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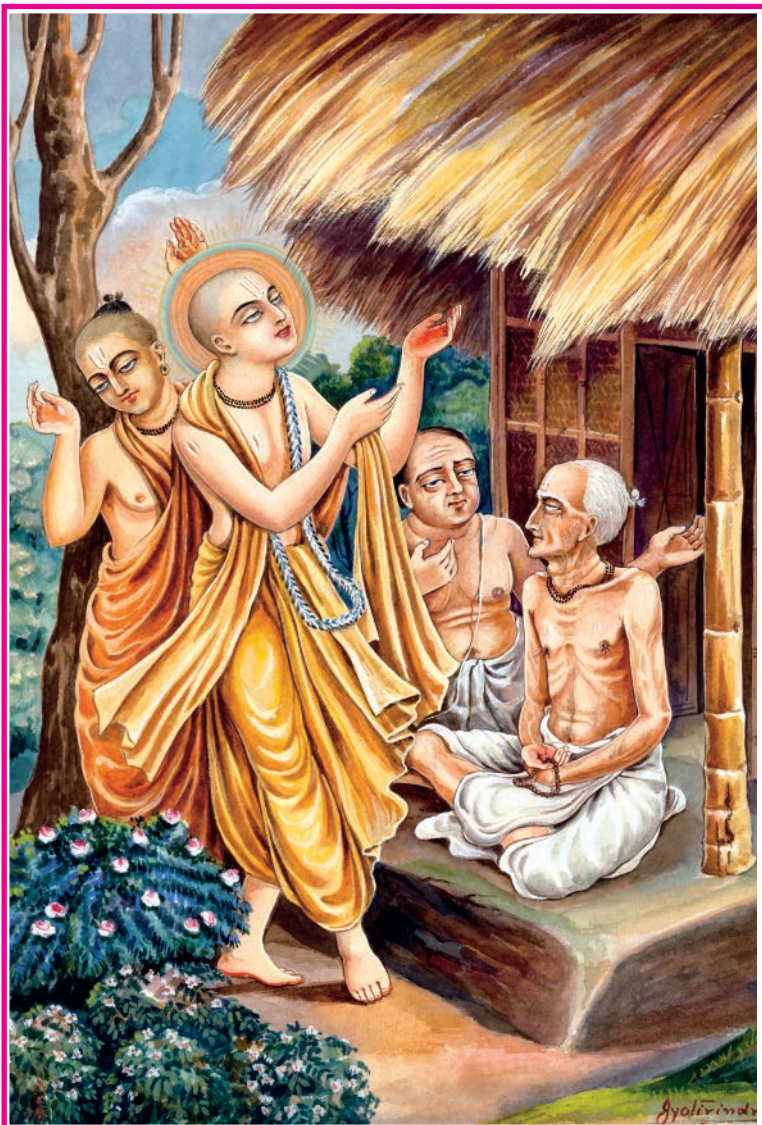


Eternal Guidance

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No. 10

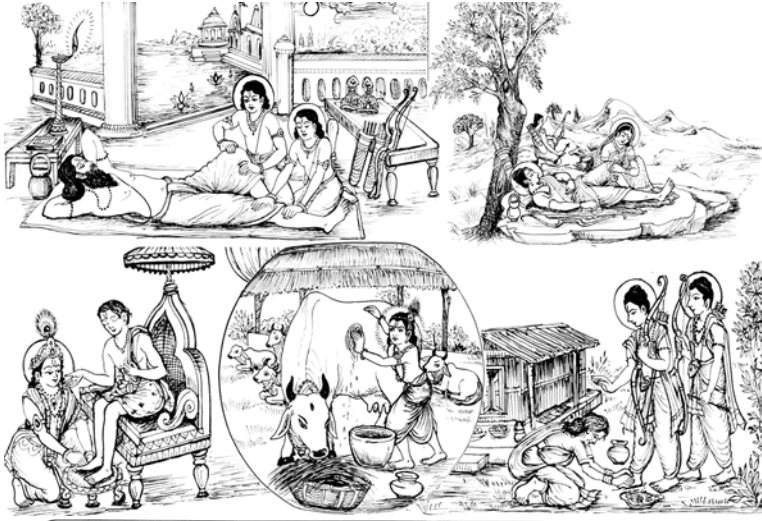
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Śrī Caitanya and Haridāsa

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



KALYANA-KALPATARU

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

Vol. 63

July 2018

No. 10

Subhāṣitam

सत्यानुसारिणी लक्ष्मीः कीर्तिस्त्यागानुसारिणी ।
कर्मानुसारिणी बुद्धिर्विद्याभ्यासानुसारिणी ॥

The Goddess of Fortune comes in the wake of Truth,
glory comes in the wake of renunciation, the turn of mind
follows the working of Fate and learning is the consequence
of studies.

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Means of Developing Love for God

—*Brahmalina Sri Jayadayal Goyandka*

You have inquired about the methods of developing love for God. Well, this love can be developed by several means some of which are being given hereunder:—

(1) Love can soon be cultivated through listening to the description of His attributes, His Love and glory from the lips of His devotees. In the absence of the association with the devotees, the regular study of scriptures is as good a means as the former.

(2) Through the constant practice of the mental repetition of Divine Name coupled with meditation, love for God may be developed.

(3) The intense longing for meeting God also increases the love.

(4) By conducting the life in accordance with the Divine will and by performing actions according to the behests of the Universal Soul, one can have love for Him. The injunction of the scriptures should also be regarded as the verdict of God.

(5) Considerable love for God can be cultivated by narrating to the people in a disinterested manner, the glory, the power and lovable acts of God as heard from his devotees and studied in the scriptures.

If any one of the five means stated above is practised well, in life, it may inspire one with the love for God. Taking honour and blasphemy to be alike, disinterestedly regarding everyone to be the manifestation of God, service should be rendered to all alike. By acting that way the

love for God may be developed of itself by the grace of God. The treatment of all as the manifestation of God shall preclude the sentiments of anger against anyone. If anger is aroused, it may be concluded that the desired state has not been achieved yet. The mind should always be free from agitation. One should rejoice at everything that takes place for everything is ordained by God and meets His approval. When God's assent is there, we should also find favour in the will of God. Nothing can take place against His will and without His approval. Thus resolved, realizing pleasure in the pleasure of God, one should ever be lost in a blissful mood.



Pure souled devotees are in a class by themselves. You cannot have real love of God unless you know that God alone is real and all else illusory. You cannot have real love of God unless you know that the world is impermanent, only of two days existence, while its creator alone is real and eternal.

—*Sri Ramakrishna*

Backbiting, rashness, malice, jealousy, prying into other's faults, unjust seizure of property, using abusive words and hard speech—these are the eight vices born of anger.

—*Manusmriti*

Weal and Woe Both are God's Līlās

—*Nityalilalina Sri Hanumanprasad Poddar*

Remember : you are not the body, hence you are neither subject to birth nor to death. It is body that undergoes birth and death. You are not the mind either; hence the joys and sorrows of mundane existence cannot affect you agreeably or adversely. You are not even the vital air; hence hunger and thirst cannot agonize you. You are the Spirit—eternally free, untainted by *Māyā* and enlightened. If you consider yourself diseased and afflicted and subject to death, your ignorance will only be confirmed thereby.

Remember : worldly weal and woe, birth and death are attributed to him alone who is rooted in *Prakṛti* (Matter), who is identified with the evolutes of Matter. He alone is diseased. You are, really speaking, the Spirit beyond Matter, are ever free from malady; be established in your own being, the Spirit; be self-poised ('स्व-स्थ'). All the agonies attendant on the malady of metempsychosis will come to an end. The ocean of mundane existence will get dry for you.

Remember : if the world-process is a pastime of the Lord, creation and dissolution are the two phases of His Play. Birth and death are the two inevitable parts of His *Līlā*. The soft mellow light of the festal lamp burning in a lying-in-chamber and the stinking and cracking flame of a funeral fire in a crematory, both represent a benign pastime of the benignant Lord. A strong and robust body full of vitality and vigour and possessed of comeliness and other attributes, on the one hand and an emaciated, weak and

feeble body—a mere skeleton, on the other, both are equally characters of the divine play; both are equally blissful.

Remember : he alone dreads worldly ailments and afflictions and death, who looks upon the body alone as his self or who has no faith in the benign pastime of God, the Director of the world-drama.

Remember : on deep thought the maladies and misfortunes etc., of mundane life would appear propitious and benignant from every point of view. (1) The morbidities accumulated in the body are drawn out, thereby purifying the body. (2) The fruit of one's evil action done in a previous existence is reaped in the form of a malady and misery etc., and the action gets neutralized in this way, rendering one pure to that extent. (3) Man becomes humble while ailing and undergoing suffering; a distaste for worldly pleasures is aroused in him, he gets an idea of others' afflictions, is shorn of pride and put in mind of God, with the result that his mind gets purified. Judged from this point of view, sickness and suffering etc., purify one's body and mind as well as one's stock of *Karma*.

Remember : if one comes to look upon ill health and misfortune etc., as a benign dispensation of God and discerns His beatific grace flowing through them, divine grace is easily attained.

Remember : if during the period of his illness and calamity etc., a man comes to believe that he is going through a course of austerities, the agony caused by his malady and woe etc., disappears and the reward of austerities is easily obtained. And by looking upon death as extinction of individual or mundane existence final beatitude or liberation is attained.

Remember : if during our illness, misfortune etc., we

feel that our most beloved Lord is pleased with these and that our supreme gratification lies in His pleasure alone, our malady and affliction etc., instantly turn out to be supremely gratifying in that they are conducive to the pleasure of our most beloved Lord, and love for the Lord is awakened in us.

Remember : if the Lord Himself is perceived in the form of illness, adversity etc., or death—if we firmly persuade ourselves that it is the Lord alone who has appeared in the garb of illness and calamity etc., nay, even of death, the rare good fortune of enjoying His sweet embrace is actually had.

Remember : if it is imperative to undergo treatment in the form of taking medicine etc., with a view to counteracting a disease and hardship etc., according to one's *Āśrama* or stage in life and circumstances, it should be taken in a disinterested spirit as a matter of sheer duty or for ensuring the pleasure of the Lord and not with the hope and desire of ending the illness and suffering etc., nor again out of attachment for one's body, any living being or object. Even as Arjuna was asked by the Lord to take up arms and fight without any hope or attachment and free from the fever of craving and to resign all actions to Him, every action of ours too should be undertaken for the pleasure of the Lord, for the sake of carrying out His behest or for implementing a decree of the Lord and not as impelled by any egotistic feeling, attachment or desire.



Spiritual Student

—*Brahmalina Swami Ramsukhdas*

The aims of a mundane student and a spiritual student are different but their methods of achieving their aims are almost the same. The only difference is that a spiritual student works more speedily because every activity for him is a spiritual practice.

For a spiritual student (striver) unfavourable circumstances are more useful because in unfavourable circumstances old sins are wiped out and new enthusiasm is born, while in favourable circumstances the reward of old virtues is destroyed and there is possibility of the birth of evils such as heedlessness, indolence and attachment to pleasures etc. Therefore, for a spiritual student unfavourable circumstances come in the form of austerity which is very helpful in spiritual discipline. If we have a look at the lives of saints and great souls such as Dhruva, Prahlāda and Mīrābāī etc., we come to know that they faced unfavourable circumstances which enhanced their faith in God. Thus, unfavourable circumstances instead of proving to be obstructive are helpful for a striver or an ascetic (*Yogī*) while they are obstacles for a voluptuary (*Bhogī*). It means that unfavourable circumstances are conducive to renunciation of the world.

