādhaka* (practitioner) is an implicit faith in the supremacy of the Lord coupled with a fervent desire to reach the Goal with the best and purest of motives. God takes care of the rest. The path then becomes easy,

enjoyable, and gratifying.

Returning to the role of *Bhakti* in the Vedic period, a *Mantra* found in the *Sāmaveda* (372) would clarify the attitude of an *Āryan* (a noble person) towards his/her Creator. This should also put to rest the notion that the path of *Bhakti* is a recent introduction in *Sanātana Dharma* for achieving Self-realization. The Vedic prayers are typically of *Bhakti* type and all members of the family were called upon to sing together—

Come together, you all, with the power of spirit,  
To the Lord of heaven, who is one, the guest of the  
people.

He, the ancient, desires to come to the new,  
To Him all pathways turn, verily He is One.

The sage is conscious of the divinity lying in the heart of the worshipper. He inspires noble thoughts and actions to form a union of fellowship and love with the Supreme *Puruṣa*. This type of worship is reminiscent of the modern day get-together in a temple or at home and performing *Pūjā* and *Kīrtana* (singing of devotional songs accompanied by the use of musical instruments).

The Vedic society was monotheistic in its outlook and believed in the existence of one Super Soul, which they called *Brahman* or *Paramātman*. They visualized this entity as *Nirguṇa Brahma* (*Brahma* without qualities, i.e., qualities which can neither be described nor perceived through sense faculties) and *Sagūṇa Brahma* (*Brahma* with qualities, such as, omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience, *Īśvara*). It should, however, be remembered that *Nirguṇa* and *Sagūṇa* are attributes of this Supreme *Puruṣa*. They do not represent two different entities. The *Ṛgveda* (I. 164. 46) *Mantra* further clarifies it by saying, “एकं सद् विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति—Truth (*Brahma*) is one, the sages

call it variously”. The two manifestations of the same entity are conceived to aid in forming a mental image for comprehension by a *Yogī* and an aspirant, respectively. This helps them to devote their undivided attention on the Deity during meditation or prayer.

This hymn of the *R̥gveda* (*Ibid*) and repeated in the *Atharvaveda* (IX. 10. 28), specifies that the gods Indra, Mitra, Agni, Yama, Vāyu, and others are manifestations of the same Ultimate Reality. The hymns addressed to Indra and others, in fact, refer to the Supreme Reality. *Bhagavadgītā* (XI. 39) also refers to the idea of unity of this Divine Existence.

In a *Yajurveda Mantra* (*Vājasaneyā Saṁhitā* 19. 30), the sage specifies the progressive building of a practitioner’s character necessary for spiritual realization:

By self dedication one obtains consecration (initiation),  
 By consecration one obtains grace (God’s mercy),  
 By grace one obtains reverence (*Śraddhā*, belief with conviction).

And by reverence is Truth (*Brahman*) obtained.

The sages in the Vedic period combined *Karmayoga* with *Bhaktiyoga*. The devout prays to Indra or other *Devatās* for help in their daily lives, such as, strength in facing the enemy, power of intellect, long life, and plentiful rain at proper times for yielding bumper crops, finding a desirable life partner, success in other worldly activities. This reflects the performance of modern day prayers. In this respect they prayed for Divine help but did not overlook personal effort to succeed. The following hymn, repeated in all the *Vedas*, invokes the help of the Deity as a saviour and a protector.

Our saviour Indra, our protector Indra, easily called at each call, Hero Indra!

We call on the mighty, much invoked Indra, may he bless us, bounteous Indra.

(*Rg.* V. VI. 47.11; *Sāma.* V. 333; *Yajur.* V. 20. 50; *Atharva.* V. 7. 86. 1).

It is commonly believed that *Sanātana Dharma* (erroneously called Hinduism, an appellation given by foreigners) is an other-world religion. It does not prepare the believers to boldly face the tussle and turmoil of the present day life. Instead, it fosters defeatism, inculcates self-mortification, and glorifies fatalism. Nothing is farther from the truth. An understanding of Vedic teachings nurtures the overall mental, moral, cultural and spiritual development of human beings. It is true that *Vedas* teach such holistic ideals as, ‘*Ahimsā paramo dharmah*—Non-violence is the supreme sacred duty, *Sarve bhavantu sukhinah*—May all beings live happily, *Śṛṅvantu viśve amṛtasya putraḥ*—Listen all of you, we are the children of the same Immortal Being’, ‘*Śāntiḥ, Śāntiḥ, Śāntiḥ*—Peace, peace, peace’, they did not neglect the advice necessary for facing the day to day challenges of living in a multidimensional society. The maturity of a *Sādhaka* (practitioner) lies in differentiating the opposing scriptural statements and using them accordingly. The concept of *Dharma* is extremely complex and requires a deep understanding of the subject. For example, scriptures say ‘*Satyam vada priyam vada satyam apriyam na vada*—Speak the truth, speak what is pleasant, but do not speak the truth which is unpleasant.’ ‘Here the words ‘pleasant’ and ‘unpleasant’ have a deeper meaning and bring in the concepts of ethics and morality. In the following prayer, found in the *Yajurveda* (*Vājasaneyā Samhitā*, 19.9), the aspirant supplicates the Deity for acquiring divine qualities so that he/she can boldly face the difficulties in life:

*Tejo asi tejo mayi dehi*—You are the fiery spirit, give me the fiery spirit;

*Vīryam asi vīrya mayi dehi*—You are manly vigour,



give me manly vigour;

*Balaṁ asi balaṁ mayi dehi*—You are power, give me power,

*Ojo asi ojo mayi dehi*—You are energy, give me energy;

*Manyurasi manyuṁ mayi dehi*—You are battle fury, give me battle fury;

*Saho asi saho mayi dehi*—You are conquering might, give me conquering might.

