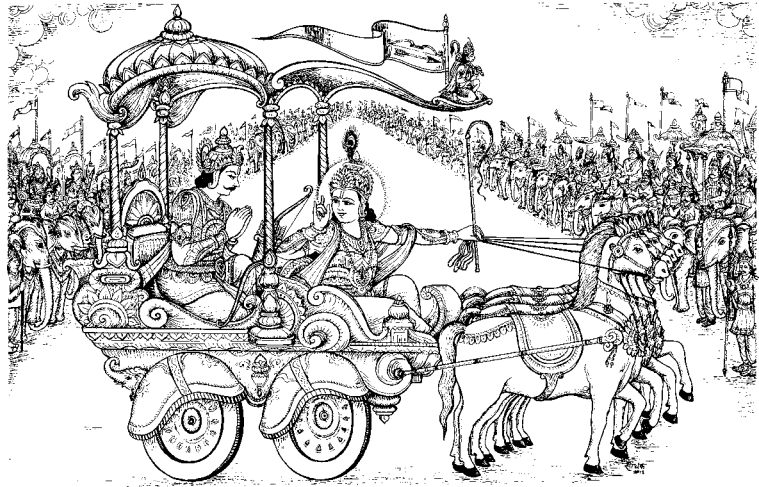


ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



# KALYANA-KALPATARU

A MONTHLY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF SPIRITUAL  
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## Śrī Kṛṣṇa—the Beloved of Gopīs

भजे ब्रजैकमण्डनं समस्तपापखण्डनं स्वभक्तचित्तरञ्जनं सदैव नन्दनन्दनम् ।  
सुपिच्छगुच्छमस्तकं सुनादवेणुहस्तकं अनङ्गरङ्गसागरं नमामि कृष्णनागरम् ॥

(Śrīkṛṣṇāṣṭakam 1)

Diadem of *Vraja-Bhūmi*, who destroys all sins and delights the mind of His devotees, I adore *Nandanandana* always. He is crowned with crest of peacock's feathers, bears flute in his hands and is ocean of cupid-art, I pay obeisance to *Naṭanāgara Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra*.

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## Exceptional Divine Love

—*Brahmalina Sri Jayadayal Goyandka*

Love on account of merits is inferior to the love of a chaste lady. He does not love because the beloved is meritorious. Howsoever be the beloved, his job is just to love. In perfect love there is no difference between the Lord and His lover just as the two hands do not love each other on the consideration of some merit. In fact there is no difference between them; nothing special in the Lord. There all the three are amalgamated into one. The Lord, devotee and devotion become one. Such is the state there.

So much has been talked yet not even a fraction could be said. The matter is like an ocean: What comes into the mind is like a few droplets and what speech has expressed is like a few atomic particles, even if it is told life long, it cannot equal to a single drop.

In fact, let our life be engaged only in such talks. No need to meet Lord or anything else. The life should pass in this way; it is enough. There should be no desire to meet God or for liberation or for favourable condition. It (perfection) is good but the devotee should attach more importance to the means. Then the stage of perfection will come of its own accord. Perfection will be delayed if the discipline is practised with this purpose. It is still better even if this idea is dropped. If by sidestepping even this you try to comprehend it, the success will be quicker.

If you tread on the path of love even without the desire to meet God, He will be met sooner. It is still better if even this much desire is not there.

If the dialogue reaches the summit, the Lord will not leave even if He is pushed back. Some law may be required to be enacted to bar the entry of the Lord there till the dialogue continues. He may come only after the dialogue is over.

The Lord becomes diffident there the devotee gets upper hand on the Lord. This is the only genuine means to win victory.

The Lord and devotee are locally coined words. There in the eyes of each other, both are Lords and both devotees. It is an unearthly thing; an effort before the meeting. We can take the example of Rāma and Bharata meeting each other. Tulasīdāsa says—“It cannot be described through speech.” Rāma and Bharata meet but this beauty of love is not there. How unique is the meeting where God meets God. The activity of devotee enhances the delight of God every moment and so does the activity of God with devotee. Their meeting is quite different from meeting with the extended hands. At that time all limbs become love personified. The embodied, the bodily limbs and the activities—all merge into one single love; become one. This meeting is impossible to be depicted through speech.

All limbs and activities become one—full of love and merged into love. There remains nothing such as love. The condition of lord and devotee becomes one and the same and they are no longer different. The mundane love among ourselves is inert but there the love also is quite sentient. There the lovers are the love itself—incarnate. There is nothing such as *Dharmī* and nothing like *Dharma*. There is only one and that is *Dharmī*. It is pure love. Love is God; love is devotee and love is love. They are three only for the sake of name.

The activity of God aims at enhancing joy in devotee

and that of devotee is for the delight of God and enhancing love for God in him. But in advanced stage, the separate entity of joy and love cease to be and do God and devotee cease to be separate. All become one. Only for our understanding we can say anything whatsoever. Here there is no unity of *Vedānta*. That is the path of knowledge and knowledge is dominating factor. Here love is dominant. None can predict about its fruit. Only he knows who gets it. ‘Can know’—this expression also is only for saying. In fact this also cannot be said. It is not knowing. It is becoming. What does one become? It is known only after becoming.

What it means for it. Means are the same what we are adopting. For example in the *Mādhurya Bhakti* of the Lord, Śrī Rādhā is the delighting force; she makes Lord Kṛṣṇa the blissful *Brahma* dance. The blissful devotion is one thing and love is another. Since Rādhājī provides blissful joy to the Lord so she is delighting force and the Lord becomes love force. Where the Lord provides Bliss to her, the situation is vice-versa.

The devotees of *Gauḍīya* cult regard Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu as the product of the unity of the two. The unity of the two cannot be explained through characteristic marks. There are no marks; no *Dharma*; no *Guṇa*. Then what is there to be explained? There everything is one pure love only. God is love and love is God. Rādhā is Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa is Rādhā.

This state of identification is the most sublime. Whosoever reaches this stage, there remains nothing for him to do. What state his body remains in, cannot be described. It is not sun who appears in the mirror but it is his reflexion. In our eyes his body becomes love incarnate. Just as due to the sun light the mirror stands glittering so also he

becomes the very image of love. If a person walks along with musk, then the atoms of musk fragrance waft everywhere. It is another thing that a person with diseased nostrils may not smell it. Even so real devotee diffuses love wherever he goes. It is said that when Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu walked, all the paths became suffused with love. He was quite oblivious of his body to see which everybody was transformed into love. Such a lover is just a mass of love by seeing or touching whom people get steeped into love. Their influence is so divine.



Supreme love of God cannot be acquired without the attainment of Knowledge also—that is to say, without realisation that my Chosen Ideal, God, is in all beings and individuals, that the animate and inanimate worlds have no separate existence apart from Him. The feeling of identity, or oneness, between the Supreme Self and the animate and inanimate worlds, as well as the inner-self, is itself Supreme Love and Supreme Knowledge. But the two paths and the modes of spiritual practice pertaining to each, differ according to the respective bent of mind and qualifications of the aspirants. Persons qualified to tread exclusively the path of Knowledge are rare in the world; the path is also extremely arduous. For this reason, *Bhakti* mixed with *Jñāna* is preferable.

—Swami Virajananda

It is not only that you are seeking Him. But God is seeking you—more than you are seeking Him. But He has given you independence to cast Him aside if you wish. You must help your Father.

—Sri Paramahansa Yogananda

## Saintly Behaviour

—*Nityalilalina Sri Hanumanprasad Poddar*

An aspirant should always have saintliness in his dealings. To endure sorts of sufferings and hardships calmly, to return forgiveness for anger, love for hatred, benedictions for imprecations and good for evil, to regard oneself as the humblest of all, not to arrogate any importance to one's own self, to find fault with none, to treat none with contempt, to look upon another's wife as one's own mother or an image of God, to have moderation in diet and recreation, to speak very little, to refrain from useless talk, to speak truthful and agreeable words, to keep oneself ready to serve all to the best of his ability without claiming to be a servant of the public, to reckon the service rendered by himself as a necessary part of his duties rather than an obligation to others, to detect one's own shortcomings in the services rendered by himself, to be alert to remedy them, to expect no return for services rendered, to bear himself humbly to behave politely with every one, to please one's parents, teachers and other elders by service, to renounce all covetousness for honour and distinction like poison, to keep away from a place where there is a possibility of one's receiving honour and distinctive treatment, to give no opportunity to any one to praise him in his very face, to feel compassion for the poor and to make himself ready for any sacrifice whatsoever in order to be able to serve them, to avoid as far as possible the work of arbitration, to keep himself aloof from societies and associations as far as possible, to abstain from literature which is not helpful

in spiritual advancement, to shun as far as possible weddings and other functions and large gathering of men, never to speak ill of other faiths, to be guileless and straightforward in one's dealings with others and to be always on the alert to avoid hypocrisy etc., are included in saintly behaviour. The more one develops these virtues the more he will advance on the path of spiritual progress.

An aspirant should see what turn his life is taking. If he finds that it is moving in the direction of divine virtues, it should be understood that he is advancing, and if he finds that it is proceeding in the wrong direction, it should be taken to be an index to retrogression. This is a sure test. Devotion or wisdom is not a thing to be merely talked of. This should be taken as an axiomatic truth. Those who are advancing on the path of devotion or wisdom must needs manifest development of divine virtues.



*Bhakti* is the moon, while *Jñāna* is the sun. I have heard that there are oceans in the extreme north and south. It is so cold there that the oceans freeze in parts and masses of ice are formed, in which ships are caught and held fast.

Even so, may a man be caught half-way in the path of *Bhakti*. But it matters nothing, for the ice in which he is held is the solidified water of the ocean of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. If he were to reason, "Brahman alone is real, the whole universe is false," then the ice would thaw in the sun of *Jñāna*, and what would remain? Only the formless waters of that ocean of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss.

—*Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*



## Think Over

—*Brahmalina Swami Ramsukhdas*

Think over—Is God ours or the world ours? Is God loving to us or the world loving to us? Will God ever stay with us or the world stay with us? We are fragments of God—‘ममैवांशो जीवलोके’ (*Gītā* XV. 7). Then is it proper on our part that instead of God, the world should be loving to us? The world is perishing every moment and does not stay with us even for a moment, while God ever remains with us, He does not leave us even for a moment. But our eye is not on God but on the world. We are fragments of God, so God should be loving to us. But our Supreme Father, God does not appear so loving to us as the world appears. The world neither stays nor will stay nor can stay with us. It does not stay with us even for a moment, it is perishing every moment. Wealth, house, wife, sons, family etc., are not to stay with us, while God will never leave us.

Our relationship with the body and the world is breaking off every moment. It is an obvious fact that from our life-time, the number of years we have lived alive, for that much of period, the world has separated from us. From the moment we were born, the body and the world are separating from us. Everything of the world is changing every moment. But infinite ages may pass, God will not change. He will never separate from us, He'll ever live with us. We are ever with God and God is ever with us. The body, which does not stay even for a moment with us, seems loving to us and from the viewpoint of people

we are called *Satsaṅgī* (those having association with the real). Think over whether we are *Satsaṅgī* or *Kusaṅgī* (having association with evils). Have we our association with the real or the unreal? Is 'the real' loving to us or 'the unreal' loving to us? At least we should be conscious of the fact that the world is not ours.