Question—What should be the daily routine of a spiritual student?

Answer—The significant fact for a spiritual student is that he should firmly hold the belief that he has only to realize God. So he performs every activity in order to attain that aim. First after rising early in the morning he bows

to God with reverence and offers the prayer to Him, “O Lord! I wish to continue my activities according to Your ordinance. You have revealed Yourself in different forms for my salvation. Your only aim is to liberate me from the bondage. If I am a listener, You become an orator, while if I become an orator, You as a curious listener, put questions to me in order to impart me knowledge (wisdom). At that time if I hold the opinion that I am removing the doubt of the audience and satisfying their curiosity, it is a blunder on my part. The fact is that You become inquisitive and feign ignorance in order to impart knowledge to me and as a listener, in order to encourage me to march forward, You declare that Your doubt has been removed and You are satisfied with the explanation.”

“You reveal Yourself for me according to the need of the hour even as food and as water in case of hunger and thirst. You also manifest Yourself as honour and fame if I hanker after them. It means that You carry on Your different forms of pastime in the form of sentient or insentient, moving or unmoving beings in order to conduce me to God-realization. When I forget this fact, You wipe out my ignorance through the medium of the scriptures, saints, preceptors, elders, verses of the *Gītā* and intuitional inspiration.”

“I perform all activities such as ablution, bathing, walking, moving, recitation of the *Gītā* and the *Rāmāyaṇa* and daily ceremonial routine etc., according to Your ordinance and in order to please You only. In fact I should perform all actions in order to please You and I also do so. But sometimes I forget to do so by accepting existence of the world and by attaching importance to it. Again You give me warning.

A striver should perform every important or unimportant action whether scriptural or mundane or practical or physical only in order to please God. His daily routine

throughout his life should aim only at pleasing God. He should not perform any activity day and night against God's ordinance. He should always feel "I am only God's; I live in His house only. I eat the food only offered to Him; while talking (speaking) I sing His glory and the only aim of my adoration and meditation etc., is to please Him." In the *Bhāgavata* it is mentioned:—

"Whatever a man does with his body, speech, mind, senses, intellect, egoism or innate nature, he should offer it to the Primeval Being, Lord Nārāyaṇa holding the opinion that it is only for Him" (XI. 2. 36).

He should hold the opinion that he himself does not offer it but God Himself with the power and intellect offered by Him makes him offer it to Him. So he should feel pleased by thinking of His grace. Therefore for himself he has to do nothing. There is neither any action nor object nor condition nor circumstance for him. All the actions are being performed by the power given by Him. Even the food eaten by him and such other activities are performed only by His power.

Thus perfection is attained when all actions change into occurrences and occurrences change into God. In that state there remains neither 'I' nor 'Mine'. This state in the *Gītā* has been said 'Fixation of mind and intellect on Me' (VIII. 7, XII. 14). In that state there remains only the abode of bliss or supreme blessedness where mind and intellect have no access.

Students study, teachers teach, warriors fight while farmers are engaged in farming. Thus, men or women perform different actions according to the place, time, conditions and circumstances and those actions go on changing. But their aim is only one which is God-realization and it never changes.

Time is Most Precious

—Swami Sivananda

There are people who waste days and nights in idle talk, in playing-cards and chess. There are people who waste weeks in drinking and chit-chatting. There are people who waste months in the company of sisters of evil repute and in gambling. There are people who waste years and years in wandering, idle gossiping, attending cinemas, smoking, chewing betels and various other licentious deeds.

What a great pity! Man has come here with a definite purpose. Life is not meant for eating, drinking, dressing and procreating. There is something grand and sublime behind. There is an eternal life of bliss beyond. Every second must be well utilised for the achievement of this goal of life. Time is, indeed, most precious. It can never come back. It is rolling on with a tremendous speed. When the bells ring, remember you are approaching death. When the clock strikes, bear in mind that one hour is cut off from the span of your life. You must tremble with fear and say: “Death is drawing near. I am wasting my time. When shall I realise the goal of life? When shall I have *Darśana* of my *Iṣṭa Devatā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa? When shall I meet Him? When shall I be free from this wheel of *Samsāra*?”

Half of your life is spent in sleep. A great portion goes away in sickness. Some portion is spent in eating, drinking and talking. You are enveloped in ignorance and play in childhood. You are caught up in the net of women in adolescence. In old age, you pine under anxiety and the burden of family affairs. When will you, my dear friends,

find time in doing virtuous deeds and worship of God? Be serious. Think and reflect now.

A doctor speaks on the telephone and ascends the staircase to take his breakfast, and is found dead on the staircase itself on account of cardiac failure. A princess drives a car along with her husband and loses her life on the way through some accident. A Zamindar comes outside to sit on the chair for getting good breeze at night; a cobra bites him and he passes away. Such is the uncertainty or evanescent nature of life here and yet, man foolishly wastes his time.

Mr. Rockefeller and Mr. Austin know the value of time. They get millions of pounds as interest every day. A second is most precious for them. In an hour, they earn a lot. Time is all money. Just as worldly people who are engaged in business are very careful about their time, so also, spiritual aspirants are careful about their time and they use it in contemplation of God. They will not speak even a single word unnecessarily. They want to spend every second in the service of God. That is the reason why they observe *Mauna* and hide themselves in the Himalayan caves. If you take care of the seconds, the hours will take care of themselves.

When I delivered lectures, I always used to sing some songs in the beginning, to bring home to the minds of the hearers the value of time. I reproduce them here:

“Life is short, time is fleeting, obstacles are many,
Cut the knot of *Avidyā* and drink the Nirvanic bliss;
Life is short, time is fleeting,
the world is full of miseries,
Apply yourself diligently to Yogic *Sādhanā*;
The world is a *Melā* for two days,
This life is a bubble for two seconds;

You came alone, you will go alone,
no one will follow Thee;

You came naked, you will go naked,
no one will follow Thee;

Do *Bhajana*, do *Kīrtana*, for, this alone will follow
Thee.”

“What have you learnt, tell me frankly, from the
Bihar and Quetta earthquakes?

Have you got now real *Vairāgya*?

Do you practise *Japa* and *Kīrtana*?

Can you expect real *Śānti* if you waste your time
in cards and cinemas?

When your throat is choked at the time of death,
who will help you for your salvation?”

*

*

*

People have risen to greatness and prominence by utilising every second profitably. Keep daily diary. Reduce your sleep. Give up all idle talk. Enough, enough! observe *Mauna*. Understand the value of time. Draw up daily routine and stick to it tenaciously. Grow. Evolve, Expand. Get success in life. Realise God. Shut yourself in a room. Reflect. Meditate. Unfold the hidden spiritual consciousness. You have realised the end and aim of life!

□□

Land, renown, glory and fortune undoubtedly woo a man devoted to truth. The wise pursue truth, hence one should worship truth alone.

—*Vālmīkī Rāmāyaṇa*

Harināma-Kīrtana

(“*Harināma-Kīrtana*” is a book of prayers in Malayalam by the great Kerala Poet Saint, Śrī Rāmānuja. Popularly known as Thunchath Ezuthassan. The following is based upon the songs therein—*Bālājī*.)

‘Hari’ means one who removes or takes away. The Lord is called ‘Hari’ because He destroys the darkness and misery of *Samsāra* in all its three forms—*Ādhyātmika* (bodily ailments), *Ādhibhautika* (caused by natural forces) and *Ādhidaivika* (caused by supernatural forces). ‘Nārāyaṇa’ is the supreme Lord in *Yoga-Nidrā*, in whom all the universes including Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva as well as all others *Devas* and created beings or *Jīvas* lie dissolved during the time of *Pralaya* or deluge, when creation restarts and from whom everything emerges.

The word *Aum* signifies the supreme *Nirākāra* Brahma—the Formless Absolute wherein there is no difference, no change, no disharmony. But disharmony creeps in the moment it divides itself and begins to function with separate forms as Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, creating, protecting and destroying the universe of names and forms. Corresponding to this division of the Absolute is the splitting up of *Aum* into three letters A, U and M and of *Prakṛti* into the qualities of *Rajas*, *Sattva* and *Tamas*. Letter ‘A’ represents Brahmā, the creator, in whom *Rajas* dominates. Letter ‘U’ represents Viṣṇu, the Protector, in whom *Sattva* predominates. The letter ‘M’ signifies Śiva or Rudra, the Destroyer, with the predominance of *Tamas*. The supreme Lord, the original Nārāyaṇa Himself, is the witness of this division and disharmony, of this phenomenal universe of

changing names and forms.

I bow to the supreme Lord who in the form of the *Guru* awakens the *Jīvas* to the awareness of the Self. He is Himself the Witness of this creation. He is the *Sarvajña* or omniscient. He is ever-present within and without everything in the universe.

The blissful omniscient form of the Lord is realized only by an extremely few even among the wise ones who are endowed with a very deep and subtle *Buddhi* or intellect. Infinite is His love and compassion for all beings. So He assures them that even by worshipping Him in His personal aspect, possessing forms, there dawns in the devotee the supreme knowledge of the identity of the *Jivātmā* with the *Paramātmā*.

Śrī Nārāyaṇa is the *Antaryāmī* or the Lord indwelling the hearts of all. He exists as the pure *Buddhi* and the *Pratyagātmā*. But the moment we forget Him and through ignorance of the *Ātmā* or Self, who is one in all, get caught in the world of dualities and make the distinction between ‘I’ and ‘You’ and ‘mine’ and ‘thine’, we become subject to the miseries of *Samsāra* caused by attachment to our bodies and possessions in the forms of wife, children, relatives and friends, as also home, cattle and wealth. O Lord! it is indeed difficult to describe the endless distress and delusion caused by this ego-sense, which is the source of all troubles. Thou hast assured that those who surrender to Thee shall cross this ocean of *Māyā*. I fall on my knees, O Nārāyaṇa, surrendering myself and every thing that belongs to me at Thy lotus feet, dedicating all for Thy service. Thy infinite love and compassion are my sole support and refuge. Deign to liberate me from all attachments and limitations and let me regain remembrance of Thee and the true awareness of the nature of the *Pratyagātmā*, the one Self in all.

O Lord who art pure *Sat-Cidānanda*! As *Gopikā-Ramaṇa* you delighted the *Gopīs*, removed all their miseries and filled their hearts with the nectar of Divine Love! Pray, flood my heart also with the same love and delight. Let me not have the least sense of ‘I’ and ‘mine’, which is the source of all *Moha* and *Kāma*—delusion and desires. When the ego-sense springs I have to seek ways and means to protect what belongs to me and as a consequence suffer untold misery. So remove my ego-sense. If I am not yet fit for that and if I must still have it, let it embrace the whole universe and let me feel that I am everything. Let me feel; “*Īśwara* is permeating all the animate and inanimate objects in the universe—I am He (*So’ham*). I am the entire universe—“*Ahameva-idam-sarvam*.” The *Śruti* says: (*Īśa. Up. 7*)

यस्मिन् सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मैवाभूद् विजानतः । तत्र को मोहः कः शोकः ।

“How can there be then any *Moha* (delusion) and *Śoka* (grief) in him who sees Oneness alone in everything?” Therefore, O *Varada*! Bestower of boons, O *Harī Nārāyaṇa*! Deign to bless me with such a boon of Universal Vision.