It is well-known that during Vedic period there were no temples. The image worship as we know today was unknown. This came into vogue during the *Āgama* period. Together with the performance of the communal or family *Yajñas*, worship of the Lord was also performed at home or as a community service. There was a harmonious blend of *Jñānayoga* with *Karmayoga* during the religious ceremonies in those days. Higher stages of *Bhakti* (devotion to the Lord) lead to *Jñāna* (knowledge of the Lord).

The Vedic corpus is a treasure house of secular and spiritual knowledge, which has sustained *Sanātana Dharma* through the mellenia, in spite of the brutal onslaughts from heterodox faiths. The principal reason for the resiliency of *Sanātana Dharma* was the universal appeal of the Vedic knowledge and its relevance in everyday life. *Vedas* have put emphasis on the development of the total personality of its followers, such as, respect for social values, love for fellow beings, forgiveness, selfless service, fidelity, and friendship towards all. *Gāyatrī Mantra* from the *Ṛgveda*, and repeated in the other three *Vedas* supplicates the Lord only for the stimulation of mental power. A similar prayer in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* beseeches *Brahman* to lead all from darkness (ignorance) to light (wisdom). With such superb qualities one can achieve anything in life.

Nothing more is needed. There are many other examples which show a supplicant most humbly praying to the Cosmic Power for sharpening mind, body and intellect so that all can enjoy a long, virtuous, productive and glorious life. It is, therefore, incorrect to assume that in the Vedic period *Bhakti* did not occupy a prominent place in the thinking of an *Āryan*. The relationship of the devotee with God is divine love. The more one develops this relationship, the greater is one's share of happiness in this life and hereafter. Nothing can be more noble, elevating, and dignified in human behaviour than the advice of *Ṛgveda* (X. 191. 4), which declares:

Let common be our aspirations,

Let united be our hearts,

Let common be our minds (thinking),

So that intimate companionship may be ours.

(Note: English translation of Vedic hymns is taken from Dr. A.C. Bose's books on *Vedas*.)



## Read and Digest

Try to receive the hearty blessings of helpless, diseased, miserables and terrified persons as well as your parents. Their blessings would save you from all kinds of calamities.

\* \* \*

Our welfare lies in doing welfare of others.

\* \* \*

God loves those who are inclined to forgiveness and benevolence.

\* \* \*

Egoism is the gateway of downfall.

\* \* \*

A man attains salvation by earning money from honest means and spending it in good purpose.

\* \* \*

Have faith in your religion, that would lead you to sublime Truth.

\* \* \*

A little sin can cause a great calamity.

\* \* \*

The advice of one wise man is better than the advices of thousand common man.

\* \* \*

Faith, faith, faith in ourselves, faith, faith in God—this is the secret of greatness.

## Never be Dejected

—*Swami Rama Tirtha*

You should not mind, if you take delicious food—fruits, milk, butter pudding, jam etc., as a guest of some rich man, or roam about from house to house, as a beggar, in search of bits of bread. It should not matter, if the circumstances swing to your favour or against you.

It is quite possible that a man once leading a rich and prosperous life, with liveried heralds to proclaim his arrivals, is now wandering aimlessly all alone in poverty. O friends, the pain and pleasure are only transitory and, as such, have no significance for a hero. It does not matter, how the circumstances are, good or bad.

“At one time a man may have led the life of luxury. There may have been beautiful women to enjoy, scented wine to drink and liveried servants to attend to, or due to helplessness and poverty, his life may be miserable, unhappy or doomed. But let him not be dejected. All this is transitory and fleeting like a line on the surface of water. How does it affect you, if the circumstances are in your favour or against you? It is all the same (because you are above all this).”

There was a day, when Rāma came here weeping with anaemic looks and heavy heart, with the intention of drowning himself in the Gaṅgā, if *Turīya* (the stage of complete absorption in God) was not realized.

“O Gaṅgā, I sacrifice my all to thee.”

And today, Rāma is fortunate to have thrown away his body consciousness into the Gaṅgā and is singing in an intoxication of extreme happiness, due to God-realization.

## Self-Enquiry

—*M. Hafiz Syed*

We are so oblivious of our own self that we have never taken the trouble to analyse the content and the constitution of our own being. Unless we have full confidence in the reality of our own being and feel that there is something in us which abides forever and is the true source of knowledge and happiness, we cannot possibly start on our adventure in search for Truth.

Most people in this world consider themselves weaklings, incapable of achieving what they want. Some of them think they are miserable sinners and there is no hope or possibility for them to improve themselves and become good citizens. In other words they have no faith or confidence in themselves as they have no clear understanding of their nature. They think that they are mere body and mind, which are ultimately perishable. Death for such people has a great terror. They think that as soon as their physical body disappears, they too would come to an end.