Being fragments of God we are free from flaws and sins—'चेतन अमल सहज सुखरासी'. But it is attachment to the world which conduces us to sheer impurities, flaws and sins. Attachment to the world causes only loss without any profit at all. We have the sense of mine with the body, therefore we provide it with food, water, clothes, rest and care etc. But it has no regard for us. If by an error, the cloth is removed from it, it catches cold and suffers from fever. If it is not provided with food for even a single day, it becomes weak. We are bent on paying so much of attention and care to it, but it does not care for us at all, it does not forgive us for our error. Even then the body is loving to us while our benefactor, God and His devotees, who ever think of our welfare, are not loving to us.

Every person should think over—whom do we like? Do we like the person who inspires us for worship and devotion to God or who inspires us to remain engrossed in mundane affairs? Do we like the thing which is transient or do we like the thing which ever accompanies us? The body and the world are transient, they don't stay with us and we don't stay with them. But righteousness stays with us, God stays with us, justice stays with us, truth stays with us. Think over—Do we tell a lie or do we speak the truth? Do we like justice or do we like injustice? Do we like honesty or do we like dishonesty? If we like injustice, what fruit will it bear? Pleasures are loving to us but we should think—what fruit will they bear? Have

we derived any benefit from sensual pleasures or have we sustained loss from them? We should divert our attention to our life and think over—What are we doing? In which direction are we going? What is our inclination? Do we like adoration and devotion to God or do we like pleasures and prosperity? What profit do we derive from the world and what loss do we sustain from God? What benefit do we derive from sins and what loss do we sustain from righteousness? Reflect upon—

संसार साथी सब स्वार्थ के हैं, पक्के विरोधी परमार्थ के हैं।  
देगा न कोई दुःख में सहारा, सुन तू किसी की मत बात प्यारा ॥

“All the worldly people are selfish, they oppose spirituality deadly, no one will support you in your sufferings, therefore don't listen to anyone.”

If we are engaged in adoration and devotion, the members of the family will not be pleased. But if we follow the path of falsehood, fraud and dishonesty, the members will be pleased. Reflect upon the point whether they are pleased with our profit or loss. Pay attention to it who think of your welfare and who do good to you. God has bestowed upon us this human body, these mundane materials and all other things but He never reminds us of such favours conferred on us by Him. But the worldly people do a little favour to us and we have to be very much obliged to them. We like those worldly people but we don't like God. God has conferred on us the body, eyes, arms, legs, intellect, discrimination and everything else and we derive comfort and happiness from them and we don't think of God. We like the things conferred on us by God but we don't like God. Is it justified (proper)? Reflect upon it. In the *Mahābhārata* it is mentioned—  
'यस्य स्मरणमात्रेण जन्मसंसारबन्धनात्। विमुच्यते..... ॥' 'Merely by thinking of Whom, a man is liberated from the shackles

of birth and death.’ Merely by remembering Him, all worldly sufferings come to an end. Render no service to Him, offer nothing to Him, only think of Him and He’ll be pleased—‘अच्युतः स्मृतिमात्रेण’. In the world besides God there is none, who gets pleased merely by thinking of (remembering) him. After discharging your duty throughout the day, in the evening you come back home and ask your wife, “Have you cooked food?” She replies, “No, I was just thinking of you.” Will you get pleased? She has not cooked the food, what is the utility of thinking of you? But you think of (remember) God, He’ll be pleased. Is there anything so cheap as God? Is there any other well-wisher as He? We forget Him but we remember the world. Is it proper? By remembering God, common people have become great saints and exalted souls. Today they are honoured. They have possessed this speciality because they, instead of thinking of the world, thought of God.



The spiritual life starts with your recognition that as long as you keep going headlong in the pursuit of sense satisfaction and pleasure, you are not going to move one step. So all will be academic and theoretical. Our aspiration, our wanting spiritual life will only be a theory—a fancy and a feeling.

You have not started.

So the beginning stage itself of the spiritual life is a turning away from sense experience and sense indulgence and starting to move in the opposite direction

—Swami Chidananda

## Sītā—the Ideal Woman

—*Swami Vivekananda*

There have been great world-moving sages, great Incarnations of whom there have been many; and according to the *Bhāgavata*, they also are infinite in number, and those that are worshipped most in India are Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. Rāma, the ancient idol of the heroic ages, the embodiment of truth, of morality, the ideal son, the ideal husband, the ideal father, and above all, the ideal king, this Rāma has been presented before us by the great sage Vālmīki. No language can be purer, none chaster, none more beautiful and at the same time simpler than the language in which the great poet has depicted the life of Rāma. And what to speak of Sītā? You may exhaust the literature of the world that is past, and I may assure you that you will have to exhaust the literature of the world of the future, before finding another Sītā. Sītā is unique; that character was depicted once and for all. There may have been several Rāmas, perhaps, but never more than one Sītā! She is the very type of the true Indian woman, for all the Indian ideals of a perfected woman have grown out of that one life of Sītā; and here she stands these thousands of years, commanding the worship of every man, woman, and child throughout the length and breadth of the land of *Āryāvarta*. There she will always be, this glorious Sītā, purer than purity itself, all patience, and all suffering. She who suffered that life of suffering without a murmur, she the ever-chaste and ever-pure wife, she the ideal of the people, the ideal of the gods, the great Sītā,

our national God she must always remain. And every one of us knows her too well to require much delineation. All our mythology may vanish, even our *Vedas* may depart, and our Sanskrit language may vanish for ever, but so long as there will be five Hindus living here, even if only speaking the most vulgar patois, there will be the story of Sītā present. Mark my words: Sītā has gone into the very vitals of our race. She is there in the blood of every Hindu man and woman; we are all children of Sītā. “Any attempt to modernise our women, if it tries to take our women away from that ideal of Sītā, is immediately a failure, as we see every day. The women of India must grow and develop in the footprints of Sītā, and that is the only way.”



Good and evil are only a question of degree; more manifested or less manifested. Just take the example of our own lives. How many things we see in our childhood which we think to be good, but which really are evil, and how many things seem to be evil which are good! How the ideas change! How an idea goes up and up! What we thought very good at one time we do not think so good now. So good and evil are but superstitions, and do not exist. The difference is only in degree. It is all a manifestation of that *Ātman*; He is being manifested in everything; only, when the manifestation is very thick we call it evil; and when it is very thin, we call it good.

—*Teachings of Swami Vivekananda*

## As We Sow, So We Must Reap

—*Swami Abhedananda*

The sleep after death is like the sleep before birth. Then they have a second sleep. Before they come to this plane, they go into that sleep and gravitate towards the proper environment. If I have a strong desire to be the best artist and if I do not succeed or pass away before I fulfil my desire, that desire will remain in me even in that soul-slumber. It will sprout again. Perhaps I will be drawn into the heaven of the artists where I would have communication and communion with the other artists who are living there and exchange our thoughts perhaps. Then I will try to manifest that desire again once more on this plane, and I will gravitate under the proper conditions and environments where I will have the physical body which will be the instrument through which I would realize my ideal. That is the process that takes place.

So there is no eternal heaven or eternal place of any punishment. If there be any punishment at all, it is like the punishment as we have on the earth plane that punishment you will get. When you desire a thing and cannot get it, that is hell. That state you may go through on account of strong attachment. A miser who has formed the habit of handling dollars and cent, enjoys it and loves it. Now, if he goes into that plane or astral plane, he will carry that desire with him. But he will have no dollars and cents to handle and he will be hankering after that and that will be his punishment. So it is very difficult for us to know exactly what would be the hell or that state of punishment for any individual who has committed something wrong. It is all that

we draw towards ourselves by our thoughts and deeds. These dreams might be real for the time being, as all dreams are true, so long as we are dreaming. But in reality, when compared with the eternal time, or when compared with the highest standard, they last only for a short period. So no heaven is eternal, and no hell is eternal: For that reason, it is said in the *Bhagavadgītā* (VIII. 16):

आब्रह्मभुवनाल्लोकाः पुनरावर्त्तिनोऽर्जुन ।

‘O Arjuna, none of these heavens from the highest heaven of the Creator downward is permanent, The inhabitants thereof are sure to return from them sooner or later’.

They are ephemeral. They do not last throughout eternity in one state. So this is a progress that the soul makes after entering into the grave. Either he will go to heaven, or suffer according to the law of justice. The law of justice is very strict. There is no such thing as forgiveness, but it is the justice that balances compensation. The well-balanced state of the law of cause and effect is inexorable. ‘Whatsoever thou sowest thou shalt reap’. That is as strong and as real as you are sitting here now. You may deny it, but you cannot get out of it. You may deny through ignorance the force of gravity, but at every step you cannot move, and cannot even exist on the surface of the earth, if it were not for the force of gravity. A child does not know whether there is such a thing as gravity, and his ignorance does not affect the law in any way. Our childish denial does not make a thing non-existence, and it simply shows that we do not know better. So this law of cause and sequence which is called the law of *Karma*, does not wait for widow’s tears, or orphan’s cries. What we have sown, we must reap either on this plane, or in some other realm. So after death we may enjoy the pleasures of our thoughts and deeds in the heavenly regions too.



## Definitions of Yoga in Gītā

—Lt. Col. R. K. Langar

If one truly wants to understand what is *Yoga* there is no other book other than *Bhagavadgītā* which can give a comprehensive meaning of the word *Yoga*. *Bhagavadgītā* as a scripture is *Brahmavidyā* and to realize It *Gītā* teaches *Yogaśāstra*. The *Yoga* of *Gītā* is a practical discipline for realization of God or *Brahmavidyā*, the philosophical wisdom. Each of the eighteen chapters of *Gītā* are titled as *Yoga* chapters with the subject and at the end of each chapter definition of *Bhagavadgītā* as science of the Absolute and the method to realize It through practice of *Yoga*, is given.

*Yoga* is a very popular word in India and the West but not many are aware that the origin of *Yoga* is India. We commonly hear these days that ‘I am doing *Yoga*’ which involves certain body *Āsanās* and *Prāṇāyāma*. Some of them openly declare that after doing *Yoga*, they have got rid of certain body pains and they feel better. So far so good. But the aim of *Yoga* is not to relieve people of their physical pain. It is to join the individual soul or *Ātmā* inside the body with the Supreme self of which the soul or *Ātmā* is a part. *Yoga* is a spiritual discipline to link one’s divine Self to Supreme. We all are divine at the core and the aim of *Yoga* is to free the embodied soul from its involvement with matter or body, mind and intellect so that the individual soul regains the three characteristics of Brahman which are *Sat* (Truth), *Cit* (Knowledge and Pure consciousness) and *Ānanda* (Bliss which is never ending).

*Bhagavadgītā* mainly gives four methods through which we can have a permanent realization of divinity within. These are *Karmayoga*, *Jñānayoga*, *Dhyānayoga* and *Bhaktiyoga* which suite different temperament of people who are of extrovert of active, introvert, contemplative and emotional types. All these types of *Yoga* are deeply interconnected and *Gītā* recommends synthesis of all types of *Yoga* to attain divinity even though one type of *Yoga* may be the start point of a spiritual aspirant. Other definitions of *Yoga* are given in subsequent paragraphs. *Yoga* is to realize oneness with others as God is present in all as unmanifested form.