The truth of *Brahma* can be realized only through the grace and *Upadeśa* of a *Guru* who is a God-realized saint, a *Brahma-Jñānī* with a perfect knowledge of the scriptures. Then alone will one be released from the bondage of births and deaths and attain *Mokṣa*. Hence the Lord says in the *Gītā*—

तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।
उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥

(IV. 34)

“Know this by prostration, by enquiry, by long service; those men of wisdom who have realized the Truth will teach Thee wisdom.” The *Śruti* also says;—“आचार्यवान् पुरुषो वेद—” “Only one blessed by an *Ācārya* will know the

supreme *Puruṣa* or God.” So *Guru*’s grace is essential for *Jñāna-siddhi* and God-realization. I bow to Thee, O Hari Nārāyaṇa! So that I may soon be blessed with the grace of the *Guru*.

O Merciful Lord! Pray pour Thy grace on me at once so that I may begin immediately to chant Thy Divine Name, which destroys all sins. Thereby I shall become pure and when the record of my actions in this life is placed by Citragupta before Yama, the God of Death, I shall have no sins for which I may be punished. Thus, alone shall I escape the sufferings of hell which otherwise will be inflicted on me by the terrible messengers of Death. So bless me, O Hari Nārāyaṇa, so that I may be purified and become freed from all sins by taking Thy sweet Name.

O Lord! May I have the supreme realization of the oneness of *Brahma*, the Universal Spirit or God and of my own identity with that Truth, which alone is real and eternal. This body of mine, as well as my wife, children, wealth and other worldly things are unreal, evanescent and perishable like the persons and objects seen in a dream. My false identification, through delusion, of myself with the mortal body and my foolish attachment to wife, children, wealth and other possessions constitute the bondage of *Samsāra*, which leads to endless misery. This delusion caused by ignorance can be removed only by the knowledge of Truth. So bless me, O Hari Nārāyaṇa, with this knowledge and make me free so that I may realize my true nature and enjoy immortality and everlasting bliss.

The worms and insects in rotten figs think that there is no happier state than theirs. Similarly, worldly-minded people also think that theirs is the best life. They are deluded by *Moha* and caught in the network of ignorance and attachment to their body, wealth, wife, children and

friends caused by Thy *Māyā* with her wonderful powers for veiling the Truth and projecting untruth. Even the four-faced *Brahmadeva*, who is engaged in the task of creation, is not free from the miseries of *Samsāra*. I am terribly frightened when I think of the helpless condition of those caught in the coils of *Samsāra*. I pray to Thee, O Hari Nārāyaṇa, save me from this miserable plight. Free me from *Moha*, liberate me from the clutches of Thy *Māyā* and take me to Thy lotus feet.

To be free from the countless miseries of *Samsāra* caused by attachment to children, wife and relatives and friends, there is no better way than the constant repetition of Divine Names like Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Hari, Govinda. Such constant remembrance of God easily bestows purity of heart and mind and leads to *Mokṣa*.

(To be continued)

—Rendered by Balaji



Mankind has only one real enemy—ignorance. Let us all work together for its annihilation, helping and clearing one another along the way. Stripped of ignorance, all souls stand in equal blessedness before one father–mother–friend beloved God.

—Sri Paramahansa Yogananda

Cerebral System Nature's Gift to Human Being for Emancipation

—*Swami Ranganathananda*

Nature has given us this cerebral system. It has a tremendous capacity to discriminate, to fix goals and to proceed in that direction. No animal has got it. Animals have only pleasure and comfort, reproduction, and effort for survival. Man alone has the capacity to seek knowledge: knowledge physical, knowledge spiritual. Both are knowledge for us and so let humanity take that road, not this road which we have already traversed as animals. This idea comes again and again in the *Mahābhārata* and in our other books. Swāmī Vivekānanda asked this question in his lectures in England and America, 'which human being can enjoy a meal with more gusto than a pig?' A pig's life is entirely in the body. It can enjoy a meal much better than you and I. Our experience in the sensory realm becomes interfered by our capacity for knowledge, by our thinking, by our logical faculty. So, we cannot have that much sensory enjoyment as an animal has. An animal body is meant for more and more of physical comfort and pleasures. A human body also can have it, but that is not its goal; it has to transcend it. That is what our spiritual teachers have said. The search for higher things will be emphasized again and again in the case of human beings. That is the line of human evolution; otherwise, it will be absolute stagnation at the physical level. This human being, with an extraordinary instrument called the cerebral system, has become stagnant at the sensory level, at the level of

Samsāra, worldliness; what a tragedy! That is what *Vedānta* says. Such a person is called a *Samsārī*, a man or a woman getting stagnant at the sensory level. Living in the world does not make one a *Samsārī*; but getting stagnant at the sensory level makes one so; a whole civilization also can become stagnant as a *Samsārī*.

So, we begin to think about it; then we find that nature has placed this cerebral system at the top level of the human body. Nature could have put it in the hip or some where else. In fact, today's neurology tells us that some huge mammals had a second relay brain in the hip, so that, as British neurologist Gray Walter humorously puts it, 'that mammal could argue a-priori and a-posteriori!' Later, that second one was abolished by nature and the brain at the crest was slowly developed and became the instrument of human evolution for one who knew how to use this remarkable instrument. According to physiology, all the ordinary functions of the body, so far as self-preservation is concerned, are done by the lower brain, which we share with the animals. Only this higher brain has got a different function: how to think and develop far-sight and foresight, how to take this life to higher levels? It has to achieve not only knowledge but also insight and inward penetrating power. The word insight, in the psychological context is defined by Geraldine Coster of England (*Yoga and Western Psychology*, p. 92).

It is defined as the capacity for being able to call up a greater variety and number of correlates to any given idea or stimulus and enables the fortunate possessor to react with "originality" to given situations.

However, if we make this cerebral system the servant of the sensory system, what a tragedy it will be! Just for survival, just for pleasure, this brain is not to be used only

for that! Unfortunately, the more educated a person, the more he or she uses this brain for only that and not for lifting life to higher levels. From the Vedantic point of view this is a great tragedy of the educated in the modern age. Nature has intended this higher brain to be the instrument of man's emancipation.



O Mother, make mad with Thy love! What need have I of knowledge and reason ? Make me drunk with Thy love's wine, O Thou stealest Thy *Bhaktas'* hearts. Drown me deep in the sea of Thy love! Here in this world, this madhouse of Thine, some laugh, some weep, some dance for joy; Jesus, Buddha, Moses, Gaurāṅga, All are drunk with the wine of Thy love. O mother, when shall I be blessed by joining their blissful company?

—*Narendra (Swami Vivekananda)*

By fondling repeating the name the *Bhakta* easily becomes a veritable home of joy and blessedness. Through muttering of Name Prahlāda secured the blessings of the Almighty Lord and became the crest-jewel of devotees.

—*Jayadayal Goyandka*

A Vedic Prayer

प्राणापानव्यानोदानसमाना मे शुध्यन्तां ज्योतिरहं विरजा विपाप्मा भूयासःस्वाहा । वाङ्मनश्चक्षुःश्रोत्रजिह्वाघ्राणरेतो बुद्ध्याकूतिः संकल्पा मे शुध्यन्तां ज्योतिरहं विरजा विपाप्मा भूयासःस्वाहा । शिरःपाणिपाद पार्श्वपृष्ठोरूदरजङ्घाशिश्नोपस्थपायवो मे शुध्यन्तां ज्योतिरहं विरजा विपाप्मा भूयासःस्वाहा । त्वक्चर्ममांसरुधिरमेदोमज्जास्नायवोऽस्थीनि मे शुध्यन्तां ज्योतिरहं विरजा विपाप्मा भूयासःस्वाहा । शब्दस्पर्शरूपरसगन्धा मे शुध्यन्तां ज्योतिरहं विरजा विपाप्मा भूयासःस्वाहा । पृथिव्यप्तेजोवायुराकाशा मे शुध्यन्तां ज्योतिरहं विरजा विपाप्मा भूयासःस्वाहा । अन्नमयप्राणमयमनोमयविज्ञानमयानन्दमया मे शुध्यन्तां ज्योतिरहं विरजा विपाप्मा भूयासःस्वाहा ।

(*Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* X. 51—57)

May the (five vital airs in my body, viz.) *Prāṇa*, *Apāna*, *Vyāna*, *Udāna* and *Samāna* become purified, so that I may become the effulgent spirit free from sullying passion and sin.

May my speech and mind, my senses of sight, hearing, taste and smell, my power of procreation, my judgment, intention and volition get purified, so that I may become the effulgent spirit free from sullying passion and sin.

May my head, hands and feet, sides, back, thighs, shanks, organ of generation, scrotum and organ of defecation be purified, so that I may become the effulgent spirit free from sullying passion and sin.

May my skin, flesh, blood, fat, marrow, sinews and bones become purified, so that I may become the effulgent spirit free from sullying passion and sin.

May (the objects of my senses, viz.) sound, touch, vision, taste and smell get purified, so that I may become the effulgent spirit, free from sullyng passion and sin.

May earth, water, fire, air and ether that make up my body become purified, so that I may become the effulgent spirit, free from sullyng passion and sin.

May (the five sheaths enveloping my soul, viz.) the physical, the vital, the mental, the intellectual and the blissful (causal) sheaths be purified, so that I may become the effulgent spirit free from sullyng passion and sin.



It is better for a man to die, if he lives only to satisfy his own selfish ends. And the man who dies for the good of others, is really immortal.

—(*An Indian Poet*)

Glory of Human Personality

—A Seeker of Truth

(Continued from June, page 64)

Note by the writer:—Wise men need not run away from the world nor need they resort to starvation and bodily discomforts; all that is enjoined is that people should not run after sense-objects and take them as they come with discrimination because their real value is negligible and it is to the advantage of human beings that they should seek things of higher value which are of a comparatively permanent nature and will give them peace, tranquility and self-satisfaction, i.e., satisfaction not dependent upon external things but emanating from inside the self itself.

It is a fundamental problem and no amount of care and thought is sufficient to understand and grasp the subject. Generally speaking, society has rightly come to the conclusion that potentialities for good should be cultivated and developed and for this the effective means are: (1) right type of education, (2) discipline of mind and body, (3) sense of duty and (4) intellectually and morally healthy surroundings.

The human infirmities require to be effectively controlled and for this the means are the setting up of various kinds of sanctions which will convert wrong tendencies and in cases where this is not possible, there should be effective control through outside agencies. Conversion and control are both essential for this work and for this a machinery has to be set up. Sanctions are of two kinds: self-imposed and superimposed. Self-imposed sanctions come from knowledge and inner evolution, which is the result of

conversion through right type of education by secular and spiritual teachers; and superimposed sanctions come from external authorities of the Government at various levels, fear of public opinion and such other external factors.