All the religions of the world, if one has faith in them, have unanimously assured their followers that they would survive after death and that they would be responsible and accountable for their deeds in this world. They would reap what they had sown. They would go to either hell or heaven in accordance with their good or evil deeds, or they would return to this earth for enjoying the result of their good action and suffer for their evil ways.

Here and there one comes across a system of thought called mysticism or occultism or Yogic *Sādhanā*, which

draws our attention to the fact of our survival after the disappearance of our body. They have also extended definite hope of the fact that here and now while one is confined in the limitation of one's body, one can consciously realize the continuity of one's existence in spite of the relentless hand of death which snatches our body against our will to live. There were and there are still various schools of *Sādhanā*, spiritual discipline, which held out definite hopes of realizing our true Self and putting an end to fear of death. In the Eastern countries, more specially in India, several schools of spiritual discipline do still exist and devout aspirants pursue the path of spiritual development according to the instructions of their *Gurus*, spiritual teachers. Some of the teachers subject their adherents to severest course of discipline and austerity.

In the last quarter of the 19th century a young man of 17 years set his foot on spiritual adventure, renounced his hearth and home, worldly career, and all earthly desire once for all, devoted himself completely to the search after Truth, which he fully realized by dint of his own perseverance, intense *Sādhanā* and one pointed and single-minded devotion to the goal he was seeking. The result of his direct experience, on earnest enquiry, by curious and searching people, made him jot down a few definite, concise and helpful suggestions for treading the path which he himself had successfully trodden, and reach the goal dear to his heart. His instructions are so simple and yet so profound. The method pointed out by him appeals to a modern mind because it is wholly analytic, and therefore scientific in its approach and method. He does not call upon us to pin our faith in this, that, or other dogma, nor has he ever given us any *Mantra*. He does not expect his admirers or devotees to follow his path uncritically. Knowing full well the

condition of the modern mind and its lack of faith in things spiritual and invisible, he has simply advised us to follow the dictate of reason, pursue the well-known method of investigation, self-enquiry and self-awareness.

The sage of Arunachala says that after the elimination of one body after another, one comes to a stage where one finds one's locus standi. One may deny any and everything; but one cannot put off or deny one's own self, the continuity of which one can easily notice if one casts his glance backward from infancy to present age, whatever it may be. He is drawn to the conclusion that although his mind and body have undergone various changes, yet his own self-identity has not undergone any change. He is what he was or has been from the moment he can recollect his conscious existence up to the time where he stands today.

The first thing to do, before beginning the quest, is to analyse the constitution of our being, wherein we would find that there is something in us which has been undergoing definite changes and therefore it may be treated as something unreal. The sum-total of our ego-sense has in it an element of reality, viz., the light of consciousness manifesting itself as "I am". This "I am" we know now as real because unlike its vestures it is constant and unchanging. We have to gradually dissociate ourselves from them and dwell in thought on the pure "I am". This "I am" is a clue to the finding of the real Self. By holding on to this clue, the sage tells us, we can surely find the self.

In simpler language it may be stated thus: as mind and body appear fitfully, they are unreal. As I exist continuously, I am real, as the pure "I am". I may reject my vestures as not my own self, because they are objects seen by me. I cannot possibly dissociate myself from my own being because it is that which perceives my body and the

functions of my mind. Hence the “I am” is the truth of me; all else is not I.

What we gain by this analytic process is just an intellectual grasp of the truth of the self. The self thus known is a mere mental abstraction. What we need to experience is the conscious presence of the self.

The sage of Arunachala has advised us not to lean too much upon any sacred scriptures nor any external guide, but depend upon one’s own self. When we get a glimpse of it, we shall then discover that its nature is *Sat*, *Cit* and *Ānanda*, which is the admitted characteristics of the supreme Self, called by various name. It is unrelated, formless, nameless, timeless, spaceless, absolute, one without a second, unchanging, source of knowledge and unending happiness.

In the first place, our knowledge of this self is indirect, as we proceed on its adventure on the authority and evidence of persons who have realized it by their own self-effort. Then after due investigation and analysis we will begin to have what is called direct experience of what we really are in essence.

Before we are privileged to have direct experience which will deepen our faith gradually, we have to learn to probe and dive deep into our inner self. First we have to have full faith, on the authority of seers, in the reality of the ever abiding self.

If we start on our spiritual adventure with this faith and confidence, we shall be able to overcome the difficulty of wandering mind and shifting ego-sense, which is like one’s own shadow. The ego cannot be subdued by one who takes it to be real.

One who has learnt to have full faith in the dignity, permanence, and glory of the self, can never stoop low



to do anything which is mean and dishonourable. The outer will reflect the inner; he who is conscious of his divine nature would never be daunted by any difficulty, nor would he be discouraged by any failure. Seeing the same self dwelling equally in the hearts of all, he would treat his fellow-men and other living creatures with sympathy and humane consideration. He would not grudge any service given to his brother man. He would overcome his selfishness and joyfully render unselfish service to those, who need it. He would have no hesitation in sharing his belonging with those who are needy and less fortunate than himself; he would overcome greed, passion, anger and attachment because these baser qualities are not part of his real nature.

If he is overcome by sorrow, suffering, grief and disappointment, he would remind himself instantly that these misfortunes could not touch him as he is above them, free from sorrow and grief. His real nature is *Ānanda*, Bliss. Death loses all its terror for him as his real self is free from decay and dissolution. No change in the outer world ever disturbs him. He knows them to be evanescent. These and much more than these await him who has full and abiding faith in his own self.