*Buddhiyoga* or the *Yoga* of wisdom or *Karmayoga* or the path of selfless action which emphasizes on the performance of action from a higher level of consciousness dedicated to God without any attachment and without bothering about the results of action. In this type of action a little effort results in purification of mind and saves one from the great fear of being caught in the cycle of birth and death.

**Yoga as evenness of mind (*Samatvam*)—**

Here *Yoga* is defined as evenness of mind or perfect serenity and inner poise of mind remaining unconcerned if the result of action is favourable or unfavourable towards us.

**Yoga as skill in action (*Yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam*)—**

When you invoke God in your actions then you even do not claim the doership of actions. The action loses its power to bind you and your action become efficient means for liberation. For this one has to be endowed with wisdom. There may be other skilful workers but since they do not invoke God or *Yoga*, their skilful work does not contribute towards their liberation from the cycle of birth and death. *Bhagavadgītā* asks us to work without making the fruit of actions as our motive because we are not the

author of results of actions. This is explained in chapter XVIII of *Gītā* where one cause of action out of five causes is not under control. This is called *Daivam*, fate or destiny. *Yoga* gives efficiency in the completion of work in addition to character efficiency inwardly.

Lord Kṛṣṇa states in chapter IV of *Gītā* that He taught this *Yoga* to Sun-god first and now He is teaching the same secret to Arjuna, since it has been lost because of long lapse of time. Lord Kṛṣṇa further states in ch.V that without *Karmayoga* it is difficult to attain *Jñāna* or Knowledge as action is easier and more natural to us. *Yoga* also leads one to see with an equal eye (*Samadarśinaḥ*) and equality. *Yoga* leads one to see with an equal eye a Brahmin, a cow, an elephant, a dog and an outcaste. *Karmayoga* leads one to wisdom which enables one to have equal eye and a sense of equality.

Chapter VI of *Bhagavadgītā* though devoted to the path of meditation is very important from the part of view of definitions of *Yoga* as used in the *Gītā*. Lord Kṛṣṇa states that *Yoga* is not for him who eats too much or too little. *Yoga* is attained by him who is moderate in all his activities, like sleeping, walking, eating or that who leads a regulated life and does not go to any extreme. Buddha called this moderation in action as the middle path while Greek Philosopher Aristotle described this as Golden mean. By leading a moderate life, *Yoga* becomes the destroyer of all sorrows. *Yoga* is also described a state in which by practice of meditation the mind becomes still and by seeing the Self (soul) by the self, man rejoices in the Self. *Yoga* is supreme delight which is perceived by purified intellect and which is beyond the grasp of senses and established wherein one no longer swerves from Truth. Having obtained *Yoga* man considers no gain as superior to *Yoga* and having established

wherein man is not shaken by the heaviest sorrow. *Yoga* is also called a state which is free from the contact of pain. A *Yogī* gets supreme bliss where mind is utterly quiet and whose passions are at rest and who has become one with Divine. The *Gītā* calls him the highest of all *Yogīs* who looks at the joys and sorrows of others as his own. This is the feeling of oneness with others. This is in confirmity with *Īśa Upaniṣad* which says that he who sees all things in his self and his self in all beings he never suffers. When he sees all creatures within his true Self, the jealousy and hatred for others disappears and he can only Love.

The beauty of *Gītā* is that it praises all *Yogas* and none is considered superior than the other. Meditation is praised when Lord Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna to become a *Yogī* (VI. 46). Devotee is praised in verse 22 of chapter VIII where Lord Kṛṣṇa states Supreme Puruṣa in whom all beings abide and by whom all this is pervaded, is attainable by unswerving devotion. Knowledge is praised in verse 18 of chapter VII where Lord states that he holds a *Jñānī* devotee as his very self. Action is praised in verse 19 of chapter III where Lord states that by doing his duty without attachment man attains to Supreme. In a number of verses of the *Gītā* knowledge, devotion and action are combined to enable a devotee to come to God. An example of this is found in verse 65 of chapter XVIII. Some of the commentators of *Gītā* feel that there is a tilt of *Bhagavadgītā* towards devotion. In my opinion it may not be so because knowledge and devotion are interlinked to that extent that a devotee is a *Jñānī* and a *Jñānī* has complete devotion towards God. This could be found in verse 16 of chapter VII where Lord Kṛṣṇa said that among the four types of men who worship Him, one out of them is a man of wisdom. In verse 10 of chapter XIII where qualities of man of wisdom are given,

one of the qualities is unswerving devotion to Lord. The more you know about God, the more you love God. The more you love God, more knowledge about God you will have. Devotion being as easier path than knowledge, is often quoted in the *Gītā*. When Lord Kṛṣṇa shows his cosmic form to Arjuna He states that by single-minded devotion to Him, His cosmic form can be seen. It should be clearly understood that all forms of *Yoga* given in the *Gītā* when clearly understood and practised they end in wisdom which is enlightenment, perfection or attainment of *Brahmavidyā*. Again a deep inter connection between work and devotion is shown in verse 46 of chapter XVIII wherein it is stated that man attains highest perfection by worshipping God through performance of his natural duties. It is emphasized here that it is the intention of God that man should perform his natural duties which is equivalent to worship of God. Elsewhere it is also stated that one who is perfect in *Karmayoga* obtains wisdom through purity of mind.

Lastly we come to the last verse of *Bhagavadgītā* (XVIII. 78) which is also referred as *Gītā* in one verse. It is stated here that wherever there is Kṛṣṇa, the *Yogeśvaraḥ* or lord of *Yoga* and where there is Arjuna the man of action there shall surely be prosperity, victory, welfare and unfailing righteousness. *Yogeśvaraḥ* or the lord of *Yoga* is already inside us (I am seated in the hearts of all—verse 14 of chapter XV). What is required is that we all have to become Arjuna, the selfless man of action and a true devotee of Supreme. A sincere disciple of Lord Kṛṣṇa with a questioning mind to clear his doubts, he shall have all the four qualities in life as stated above. Such is the great power of *Yoga* which cannot be found anywhere except in *Bhagavadgītā*.

# The Kaleidoscopic Karmayoga

—Sunderlal Bohra

Without action there can be no existence. The mind has no physical form—it is an abstraction. Whereas the brain can be verified and dissected on a surgeon's operation table. All the memories, the emotions, the impulsiveness and the six inbuilt vices of the *Antahkaraṇa* (the internal area of the *Citta*) emanate from the mind in action. In the absence of the brain the mind has no meaning. The brain is a biological reality whereas the mind is responsible for a person's behavioural intricacies. Since humans are gregarious by nature, a person's mind becomes receptive in the day-to-day social interactions. The human past stored in the mind propels the present. The yesterday contributes to the progress of the today which, in turn, fancies the future. The human history is fettered by the chain of yesterdays. Natural phenomena like floods, famines, storms, earthquakes and the spewing volcanoes affect life on earth. Humankind is always vulnerable. The ferocity of the flux has been frustrating the fertile human mind for the ages.

To silence a pestering heckler the Indian seers and sages crafted the philosophy of *Vedānta* and sealed the darkest dens of dualism. The concept of the formless *Brahma* and the *Ātman* is the unique achievement of the rational Indian mind. It is through the perennial penance and *Karmayoga* that the ancient Indian thinkers were able to codify the effects of time, space and causation on the human psyche. In spite of the spread of the *Vedānta* philosophy the various social groups in India are found to be moored to mythology. Even the so-called rationalists are a prey to the meaningless and

redundant rituals and superstitions. Mythology mars science.

### **The Cosmic Karmayoga—**

*Karmayoga* means diligent devotion. A true *Karmayogī* is devoted to his deity and duty. He is a determined soul who never tires of asserting the meaning and mission of life in a hostile environment. The kaleidoscopic character of *Karmayoga* confuses many a casual thinker. Innumerable pages have been written on the form and function of *Karmayoga* by many assertive scholars known for their quotability from the ancient scriptures. In the animal kingdom ants, bees, weaver birds and woodpeckers are the real *Karmayogīs*. Today a workaholic can be considered a *Karmayogī*. A *Karmayogī* is an obsessive by nature. *Karmayoga* is not an academic exercise—it should be the integral part of a person's behaviour pattern. The aim of every branch of *Yoga* (*Aṣṭāṅgayoga*, *Jñānayoga*, *Karmayoga*, *Hāṭhayoga* and *Bhaktiyoga*) is to attain the state of peace and tranquillity (i.e. *Samādhi*) through sublimation. Those who preach *Samādhi* through the sexual intercourse are thugs. The awakening of the *Kuṇḍalinī* is not a child's game.

According to Lord Kṛṣṇa *Yoga* means the skilful execution of an act (*Yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam*). A *Yogī* need not be a hermit or *Saṁnyāsī*. A person can monitor his wayward mind even in a noisy atmosphere. The *Nirvikalpa Samādhi* can be a reality if a person observes the inward-outward movement of his breath along with a constant watch over his wavering mind. By identifying the presence of five inherent but invisible five elements (the sky, the air, the fire, the water and the earth) in the flow and feel of one's breath one can become a *Tattvaniṣṭha* (the one with the Supreme Reality). And a *Tattvaniṣṭha* enjoys the permanent peace and pleasure meant for a *Jīvanmukta* (a liberated soul). Through the perennial practice

the mind can be made to focus on the *Ātman* only. A true *Karmayogī* tries relentlessly to be one with the Supreme Being.

In the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* *Guru* Vasiṣṭha lays immense stress on the importance of *Karma* and *Puruṣārtha* in life. The figurative force of his expression is the envy of a creative thinker. His similes and metaphors are superb. His imagery is exhaustive and instructive. To convince an inquisitive and introspective but confused teenaged Rāma, Vasiṣṭha embellishes his discourse with the excellent *Dṛṣṭāntas* (anecdotes). The seers and the scholars who are uncertain of the role of *Karma* in the path of Self-realisation should acknowledge Vasiṣṭha as a model master of the karmic theory. Even the obsessive writer of the *Bhāmatī* (a classic treatise on the *Vedānta* philosophy named after the writer's wife) realized the importance of *Karma* when he came to know about his ageing wife's exemplary diligence and devotion. An illiterate Kabīra operated the handloom and composed the incisive and inspirational *Sākhī*. The unlettered Raidāsa stitched footwear but knew the secrets of the *Ātman*. Tulādhāra *Vaiśya* was an enlightened *Karmayogī*. There can be no creativity without *Karma*. The Marxian philosophy is based on the importance of labour in life. A real *Śramaṇa* (devotee) is not a shirker.

### **The Soul Sense of a Karmayogī—**

In the common parlance a *Yogī* is one whose demeanour is different from the people around. *Yoga* in *Ayurveda* means a blend of different ingredients that cures some specific ailment. Also *Yoga* means an appropriate or right time for a thing to happen. In astrology *Yoga* means a conjunction or juxtaposition of stars indicative of a person's future course of life. In mathematics *Yoga* means a total of items in a series. The core components of *Karmayoga*



are determination, devotion, diligence, industriousness, fearlessness, patience and value-consciousness. The three types of *Karma-Prārabdha* (the past), *Sañcita* (the accumulated), *Kriyamāṇa* (the daily chores)—are the boughs of the tree of *Karmayoga*.