Under the present conditions of society, there are certain problems, ideas and forces which have created a good deal of clash and confusion and the matter requires to be carefully and calmly considered by a thoughtful person for the sake of his own welfare and that of society.

There is unusual unrest throughout the world at present as compared with the past. Two factors appear to be mainly responsible for this state of affairs and they are: (1) the war of ‘isms’ and (2) the tyranny of slogans.

(1) There are so many “isms” with their numerous followers that it is very difficult to find common ground for association and action. Some of the “isms” are mentioned below. The list cannot be exhaustive. They are capitalism, communism, theism, atheism, agnosticism, fanaticism, casteism, communalism, linguism, regionalism etc. In order to avoid and escape from this war, the only safe and sound course is to accept and adopt humanism based on rationalism, which is a special asset of every human being. This humanism will give us discrimination and power of toleration and synthesis and we can accept from every ism all that is good and noble and discard all that is false, degrading and injurious, individually as well as collectively. The common interests of all human beings lie in evolution, co-operation and coordination of activities and clashes can be avoided if there is a spirit of toleration, compromise and conciliation. Everybody is free to have his own beliefs and practices provided he gives the same freedom to all others for similar beliefs and practises. This freedom should be willingly accepted and exercised on all occasions subject

to one paramount consideration mentioned above, namely, that no one has a right to impose his ideas on others by force or fraud.

After all, there is a common source from which all ideas have come; the differences are due to different circumstances, different temperaments, inadequacy of knowledge, perversity etc., due to absence of discrimination. An appropriate simile may be given here in this connection. There is only one small seed for a tree but out of that seed, a great banyan tree comes out gradually and spreads out over a large area and contains innumerable parts of all kinds. Individually, the parts are different in various ways but ultimately in their source they are all interrelated and interconnected. A similar lesson can be learnt from the human body itself, which is a very complicated machine consisting of innumerable parts which can be individually separated; but they are all interrelated and interconnected and when they are properly adjusted, the machine works well. But if any part becomes diseased or gets out of order, the whole system suffers more or less according to the nature of the defect or injury. Harmony and reconciliation are the signs of sanity and are the two roads of progress and prosperity for individuals as well as for society.

More or less, similar remarks apply to the tyranny of slogans. A slogan generally stands for a principle or idea of some importance and due consideration should be given to it. But its limitations and complications should always be kept in view through discrimination, otherwise it becomes a dogma and leads to disastrous results.

The essence of the above article lies in the fact that it is possible for a human being to rise up to undreamt of heights of glory, sublimity and excellence if he qualifies and works for it with zeal and faith. For this, guidance

and company of holy men and the study of the experiences of sages and seers are very effective.

Similarly, in order to avoid degradation and demoralization, every human being who wants to avoid his destruction should avoid the company of wicked persons as if they were germs of plague and tuberculosis and should do his duties of whatever nature they may be (he has little choice in the matter because various factors inner and unseen direct his activities) honestly and diligently. For those who believe in God and His Grace, it is essential that they should invoke His Grace by prayers and live according to His will and directions as found out by the sages and seers. The great English poet Tennyson has significantly observed in this connection: "More things are wrought by prayer, than this world dreams of." All the leading thinkers of the world have emphasized the value and power of prayer, provided it is sincere and seeks only obedience to His Will. Every great world religion has its specific prayers; the Hindus have their *Gāyatrī-Mantra*, which is wonderfully efficacious if it is correctly understood and honestly invoked. The sole objective of this great *Mantra* is to seek divine guidance in all activities so that every individual may avoid everything that is degrading and demoralizing and strive for everything that is elevating and exalting.

Let Heaven's Light be our Guide.

Om Śāntiḥ



Thoughts from the Bhagavadgītā

—Swami Chidananda

In the *Bhagavadgītā* the Lord says, “My devotee who engages in doing good to others, will never come to any harm” (*Na hi kalyāṇakṛt kaścit durgatim tata gacchati*). One who engages in doing good, one who harms no one, such a one will never come to harm. This is the Lord’s assurance. It is His law. What you gave that comes to you. If you engage in doing good, never shall any harm come to you. We see people who engage in doing good, have a lot of misfortune, lot of troubles, lot of sufferings. That is also a law. Because the good you are engaged in now, will secure you from all harm in the time to come, in the days ahead. It guarantees you a glorious future. But if you have contradicted this great law in the past, the law demands the settlement of your accounts. If debts are accumulated, you have to pay them. If someone is suffering even while doing good to others, it means that he is getting rid of old debt. They are so much liberating themselves from their burden.

“O Arjuna, know this well that My devotee never perishes. He will never come to harm. Why? Because I have given this assurance that I am always at his back.” Pinpricks and little bit of unpleasant experiences may be there. They are part and parcel of the world of duality. The world is made up of pairs of opposites, *Dvandvas*. So if one wants one particular thing, he gets the other kind also a little bit together with it. Therefore, one philosopher shrewdly said, “What is the cause of pain? Pleasure is the

cause of pain.” It is true. Because pleasure is always accompanied with pain. So the devotee does not care. Because he knows the Lord’s firm assurance that even though he may have some passing setbacks and failures, ultimately he will not come to harm. God is at the devotee’s back. He is the devotee’s armour and shield. So nothing can happen to him. It is the direct injunction of the *Pūrṇa Parabrahmāvatāra* of Lord Kṛṣṇa “*Anityam asukham lokam imam prāpya bhajasva mām*—having come into this temporary world of transitory things, which is full of pain and suffering, do always contemplate Me, always worship Me, always be rooted in Me. Then you will cross this ocean of transmigratory existence and attain great blessedness.” Having said this, the Lord gives all facilities.

Once you know the purpose behind the *Vibhūti Yoga*, once you know its true implication, then your whole life will be transformed, your whole vision gets transformed. Even one little aspect of His *Vibhūti* if you take, your life will never be the same. It will be permeated by spirituality. The divine essence of the Lord is present in this universe in multifarious facets. By giving this *Vibhūti Yoga* to us, the Lord makes it possible for us to be ever in the awareness of Him, no matter where we are, because He permeates every corner of this universe. Having said everything in the *Vibhūti Yoga*, in short, the Lord says to Arjuna, “O Arjuna, why dilate upon the details of My *Vibhūtis*, let Me tell you, having completely pervaded this universe with a little part of My being, I remain supremely transcendent. The whole of the universe has been created thus, with countless manifestations, with only a fraction of My being. And I am what I am. So with a fraction of My Being I pervade this entire universe of countless manifestations.”

Now Arjuna says, “O Lord! You have described Your *Vibhūti*s. But can You actually make me see them?” In response to this request of Arjuna, the Lord grants him actual vision of His Transcendental Being where He stunned Arjuna to the core. No matter where Arjuna turns his head, he sees the Lord in all directions. He became frightened. He saw the Lord in all things, not only in the beautiful flower or butterfly, but even in thunder, in life and death. He said, “O Lord! I am frightened. Please assume Your usual form. I cannot take it any more.” Then the Lord withdraws that vision from him. This is the blessed knowledge which the Lord has given to the world, taking Arjuna only as a medium, as a token of His great love for all the *Jīvas*. The great message is “*Imām Prāpya bhajasva mām*”—having attained this world of vanishing names and forms, adore Me and worship Me; centre your love upon Me and worship Me. This is the way you can easily attain Me. My true glory, My true nature cannot be seen through penance, meditation and difficult *Yoga* practices. It is not attained through self-denial and self-control. But it is attained through pure devotion and sincere love for Me. Through worship and adoration with devotion I can be cognised, I can be experienced. The devotee can enter into Me.

More than all paths, I tell you the secret, devotion is the easiest way. Specially in this age where there are so many distractions, where pressures of life are so much that fifty percent of people have nervous weakness, how can the truths of *Vedānta* be revealed? Impossible. It is only wild imagination and self-deception. For that very great and subtle *Sūkṣma Buddhi*, razor-sharp intellect is necessary. Then only you can pierce the veil of *Māyā*. With what disciplines the ancient seekers prepared themselves to

receive *Jñānopadeśa*! What severe discipline they underwent to establish themselves in *Viveka*, *Vairāgya*, *Sama*, *Dama*, *Titikṣā*, *Uparati*, *Śraddhā*, *Samādhāna* and *Mumukṣutva*! So it takes a lifetime to equip ourselves with the pre-qualifications to listen to the Upanishadic *Jñāna*. If you manage to qualify yourself by such discipline, one in a thousand, if you grasp the implications, then you are blessed. It is not a joke. You have to reflect again and again. If you think that you will catch the Reality through your intellect, then it may be a wild path. Once upon a time it was the main path; but not now; it is not possible. We don't have that calibre. The exercise of the heart is spontaneous. It is present in all. So it can easily be exercised. And therefore, *Bhakti Yoga* combined with *Niskāma Karma Yoga* is the path, supported by *Rāja Yoga* and also helped on with what little *Jñāna Yoga* you possess—*Viveka*, *Vicāra*, little bit of Upanishadic reading, little bit of discriminating between the real and the unreal. All these are necessary. Because, it is not for nothing that God has endowed you with a little bit of intellect also. We should not allow that intellect to go over our head and think, “I can become a philosopher like Śaṅkara or Kant or Hegel or Schopenhauer”—it is not given to all to become so great.

Therefore, recognise realities and take to the path of devotion. Exercise your intellect in the right direction, in discrimination, analysis, enquiry by all means. But make selfless service unto all beings and devotion, adoration and love for the Lord and prayer and worship as your mainstay. This is the path. It will lead to meditation. When through intense love grace showers upon you and you attain illumination, highest knowledge comes to you unsought. Because the fruit of devotion is *Jñāna*. “*Buddhi yogam*

dadāmi—I give to them the highest Knowledge,” the Lord says, “*Śraddhāvān labhate jñānam*—He attains wisdom who is full of faith,” So these things will come by themselves. You have only to exercise, more than anything else, the pure and divine emotion of divine *Bhakti*. Through it you have to try to attain God. That is the special path for *Kali Yuga*—*Niṣkāma Karma* and *Bhagavad Bhakti*, supported by discrimination, a little discipline of the mind, control of thoughts, introspection and also analysis.



You for your past O king! give up this foolish notion, characteristic of a brute, that you will die. Unlike the body—which is born at a particular moment while it was non-existent before and therefore, perishes you, the soul that you are, were no born and therefore, will not die.

(*Śrīmad Bhāgavata*)

Hearken to this my only prayer—a prayer of mine, that is genuine without a trace of falsehood. If you shall not take pity on me, then O Lord! It will be hard for you to find one worthy of compassion.

—*Sri Yamunacharya*

Read and Digest

The more you have, the more you want, learn to live simply.

* * *

It is in giving that we receive.

* * *

Praise does not make anyone any better; blame does not make anyone any less. Therefore, remain even-minded in both.

* * *

Have goodwill towards all religions; love them in your heart, but be faithful to the path to which God has drawn you.

* * *

We suffer more by the desire for things than by lack of things.

* * *

We are in want only so long as we are attached to possessions.

* * *

To do evil in return for evil and good in return for good, is a characteristic of the animal; to do good in return for evil, is the characteristic of a man.