Steady abidance in the self, looking at all with an equal eye unshakable courage at all times, in all places and circumstances are the marks of a real teacher.

—*Sri Ramana Maharshi*

## Songs of Kabīra

Creation is all a nightly dream,  
Flows full along attachment's stream.  
Know, O man, none is thine;  
The world is carried in torrent's line.  
The life—it all comes to naught,  
As breaks the brittle earthen pot,  
As falls the leaf from bough;  
Beware, conceited fool, from now.  
Swell not at thy body fine,  
The *Prāṇas* will soon clear the line;  
Shortlived is life on earthly plane;  
None can help to allay thy pain.  
Friends, family, wife and son,  
They like aliens thee shall shun.  
Such is, man, the physical plane;  
Cling thou fast and tight to Name.  
Greed, pride and talent hurl aside;  
Then fearless and calm in the world  
abide.  
The meshes of life will thus be cut;  
So saith Kabīra, who ne'er goes fut.

—Translated by *B. R. Sharma*



# Manifest What You Are

—Swami Chidananda

What will you yield, in the form of the living of your life, in the world into which God has sent you? The oyster yields a pearl because that is what it holds within its bosom. The gold mine yields gold because that is what it holds within its bosom. What will you yield from within the depths of your own personality, your nature, your individual identity? What will be your gift to the world? It is for you to choose. It is for you to make this choice and to live your life in this grand arena, which gives you the occasion, the opportunity, and the unlimited scope and freedom to be what you are.

God did not send His own radiant ray, His own *Amśa* (part), His own individualised expression, to spread darkness where one has the full potential to manifest light. God did not send His own chosen ones, His children, to do anything except to manifest His love, His purity and peace, His kindness and compassion, the fragrance and beauty of His all-virtuous divinity. All that is positive, auspicious, blessed and beautiful inheres in God as His transcendental, perfect, pristine nature. And He dwells within you. He is manifest here as you. You choose whether you will withhold it or gloriously manifest it.

To make the right choice—purposefully, intelligently, wisely, with discrimination—is the great privilege of only one species of creatures on this planet Earth, and that is the human being. Reflect well on this, and act in harmony with this inner fact.

When you can make your life beautiful, why should you allow it to give place to ugliness? When you can make your life wonderfully fragrant, why should you allow any contrary factor to mar its fragrance? When you can make your life luminous, effulgent and radiant, why should you deny yourself this privilege? When you can make your life all that is good, auspicious and beautiful, why should you not do so and be a blessing to all?

For, this is your birthright which you can claim. Therefore, throughout the day always let your choice be for Divinity and the expression of what you really are. Let each word that you speak, each thought that you harbour in your mind, each sentiment or emotion that you cherish in your heart, each action that you engage in, bring forth, express and actively manifest the purity, the sublimity, the blessedness, the auspiciousness and the radiance that you are.

What a great blessing, what a great privilege this life is! It would be a pity not to see it as such. Make up your mind, therefore, that each day, every moment, at every step, your choice will be to manifest the Truth within you, and never anything else but this. Choose always to be the best, the highest. Choose to be what you really are. Choose to be the source of blessedness.

In this choice lies not only your own highest good, but in it lies the good of all creatures. In this lies the highest well-being of the contemporary world in which you live. This is the truth, and this is the occasion and the opportunity. This is for you the moment to prove your wisdom in all your life each day.

Choose to manifest the glory that you are, the grandeur that your true identity constitutes, the sublime loftiness and nobility which is your true dimension. Choose to manifest

the divinity that you have been made aware of by the awakening teachings of *Gurudeva* and that you have been awakened to by the Being who sent you here and brought you here, and who indwells you as the great Light of lights beyond all darkness shining in the innermost chambers of your heart.

When God and *Gurudeva* have offered you this priceless gift and this unique privilege, will you turn away from it, reject it and refuse to receive it, or will you eagerly grasp it and make your life sublime? This choice is not a single act at some time in your life. This choice is an ongoing, continuing process forming the very living of your life—day by day, moment by moment, in each and every act—mental, verbal and physical.

This choice has to be made constantly, and the right choice at each moment and each step constitutes the steps of the shining stairway that leads to the highest state of blessedness, divine perfection and liberation. May every moment of each day be an upward ascent upon this shining stairway that leads to the Goal Supreme. Thus determine within yourself and crown yourself with glory!



अन्तःस्थसच्चिदानन्दसाक्षात्कारं सुसाधयेत्।

योऽसावेव गुरुः प्रोक्तः परो नामधरः स्मृतः॥

He alone is the real *Guru* who makes us realize perfectly the Lord, the very embodiment of *Saccidānanda* (immaculate existence-consciousness-bliss). Others are only for name-sake.

# **Viveka: True Discrimination**

## **(Gleanings from a Saint's Teachings)**

*Viveka* (Discrimination, Discernment, Intelligence) is the light of Wisdom that is rooted in Man and marks him out from the subhuman creation. It is not the same thing as the intellect, but that from which the intellect derives its force. The intellect is a mechanism of nature, whereas *Viveka* is supra-natural light illuminating it. As the Sun is the source of the electric or the candle light, so is *Viveka* the source from which the intellect and the senses derive their light and power. *Viveka* is the Light of the Divine whose ray is embedded in the innermost shrine of the heart of man and which lights the pilgrimage of man from a human skeleton to a mirror of the Divine.