The no-break habit of introspection and meditation converts a *Karmayogī* into a *Jñānayogī*. Despite the region-specific ritualistic differences the religions throughout the world agree on the theme of meditation and salvation. No true religion preaches perversion. Without the discipline of the sense-organs there can be no spiritual attainment. And in order to restrain the sense-organs from their instinctive inclinations one has to be a *Karmayogī*. A *Karmayogī* makes his way through the tough odds of life. With sheer determination a *Karmayogī* on the crutches can scale the highest peak of a mountain. A *Karmayogī* is always competitive. He is intolerant of indolence. He hopes for the best but is prepared for the worst. The motto of a *Karmayogī* is: in order to achieve the desired aim let the body collapse (*Kāryaṃ vā sādhayet, Śarīraṃ vā pātayet*). A *Karmayogī* is the master of his sense and support organs i.e. the *Pañca Jñānendriyas* and the *Pañca Karmendriyas*. Unmindful of the reward he carries out his duties diligently “कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन।” The hailstorms and the hurricanes cannot force a *Karmayogī* to remain indoors. The following verse is a fitting tribute to a *Karmayogī*—

The heights by great men reached and kept  
Were not attained by sudden flight  
But they when their companions slept  
Were toiling upward in the night.

**No sweat no science—**

*Karmayoga* is the divine force behind every scientific marvel. Through the digital technology *Karmayoga* has

converted the vast world into a global village. There is a lot of talk and tune in *Jñānayoga* and *Bhaktiyoga* but a *Karmayogī* toils to till a barren patch of land. A farmer is a *Karmayogī* so are a surgeon and an engineer. Our fields are fertile and our gardens blossom throughout the year due to the determination and diligence of *Karmayogīs*. A lion will starve if it does not hunt “उद्यमेन हि सिध्यन्ति कार्याणि न मनोरथैः । नहि सुप्तस्य सिंहस्य प्रविशन्ति मुखे मृगाः ॥” If a soldier does not awake and act, the enemy will kill him. There is no room for wishful thinking in *Karmayoga*. Too much faith in the fate spreads indolence. Mohammed Gorī fettered the powerful Pṛthvīrāja Cauhāna after observing a determined and dauntless spider that fell around sixteen times before reaching the ceiling of the cave. The slow but sure wins the race. Edison spent seventy-two sleepless hours to fix the filament in the future electric bulb. There is no room for magic or miracles in *Karmayoga*. *Karma* is a must for our biological existence.

### The Gītā on Karmayoga—

The *Aṣṭāṅgayoga*, the realization of the adjectiveless *Ātman* and the spontaneity of *Samādhi* are interlinked—all the three are based on *Karmayoga*. Without the role of *Karmayoga*, *Jñānayoga* and *Bhaktiyoga* are meaningless. Lord Kṛṣṇa was a *Karmayogī* and a tactful tutor who was smart at strategy. With the discourse of the *Gītā* he converted a dejected Arjuna into a combatant. The people given to sensual pleasures paint Kṛṣṇa as a *Kāmayogī* (a pervert). They cover up their dirty deeds by citing the example of Kṛṣṇa’s *Rāsālīlā* with the *Gopīs*. The gullible mortals do not realize that Lord Kṛṣṇa was an *Ātmastha* (a person in the state of Enlightenment, Existence and Bliss) detached from vices of carnal desires.

*Kriyā* and care are inseparable. *Kriyā* of *Karma* is an

exhaustive term. Its synonyms include work, act, action, activity, operation, execution, deed, doing, movement, motion, function, job, service, care, pursuit, performance, business, profession, vocation, task, endeavour, enterprise, industriousness, labour, toil, effort, sport, employment, obsession, speed, mission, thinking, seeing, speaking, hearing, smelling, touching, eating, drinking, walking and the rest of the function words in grammar. Nature forces humans to act “कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः” (*Gītā* III. 5). The Enlightened and the entrepreneur (*Karmayogī*) attain the same spiritual heights “यत्साङ्ख्यै प्राप्यते स्थानं तद्योगैरपि गम्यते।” (*Gītā* V. 5). God plays no role in deciding the action of humans as humans act by force of nature or instinct “न कर्तृत्वं न कर्माणि लोकस्य सृजति प्रभुः। न कर्मफलसंयोगं स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते ॥” (*Gītā* V. 14). A *Karmayogī* who is free from jealousy and desires should be accorded the status of a *Samnyāsī* “ज्ञेयः स नित्यसन्न्यासी यो न द्वेष्टि न काङ्क्षति। निर्द्वन्द्वो हि महाबाहो सुखं बन्धात्प्रमुच्यते ॥” (*Gītā* V. 3). Without *Karmayoga Samnyāsa* (i.e. the attitude of non-attachment with the mental faculty and the sense-organs) is impossible “सन्न्यासस्तु महाबाहो दुःखमाप्तुमयोगतः। योगयुक्तो मुनिर्ब्रह्म नचिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥” (*Gītā* V. 6).

No *Jñānayoga* or *Bhaktiyoga* can survive if the heart (the life-line of *Karmayoga*) stops the supply of blood to the brain. Only through the perennial practice one can attain *Kaivalya* (*Abhyāsenā tu Kaunteya*). The turnkey *Karmayogī* engineers have made it easy for every pilgrim to reach the otherwise inaccessible holy spots. Goswāmī Tulasīdāsa has summed up the importance and inevitability of *Karma* in this *Ardhālī* “करम प्रधान बिस्व करि राखा ॥” In the *Dāsabodha*, Samartha Rāmadāsa Swāmī has remarked that the speech makes no sense without the accompanying action (*Kriyā vinā vācālatā vyartha āhe*). *Karmayoga* rules the roost.

## In Praise of the Mother Earth

—*Ramakrishna Rao Gandikota*

Mother Earth 'Kṣamā', the tolerance  
Bearer of the burdens, more so of sinners  
*Karma Bhūmi*, place for evolution and progress  
In graded series of world, earth the lowest  
But out of this Earth alone basic foundation  
Of the stair-worlds evolve and grow indeed  
Ruling principles of other worlds—involved on Earth  
In the scheme of manifestation unique  
Earth, field of evolution towards Divine  
Divine principle is implanted in Earth Life!  
Evolving Being is born on this very Earth!  
Mans' nourishment is derived from Earth soil!  
Opportunities and ingredients of man's progress  
Provided on the Mother Earth alone  
Not in the other worlds-static  
With no scope for change, with fixed pattern  
Earth the chosen centre of the Divine  
To the past and future—Earth holds the key  
The instinct in Her being and the  
Resources rich Yielded by Mother Earth  
Source of progress in other worlds  
In the heart of the Earth there is  
Immortal principle and psychic soul in evolution  
Salutations to Thee Mother Earth.

Source: *Atharva Veda*



# The Richness and Glory of a Real Saint

—*Swami Rama Tirtha*

When Alexander, the Great visited India after conquering all the other countries in the world that were known to him, he wanted to see the strange Indians of whom he had been hearing so much. He was just led to a monk or priest on the bank of the Indus river. The monk lay there on the sands, bare-footed, naked, wearing no clothes and not knowing wherefrom his tomorrow's food was to come, just lying there and basking in the Sun. Alexander, the Great, with his crown shining, dazzling with the brilliant diamonds and gems that he had got from Persia, stood beside him in all his glory. Beside him was the monk with no clothes on—what a contrast, what a contrast! The riches of the whole world represented by the body of Alexander on one side, and all the outward poverty represented by the saint on the other side! But you have simply to look at their faces to be convinced of the poverty or riches of their true souls.

Sisters and brothers, you hanker after riches in order to hide your wounds, put on linen bandages in order to conceal them. Here is the saint whose soul was rich; here is the saint who had realized the richness and glory of his *Ātman*. Beside him stood Alexander, the Great who wanted to hide his inner poverty. Look at the beaming countenance of the saint, the happy, joyful face of the saint. Alexander, the Great was struck by his appearance. He fell in love with him, and just asked the saint to come with him to Greece. The saint laughed, and his answer was: "The world

is in Me. The world cannot contain Me. The universe is in Me. I cannot be confined in the universe. Greece and Rome are in Me. The suns and stars rise and set in Me.”

Alexander, the Great, not being used to this kind of language, was surprised. He said, “I will give you riches. I will just flood you with worldly pleasures. All sorts of things that people desire, all sorts of things which captivate and charm people will be in wild profusion at your service. Please accompany me to Greece.”

The saint laughed, laughed at his reply and said, “There is not a diamond, there is not a sun or star which shines, but to Me is due its lustre. To Me is due the glory of all the heavenly bodies. To Me is due all the attractive nature, all the charms of the things desired. It would be beneath my dignity, it would be degrading on my part, first, to lend the glory and charm to these objects, and then go about seeking them, to go begging at the door of worldly riches, to go begging at the door of flesh and animal desires to receive pleasure, happiness. It is below my dignity. I can never stoop to that level. No, I can never go begging at theirs.”

This astonished Alexander, the Great. He just drew his sword and was going to strike off the head of that saint. And again the saint laughed a hearty laugh and said, “O Alexander! never in your life did you speak such a falsehood, such an abominable lie. Kill Me, kill Me, kill Me! Where is the sword that can kill Me? Where is the weapon that can wound Me? Where is the calamity that can mar my cheerfulness? Where is the sorrow that can tamper with my happiness? Everlasting, the same yesterday, today and for ever, pure and holy of holies, the Master of the Universe, that I am, that I am. Even in your hands I am the power that makes them move, O Alexander! If

this body dies, there I remain, the power that makes your hands move. I am the power that makes your muscles move.” The sword fell down from the hands of Alexander.

Here we see that there is only one way of making people realize the spirit of renunciation. From the worldly point of view we become ready to renounce everything only when we become rich from the other point of view. Have you not heard the unquestionable law of science, what is gained in poverty is lasting? The outward loss, the outward renunciation, can be achieved when inward perfection, inward mastery or kingdom is attained. No other way, no other way.



This body is transient, it will turn into worms and ashes in the end after death; its constituents are impure, loathsome and filthy materials, such as, faeces, urine, phlegm, blood, fat, marrow, flesh, etc., and yet how foolishly the *Jiva* is deluded by being imprisoned in such a cage of bones and flesh! Being dreadfully attached to this body and identifying himself with it, he suffers endless pain every moment; but in spite of it he is not roused to his senses. Such is the *Māyā* of *Mahāmāyā*, the Great Mother of Universal Illusion! What a magic spell She has cast over all! Those who aspire after *Mokṣa*, or Liberation, should cut asunder this utterly ruinous snare of delusion, knowing the body and all the objects of the senses to be unsubstantial and impermanent, and strive to take refuge in the Eternal.