The Boy Sukarmā, Devoted to Father

Born in the family of great sage, Kaśyapa, the best among *Brāhmaṇas*, Pippala was a very righteous ascetic. Control over senses and mind and piousness were his natural virtues. In the Daśa-forest where he undertook penance, by the influence of his penance, even the wild beasts and other beings, having become free from the feelings of hostility for each other, lived with love and peace. He undertook such an austere penance that black and white ants made their holes all around his body and covered his body with soil. Out of the heap of soil such a lustre radiated as if the flames of fire were coming out. Being pleased with his penance, the gods appeared before him and granted him the boon that the entire world would be brought under his control.

With the power of this boon, the person, he thought of, was under his control. He became very much proud of his accomplishment. He regarded himself as the greatest ascetic and most perfect soul in the world. The pride of his accomplishment proved to be an obstacle to God-realization. Seeing his pride and for showering grace on him, Brahmājī himself, having assumed the form of a crane, appeared before him and said to him, “O *Brāhmaṇa* (a member of the priest class), why are you proud of your accomplishment that no one is equal to you in the world? Though you have undertaken penance for three thousand years and you have gained accomplishment to bring others under your control, yet you are a fool. You don’t know what unmanifest Divinity is! Kuṇḍala’s son, Sukarmā is

a scholar. He knows the distinction between Unmanifest and Manifest Divinity. Pay attention to what I say. In the entire world there is no such a great scholar as Sukarmā. Though he neither offered charity nor meditated on God, nor offered oblation, nor performed sacrifice, nor went for a pilgrimage, nor served his preceptor, yet he has knowledge of all scriptures. He serves his parents from his heart and it is because of his sincere service that he has gained such a knowledge which you don't have."

Having listened to the crane, Pippala started to meet Kuṇḍala in his hermitage at Kurukshetra. Having reached there, he saw that Sukarmā was engaged in serving his parents. Having seen Pippala coming to him, he welcomed him with open arms, offered him a seat and washed his feet. Then Sukarmā told him that the crane had sent him to him. He told Pippala that Brahmā had come to him, assuming the form of a crane, in order to dispel his pride. Pippala was still somewhat proud of his accomplishment. So Sukarmā thought of the deities. The deities such as Indra etc., appeared there. The vision of deities never goes in vain. When the deities asked him to ask a boon, he said, "Grant me the boon of having unfaltering devotion at the feet of my parents and let my parents attain the abode of Lord Viṣṇu." Having granted him the boons, the deities went to heaven. Then Pippala had faith in Sukarmā's power. So he requested Sukarmā to explain to him the unmanifest and manifest forms of the Supreme Soul.

Sukarmā said, "I first explain to you the unmanifest form of God. Deities such as Indra etc., and the entire universe get deluded with this form. That Absolute, the master of the entire animate and inanimate world, pervades everywhere and He is omnipresent. No one can see this all-pervading form. The *Vedas* also declare that He is

indescribable. He is devoid of eyes, ears, mouth etc., but He is the onlooker of all beings and their actions. He hears their sound, knows all smells and is the supreme enjoyer of all fruits. In spite of being devoid of hands and feet, he performs actions and runs all around. That Supreme soul is all pervading, pure and perfect and also bestows perfection upon others. This is God's all pervading, unmanifest form.”

Then Sukarmā explained His manifest form and said, “When Brahmā, the soul of all beings, having destroyed all beings, gets established in God, then God having merged him in Him, sleeps on a thousand headed serpent known as ‘Śeṣanāga’. At the end of annihilation, when He awakes from sleep, then from His navel a brilliant lotus is revealed. From that lotus Brahmājī was born. From Brahmā, the deities like Indra etc., and governors of different spheres and animate and inanimate world emanated. This cosmic (Universal) Form is God's manifest form.”

Pippala asked Sukarmā, “You are not an aged man and it seems that you have not undergone any penance but your influence (glory) and knowledge are limitless. What is the reason?”

Sukarmā said, “I have neither performed any religious sacrifice nor righteous ceremony nor I have gained knowledge nor went on a pilgrimage nor I have done any virtuous deed. I serve my parents only. I remain engaged in serving them day and night without any negligence and indolence. So long as my parents are alive, I am getting the golden rare opportunity to serve them, so I have nothing to do with undergoing penance or going on pilgrimage or doing other virtuous deeds. I have reaped the fruit, which learned persons reap by performing sacrifice etc., by serving my parents. For a son the residence of his parents is the place

of pilgrimage such as the Ganges, Gayā and Puṣkara etc. The great sages and the deities get pleased with the obedient son who serves his parents. The three worlds get pleased with such a son. The son, who washes the feet of his parents, gets fruit of daily bath in the Ganges. He, who worships his parents, by providing them wholesome eatables, comfortable clothes and betel leaf and other necessary articles, becomes omniscient. O best of the *Brāhmaṇas*! The son, who gives bath to his parents, the drops of water that fall from their bodies on the body of the son, with those drops, he reaps the fruit of bathing in all places of pilgrimage. If a son serves his parents even though they are degraded, old, diseased, deadly-hungry, incapable and leprous, God gets pleased with him. He attains the eternal abode of God which is very rare even to ascetics. All virtuous deeds such as sacrifice, penance, charity etc., go in vain of the person who does not hold his parents in reverence. For a son, his parents are—righteousness, pilgrimage, salvation, sacrifice, charity and the best fruit of his life.

He, who renounces his crippled, poor, old, sad parents suffering from epidemic diseases, that evil souled son is hurled into the foul hell full of germs and insects. The foolish son, who does not go to them, when they call him, becomes a pig in a village and eats excrement and then takes birth as a dog a thousand times. He, who eats food himself without offering to parents, is born a hateful dung-beetle, a thousand times and eats excrement. He, who utters hard words to his parents, is reborn as a tiger and then a bear. The wicked person who does not bow to his parents, resides in Kumbhīpāka hell for a thousand ages.”

At last Sukarmā said, “For a son there is no other place of pilgrimage more important than his parents. Parents are

like Lord Viṣṇu here as well as hereafter. I remain engaged in serving my parents daily, therefore, the three worlds are under my control. The reason of my omniscience is my service to my parents. He, who does not serve his parents, is not benefited either by the thorough study of the *Vedas* or by undergoing penance, performing sacrifice, offering charity and worshipping God. He, who does not respect his parents, all his meritorious deeds are in vain. Parents are all-in-all—sacrifice, charity, penance, pilgrimage and salvation for the son.”

Sukarmā also narrated some other episodes to Pippala. Listening to his gospel, Pippala’s pride was dispelled. He felt ashamed of his past pride. Seeking permission from Sukarmā and bowing to him, he went to heaven.



A man reads a little of the *Gītā*, the *Bhāgavata* or the *Vedānta* and thinks he has understood everything. Once an ant went to a hill of sugar. One grain of sugar filled its stomach and it was returning home with another grain in its mouth. On the way it said to itself, “Next time I go, I shall bring home the whole hill.”

—*Sri Ramakrishna*

Our Basic Desires are Native to the Soul

—*Sri Daya Mata*

Why do we want fame? Why do we want power? Why do we want love? Why do we want joy? We crave these things because they are a part of our true nature, the nature of the soul. The full realization of this was part of an experience I had in India when I was meditating at Bābājī's cave. The soul is immortal. And what is fame but the fulfilment of an innate desire to go on living in the memory of the rest of the world. Why shouldn't the soul want to leave behind on earth the name and achievements of one of its incarnations for others to read about a thousand years from now? The soul is all-powerful, one with the omnipotence of God. Why shouldn't it want to express its potential? The soul is love and joy. So it is natural to seek these also as essentials of life.

You see from this that we pursue goals native to our being. The delusion lies in expecting fulfilment from a world that is nothing but a fleeting dream. The world is a fraud; I see this so clearly. Why be tossed about on the waves of remembrance and forgetfulness of life and death? Why waste yourself that way? And for what reason? All the things that man is seeking, he will find in God. The trouble is, we do not have enough faith in the divine promise that if we seek God first, all other things will be added unto us. But I have believed this all my life; I know it to be so. I know it. Any time doubt arises, hold to that thought. Ask God to prove it to you. And you will see,

if you do your part, that He will prove it to you. That proof is a marvellous thing!

Whenever any kind of delusion comes into your life, any kind of temptation or trial, just remember these words: “I seek You first, my God and I know that all other things will be added unto me.” Believe that. You have to start with believing and then eventually, if you go on seeking Him, you will suddenly say: “My goodness! All that I wanted, I feel I have; I have not missed anything.”

Most people do not want to seek God because they are afraid they might have to give up this or that. What are you giving up? You really relinquish nothing. You find all fulfilment within your soul. You feel divine love in your heart. You realize all wisdom within you. You feel celestial strength. You no longer look for anything, for you have no unfulfilled desires.

Have not all the great ones who have ever communed with God—from Kṛṣṇa, Buddha, Jesus, to our Masters—proven in their lives the all-fulfilment of God; sufficiently so that they would rather die than let go of Him? Most people, by contrast, would rather die than let go of the world; how desperately they cling to this world and all the things in it. But once you have found God, you would rather die than renounce Him. There is the difference. Because those who know Him are convinced that “all other things” have been added unto them. They know and they feel God’s all-inclusiveness. The world can never give the satisfaction that God will give. And no human love will ever bestow the infinite joy that is found in God’s love.

There will always be disappointments, disillusionments and heartaches in life; because the nature of the soul is perfection, while everything on earth is gross and limited. Here, you find the inability to convey adequately to others

what you feel; the inability of others to receive what you want to give; the inability to explain through words (words are too crude!) what the soul wishes to tell.

Everything we are seeking is in God. Hold to that one thought for a while—for the next six months, for example. Say to yourself: “Just think! seek God first and all other things will be added unto me.” Meditate on it. Every time you feel tempted or discouraged or distracted, say to Him, “God, I am giving my life to You. Now, I am holding You to Your promise.” And you will see that He does keep His word. The point is that you should have a working relationship with God; do not be satisfied until you do. You can develop that relationship by following these rules that I have given to you from Master’s teachings.

There will always be an inexplicable yearning and void in man until he gets back to God. You may travel the whole world over, you may seek throughout the entire universe, you may gather all the experiences creation has to offer, but you will remain “lost” until you get back to Him.

No amount of trying to fill one’s heart with human love will ever satisfy; there will always be a lack of some kind. And it is logical that it should be so. Christ said: “My kingdom is not of this world.” Your kingdom, too, is not of this world. Therefore, so long as you fool yourself into thinking, you can build your hopes and happiness in this world, they will be dashed on the rocks of disappointment. This is truth I am telling you. You know it in your soul.

To create a working relationship between you and the Infinite, there has to be an effort on your part, an unstrained effort, through which the mind dives deeper and deeper within. The time comes when you will churn the ether with just one thought: “You, You, my God, my Love, only You, only You, only You.” The mind becomes totally immersed

in that consciousness. The soul begins to open up; you feel a flood of joy and devotion and a great wave of understanding that only the Lord is real. You know, at that moment in the presence of God, that you are facing Truth. Only God is Reality.

What I have said to you tonight can be summed up in these words from the *Bhagavadgītā*: “He who perceives Me everywhere and beholds everything in Me never loses sight of Me, nor do I ever lose sight of him.”