*Viveka* teaches us that man is not the human skeleton, but Consciousness encased in the human body. What he is—Consciousness—is the hidden target of discovery for the individual. But it should be discernible to each thinking man that he is not the body, even though normally he may be all too body-conscious. Each man calls the body his body, not himself; and there are many men who are ready to lay down their bodies to protect something they value higher—honour of self, family or country, etc., or who would rather be released from the body if faced with an incurable and agonizing malady in the body. What, then, does man find himself? A being or consciousness who is discontented with his imperfections—reflected in his unceasing desires—and is impelled by an urge for fulfilment, perfection or liberation, and is endowed with discrimination (*Viveka*) which guides him onward all along is the man as he

actually finds himself in substratum. It follows, therefore, that man's life must be a process of *Sādhanā*: a conscious aspiration and ceaseless effort to emerge from want to fulfilment, from imperfection to perfection, from bondage to liberation. *Sādhana*-less living (awareness) is living by instinct, the life of the subhuman; or (conscious) life up above of the superman, the liberated man who has fulfilled himself through the school of human life—not of the normal 'man'. 'Man', as he is, is, thus, an entity of conscious *Sādhana*. Unconscious good conduct and service one finds even in many trees, but they do not equate with man for they lack the self-awareness of *Viveka*. Non-possession is the attribute of many animals, but none calls them *Samnyāsīs*. So, it is *Viveka*, or self-awareness, which marks out man as the highest of God's creation; verily made in the image of God.

Mystics, Saints and Sages of all lands and ages have offered their testimony that, eventually, man must inevitably realize his kinship or unity with the True, the Good and the Beautiful—the Divine, or by whatever name we call that ultimate Reality; when he discards his transitional identification with the outer appearance imposed upon him by age-long habit and the resultant delusion in Nature's process of educating, which is the secret purpose of human evolution. In other words, the manhood of man consists in a process of his integration into completeness, which may be termed as Divinehood.

True integration of man's personality is not possible without control of the senses, transmutation of selfishness into selfless service and of fissiparous thoughts into contemplation of God or yearning for Truth. These are labelled as the paths of *Yoga*, *Karma*, *Bhakti* and *Jñāna* respectively.

Self-introspection, in the light of *Viveka*, leads one to make right use of his senses. Control of the senses dissolves man's identification with the body and thereby directly liquidates attachment and selfishness. This involves *Tapas*: which purifies man's heart. From a purified heart emerges true prayer. Prayer is the universal and the deepest and yet closest link between man and God. No purer prayer has soared from the heart of man—significant of the *potential* 'man'—than the one which has sang through the ages:—

“From untruth lead me to Truth,  
From darkness lead me to Light,  
From death lead me to Immortality.”

This indicates the hidden urge of man to find himself, and is an index of man's essential want, which is a pointer to what he is.

The part enacted by an actor on the stage is not his *Swarūpa*. The states of wakefulness, dream and *Suṣupti* are the states of the physical, the astral and the causal bodies of man. The true man is beyond these three states of the object world.

Knowledge is one; but we experience it at different levels—one through the senses, second through the mind and third direct by oneself. This threefold knowledge may be considered relatively progressive knowledge. But all these three states of knowledge are illumined by one Supreme Consciousness. As the Sun is the sole source of light to the eye and of electricity, so is the Divine the sole repository of all knowledge and consciousness. *Viveka* is the Light of the Divine.

Truth, being self-aware and sure of itself, is infinitely patient. Just as salt does not beat the drum of its own flavour but brings out goodness in everything which it



contacts, so does Truth impart light and life to everything. *Viveka* is the light of Truth.

Man rightly calls his body his body, his mind his mind, and so on. But he does not pause to enquire who he is. As soon as he dissociates himself from the body, the mind and their environments, he will stand by himself and know himself. Ask any man if he is the same person who was studying in the same school with another who is now in entirely different circumstances. One might be highly placed, while another a beggar. The circumstances of the two are now widely different; but both know themselves to be the same as they were as school-mates. Thus any change in their bodily circumstances and environments does not affect their awareness of what they are, irrespective of the circumstances and environments. This shows that man by himself is distinct from his surroundings.

The enquiry, 'Who am I?' arises in the mind of a man when he finds himself bound in limitations but bursting with an inner urge to cut asunder the bonds of things, environments and states of mind. These are merely shadows of the real 'I'. The false 'I' is but an yearning for its real content. Put otherwise, it is like unto a thief who elopes the moment the master 'I' dawns on man's consciousness.

*Ahaṁ-Vṛtti* is the disease, while *Ahaṁ-Sphūrṭi* is its cure. One devours the other and the resultant residue is effortless awareness, which is Self-realization.

An investigation into the content of the false 'I' will reveal that the *Swarūpa* of the real 'I' is the hidden want and aspiration of the former, even though dissipated in numerous reflection of desire.

Man's manhood consists of love of the Divine, service of fellow-beings and an aspiration to Self-realization. True manhood is the same as *Sādhana-Tattva*.

The inquiry 'Who am I?' or yearning after God arises in a man only after he has repaid the debts of society by selfless service. Man identified with the body is a repository of the calls of society. Deeper down he is a longing for the Divine.