—*Swami Virajananda*

## Śrī Rādhā, Guru of Kṛṣṇa

मधुरया गिरा वल्गुवाक्यया बुधमनोज्ञया पुष्करेक्षण।  
विधिकरीरिमा वीर मुह्यतीरधरसीधुनाऽऽप्याययस्व नः ॥

(*Gopīgītā* 8)

Oh friend with a lotus eye, the words that fall from thy mouth, which made the wise turn in to ecstasy, have attracted us a lot, one with Lotus like eyes, you are our hero, feed us the nectar from your lips, and give us our life again please.....

The above sparkled words glitter when great souls get united with the Lord. I see that foremost greatest soul is Śrī Rādhā. I feel, Śrī Rādhā was the *Guru* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Now, here is an intriguing idea: I ask myself—is this possible? Had Śrī Kṛṣṇa anything to learn? Had Śrī Rādhā anything to teach? And if so, what could be that? One thing, that occurs and to be the most important, since without it the complete union of the soul with the over soul become impossible. And that one thing is *Bhakti*.

*Bhagavān* being almighty must lack *Bhakti*, since what power is there higher than himself that can inspire it in Him? And yet, he elects to be the *Bhakta* of his *Bhaktas*—The Greatest and first of all *Bhaktas*? He must learn *Bhakti* then—and from whom is he to learn if not from this *Bhaktas*. They alone can impart this thing to him the only thing they possess.

Śrī Rādhā, the greatest of his *Bhaktas*, was alone fit to teach him the lesson of *Bhakti* of utter and ecstatic self-surrender. She first gave herself wholly, and then got him



the one alone and immaculate. She first renounced all power and then conquered him the Almighty, the invincible, the unconquerable. She ceased to be herself, and became Kṛṣṇa where upon Kṛṣṇa automatically became Rādhā also—the very soul animating her body. Indeed, who more fit than Rādhā to become the *Guru* of Kṛṣṇa and there of all creation? Is it not perfectly right and proper then, that she who voluntarily became less than a speck of dust at the feet of the Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa should have achieved a rank of such dizzy height as to have her name not only coupled with his, but even uttered before his? It is always “Rādhā Kṛṣṇa” and never “Kṛṣṇa Rādhā”. Yes, the *Guru* must come first, the *Śiṣya* thereafter.

Let us also be part of *Rāsa Krīḍā* praying to Rādhā Devī by saying “*Samāyojaya mām rādhe tava rāsa līlāyām*”. Oh Devī please allow us to participate in your *Rāsa Līlā* and get the Grace so as to serve the Lord in any possible manner that he might wish us to be worthy of it. Let us get enlightened by the true *Bhakti* from *Gīta Govindam*—

स्मरगरल खण्डनं मम शिरसि मंडनं देहि पदपल्लवमुदारम् ।

ज्वलति मयि दारुणो मदनकदनाऽनलो हरतु तदुपहित विकारम् ॥

(X. 7)

My sweet beloved! offer the fresh buds of your enchanting feet as an ornament upon my head, so the devastating effect of Cupid’s poison may be lightened and the harsh fire of romantic desires may also be relieved.

—Compiled by *Rajalakshmi Srinivasagopalan*



While doing works bodies of the wise and fool are practically same but their understandings remain different.

—*Lokmanya Tilaka*

## The Release from the Ego

—R. Subramaniam

The sense organs are the platform on which mind functions and they can function only when the mind energizes them. The mind illumined by consciousness and in turn activating through sense organs becomes the seer. Only when the *Ātman* functions through the mind that the latter become the illuminator of the senses. More so only when the sunlight is reflected upon the object, the latter is perceived. Pure light is not perceptible. In like manner when consciousness is reflected upon a thing, one becomes conscious of the thing.

If a dark room is found to be illumined by a beam of sunlight reflected from a bucket of water from the veranda, the illumination will continue as long as the bucket remains there. When the bucket is removed the illumination in the room also disappears. Thus the water in the bucket is the source of light in the room. So too when the mind is agitated the light of intelligence of the individual is deficient. When the mind is calm the intelligence is sparkling to be efficient. Hence quieter the mind brighter the intelligence. It is not the Self, the Pure Consciousness which is acting as I, but it is the reflection *Ābhāsa Caitanya* otherwise called ego that is acting as I at all the moments of waking-dreaming states of our existence.

In each one of us there lurks a feeling—I am the doer, I am enjoyer and this propensity is the ego. That is he who arrogates himself to all his actions saying I am the doer, I am the enjoyer of joys and sorrows. This sensibility

when identified with the three *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* *Guṇas* gets to express itself in the three states of consciousness respectively—waking, dreaming, deep-sleep. The same ego with the conditions of the mind experiences itself as the waker-dreamer and deep-sleeper. In all these states the ego claims to be the doer and experiencer.

Each individual is subjected to these patterns of the existing conditions of the world around. You are happy so long as you are with near kith and kin and they are in harmony with you, otherwise the opposite prevails. Happiness is born of self-sustenance. So long as one has *Vāsanās* one has to experience joys and sorrows in the world since the world is ever changing and things in the world do not remain stagnant. Happiness does not station itself in the world of things as such, but it clings to us depending upon the condition of the mind. For people who are able to strike a balance in whatever conditions of external ambience that prevails, become totally independent of the outer world for his inner happiness.

Happiness and sorrow are the conditions of the ego. The Self is only the illuminator of joys and sorrows. When the Self functions through the mind it appears as the ego. The reflection on the mirror depends on the curvature of the reflecting agency—concave, convex, plain, short long in shape and size. The reflected image in a pond is steady when the pond is undisturbed but when it is disturbed the image gets distorted. The Self is unchanged and the above-said distorted images do not belong to it. So too happiness and sorrow. Happiness and sorrow do not belong to the *Ātman*. The nature of the Self is ever blissful. When the Spirit identifies with matter the ego arises with the emergence of happiness and sorrow. Spirit is blissful and perfect where as the ego is imperfect and unhappy. In general every one

wants joy and nobody knows where joy has its source. So everyone runs after sense objects. Indeed the *Ātman* is of the nature of Bliss and there is not even a trace of sorrow. Scriptural declarations testify direct experience tradition, right inference and clearly say that is deep-sleep we experience the Bliss of the *Ātman*.

The objective world is quite unreal nor the ego real for it is ever fleeting. As long as there is slight identification with the wicked ego, there cannot be any talk of liberation. He who is liberated from the ego attain his true nature even as the sun regains his glory after the solar eclipse. The redemption comes with the recovery of the universal in the individual and of the spiritual in the physical consciousness. They formulate separation where there should be unity and harmony. The ego is that which is produced by intellect and deluded by nescience; which is perceived in body as I am so and so—this ego should be totally annihilated. Man with discriminative intellect having destroyed the root of the ego by the sword of knowledge gained by the study of the *Śāstras*, enjoys the bliss of the Absolute.



When the water in the lake is absorbed, the reflection of the Sun in the water merges in the Sun itself. Even so, when the mind is annihilated through meditation, the individual soul merges itself in the Supreme Soul or *Paramātmā*. This is the goal of life.

—Swami Sivananda

True spirit of *Karmayoga* is the attitude that offers every action as a form of worship to the Lord.

## Read and Digest

No joy of the senses, no joy of possessions, can match the joy of God.

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God is not to be acquired, He is to be realized, for He is already yours.

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The purpose of religion is to take you to God. Somehow you must get back to Him.

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Truthfulness is God manifest in the human world.

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In that heart where truth abides, there God is. God dwells not in that heart where dwells untruth. falsity, concealment, cheating, dishonesty, hypocrisy, crookedness which are all various shades of untruth.

\* \* \*

God loves a guileless nature.

\* \* \*

God is truth, Truth is God.

\* \* \*

And it is in dying to the little self that we are born to eternal life.

\* \* \*

Rememberance of God is life and forgetfulness of God is death.

# Goal

—*Siluveru Sudarshan*

Many people may doubt that finding God is the purpose of life; but everyone can accept the idea that the purpose of life is to find happiness.

Even if life gave us at one time every thing we wanted—wealth, power, friends—after a while we would again become dissatisfied and need something more. Lasting, everlasting new joy, finding this joy within, we will find it in everything without. In God we will tap the reservoir of perennial unending bliss.

The joy of God is boundless, unceasing, all the time new. When we sit in the silence of deep meditation, joy bubbles up from within, roused by no outer stimulus. The pleasures of the senses do not last; but the joy of God is everlasting. It is incomparable!

Let us economize our time—life times ebb away before we wake up; and that is why we do not realize the value of immortal time God has given us. It is because of *Māyā*, the net of cosmic delusion which is thrown over us, that we entangle ourselves in mundane interests and forget the Lord.

We have to resolve to have our meditation first, first comes duty to our God and then we take care of all lesser duties. In order to find freedom and bliss, minister only to our needs. We have to stop creating limitless wants.

The best prayer is, we have to say to the Lord: “please tell me Thy will.” We should not say, ‘I want this and I want that’, but have faith that he knows what we need. We will see that we get much better things when he

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chooses for us: "It is not wrong to tell the Lord that we want some thing, but it shows greater faith if we simply say: 'Heavenly Father', I know that Thou dost anticipate my every need. Sustain me according to Thy will."

We have trust in God. We have to believe that he who created us will maintain us. We should not seek little things; they will divert us from God. We have to make our life simple and be a king. The man of concentration shapes his own life. He plans his day and finds at the end of the day that his plans are carried out; he finds himself nearer to God and his Goal. Eventually we must learn to lead a controlled existence.

We are the masters of the moments of our life. We have to follow a simple diet, exercise the body, and meditate daily—no matter what happens, rain or shine, we have to pray him everyday, "Lord, even if I die, or if the whole world crumbles away, I am going to find time daily to be with Thee."

If we do not fill the minutes of our life with thoughts of God, the years will slip by; and when we need him most we may be unable to feel his presence.

Joy lies in continuously thinking of God. The longing for him should be constant. Just behind the words of our speech, just behind our thoughts, Just behind the love of our heart, just behind our will, just behind our sense of I-ness is the great spirit of God. The Lord never fails us.

He is visible in the mighty manifested universe. God is everything—not just one thing. Whenever we see a beautiful sunset, think to ourselves, "It is God's painting on the sky". We have to apply this thought to all experiences. "The blood in our body is God, the reason in our mind is God; the love in our heart is God; everything that exists is God."

If we think of God while we perform our duties in this world, we will be mentally united with Him. Doing things for God is a very personal experience, so satisfying. If we are constantly thinking that He is walking, through our will, we will know him. Transmute petty desires into one great desire for Him. Our mind should continually whisper, “night and day, night and day, look for Thee night and day.”

Whatever we may be doing—inwardly say, “Lord, manifest to me! You are right here. You are in the sun. You are in the grass. You are in the water. You are in this room, you are in my heart.

True joy eludes the man who forsakes God, because he is bliss itself. We have to cultivate his acquaintance. First we must have a right concept of God and then we must meditate and pray until that mental conception becomes changed into actual perception. If we persist, the Lord will come.

God is eternal bliss. His being is love, wisdom and joy. Devotees whose worship takes an impersonal turn become conscious of the Lord as an infinite light or as the wondrous sound of *Aum*, the primal word. Only in deep meditation, we shall know his unique essence.