An expiation has been prescribed by good men with respect to a man who has killed a cow, for him as well who has drunk wine, also for a thief and likewise for him who has violated a sacred vow; but there is no expiation for an ungrateful soul.

—*Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa*

Never allow your voice to be harsh out of anger or vengefulness. Like a flower, shed petals of kindness when you are aggravated by others or attacked by the evil in them.

—*Journey to Self-realization*

Nectarean Bliss of Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava

श्रीराधाके प्रेमोद्गार—श्रीकृष्णके प्रति

(राग भैरवी—तीन ताल)

मेरी इस विनीत विनतीको सुन लो हे ब्रजराजकुमार!

युग-युग, जन्म-जन्ममें मेरे तुम ही बनो जीवनाधार ॥

पद-पङ्कज परागकी मैं नित अलिनी बनी रहूँ नँदलाल!

लिपटी रहूँ सदा तुमसे मैं, कनकलता ज्यों तरुण तमाल ॥

दासी मैं हो चुकी सदाको, अर्पणकर चरणोंमें प्राण।

प्रेम-दामसे बँध चरणोंमें, प्राण हो गये धन्य महान ॥

देख लिया त्रिभुवनमें बिना तुम्हारे और कौन मेरा।

कौन पूछता है 'राधा' कह, किसको राधाने हेरा ॥

इस कुल, उस कुल—दोनों कुल, गोकुलमें मेरा अपना कौन ?

अरुण मृदुल पदकमलोंकी ले शरण अनन्य, गयी हो मौन ॥

देखे बिना तुम्हें पलभर भी मुझे नहीं पड़ता है चैन।

तुम ही प्राणनाथ नित मेरे, किसे सुनाऊँ मनके बैन ॥

रूप-शील-गुणहीन समझकर कितना ही दुतकारो तुम।

चरणधूलि मैं, चरणोंमें ही लगी रहूँगी, बस हरदम ॥

Śrī Rādhā's Love-utterance to Śrī Kṛṣṇa

Listen, O prince of the Lord of Vraja, to the following humble prayer of mine. Be you alone the support of my life in every aeon, from birth to birth. Let me ever continue to hover as a black bee over the pollen of your lotus feet, O darling of Nanda! Let me remain ever entwined about you as a gold creeper round a young Tamāla tree (distinguished by its dark bark). Having dedicated my life at your feet, I have placed myself at your service for all time to come. Fastened to your feet with the string of Love, my life has become highly blessed. I have seen that none

other than you in all the three worlds is mine. Who accosts me calling me 'Rādhā' and at whom have I, Rādhā, (ever) cast a glance? Who is mine in this (my father's) family and that (my husband's) and in (the entire) Vraja (lit., a station of cowherds)? Seeking the protection exclusively of your red soft lotus-like feet I have turned mute. Without seeing you, I find no peace of mind even for an instant. You are ever the Lord of my life; before whom (other than you) shall I open my heart? Accounting me destitute of bodily charm, amiable disposition and virtues, rebuff me as much as you can; I, the dust of your feet, shall remain clinging to your soles alone every moment; that is all I know.



No one punishes, we create our own punishment. We create our own retribution. We create ultimately our own spiritual destruction. If there is evil mind, it becomes our destroyer. If there is virtuous mind grace, salvation and liberation are sure and certain. They are as sure and certain as the sun rising in the East and setting in the West.

In virtue lies wisdom. In wisdom lies your success in life; your highest welfare. It is the guarantee and assurance of your peace, bliss, illumination, immortality and liberation. Therefore, virtue should never be abandoned, come what may.

Know Your Real Self

Remember that all of your troubles are only grafts on your consciousness. They do not belong to your soul. So why accept their limiting influence? Why be fearful or doubtful? Why say that you are restless or moody or that you can't meditate? Such statements are a lie, for they contradict the truth of your real Self. Rather, inwardly affirm, "I am a child of God. I am with Him; He is with me." For these many years since childhood, even though sometimes my mind might have been restless, still I do not remember a week or a day or even a minute, that I have not been inwardly with Him—night and day. That is the way to live your life. In the beginning—and perhaps for years—you have to make constant effort and then the need for effort is past, for you are always with God. The would be concert pianist must practice and practice, until finally the music becomes a part of him. As the writer is always thinking of his compositions and as the inventive engineer is always thinking of mechanics, so the divine man is all the time thinking of God. To have that constant remembrance of God is to be intensely happy. Nothing can describe that divine joy.

Yesterday I was busy all day with people and it was late before I could get to my time of silence. But when I sat in my room to meditate, my mind was instantly with God. I prayed, "Lord! You are myself." And as soon as I said that, the world floated away from my consciousness and I was in complete ecstasy with God. The time will come when you will have that experience if you make the effort.

God has already given Himself to you, but you have not accepted Him. That you do not make the necessary effort to know Him is the underlying cause of all your sorrow. You bring it on yourself. “Lord! Thou didst make me a prince, but I willfully wandered away from my divine realm and like a prodigal son, I chose to be a beggar.”

Of course, I also blame God and say that He is primarily responsible for our difficulties because He created us. Every day I scold Him. I say, “Lord, haven’t You gathered much bad *Karma* for creating this troublesome world?” But I know He has no *Karma*. And when you realize your oneness with Him, that you are made in His image, you have no *Karma* either. That is why I do not stress too much the theory of *Karma*. The more you hold on to the concept of limitation, the more you bind yourself. Jesus said, “Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?” The advanced attitude is not to dwell on the idea of sin, for it is a lie. When a sleeping prince is dreaming that he is a beggar and cries out in anguish at his poverty and hunger, you do not say to him, “Beggar, wake up!” You say, “Prince, wake up!” Similarly, why should anyone call himself or another a sinner? Forget that notion. No matter what mistakes you have made, hold constantly to the thought, “Lord! I am made in Thine image.” You have within you the power to be good!

—*Journey to Self-realization*



Glorify Womanhood

—*Sree Rama Devi*

The betterment of the nation, the progress and prosperity of the society, depends mainly on the conditions in which women live. Therefore, to serve the nation effectively, to work for the advancement of the society, is to better the lot of the women. Women are the salt of the earth. They are the moving embodiments of creative energy. They are the deities of force, *Śakti Devatās*. Only those people have risen in spirituality as well as in material prosperity who have taken themselves to the worship of the Universal Energy in its moving images, the woman. Where women are honoured and cared for, where they are made happy, where motherhood is revered and worshipped, there alone prosperity has reigned and auspiciousness has shown in all its glory.

Rue the day when women are ignored and uncared for where they live a miserable life, there the reign of unrighteousness has already started. All of you know the story of the divine pair of *Paurāṇika* fame—Rāma and Sītā. When Sītā Devī left Ayodhya, it was as if the strength of the whole kingdom was lost. Misery, darkness, wail upon wail, this was the lot of the country from which Sītā went away. Who is Sītā? She is not a mere personality. She is the Cosmic Force. She is the dynamic divinity, the Universal energy, *Śakti*. Whenever you find a splendour of *Dharma*, the power of purity, the peerless strength of self-sacrifice, the force of silent fortitude, there, a bit of Sītā Power is made manifest. Verily, Sītā is the Mother

Supreme, who dwells in the heart of all, but manifests to a great extent in women.

Where woman has been insulted, where she has not been given the rightful honour, where she has been subjected to abject slavery, there, the demon of destruction has danced. What was the cause for the downfall of the entire *Kaurava* race? It was nothing but the inhuman treatment meted out to that noble woman, the incarnation of divine fortitude, Draupadī. What brought about the destruction of Rāvaṇa and his race? It was his evil lustful look cast upon the peerless '*Pativrata* Sītā, that destroyed Rāvaṇa.

India of yore produced Gārgī and Maitreyī, who rose above the earthly vanities and proclaimed the glory of Wisdom of Self. She produced Sāvitrī and Anusūyā who showed the world the might and purity of wifely loyalty, '*Pātvrata Dharma*.' She produced many a heroic woman in the past. From this sacred soil from the womb of Bhārata Mātā will again come such glorious gems of womanhood who will show the world the glory of a God-attuned life of service and self-sacrifice.

The power of *Dharma* should penetrate into the kernel of womanhood, wifhood and motherhood. Endowed with this force, the woman represents the Divine Motherhood on earth. She has the power to give manliness to man. She is capable from the position of her consciousness of identity with the Divine Mother of bestowing '*Puruṣārtha*.' Woman is the symbol of service and self-sacrificing spirit. She is the moulding force behind man's evolution. She is the controller of the destiny of man.

Purity and chastity are of supreme values in the prosperity and progress of woman. When these two virtues are abandoned, the woman sinks down to the level of

bestly existence, along with the decline of womanly *Dharma*, the country as a whole, goes to perdition. All vitality, brilliance, splendour, prosperity, disappears from that country where *Dharma* ceases to be the object of worship by its women.

The criterion of a nation's progress is not the material or the scientific advancement. A nation's progress is determined by the culture of its soul. What is this culture of the soul? It is the purity and power of *Dharma* that graces the heart of the woman.

Unless the women of the world rise to spiritual eminence, unless they scale the height of moral perfection through worship of *Dharma*, the world cannot advance towards the goal of peace. The education that lifts women out of their miserable existence, is a cultural education which helps them to develop devotion to eternal *Dharma*, *Śraddhā*, faith in the divinity of the soul, the consciousness of the unity of existence and an abiding sense of duty to the world.

Saints and sages, monks and reformers cannot bring about the real upliftment of womenfolk. A woman alone can understand the problems of women and offer solutions to them. This was the truth which Vivekānanda realized through the dint of his multifarious experiences and toils of life. Hence My daughters, you should come forward and equip yourselves with the power to direct the destiny of woman in the world.

Sender—Deepak Patel



Significance of Sundarakāṇḍa

—S. Subbarama Aiyar

Tradition ascribes peculiar sanctity to *Sundarakāṇḍa* and holds that daily *Pārāyaṇa* (reading) of the *Kāṇḍa* will bring the reader health and wealth, progeny and prosperity. To the student of the Epic, its esoteric and spiritual significance is no less important.

The historical essence of the *Rāmāyaṇa* may be said to represent the conflict of two civilizations—the Aryan and the Rakshasic. In the days of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Bharat—present-day India—was divided politically and culturally into three spheres of influence. The first was in the north—roughly north of the Vindhya—where the Aryan view of life prevailed. To the south of the Vindhya, there was a region under the sway of the *Vānaras* with Vālī as their king, who was in sympathy and even alliance with the *Rākṣasas*. These lived in the extreme south of the peninsula including Lanka, whose topography is a matter of doubt due perhaps to land convulsions that might have rocked that part of the earth. The *Rākṣasas* in the south were distinct from the others in their outlook on life and social conduct. It is noteworthy that Vālī—the *Vānara* king—had permitted Rāvaṇa—the *Rākṣasa* king—to station 14,000 *Rākṣasa* soldiers in Daṇḍaka forest under Khara and Dūṣaṇa evidently with a view to preventing the Aryan culture from penetrating into the south. It was Rāma's conflict with this army—to favour the sages doing penance in the Daṇḍaka forest—that brought on the train of events bringing the abduction of Sītā by Rāvaṇa, who was partly moved by

lust to possess Sītā and partly to wreak vengeance on an enemy who had caused destruction to his army.