Desire is born in man because he identifies himself with his body. The cessation of desire of the fleeting robs the passing I-sense of its main prop. It then survives for a time on the desire for the eternal, which consumes what remains of him till he resurrects into divinity. As the concept 'I am His devotee' or 'I am a seeker of Truth' i.e., one all-consuming aspiration—replaces a motley of desires, God or Truth does not take long to own the aspiring soul. Aspiration is directed to one, desire to a multitude of objects.

All the various rules of conduct prescribed by different religions are meant only to rid man of his body-consciousness through right action, of the subtle body by right thinking, of the causal body by detachment etc. With the dissolution of body-consciousness, self-realization dawns by itself. It is only till man has not realized his true self that the *Sādhaka* engages in various efforts to unwind the false identification with which he has bound himself. The dawn of *Viveka* and the ending of body-consciousness is a simultaneous process. The sunrise of *Jñāna* dispels in a stroke the age-long nightmare of darkness. *Viveka* is not a matter of practice, it is the fruit of all practices.

Self-purification is an essential prerequisite for self-realization. Self-purification, in the ultimate analysis, consists in dissociating the self from the body.

As the eye can see every object, but no one can see the eye, so One who knows everything and is Self-luminous is the Self or the Divine—Who cannot be perceived by the intellect or seen by the eye. Even as the light of the candle

merges with the light of the Sun, so does the knowledge of the senses merge in the knowledge of the Self.

*Viveka* is the self-sufficient torch-bearer of truth; for it is the light of Truth itself. Thus, when *Viveka* is ablaze there is effortless awareness, supreme *Jñāna*. Effort pertains to the 'I' and lasts only till it has not consumed the 'I' itself. All *Sādhana* is meant to lead to *Sādhana*-lessness. Realization dawns when the 'I' has set. The 'I' is motion; *Jñāna* is the stillness of the Self. Just as where Light is, darkness is not, so in stillness there is no motion of effort. The light of *Viveka* leads to the flame of *Viveka*.

*Viveka* is the true *Guru*. Just as the fragrance emitted by the flower is in fact latent in the seed as well as in the tree, but it is given to the flower to emanate it by virtue of its perfection, so is Truth or God, though omnipresent, revealed to man by Flowers of the race, Saints and Sages. The *Guru*—Saint or sage—accordingly is *Viveka* itself personified.

In fact, as in all sweetmeats the sweetness is of the sugar, so is all that appears true and beautiful a reflection of *Viveka*.

As the pure waters of a flowing river, enclosed in a pit, breed various germs, so does universal love, encased in a body, thing or environment degenerate into *Moha*. The ego is the limiting agency.

*Viveka* is the splitter of the ego, which is the atom of the spiritual world. The splitting of the ego is the key to *Mokṣa*, the realization of Truth. Truth is the substratum that is eternal and knows no change; untruth is that which floats on the screen, an influx of ever-changing appearances. The latter feeds on desires; the former is what remains of the cessation of desires.

—Compiled by *M. M. Varma*

# Smile in the Present Moment!

—Prof. Sudesh Gogia

Present moment is a wonderful moment: Smile. That's is the only moment that's real. To be here and now smile and enjoy. Remind yourself always to relax and smile. Don't ever set-aside time to smile. You may walk slowly, never mind, but smile. Brisk walking pays a lot but with smiling pays better! Taking tea with your friends is good but with smile is pleasurable enjoy being together with smile as if you're the happiest couple on Earth!

This's not a retreat, it's a treat! While gardening, give a hearty smile to flowers, they'll blossom. While preparing dishes for your lovable in the kitchen, do them all smilingly.

In meditation your spine is erect and you smile. Observe carefully when 'Buddha' and 'Bodhisattvas' are in meditation; they all smile. Smile improves the contours on your face! In '*Prāṇāyāma*' or in '*Yoga*' Breathe-in smilingly calming your mind and body. Breathe-out smilingly to outst toxins from your body.

Smile is like drinking a glass of ice-water, you feel the cold; you feel the freshness permeate your body! Dwelling in the present moment with a smile is a wonderful moment!

A smile relaxes 375 muscles on your face, relaxes your nervous system. A smile makes you master of yourself! That's why the 'Buddhas and Bodhisattvas' are always smiling. You realize the 'Wonder of smile' when you smile!

Past is gone, future uncertain then why to worry both? You sit here realize where you are! That's important. Tend

to be alive now, not in the future! You say, “Wait until, I finish college and get my degree, then I’ll be smiling” “When you have it, you say wait until I have a job. And then after the job, a car, after the car, a house, a beautiful wife....!” Are you capable of being alive in the ‘present moment to smile and enjoy’? You have become habitual of postponing your happiness which was knocking your door at every step! You tend to postpone being alive to the future, the distant future!

You based your happiness in the ‘future happiness’ which never comes! You may never be alive in your entire life! The technique is ‘present moment’! You are here and now! You’re in the wonderful moment! Do the things you love most smilingly! Life’s too precious to waste it doing what you do not like. Forgive and forget with a smile! Never be afraid of mistakes. Accept mistakes by smiles and keep learning. Remember there’s always something to learn, from everything you see, hear and experience in life!.



Serve silently! Do not serve for show or publicity, let the right hand not know what your left hand gives away. Do not serve for name, fame, popularity or publicity.