We have to learn to recognize Him as the quiet, inner peace that steals over our consciousness. This peace is the first proof of God’s presence within. We will know Him as the ever-increasing joy and love that surges deep within, overflowing into our everyday life and relationships. When we know God as peace within, then we will realize him as peace existing in the universal harmony of all things without.

If we are receiving more and more joy in meditation without cessation. We may know that God is making His



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presence manifest in us. We have to have faith. We have to know that even as we pray he is listening to us. Then He will make Himself known to us. In the sanctum of our heart there must be enshrined one power, one joy, one peace—God.

The heavenly father wants to be sure that his children desire only Him. So, when we have an immense thirst for the divine, then He will come. If we want to know God, we must be like the naughty baby who cries till the mother comes.

He is the nearest of the near, the dearest of the dear. When we yearn for God with intensity, He will come to us. If we cry to Him, "O Lord; I love you!" And into that devotee's heart He comes running and we shall never be happy until we give it.

The greatest love we can experience is in communion with God in meditation. When we meditate, love grows. We will know His divine love, and we will be able to give that pure love to others. A great bliss is felt—eternal fullness of joy and knowledge and love.

Man has come on earth solely to learn to know God; he is here for no other reason. This is the true message of Lord to all those who seek and love Him, He tells of that great life where there is no pain, no old age, no disease, no war, no death—only eternal assurance. In that life nothing is destroyed. There is only ineffable happiness that will never grow stale—a happiness that is always new.

That is why it is worthwhile to seek God. All those who sincerely seek him will surely find Him. Those who want to love the Lord and yearn to enter His kingdom, and who sincerely wish in their hearts to know Him, will find Him. We must have and ever increasing desire for Him, day and night. He will acknowledge our love by

fulfilling His promise to us throughout eternity and we shall know joy and happiness unending. All is light, all is joy, all is peace, all is love. He is all.

We have to pray God as “Teach us to find Thy presence on the altar of our constant peace and in the joy that springs from deep meditation.”

Bless us, that we may find Thee in the temple of each thought and activity. Finding, Thee within, we will find Thee without, in all people, and in all conditions.



Is it not a fact that all the benefactors lived pure lives, lived free of personal attachments? Did Christ ever marry? No. Saints and prophets, did they marry? No. Rāma speaks not against marriage, but he means to keep the mind one with Divinity, to keep the soul one with the whole world. Some of the saints married, just mark their relation. Their mind was perfectly unattached, perfectly pure, even though they lived in the family, had children; but we do not live where our bodies live, we live where our minds live. We live in reality where our minds live; so all our saints who lived apparently a married life, lived wholly and solely with Truth, lived in the Light. “I am the All.” Thus *Vedānta* by asking you to gradually give up your attachments simply makes you the benefactors of the whole human race.

—Swami Rama Tirtha

If each one of us attended to our duties in the right spirit, this world will surely be a kingdom of God. If there is chaos, confusion, anarchy and indiscipline rampant in the world today, it is because the emphasis has changed from duties to rights.

—J. P. Vasawani

# Vaiśvānara Vidyā

—Dr. M. S. Manhas

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* is a treasure house of *Vidyās* (knowledge, meditation). A number of *Vidyās*, such as *Vaiśvānara Vidyā*, *Prajāpati Vidyā*, *Śāṅḍilya Vidyā*, *Prāṇa Vidyā*, *Agni Vidyā*, etc., have been discussed in this *Upaniṣad*. All these meditations have only one aim in common and that is the realization of the Supreme. The *Sādhaka* (practitioner) can select any one of these meditations depending upon his/her interest, propensity and background.

*Vaiśvānara*, *Agni Vaiśvānara*, and *Vaiśvānara Ātmā* are synonymous terms. All of them denote the Supreme Brahman. *Vaiśvānara* is a compound word and is made up of *Viśvā* (all) and *Nara* (persons). This means the One who guides all beings according to their virtues and vices or the One who is identified with all men is *Vaiśvānara*. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (V. 2. 1—4; 5. 9) defines it as the gastric fire (energy) that is present in all human beings and digests their food. *Bhagavān* Kṛṣṇa in the *Gītā* (XV. 14) also explains it in similar terms when He says, “Having become *Vaiśvānara* (fire of life) I dwell in the bodies of all beings, and united with *Prāṇa* (incoming) and *Apāṇa* (outgoing) breaths I digest four types of food (masticated, swallowed, sucked, and licked).

*Vaiśvānara* or *Agni Vaiśvānara* has been eulogized as the Supreme Being in the *Ṛgveda* in thirteen *Sūktas* (hymns) spread over various *Maṇḍalas* (books). These hymns have been attributed to different *Ṛṣis*. In all these hymns the description of *Agni Vaiśvānara* is identical with

that of Brahman as creator, sustainer and annihilator of this universe. Hymn (X. 90) mentions the glory of *Puruṣa*, who sacrificed Its absoluteness to manifest in this world. In its manifest state this *Puruṣa* is the creator of gods, humans, and other living and non-living entities. The first verse of the hymn (I. 170) says that the Supreme is beyond thought. It vanishes when It is approached. *Mantra* (VIII. 5. 2) refers to ‘the One that has become all this’.

### **King Aśvāpati Teaches Vaiśvānara Vidyā—**

The following elucidation of the *Vaiśvānara Vidyā* in the form of a story is mentioned in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (5. 11—18). Once upon a time, five friends—Prācīnaśāla, Satyayajña, Indradyumna, Jana, and Buḍila— assembled for discussion on several spirituality related topics. All of them were householders and quite adept in the Vedic lore. They were well aware of the fact that *Vaiśvānara* is Brahman (the Supreme Being) and It is also the Self (the universal Soul). The conversation gradually shifted to a philosophical theme ‘*Ko na ātmā, kiṁ brahma—* which is our Soul? Who is Brahman?’ This subject was directly related to their desire for Self-realization. However, they could not come to any consensus.

Because of their divergent views on this important subject, they decided to approach Ṛṣi Uddālaka, who knew about the Self that is *Vaiśvānara*. When Uddālaka learnt about the reason for the visit of these scholars, he became apprehensive about his own ability to satisfy them. Therefore, he suggested that since he would not be able to answer all their questions it would be better if all of us go to King Aśvāpati. He knows all the secrets of *Dharma*, an expert on future and past, knowledgeable about birth and death, and an adept on apprehending the fate of beings due to the quality of their *Karma*. He is also an authority on the

subject of Self vis-a-vis *Vaiśvānara* and should be able to clear all our doubts and enlighten us about this *Vidyā*.

When King Aśvapati learnt that six learned Brahmins were waiting at the gate, he personally greeted them with respect and humility, and performed the customary formalities to honour the learned guests. Early the following morning the king told them that tomorrow he was performing a sacrifice and would be glad to give as much wealth to each of them as he would be giving to other Brahmin participants. To assuage any doubt about the purpose of their visit, the guests responded by saying that let us speak about the reason for which we have come to you. Your Majesty, you are an authority on the knowledge of the Self that is *Vaiśvānara*. Please teach us about them.

Learning about the reason for their visit the king said that he would answer this question tomorrow morning. You may rest in the meantime. In the afternoon the guests brought faggots for the king. This gesture indicated that they acknowledged the king as their preceptor irrespective of the fact that they were Brahmins and the king was a *Kṣatriya*.

The next morning they assembled for discussion. The king asked one question from each one of the six guests individually. “*Kim tvam ātmānam upāsse*—Who is the Self that you meditate on?” First you tell me what you know about this subject, and then I shall tell you what you don’t know. The answers of the six visitors along with the king’s brief comments are summarized below:

**Prācīnaśāla:** I meditate on *Divam* (heaven) as *Vaiśvānara*.

**King:** This is not enough. Heaven is only the head of Self. Persons belonging to your line shall be prosperous and devoted to rites and rituals. It is good that you have come to me for further instructions.

**Satyayajña:** I meditate on *Ādityam* (sun).

**King:** The sun is the eye of the Self. Your lineage will lead a happy and comfortable life. They shall enjoy a variety of amenities here and hereafter. You would have become blind if you had not come to me.

**Indradyumna:** Sir, I meditate on *Vāyu* (air) as *Vaiśvānara* Self.

**King:** Air is merely the vital force of Brahman, which has several paths. Your progeny will lead a happy life and will have the lustre of knowing Brahman. Your vital force would have depleted if you had not come to me. You need further instructions to avoid this deficiency.

**Jana:** I meditate on *Bahula* (vast, space) as *Vaiśvānara*.

**King:** Space is the middle of the Self. The *Vaiśvānara* Self on which you meditate is very vast and pervades everything. In your happy lineage there shall occur the lustre of knowing Brahman. The middle part of your body would have become very weak if you had not come to me for help.

**Budīla:** Reverend Sir, I meditate on *Rayi* (wealth) as *Vaiśvānara* Self.

**King:** This is indeed the *Vaiśvānara* Self, but it represents only the bladder of the body where urine is collected. Water helps in raising food, and where there is food there will be prosperity. You are wealthy and well nourished. However, your bladder would have burst eventually if you had not come to me for help.

**Uddālaka:** Dear Sir, I meditate on *Pṛthvī* (earth).

**King:** The Self on which you meditate is indeed *Vaiśvānara* Self, but the earth represents only His two feet. Your feet would have become weak without further instructions.

**Summary of King Aśvapati's Instructions—**

After listening to the depth of knowledge of the six visitors with regard to the *Vaiśvānara Vidyā* and briefly commenting on their shortcomings, the king summarized

this *Vidyā*. He said that heaven is the head, sun is the eye, air is the vital force, space is the middle part of the body, earth represents Its two feet, sacrificial altar is the chest, *Kuśa* grass (sacred grass used in religious ceremonies, *Poa cyanosuroides*) is the hair, and the three types of sacrificial fires are the heart, mind and mouth of the *Vaiśvānara* Self. Those who meditate on this Self partially, as you have done until now; do not get the full benefit of their effort. This summary represents an injunction for a practitioner to meditate on the whole rather than on the parts of *Vaiśvānara* for Self-realization.

### **Some Food for Thought—**

*Vaiśvānara Vidyā* is one of the most important meditation techniques. It is closely associated with the very life of an individual. *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* (2,3) says that Brahman is all and the Self is Brahman. The Self has four feet (states of consciousness) namely, waking, dreaming, deep sleep, and *Turīya*. The first (waking state) is called *Vaiśvānara*, in which one lives with all the senses turned outward and experiences only the external world. At the mundane level, the life of a person is intimately linked with *Ātmā* (soul) and *Vaiśvānara* (Brahman, heat energy). What this means is that realization of *Agni Vaiśvānara* or *Vaiśvānara Ātmā* is fundamental for achieving perfection (bliss) in life.

The teaching of *Vaiśvānara Vidyā*, as described in *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (*loc. cit.*) through the medium of an interesting episode is to make the subjects easily comprehensible. It also demonstrates this well recognized method for teaching an esoteric subject to a layperson. The spiritual literature abounds with such illustrations.

In olden days a prospective disciple approached the preceptor with a bundle of faggots used for *Agnihotra* sacrifice. This offering of faggots to a learned person

indicated the humility, sincerity, and total dedication of the disciple and his earnest desire for acceptance in the *Guru*'s family. This represented a sacred bond between the teacher and the taught. This was also considered as a new birth of the disciple. From then on all the necessities of disciple's life were the responsibility of the *Guru*.