Sundarakāṇḍa gives a very vivid description of the civilizations represented by these three—the Aryan, the *Rākṣasa* and the *Vānara*. Daśaratha—the Emperor of the North—is described by Hanumān in the following terms (*Sundarakāṇḍa*, Canto XXXI. Verses 2—5)—

राजा दशरथो नाम रथकुञ्जरवाजिमान् ।
 पुण्यशीलो महाकीर्तिऋजुरासीन्महायशाः ॥
 राजर्षीणां गुणश्रेष्ठस्तपसा चर्षिभिः समः ।
 चक्रवर्तिकुले जातः पुरंदरसमो बले ॥
 अहिंसारतिरक्षुद्रो घृणी सत्यपराक्रमः ।
 मुख्यस्येक्ष्वाकुवंशस्य लक्ष्मीवाँल्लक्ष्मिवर्धनः ॥
 पार्थिवव्यञ्जनैर्युक्तः पृथुश्रीः पार्थिवर्षभः ।
 पृथिव्यां चतुरन्तायां विश्रुतः सुखदः सुखी ॥

“There was a king named Daśaratha. He was the head of armed forces—chariotsmen, elephantsmen, cavalry (and foot soldiers). Far-famed, blessed and guileless, he was the foremost among Rājarṣis (kingly sages) in virtues and the equal of *Rṣis* in penance. Born in the race of Emperors, he was the equal of Indra in strength and devoted to *Ahimsā* (non-violence). He was magnanimous and kind-hearted. A prominent member of *Ikṣvāku*'s race, he was truly valiant, prosperous and given to promoting the prosperity of others. He possessed all the bodily features of Emperors. He was a great and illustrious king whose fame extended to all the corners of the world. He was happy himself and scattered happiness all round.”

This ideal of kingship was also followed by Daśaratha's predecessors as well as by his successors. The king and the people respected and followed the Aryan way of life

based on the principles of *Varṇa Āśrama-Dharma*. Society was organized into four divisions, (*Varṇas*) based on functions, viz, *Brāhmaṇas*, who specialized in the study of the *Vedas* and other sacred literature; *Kṣatriyas*, who ruled according to the teachings of well-recognized *Śāstras* dealing with the art of government; *Vaiśyas*, who engaged themselves in trade, industry and agriculture; *Śūdras*, who served the rest in carrying out their respective functions. The three sections especially—the *Brāhmaṇa*, the *Kṣatriya* and the *Vaiśya*—were enjoined to follow the four stages of life (*Āśramas* as they were called). These are: (1) *Brahmacarya* (carrying on study in youth, while remaining celibate); (2) *Gṛhastha* (household life in middle age); (3) *Vānaprastha* (penance in the forest in old age); and (4) *Samnyāsa* (renunciation as a recluse and dissemination of spiritual knowledge). The kings took as their *Gurus* and advisers sages such as *Vasiṣṭha*, who had attained high spiritual excellence through hard penance.

In his reference to *Rāma*, *Hanumān* made the following observations (*Sundarakāṇḍa*, Canto XXXV, verses 11,13-14)—

रामो भामिनि लोकस्य चातुर्वर्ण्यस्य रक्षिता ।
 मर्यादानां च लोकस्य कर्ता कारयिता च सः ॥
 राजविद्याविनीतश्च ब्राह्मणानामुपासिता ।
 श्रुतवाञ्छीलसम्पन्नो विनीतश्च परंतपः ॥
 यजुर्वेदविनीतश्च वेदविद्धिः सुपूजितः ।
 धनुर्वेदे च वेदेषु वेदाङ्गेषु च निष्ठितः ॥

“*Rāma* protects the four *Varṇas* in the world; he is the giver of laws; he submits to laws and makes others do so. He is learned in *Rāja-Vidyā* (Political Science). He is respectful to *Brāhmaṇas* and serves those (engaged in spiritual studies). He is learned in the *Śrutis* and the *Śāstras*.

He is good-natured, he is humble and yet a great warrior. He is proficient in *Yajurvedas*; he is respected by Vedic scholars for his Vedic knowledge. He is (also) proficient in the other *Vedas*, *Vedāṅgas* and in archery.”

Rāma possessed these and other kingly qualities of the highest order. He stands as the unrivalled embodiment of Truth and *Dharma*, which according to the Aryan view of life must permeate every fibre of a person's being. The ideal of kingship for which Rāma stood has become famous for all time as *Rāmarājya*. The poet, Vālmīki, gives a fascinating account of Rāma's rule in the following verses (*Yuddhakāṇḍa*, Canto CXXVIII, Verses 98—105)—

न पर्यदेवन्विधवा न च व्यालकृतं भयम् ।
 न व्याधिजं भयं वापि रामे राज्यं प्रशासति ॥
 निर्दस्युरभवल्लोको नानर्थं कश्चिदस्पृशत् ।
 न च स्म वृद्धा बालानां प्रेतकार्याणि कुर्वते ॥
 सर्वं मुदितमेवासीत्सर्वो धर्मपरोऽभवत् ।
 राममेवानुपश्यन्तो नाभ्यहिंसन् परस्परम् ॥
 आसन् वर्षसहस्राणि तथा पुत्रसहस्रिणः ।
 निरामया विशोकाश्च रामे राज्यं प्रशासति ॥
 रामो रामो राम इति प्रजानामभवन् कथाः ।
 रामभूतं जगदभूद्रामे राज्यं प्रशासति ॥
 नित्यमूला नित्यफलास्तरवस्तत्र पुष्पिताः ।
 कालेवर्षी च पर्जन्यःस्सुखस्पर्शश्च मारुतः ॥
 ब्राह्मणाः क्षत्रिया वैश्याः शूद्रा लोभविवर्जिताः ।
 स्वकर्मसु प्रवर्तन्ते तुष्टास्त्वैरेव कर्मभिः ॥
 आसन्न्रजा धर्मरता रामे शासति नानृताः ।
 सर्वे लक्षणसम्पन्नास्सर्वे धर्मपरायणाः ॥

“In *Rāmarājya*, there were no widows wails; there was no fear from wild beasts; diseases there were none and

there were no thieves. No harm befell any; and there was no infant mortality. All were happy; and everyone was considerate to everyone else. No one harassed another, taking Rāma as a model (for mode of living). All were strong and lived long and healthy lives with plenty of children to enliven their homes. Everyone uttered ‘Rāma,’ ‘Rāma,’ ‘Rāma.’ The name of Rāma spread everywhere. Trees flowered and bore fruit in every season. There were seasonal rains and wind blew mildly. *Brāhmaṇas*, *Kṣatriyas*, *Vaiśyas* and *Śūdras* lived in complete amity, each section doing its allotted tasks in contentment. People practised righteousness and eschewed lies. All were perfect in bodily features and all were inclined to follow the path of *Dharma*.”

What a galaxy of virtues in the ruler and the ruled alike! Altogether a quiet, peace-loving, kind-hearted and truth-loving people were the Aryans as they are depicted in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, bent on promoting the good of all and giving free scope for the growth of spiritual excellence—be they *Brāhmaṇas*, *Kṣatriyas*, *Vaiśyas* or *Śūdras*. Their models were the sages, not warriors—sages who preferred to live in forests, away from the haunts of men, but who all the same kept human contacts if and when they thought they could promote peace and goodwill among men.

The Aryan civilization as depicted above was anathema to the *Rākṣasas* ruled by their ruthless king, Rāvaṇa. The powers and qualities they possessed—these were varied and enormous—were intended to promote self-enjoyment and were used to subjugate and domineer over others. An elaborate description of their attainments and qualities as Hanumān saw them is given in Cantos IV to XII of *Sundarakāṇḍa*. The beautiful city of Lanka was built on the model of Amaravati—the celestial city of Indra—with

its majestic buildings rising storey upon storey to the sky, broad and well-paved roads, deep ditches and strong fort-walls, high *Gopurams* (watch-towers) at strategic points, with gardens attached to every house and public parks planted with trees of all kinds which pleased the eyes and delighted the hearts of those who saw them. The people of Lanka were noted for their personal beauty, bodily strength, intellectual attainments and capacity for accumulating worldly riches, which they used for sensual enjoyment. Their material standard of living was exceedingly high. None was poor or discontented among the people. Learning of *Śāstras* (branches of knowledge) flourished. Some of them even studied the *Vedas*—the special contribution of the Aryans to the thought and literature of the world, Rāvaṇa had attained to high proficiency in these, as his brother Vibhīṣaṇa testifies in the trial scene of Hanumān. But the *Rākṣasas* studied the Aryan scriptures not so much for their spiritual value as for their efficacy to promote material prosperity. Music and fine arts like dancing were pursued with great enthusiasm and women in particular distinguished themselves in them. There were indeed many beautiful *Rākṣasa*-women—perfect in every feature, lovely to look at and pleasing in their manners, attached to their husbands, but leading a life of ease and pleasure on the model of their king. There were very ugly women too—the disgrace of their sex—with distorted forms and cruel hearts—cannibals some of them—who had thrown to the winds the canons of all civilized conduct. A picked lot of this species was put in charge of guarding Sītā in the Aśokavana during her captivity.

Rāvaṇa, the king, represented in his person the best and worst qualities of the *Rākṣasa* race. He was a person of great learning, great powers, a great warrior, a terror

to all the worlds. None could stand against him in battle. He liked to move in the company of beautiful women whom he had brought from all parts of the world by force or fraud. Some of them like Mandodarī, the principal queen, were ideal women deeply attached to their husband, who in turn treated them with great affection. In stealing Sītā, Rāvaṇa was perhaps prompted not only by lust (a carnal affair) or hatred of Rāma, but also by a desire to see that the best woman must be matched to the best of the opposite sex. He argued before Sītā in the wooing scene in *Aśokavana* that she, the best woman in the world in beauty and everything else, should marry him, the best male in the world, her equal in every respect. He went so far as to assert that she was not fit to be the wife of Rāma the recluse, an exile from his kingdom, a man who ate roots and fruits of trees in the forest, a penance-monger who had given up the pleasures of the world. He also held out to Sītā the temptation that she could enjoy every conceivable pleasure of the senses and roam about in his company in an aerial car visiting the most enchanting spots in the world. Actuated by such ideals of sensual enjoyment in the company of women and the exercise of ruthless power to put down opposition in every part of the globe and beyond, Rāvaṇa committed every conceivable crime recognized as such in the Aryan code of conduct. In the course of his search in the *Antahpura* (women's apartments) of Rāvaṇa's palace, Hanumān reflected as follows (*Sundarakāṇḍa*, Canto IX, Verse 73)—

पुनश्च

सोऽचिन्तयदार्त्तरूपो

ध्रुवं विशिष्टा गुणतो हि सीता ।

अथायमस्यां

कृतवान्महात्मा

लङ्केश्वरः

कष्टमनार्यकर्म ॥

“Sītā is foremost in all excellent virtues. That is why this great king has done this. Alas! What an un-Aryan deed!”

What Rāvaṇa did in taking away another man’s wife is described as an un-Aryan deed. In another place Sītā has been described as walking on the Aryan path.