—J. P. Vaswani

It is not difficult to practise *Karmayoga*. But who cognise it as difficult for them, it is difficult and who regard it as easy to practice for them, it is so.

—Jayadayal Goyandka

## Deliverance of Two Vilest Sinners

—*Tridandiswamy B. S. Niskinchana*

The two of the vilest sinners referred to above are Jagāi and Madhāi of Śrī Navadvīpādhāma of Bengal, contemporaneous with Śrī Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Deva. There was no sin that these two brothers, born in a *Brāhmaṇa* family, did not perpetrate. They were hard drunkards, keeping drunken all day and night, often senseless almost all the time on the streets. They were a menace to all their neighbours and passers-by, who kept away from them lest they should be molested and roughly handled by them. They robbed people of their money, murdered them, if resisted, committed rape, burnt houses and were guilty of various other most heinous sins. They ever revelled in drinking bouts and rolling on pathways and into drains.

Lord Gaurāṅga with His heart moistened with the milk of human kindness for all sinners, deputed Lord Nityānanda, His own Self, so to speak, with Nāmācārya Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura, for propagating *Śrī Harināma* (Lord Kṛṣṇa's Name) from door to door, so that people might chant it with them and thereby acquire devotion to God, the highest good that man can ever attain to. When accordingly the two preachers roamed about Navadvīpa, asking all to give them alms in the form of chanting *Hari-Nāma* in their company and thus become devotees of God, the refrain of their song was: "Say Kṛṣṇa, chant Kṛṣṇa, worship Kṛṣṇa; for Kṛṣṇa is Father, Kṛṣṇa is Mother, Kṛṣṇa is true property (*Dhana*) and the very life (*Prāṇa*)." (Vide Śrī Caitanya

*Bhāgavata* of Śrī Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākura, Part II. Chap. 13). Those who were good among the citizens complied and joined them in *Harināma Saṅkīrtana*, while others railed at them as crazy-brained.

One day they came across the two drunken brothers engaged in mutual brawl and fray. Learning their antecedents from the locality, Lord Nityānanda became exceedingly anxious for their deliverance and attainment of devotion to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura was glad at the certainty of their redemption, as Śrī Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu had wished it. They called, in spite of the good men present there preventing them, to the two ruffians for joining in their *Kīrtana* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Name. Feeling disturbed thereby, the rogues turned with a violent attitude against the mendicants, who saved themselves from rough handling by speedily leaving the place.

On their report and Nityānanda Prabhu's strong pleading for their conversion into devotees, Śrī Śrī Mahāprabhu smilingly assured the devotees round Him of the deliverance of the two drunkards, as Śrīla Nityānanda had desired it. The following night the two preachers repeated their call to the rogues, when Madhāī, suddenly rising from his street-bed, hurt the temple of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu with the broken piece of an earthen pitcher lying near by, thereby causing a bleeding wound. Jagāī, however, prevented further assault by Madhāī.

Learning this from a passer-by Śrī Śrī Mahāprabhu quickly reached the place of occurrence with a great fury, when He was appeased by Śrīla Nityānanda Prabhu saying that the injury had caused no such pain and that Jagāī had taken Madhāī to task for his rudeness. The Mahāprabhu forthwith embraced Jagāī as the rescuer of Śrī Nityānanda and immediately conferred *Prema* (Love of God) on him.

Madhāī, then, coming to his sense, very humbly prayed for pardon, which the Mahāprabhu strongly refused to grant for his attack on the person of Śrī Nityānanda. On his continuous plaintive prayer for mercy and Śrī Nityānanda's fervent intervention on his behalf, his prayer was granted. When the two brothers undertook to commit no further sin and chanted panygeres to the Lords, being helped by Śuddhā Saraswatī (the goddess teaching true devotion to God), the Mahāprabhu took upon Himself the burden of all their sins ever committed in their lives. Overpower with this type of Grace, they swooned and, regaining their senses, most humbly eulogized the intensity of the mercy shown towards the most debased rogues like themselves as far greater even than that received by Ajāmila, who had been absolved of his sins on his taking the Name of Nārāyaṇa, though for calling his son of that name (Vide *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, Sk. VI. Ch. I).

Now a question crops up here. How could these villains (Ajāmila, Jagāī and Madhāī) secure mercy from God, which even very pious *Brāhmaṇas* versed in Vedic rites could not? At the outset, it is very difficult to solve this mystery, which is like an intricate riddle. Śrī Vṛndāvanadāsa Ṭhākura, the author of *Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata*, while narrating the account of the deliverance of Jagāī and Madhāī. has said that Śrī Gaura Candra Mahāprabhu delivered all except those that calumniated the *Vaiṣṇavas*. He has cited passages from the *Purāṇas* to establish that a calumniator of God's devotees, be he even as great as Śiva Himself, is utterly ruined—so heinous is the consequence of *Vaiṣṇava-Aparādha*. Fortunately, he continues, the two ruffians, having remained ever in the company of drunkards who always drank themselves drunk, had no occasion to be guilty of the severest of offences and as such they were



easily redeemed of their sins and gifted with love of God, which the pandits with their learning and religious formalities but given to thinking and speaking ill of *Vaishavism* and the *Vaiṣṇavas*, can never expect to secure even in the course of all their lives, until their *Aparādha* becomes exorable on their appeasing the *Vaiṣṇavas* to whom it has been done or by *Sevā* done to other *Vaiṣṇavas* in a penitent spirit. The case of Devānanda Pandit of Kulia—Navadvīpa is an instance in point.