At the advanced stages, before formally accepting a student, the *Guru* would ask some probing questions to assess the level of student's ability and his propensity to benefit from further instructions. This method of admission was universally accepted. There was no partiality shown in this selection process. The candidate's ability was the only consideration. Even the internationally recognised institutions, such as, Takshashila, Varanasi, Nalanda, used this method for admission. This selection process may be compared with the modern practice of requiring a certain level of proficiency in standard tests followed by rigorous personal interviews before admitting a candidate in some technical schools or professional institutions.

Contrary to the modern erroneous belief that *Vidyā* was the monopoly of the Brahmin class and all *Ācāryas* were Brahmins, history does not support this conviction. A question mark can be placed on the ancestry of some of the most celebrated *Ācāryas*. *Ṛgveda* (I. 89. 1) emphasizes "Let noble thoughts come to us from all sides." This is what made Hinduism one of the most celebrated faiths in the world. It has withstood jerks and jolts from various corners for several millennia without the loss of its vibrancy. The *Ācārya* of the *Vaiśvānara Vidyā*, King Aśvapati, was a *Kṣatriya*. The six learned Brahmins had no qualms in accepting him as their *Guru*, as none else possessed this knowledge.

During meditation on an object one should not meditate



on it partially and expect to achieve the desired benefits. This unfortunately is the case in most attempts. The practitioners become frustrated and disillusioned with time. This results in the loss of faith in the efficacy of meditation after failed attempts. Before giving up a useful medium for achieving perfection one should scrutinize own shortcomings and rectify them. All aspects of the object must be meditated upon with pure body and mind using the prescribed methodology. Only under these conditions the *Sādhaka* (practitioner), *Sādhana* (practice) and *Sādhya* (object to be meditated upon) become one resulting in the realization of *Sādhya*—the *Vaiśvānara Ātmā*.



Human birth, higher aspirations and the inspiration to contact great ones and to imbibe their stirring spiritual messages—all these constitute your wealth. All these constitute your good fortune. All these constitute your special unique blessings when compared to those who do not have these things.

Having been born as human beings, countless millions of people lead a life where their human potential is never fully recognised, never fully tapped and utilised. It is frittered and wasted away in miscellaneous petty pursuits and occupations. Thus, even though rich, they are poor. Even though most fortunate, they are the most unfortunate of beings. For they fail to recognise their good fortune and fail to put this great good fortune to proper use, wisely.

—Swami Chidananda

You have already lost so much time—death may take you at any moment, and then you won't have time to know Him. You must realize Him before you go out of the body cage.

# My Hope

—*Chilukuri Venkateswarlu*

No where are you to find,  
In and out of my mind;  
But vouchers are with seers,  
That vouch you is their souls.

How pure they lead their lives,  
How nice they thought of you,  
How good their hope crept in,  
How sane their soul kept in.

To lead so saintly,  
To see you so sweetly,  
To get you to my glance,  
Give me a soul so sane.

Good thought entered my mind,  
Hope moved more at its might;  
Let them be of bit use  
To lead me to gain fruit.

Let my thought be ever,  
Let my hope loose never,  
Let my search be for you  
To seek voucher from you.

## The Significance of ‘Om’

—Mohan Lal Mago

I reproduce an excerpt from the dialogue Swāmī Rāmatīrtha had with Muslims clergy at Lucknow in 1905 in a bid to explain Islam from a Vedantic angle.

The Muslims said ‘*Ādābarza*’ to Swāmī Rāma, showing their respect for him. In reply to their salutations, Swāmī Rāma only said ‘*Om*’ in a serene and peaceful tone. The Muslims took objection to it and said:

Muslims: respected Swāmījī, we all said, ‘*Ādābarza*, but in reply to our respectful salutation you only said ‘*Om*’. Is there any secret enigma in it? What is the mystery of this ‘*Om*’?

Rāmatīrtha: There is no mystery in any word or Rāma. Rāma has only ‘*Om*’ with him. This is all that Rāma possesses. This is non-dualism or monism the *Vedānta* of Rāma.

Muslims: Kindly explain it further, so that it may become clearer to us.

Rāmatīrtha: As a matter of fact, God is nameless. But the devotees, the Pundits and learned people call Him by various names according to their angles of vision. Some call Him Rāma, some Rahīma, some call Him Kṛṣṇa, some Karīma. Some call him by the name of *Īśwara* and some by that of God, *Allāha* or *Khudā*. Some respect Him as their Father and some love Him as their Mother. There are some who take God to be their Friend or companion, while there are others who regard Him as their Master, Lord or creator and bow down before Him to rub their

foreheads in servility. Some pay their respects to Him as their Husband while others, taking Him to be their preceptor, *Guru*, *Pīra* or *Murśida*, surrender themselves to Him. There are some who regard Him as their own self. In short, they establish their relation with Him, according to their own understanding and propensity.

So, you can feel your oneness with God by establishing some sort of relation with Him. It can be any relationship. You can call Him by any name you like. You can develop any alliance with Him. But the Truth or Reality is only one. All these different names or relations point to the same Reality, the one without a second. He is what He is. In other words, He is indescribable and beyond being defined or circumscribed in words. But the ancient *Ṛṣis* and saints have called Him and known Him through the significant symbol ‘*Om*’. It signifies His all pervasive universalism, which includes your own self.

Muslims: When God has hundreds and thousands of names, why should only this word ‘*Om*’ be so dear to you?

Rāmatīrtha: Though the question appears rather simple, it requires a long reply. Any way, it would be quite in the fitness of things, if it is said in short, that it is the most natural name of God. It is universal. Every person, of whatever caste, creed or nationality he may be, benefits from repeating it.

Muslims: How?

Rāmatīrtha: By pronouncing it properly, the heart and the mind are filled with peace, tranquility and bliss. You can feel the limitless ocean of power and energy within you. Truth is self-evident. Rāma invites you to join the blissful melody of ‘*Om*’ with him to enjoy the refreshing and invigorating bath in the Ganges of peace and serenity.

(After saying this Rāma sang the *Mantram* 'Om' thrice in his all-absorbing melody. All the Muslims present there also joined him in the singing of 'Om'. After this there was silence for some time.)

Rāmatīrtha: Well, please, speak out your personal experience of singing 'Om' with Rāmatīrtha.

Muslims: Well Sir, we did feel a sort of peace and concentration of kind.

Rāmatīrtha: It is because of this that the Hindus blow the conch shell on all occasions. It may be for a birth or death, for *Pūjā* or any other happy celebration. They blow this conch shell even on the eve of declaration of war. The conch shell, when blown, gives out the sound of 'Om'.

The word 'Om' does not belong to any particular language. It is not the monopoly of Sanskrit language alone. This sound is found practically in all languages including Persian, English, German and Japanese.

The sound 'Om' filling the entire atmosphere, gives immediate relief to humanity. It has been with you, since your birth. When a child is born, he cries with the sound of 'Om'. When the children play and their minds are saturated with happiness, they produce a noise which resembles that of 'Om'. When people fall sick or are afflicted with some unbearable pain, they invariably groan which produces the sound resembling 'Om'. This gives them relief from their agonizing pain.

At the end of the prayers in Jewish, English or Arabian languages, the word 'Amen', or Amin' is nothing but the changed form of 'Om'. The last word of the Greek language is 'Omega' which has the prominence of 'Om'. Also, the English words, 'omnipresent', 'omniscient' and 'omnipotent' the eminence of 'Om' is distinct. The presence of 'Om' in these words is not just by chance. It is on

account of the word ‘*Om*’ that these words give the indication of universal.

The Hindu philosophers regard ‘*Om*’ as the only Reality, the unchangeable Truth, which remains the same in all circumstances in the waking, dreaming or deep sleep state.



We have seen how happiness is either in the body or in the mind, or in the *Ātman*. With animals, and in the lowest of human beings, who are very much like animals, happiness is all in the body. No man can eat with the same pleasure as a famished dog, or a wolf; so, in the dog and the wolf the happiness is entirely in the body. In men we find a higher plane of happiness, that of thought, and in the *Jñānī* there is the highest plane of happiness in the Self, the *Ātman*. So to the philosopher this knowledge of the Self is of the highest utility, because it gives him the highest happiness possible. Sense gratification or physical things cannot be of the highest utility to him, because he does not find in them the same pleasure that he finds in knowledge itself; and after all, knowledge is the one goal, and is really the highest happiness we know.

—*Teachings of Swami Vivekananda*

Do not leave anybody out of your love, keep everyone in your heart, and they will keep you in theirs; you will be a king on the throne of all hearts, commanding their love and influencing them to goodness, not by force, but by your love.

—*Divine Romance*

# The Real Purpose of Incarnation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa

—Swami Virajananda

The best proof of the Incarnationhood of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is, verily, manifested by His *Līlā*, or playful Sport, at Vrindaban, because therein alone He has revealed the real essence of His indescribable Love. How far pure devotion and love can submit God to the devotee, and how much He can make the devotee His own, are best understood from His *Līlā* at Vrindaban. In that *Līlā* of His, He has revealed to the world the peak of Love which is beyond the reach of our knowledge and intelligence. Attracted by that sublime Love, the young *Gopīs*, or milkmaids, of Vraja (Vrindaban) used to run like mad to the banks of the Yamunā, hearing the call of His flute, in the hope of seeing Him and being near Him. Casting aside all sense of shame, fear, family reputation and social position, they used to lose in His company the sense of the body and their individuality and become merged in Him! Such a selfless love could never be evoked by any man but by God and God alone. The sweet, spiritual influence of that wonderful, Eternal and ever-felt Divine Sport has been drawing the hearts of countless men and women for ages to their Beloved, aye, has been shedding peace and bliss on their lives, and qualifying them for Liberation, through worship of Him as their Chosen Ideal. Centuries after, the Great Master, Śrī Caitanya Deva, came down as an Incarnation to revive the idea of that very Love; and losing himself in *Mahābhāva*, the highest blissful state of *Samādhi*, through contemplation

of that sweet Sport of Śrī Kṛṣṇa with Rādhā, the chief of the *Gopīs* unstained by even the slightest taint of lust, he disseminated that divine love and pure devotion freely to one and all in the world. And in our own day, Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa in singing or speaking of the same *Līlā* of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa used to be so overwhelmed that he too lost himself in *Mahābhāva*, expressing in his person all the outward eightfold signs of those rarest divine feelings which were manifested in the lives only of Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Caitanya Deva.

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One can renounce only what one possesses, how can one renounce that which one does not have? If a thing is to be relinquished, it has first to be acquired. It will not do to shirk the trouble or the responsibility this entails. It will not do “to offer to Govinda the puffed paddy which has been blown away by the wind.” The *Śāstras*, or Hindu scriptures, do not forbid enjoyment; they say: “Enjoy the world through renunciation, that is to say, enjoy the world, giving up the feeling of ‘mine’ and attachment thereto. Everything in the universe is pervaded by God. He permeates every object, everything is His. Therefore, holding firm to this knowledge, do all work, enjoy everything, renouncing the idea of ‘I and mine’; otherwise enjoyment will turn into suffering.” If you enjoy the world with this idea, *Yoga* will come of itself; you will have practised it automatically, that is, without going through its prescribed processes.