Again, Rāvaṇa proclaimed to Sītā in the *Aśokavana* scene in the presence of his numerous wives (*Sundarakāṇḍa* Canto XX, Verse 5):—

स्वधर्मो रक्षसां भीरु सर्वदैव न संशयः ।

गमनं वा परस्त्रीणां हरणं सम्प्रमथ्य वा ॥

“It is in every way the *Dharma* of the *Rākṣasas* to seduce or take by force other peoples’ wives or embrace them in sexual union.”

To the *Rākṣasas*, the end justified the means. Without the slightest compunction, they practised cruelty on others and harassed them who did not believe in their way of life. “Do unto others as you would be done by” was a doctrine unknown to them. In reply to Rāvaṇa’s wooing, Sītā appealed to him to desist and said (*Sundarakāṇḍa*, Canto XXI, Verse. 7)—

साधु धर्ममवेक्षस्व साधु साधुव्रतं चर ।

यथा तव तथान्येषां दारा रक्ष्या निशाचर ॥

“Treat other peoples’ wives as you would have others to treat yours, treat others as you would like to be treated.”

But Sītā’s advice based on Aryan conduct fell on deaf ears on the protagonist of the *Rākṣasa* way of life.

(To be continued)



Man, the Master of his Own Destiny

—Swami Rama Tirtha

There was a man carrying a heavy weight upon his shoulder; he was old, weak and feverish, and lived in a hot country, India. He sat down under the shade of a tree and threw off his burden from his shoulders and rested a while and cried, “O Death, O Death, come, O Death! Relieve me, relieve me.” The story says that the God of Death appeared to him on the spot. When he looked at him, he was astonished, he trembled. What is that hideous figure, that monstrous something? He asked the God of Death, “Who are you?” The God of Death said, “I am he whom you called; you have called me just now and I have come to satisfy your wish.” Then the old man began to tremble and said, “I did not call you to put me to death, I called you simply to help me to lift this burden and put it on my shoulders.”

That is what people do. All your difficulties, all your troubles and what are called sorrows, are brought about by your own self; you are the master of your own destiny, but when the thing comes, you begin to cry and weep; you invite death, and when death comes, you begin to cry. But that cannot be. When once you bid the highest price in an auction, you will have to take the thing. When you make the horse run, the carriage follows the horse. So when once you desire, you will have to take the consequences. How is it that people usually die in their old age and very few die in their youth? *Vedānta* says when people become old, their bodies become diseased? They are harassed by

sickness and then they begin to desire death; they begin to ask for relief and relief comes. Thus, your death is brought about by your own self. Everybody is a suicide according to *Vedānta*. Death comes the moment you wish it to come. How is it that people die in the prime of life? You will not, perhaps, believe Rāma at present, but if you make correct observations, you must concur with what Rāma states just now. Rāma has observed many people dying in the prime of life; Rāma entered into their private life, enquired into the whole matter and came to know that these young men in their heart of hearts sought death, they were sick of their circumstances, and wanted to change the surroundings. That is always the case. There is no time now to advance any concrete illustrations, but this is a fact.

There was a bright young man working as a professor in one of the sectarian colleges in India. In one of the public meetings, he declared his life to be given to that cause, he dedicated himself to that cause. He worked there most zealously for a time and then his opinion changed, his thoughts expanded, his mind broadened, his views enlarged and he could no longer work with these sectarians, and these sectarians could not sympathize with him in their heart of hearts, yet he had to pull on with them, because he had committed himself, because he had bound himself to their cause; there was no escape for this young man. His heart was in one place and his body was somewhere else, the heart and the body were disunited. This could not be, this could not go on. The man died; he could not change his circumstances by any other means than, by death; by death were the circumstances changed. Thus, even death is not the bugaboo that it appears to be.

You are the master of your circumstances, you are the master of your destiny. How is it that people are made

miserable? How is it that difficulties are brought about? By the conflict of desires. You have one kind of desire which wants you to do one kind of act, and then you have other desires which want you to do differently. Both desires are there. One desire wants to raise you to a certain position as a writer, a speaker, a professor, a lecturer or a preacher; one kind of desire wants you to go that way; another kind of desire comes and wants you to become a slave to the senses. Here are conflicting desires, which cannot go together. What happens? Both must be fulfilled, while one is being fulfilled, the other suffers and you are in pain. While the other one is being fulfilled, the first one suffers and you are in pain. This is how people bring about suffering on themselves. Even your suffering shows that you are the master of your own destiny. Rāma will illustrate this by a very pretty story.

A man in India had two wives. You know the Hindus generally never believe in polygamy, but the Mohammedans do. It was a Mohammedan who had two wives. One of them used to live upstairs and the other on the lower storey. One day a thief broke into the house. He wanted to steal all the property, but the members of the house were wide awake, and the thief could not get an opportunity of stealing anything. Near dawn, the members of the house saw the thief, and they caught him and took him before a magistrate—to the police magistrate. Nothing was stolen, yet the thief had broken into the house. That was a crime. The magistrate put some cross questions to the thief, he at once admitted that he had broken into the house with the intention of stealing something. The Magistrate was going to inflict some punishment upon him. The man said, “Sir, you may do whatever you please, you may throw me into a dungeon, you may cast me before dogs, you may burn

my body, but do not inflict one punishment upon me.” The magistrate being astonished asked, “What is that?” The man said, “Never make me the husband of two wives. Never inflict this punishment upon me.” Why is that? Then the thief began to explain how he was caught, how he had no opportunity to steal anything. He said that all night-long the master of the house had to stand upon the stairs, because one wife was pulling him upstairs and the other was dragging him downstairs. The hair of his head was pulled out and the stockings on his feet were torn off; he was shivering with cold all night-long and thus it was that, he had been caught and had no opportunity of stealing anything.

So it is, all your sufferings come through your conflicting desires, when your desires are not in harmony, but are at war with one another; and you know a house divided against itself must fall. So, examine your own hearts and minds and see if there is peace there. If you have singleness of aim and unity of purpose, you will have no trouble, you will have no suffering, but if there is conflict and discord, the house must be pulled down, you must suffer.

This is the cause of your suffering and it is brought on by yourselves. You are the masters of your own destiny.



What We Should See

—*B. S. Narasimha Iyengar*

It is not easy to make a choice between what we should see and what we should not. To see with the eyes of discrimination is wisdom. To see anything and everything may be a folly.

Ordinarily, our eyes are attracted towards anything beautiful—a fragrant flower, a beautiful natural scene or a lovely child. The way we enjoy, it speaks of our character. If we covet a thing when we see it, we are selfish. If we think of the bounties of nature and are reminded of others who have an equal right to enjoy it, we are broadminded.

The will to see only the good and the beautiful around us and to enjoy it as unselfishly as possible is a mark of mellowed character. To develop this willpower and the outlook necessary for it is an elementary duty of all sensible human beings.

Imperfect as things are and imperfect as we are, there are numerous things which we can see with an eye of greed or jealousy. If my neighbour owns a car and a radio and lives in a three-storeyed mansion, how should I look at it? To think that he is lucky while I am not, is the origin of a deep disturbance within me. To feel envious of his wealth and comfort is the root of misery. To expect him to share his happiness with us may not be out of place altogether; but, to feel unhappy that I have not got what he has got, does really no good. To understand that I always get and enjoy what I work for and deserve is the right attitude, which removes the causes of envy, jealousy and misery.

Rarely does the good in others capture us unless we

have trained ourselves to this attitude. Instead of creating jealousy or greed, another's happiness should whip us up to correct endeavour. This is possible only when we get over the common and negative propensity of probing into others faults and weaknesses. To see the good in others is a difficult but positive quality. Exaggeration of a fault is the worst enemy to correct perspective; ignoring it and picking out good points is, on the contrary, a noble trait.

Small kindnesses, timely help or advice, soothing words in moments of trial or sorrow, are worth remembering a lifetime. Since the capacity in ourselves to do good to others is so rare and scanty, whenever we receive help or kindness, we should cherish it. This develops the constructive side of our character inasmuch as an effort will be made to return the kindness whenever possible.

Man is endowed with a special gift of not only seeing and appreciating the good and the great in others, but also developing healthy and congenial traits within himself. I can see, if only I will, what potential good there is in me. To feel that I am good, that I am capable of imparting good, is not always arrogance. If I know I can help others with my intellect, if not with wealth, it is not pride. I am perfectly within my bounds when I try to communicate to others what little I have learnt from the great works of masterminds. In fact, I should be able to see that it is my duty to do so.

Similarly, whenever it is necessary and possible for me to extend my love to others, I must do it. If I understand my own true nature as divine and not devilish, I am on the road to love and wisdom. No doubt, anger and passions I have in plenty (and to spare also, but none else will be prepared to accept the gift!) and yet I must see the way in which I can bring them under control and try to spread

peace and joy. This insight into one's own true nature is a positive quality, productive of immense good.

The evils in the world arise mainly from two causes: (1) By picking holes in others' nature and exaggerating their blemishes and (2) by failure to understand how much potentiality for good lies in others as well as ourselves. If we attempt to see only what we should and not see or make much of what we should not, the way to peace and happiness is made easier and smoother.



Joy and sorrow, fear and anger, gain and loss, birth and death and whatever similar experience comes a particular individual, that is unquestionably the work of providence.

—*Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa*

One cannot have the vision of God as long as one has these three—shame, hatred and fear; is very true. Shame, hatred, fear, caste, pride, secretiveness and the like are so many bonds. Man is free when he is liberated from all these.

—*Sri Ramakrishna*

The Hindu Ideal of Marriage

Marriage is a sacrament for a Hindu. The wife is his partner in life. She is his consort. He cannot perform any religious ritual without her. She stands by his left side when he performs any religious rites. The husband and wife keep Rāma and Sītā as their ideal.

What the wife is to a Hindu husband is well illustrated by a verse in the *Rāmāyaṇa* where Lord Rāma, referring to Sītā, says: “In counsel she is my counsellor; in action she is my servant; in religious performances she is my partner; in tolerance she is like the earth; in affection she is like unto my mother; in bed she is like the celestial Rambhā; and in play she is my companion. Such, indeed, O Lakṣmaṇa, is my beloved.” This is the Hindu ideal of a wife.

Of all the orders of life, the second is the most important because it supports all the others. As all creatures live supported by air, so also the other orders exist supported by that of the householder. As all streams and rivers flow to rest in the ocean, so also all the orders of life flow to rest in the householder. The householder is the very heart of Aryan life. Everything rests and depends on him.

—Swami Sivananda

The True Basis of Morality

Worshipful homage to the supreme Cosmic Being who is the one common factor indwelling and interconnecting all living beings and all members of the human family. We may be quite different and diverse in every other way, but there is one common factor and that is the indwelling Reality. “Within you is hidden God. Within you is Immortal Soul.” *Eko devaḥ sarvabhūteṣu gudhaḥ* (God, who is one only is hidden in all beings). The same indwelling common factor—Existence-Consciousness-Bliss—makes us all one.

If this is pondered, recognised and gradually grasped as the basis of relating ourselves to seeming others, we discover that there are no others. From the innermost reality of our spiritual being, there are no others in the sense that they are something else other than us or something different with whom we have nothing in common. If we make this the basis of relating ourselves with all living beings and all of God’s creation, then we will live and move in this world as a unifying factor, a cementing force, a harmonising principle.

—Swami Chidananda

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