This pandit was a great scholar and famous teacher of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata*. Once, before Śrī Śrī Mahāprabhu came out as the greatest teacher of devotion to Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Śrīvāsa Pandit of Sri Mayapur—Navadvīpa (birth-place of the Lord), later a most intimate follower of His, was attracted by the reputation of Devānanda to call at his place for listening to his *Bhāgavata* exposition. Śrīvāsa's heart was always full of devotion to God and it overflowed with the *Rasa* of devotional sentiment on hearing a *Śloka* of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata* when he fell in a swoon. Devānanda was quite alien to such sentiment and had Śrīvāsa removed from the scene by his pupils. Here he committed a great *Aparādha* to Śrī Śrīvāsa Pandit. Some years later he got himself absolved of it by dint of his most cordial personal service rendered to Śrī Vakreśwara Pandit, another of Śrīmān Mahāprabhu's closest associate-devotees, when He pardoned his *Aparādha* with instructions about it. Another *Brāhmaṇa*, Gopal Chapal by name, who had committed *Aparādha* to the same Śrīvāsa Pandit, got the disease of leprosy all over his body, of which he was freed by Mahāprabhu when he got himself pardoned by Śrīvāsa after a long time. God Viṣṇu too made *Rṣi* Durvāsā fall at the feet of King Ambarīṣa, whom he had attempted to kill by means of *Kṛtyā*, a demoness born out of his torn

lock, before he could be absolved from the torturing heat of God's discus, Sudarśana, that forthwith came to punish him for his offence to the *Vaiṣṇava* king.

These instances establish the fact that *Aparādhas* done to *Vaiṣṇavas* cannot be pardoned until they bow down to their feet and appease them with prayers. From all these we should learn to be cautious that we do not offer true *Vaiṣṇavas* any kind of disparagement and dishonour in the course of our dealings with them, and we also advise our friends everywhere to be careful never to be guilty of arrogance to true *Sādhus*, knowing that there may be an escape from the consequences of sins, but never from *Vaiṣṇava-Aparādha* except by the grace of such *Sādhu-Vaiṣṇavas* themselves.



To restrain the *Indriyas* (organs) from going towards the objects of the senses, to control them and bring them under the guidance of the will, is the very central virtue in religious culture. Then comes the practice of self-restraint and self-denial. All the immense possibilities of divine realisation in the soul cannot get actualised without struggle and without such practice on the part of the aspiring devotee. "The mind must always think of the Lord." It is very hard at first to compel the mind to think of the Lord always, but with every new effort the power to do so grows stronger in us. "By practice, O son of Kuntī and by non-attachment is it attained", says Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Gītā*.

—Swami Vivekananda

## Salvation

Were a man's heart so fixed on God as on the world of outward things who would not then be freed from bondage?

For mind is said to be of two kinds, pure and impure—impure when united with desire, pure when free from desire.

When the mind has been made steadfast, alert, and undistracted, and a man attains that state in which the promptings of unruly fancies exist for him no more—that is the highest stage.

The mind's undisciplined movements must be checked within the heart till they have come to an end. That call I true wisdom and salvation. The rest is mere book learning and prolixity.

The happiness of a mind, by inward concentration washed clean from its defilement, a mind that has been brought to rest within the Self, that happiness cannot be pictured forth in words. By inward sense alone it is realised by each one for himself.

Water in the midst of water, fire in fire, sky in the sky—no man can distinguish them. Thus he whose unchastened thoughts and feelings have vanished merges his soul in God and so finds freedom.

The mind alone is the cause of men's bondage or salvation. When it is attached to outward things it tends to bondage, but a mind freed from the power of outward things is, we are taught, salvation.

—*Maitrāyaṇa Upaniṣad*

## A Prayer

ब्रजकर्दमलिप्ताङ्गे                      स्वरूपसुषमाजितानङ्गे ।  
कृतनन्दाङ्गणरिङ्गणविधिविहारे                      मतिर्मेऽस्तु ॥

Let my thought be concentrated on Child Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Whose limbs are daubed with the mud of cow-pens, (nay) Who has conquered the god of love with the charms of his own (divine) personality and Who enacts various sports while crawling on his hands and knees in the courtyard of Nanda.

करवरधृतलधुलकुटे    विचित्रमायूरचन्द्रिकामुकुटे ।  
नासागतमुक्तामणिजटितविभूषे                      मतिर्मेऽस्तु ॥

Let my thought be focussed on Child Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Who holds a light staff in his lovely hand, (nay) Who wears on his head a diadem consisting of the multi-tinted plumes of a peacock and is graced with an ornament set with a pearl and suspended below his nose.

अभिनन्दनकृतनृत्ये                      विरचितनिजगोपिकाकृत्ये ।  
आनन्दितनिजभृत्ये                      प्रहसनमुदिते                      मतिर्मेऽस्तु ॥

Let my thought be riveted on Child Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Who begins to dance when applauded, (nay) Who performs small acts of service to his beloved *Gopīs* and (thereby) brings joy to his servants and feels rejoiced when made to laugh.

—Goswami Sri Harirayaji

Date of publication 1. 8. 2015

Subscribe online—Go to [www.gitapress.org](http://www.gitapress.org)

Click: Online Magazine Subscription.