# Bhagavadgītā—the Fountain of Karmayoga

—Dr. Radhanath Behera

The *Bhagavadgītā* has been to the Hindu mind sat once a lofty poem and a sacred text dealing with the metaphysical as well as religious thoughts. With its power of spiritual penetration the *Gītā* guides men to realize their inner qualities and their spiritual aspirations. Human life by its very nature is assailed by its stark problems of body, mind and spirit. They all need to be countered by courage and conviction. Mere escape from them affords no solutions but only aggravates them.

In a dramatic moment of fratricidal conflict, when the near and dear ones, men of wisdom, worthy of respect of either foe are arraigned to face each other with lethal weapons in hand, the great warrior Arjuna is overcome with grief and despondency. He has to fight those who are by relatives, by birth, friends, elders and even his masters who made him an invincible archer. Utterly upset by this 'sinful' act, he throws away his mighty bow, *Gāṇḍīva*. His manliness and heroism apparently vanish under the cloud of gloom, uncertainty and feeble mindedness.

Arjuna in this state of utter bewilderment implores his charioteer, friend and guide, Śrī Kṛṣṇa to turn back from the battlefield than to bear the unforgivable sin of slaying his own people. The battle is intended to restore the kingdom to *Pāṇḍavas* unlawfully snatched away by their cousins. He pleads that inaction is better than any action that results in violent bloodshed. Action is to be totally

avoided for a *Jñānī* as all actions beget their reactions, which ultimately become obstructions in the path of the liberation of spirit.

Here Arjuna takes up plea in defence. Better he be slain by the foes than he be the cause of their annihilation. In such a mood of dejection, he confesses that he is unable to contain himself and he is stirred to the depth of his being while his mind is reeling. He even confesses that kingdom so retrieved is useless. It cannot be enjoyed in an atmosphere all around misery and bereavement.

But the great Lord intervenes, enlivens Arjuna's depressed and sagging spirit and shows him the path of righteousness. Śrī Kṛṣṇa propounded the four (unfolded) great paths of *Yoga* and the merits of each direction. Yet He maintains that each path is distinct from the rest and none superior to the other. Each seeker of Truth or Ultimate Reality is free to choose any of them depending on one's inclination. But to Arjuna, the only benefiting path to tread along is the path of action which practical *Yoga*. As a *Kṣatriya*, Arjuna is enjoined to protect *Dharma* in a spirit of sacrifice, even if it is a necessity to shed blood in the process.

The fighter is not a seeker of knowledge, nor a sannyasin ready to renounce the world of our existence. He has to take up arms against his kith and kin, his own men whom he had sentimentally abhors to fight. *Karma* or action is the mainspring of subsistence for every living being. Only when one is decrepit, infirm, old or very enlightened, one may not be engaged in any form of activity. The blessed Lord illustrates that He Himself is eternally engaged in work although it is not mandatory. He is engrossed because of His love for the whole universe. Again He has to work to show to His creatures His standards which are to be emulated. He can cease to work

lest His created worlds end up in ruins for want of action.

Each man has to act according to his understanding. It is better not to be bound by our actions. Actions spring from a sense of duty and not from our longing for their results. We ought to work by the impulses of our own nature and our life is sustained by it. A man cannot attain spiritual pleasures by abstaining from work. Freedom resides in motiveless work, wherein work is accomplished in a spirit of renunciation. We are scared because of our craving for results of our action and we become enslaved. Such actions which our selfish desires are not rooted are commended. Even God is pleased when the fruit of honest labour is offered at His feet. Motivated actions lead us astray and to attain highest implicit faith and *Niṣkāma Karma*, desireless action, are called for. If work is graded, the highest place is preserved for the work done in the spirit of detachment and sacrifice. Action entangled in desire is left in the lowest rung of spiritual ladder. Our great men, our admirable heroes have been tireless and desireless workers whose desire is only steered in the spirit of magnanimity and the welfare of the world. They work with a spirit guided by ethics and morality. If work is worship, labour is prayer, it has to be undertaken in a free mind and detached conscience.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa cautions that even a man of wisdom is prone to fall prey to the craving of senses. It is a quiet enemy of all wisdom and faculty of discrimination. Man himself is superior to his senses, mind and even intelligence. The goal is freedom from the sway of passions proved to be inimical to the selfless spirit of action.

Thought to deflect Arjuna from his rigidity of escaping from the battlefield, the Lord cites several modes of contemplation and worship and He even reveals His rare

Supreme Self—‘the *Viśwarūpa*’. The disciple is dumb-struck and never in dreams imagines that the Lord of Universe, whom he treats casually as his charioteer in the battlefield. Śrī Kṛṣṇa using the scene of guiding Arjuna along his befitting path, addresses the human beings everywhere lost and confused in the battle of life to pursue the mode of work without attachment.

Swāmī Vivekānanda, the great peacher of *Karmayoga* hails that the whole teaching of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is contemplated in one *Śloka*. “क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ.....” (II. 3). He says, “if one reads this *Śloka*.....he gets all the merits of reading the entire *Gītā*, for in this one *Śloka* lies imbedded the message of the *Gītā*.”

The message of *Karmayoga*, particularly its insistence of motiveless action—aspect is a time-honoured gospel. It is relevant in today’s world where love and affection, charity and goodwill are merely treated as commodity ready to be exchanged on gain or profit basis. But these emotions emanate from heart and as such non-material in nature. Parents expect too much from their grown-up children in exchange for their troublesome upbringing. They remain insatiable, angry and ever complaining. For the pleasure-seeking, duty shirking children, their old parents are a hateful burden. Pangs of unreciprocated affection, of unrequited love, unethical demand for return of goodwill among men and nations haunt us. But there is a lasting panacea springing from the message of ‘*Karmayoga*’—work without the expectation of return. This principle if adopted, in letter and spirit, cleanses our spirit unduly tainted by expectation of any measure of gratitude from those whom we serve.

## Bondage—A Creation of the Mind

—V. Anand

The Self or the *Ātman* and consciousness are synonymous. Both are the same. In that consciousness no thought, no ego has ever arisen. The pristine purity of It is ever intact. It has never ever deviated (fallen) from its awareness. Consciousness is only and ever aware of Itself.

Then who complains—‘I am bound, I suffer, I want salvation! etc.’ On careful analysis we discover that it is the ego which complains so, which creates all such doubts and confusions.

To prove this subtle point and clarify it, Śrī Ramana Maharṣi advises an aspirant who was perceiving ‘blank’ on discarding thoughts in the following way:

Maharṣi: “Be what you are. All that needful is to efface the ego, That what is, is always there. Even now you are That. You are not apart from it. The blank is seen by you. You are there to see the blank. What do you wait for? The thought ‘I have not seen’, the expectation to see and the desire of getting something, are all the working of the ego. You have fallen into the snares of the ego. The ego says all these and not you. Be yourself and nothing more.”

In the immediate presence of the most revered Ramana Maharṣi, the European Journalist Paul Brunton realized that intellect creates its own problems and becomes miserable by trying to solve them. Thus bondage, the ensuing struggle for freedom (liberation) all are mere concoctions of the ego. They do never really exist. On realizing their illusory nature one experiences instantaneous peace and bliss. For self-realization is ever present, ever existent. It is our very

nature. Abidance in it needs no effort, for it is spontaneous and axiomatic (self-evident). Infact we always abide as 'That'. Only one should lose the false knowledge concocted by the ego by recognizing one's true identity.

A beautiful story narrated by Śaṅkarācārya in his commentary on *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* is given as an illustration.

When a king was killed by a conspiracy, his queen escapes to the forest and delivers a child there. She dies during childbirth, The child is brought up by hunters in the forest. He acquires all the habits of a forest-dwelling hunter and grows up to be a hunter. When the power of the conspirators declines, the prime minister of the assassinated king comes to the forest in search of the prince. At the very sight of the boy the minister recognizes royal signs in him. When he enquires of him the boy stoutly denies that he is of royal blood. He asserts that he belongs to the hunter clan. Enquiry from elders confirms that the boy is actually the prince. He then makes the boy realize his true identity as the prince. On realizing his identity the prince overcomes the usurpers and regains the throne. Now when informed by the minister that he is the prince and belongs to royalty the boy has nothing to do in order to regain his true identity. He has only to simply realize his identity affirmed by the minister and the elders of his clan. No effort, purification or refinement is required to make him the prince. The fact remains that even when he mistook himself to be a hunter-boy, in reality he was the prince. The princehood of the boy ever was, ever is and ever will be. The mask (camouflage) of the hunter-boy automatically drops off on recognizing his true identity as the prince.

## Old Pernicious Habits

—*Li Hong Chong*

Some ants had colonised themselves on a saline hill where there was a mine of salt; the mud and the stone of it were of the same material. The ants lived on salt. Salt was here, there and everywhere; and they fed upon it. Years passed and none of them chanced to taste anything but salt.

As good fortune would have it, an old ant chanced to visit a neighbouring hill, which was made of sugar crystals. He enjoyed the sweet taste of sugar, and felt happy. He had gone there alone, and for some time he lived on this better food. He thought of his old companions, and wanted them to leave the salt colony. Accordingly he repaired there, and told them of the existence of the sugar colony, where nature manufactured sugar without resting upon the agencies of mills and machineries, as men of the present age do. No body believed it at first. There was a great controversy on the point. Some of them said, "Salt is a natural product of soil, and sugar is only an artificially manufactured article." But the traveller ant was a true insect. He insisted on the veracity of his personal experience and experiments.

A few young ants, however, seeing that the ant which brought them good news was enthusiastic in his assertions put their faith in him, and accompanied him to the sugar hill. The crystals of sugar were brilliantly transparent. The sight gladdened them. But, when they tasted it, it proved nothing but salt. This made them uneasy, and they accused him of treachery and false report. "You brought us for

destruction and ruin, and made us homeless. And it is for separating us from our kith and kin that you devised this foolish means to transfer our residence here. Now we have nothing but to perish here. We had abundance of salt there as well.”

They were so much prejudiced against him that they plotted against his life, and wanted to punish him for his nefarious doing.

The ant felt uneasy. He was conscious of sugar, but was at a loss as to how to change their views. He thought over the matter for some time, and it came to his mind that they had concealed some particle of salt in the cavity of their mouth, and it was because of the presence of saline matter that the taste of sugar failed to assert itself and it tasted just like salt.

After much discussion and dissertation he advised them to vomit the salt from within their mouths and enable themselves to relish the sweetness of the delicious sugar. They acted likewise; and, when the pieces of salt were out of their mouths, they could easily taste the delicious and tasty sugar. The experiment proved beneficial, and they were delighted to find themselves wrong and the messenger as a truthful being.

When they were satisfied, they came to their old colony to spread the good news far and wide, and persuaded their old comrades to relinquish their old homes, and make the new hill their permanent settlement.

The worldly-minded people, who are solely occupied with the material proclivities of their mind, lose sight and insight of spiritual facts; and, unless they change their old habits and sordid pursuits of mortal abode, how can they be enabled to realise the spiritual significance of life.