

# Kalyana-Kalpataru

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## Grace on Kākabhuṣuṇḍī

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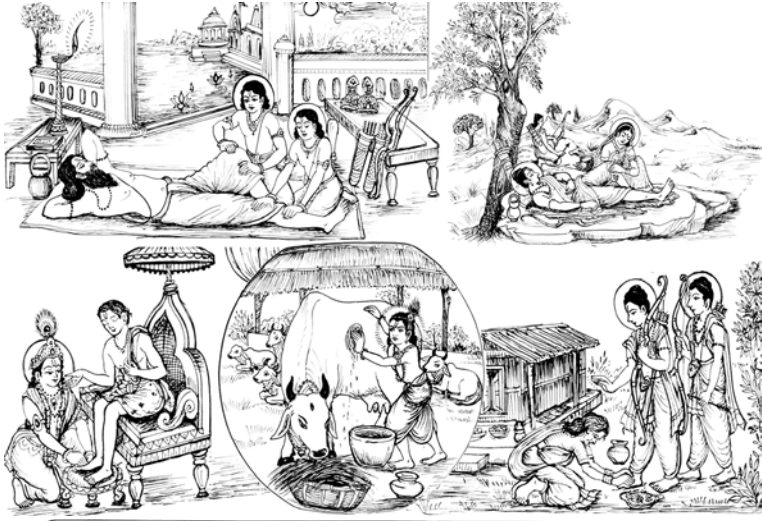
June  
2018

## Kalyana-Kalpataru



**Bhakta Gobinda Dāsa**

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



# KALYANA-KALPATARU

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

Vol. 63

June 2018

No. 9

## Subhāṣitam

सेवनीयं सदा सत्यं मनोवचनकर्मभिः ।

सत्ये संसेविते स्वर्गाः प्रादुर्भवन्ति भूतले ॥

Follow truth at all times in thought, speech and deed.  
When truth is followed in its totality, the heavens manifest  
upon earth.



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## Glory of Divine Name

—*Brahmalina Sri Jayadayal Goyandka*

*Satsaṅga* i.e. the association with saints should be done twice a day, in the morning as well as in the evening. Through greater practice of remembrance, meditation and the association, the sense of renunciation from the world can automatically be born. Knowing all earthly things as transient and ephemeral, sense enjoyments should be abandoned.

If one has to cross the ocean of worldly existence the repetition of the Divine name should be practised at all time. Through the practice of the Divine name, the meditation on aspect of God is performed, an undivided love of God is evoked as a matter of course. The state of desirelessness having been attained, there is hardly any delay in establishing love ties with God, so the essence of all spiritual discipline is nothing but the disinterested practice of the Divine name.

Time is fleeting and the time lost can never be regained. So even a moment of the invaluable time should not be wasted indirectly that is to say that remembrance and meditation should not be ignored.

Lust, anger, greed and infatuation etc., our enemies, so to say, are robbing us of our real wealth. So the bugle of the Lord's name—'Rāma' should be blown continuously. Just as the sound of the bugle keeps away the enemies (the robbers) so also the bugle-like sound of the Divine name startles away our enemies—the lust and anger etc., so cautiousness on our part is desirable.

बिन रखवारे बावरे, चिड़िया खाया खेत।  
 आधा परधा ऊबरे, चेत सके तो चेत॥  
 इस औसर चेता नहीं, पशु ज्यों पाली देह।  
 रामनाम जाना नहीं, अंत पड़ी मुख खेह॥

‘O neglectful man, without being watched over, the crop in your field is being eaten up by the birds. Only half of the produce or a fraction thereof will be left for you. Take notice betimes if you can.’

‘Even after getting this opportunity (of assuming human form) you remained neglectful of your supreme duties and like an animal cared for the upkeep of the body only (and neglected the soul). The mystery of the Divine name remained un-revealed to you so you will have to repent in the end.’

The meaning of the above two couplets should be thought over. The association with saints and the repetition of the Divine name practised continuously, lovingly and disinterestedly are decidedly the supreme goals of life, thereafter one has developed love and faith in God and meditation on him is inevitably performed. The lease of our life is drawing to a close, one needs rise from the slumber of ignorance and regain consciousness.

Having attained this human form, which is unattainable by celestial gods even, one should not waste one’s life but make it purposeful. The man, who having attained human body, does not perform remembrance of God, has to make severe repentances for it in the end for when one’s own body will be of little avail it is quite vain to expect anything from other objects of the world.

## Supreme Wealth

—*Nityalilalina Sri Hanumanprasad Poddar*

Remember : he alone who is possessed of supreme wealth in the form of reverence for and faith in God and practice of God-remembrance is a truly rich man. And from this very wealth flows eternal peace, eternal happiness and eternal satisfaction.

Remember : in fact, the worldly possessions that you treat as your property and the riches you regard as your fortune serve only to aggravate your want and poverty. Their non-acquisition too carries with it a sense of want and indigence, while their acquisition brings even a still more acute feeling of want and impecuniosity.

Remember : real wealth and real fortune is only that, which ends our want. Would that wealth be worth the name should its acquisition only increase one's want?

Remember : the more a man gets the means of worldly enjoyment, the more he craves for them. And it is self-evident that the wider the range of desire, the greater is the want. The very sense of want is clear evidence of one's poverty.

Remember : he who is contented and is never perturbed by any material want, enjoys supreme peace and happiness, even though he is impecunious in the eyes of the world. While the so-called millionaires, men in authority, rulers and leaders wail and weep, he constantly revels in his sublime and natural peace.

Remember : desire is a formidable fire, which blazes all the more furiously when successively fed with fuel and

clarified butter in the form of sense-enjoyments. And as it grows in volume, the burning and agony caused by it increase in the same proportion. A man burning with the fire of desire may get the most rare and choicest objects of sense-gratification and attain the highest position in the world; yet he would continue to burn all over his life. Nay, he will die full of burning and will be reborn with a heart burning with the same fire.

Remember : this terrible fire of desire will never be extinguished by the acquisition of objects of one's liking. It will be extinguished only when one develops reverence for and faith in God and believes that every benign dispensation of the Lord is full of blessings and lastly when one takes to the adoration of God in a spirit of resignation and with implicit faith, regarding such adoration as the supreme end.

Remember : you have been invested with a human body only for the adoration of God. Blinded by infatuation you are viewing the objects of this world as embodiments of bliss. Nay, ever worried for their acquisition and developing an inordinate attachment and infatuation for them when acquired, you are thus doing a very great harm to yourself through your own folly, forgetting your real purpose.

Remember : worldly loss, however great, is no loss at all. It is only the want or non-acquisition of a worldly object or the destruction or disappearance of an object already in your possession that you regard as your loss. This loss you are bound to suffer *nolens volens* the moment you die. You may be the owner of countless invaluable things; nevertheless, on your death you will be surely disunited from them and they will surely pass out of your hands. Hence their loss should never be reckoned as such. Your



real loss lies in the fact that you have wasted your human existence without achieving its object. And that object will be realized only by giving up the attachment and infatuation for worldly objects and developing reverence for and faith in God and practising His adoration.



Blessed are you who cry for God-realization now, for by that single-minded yearning you shall attain. With the entertainment of ever new joy found in divine communion you shall laugh and rejoice throughout eternity.

—*Sri Paramahansa Yogananda*

What little time man has on this earth, he spends thinking and planning to get the things he wants, when one desire is satisfied, he begins to chase after something else like a dog hitched to a cart with a sausage hanging out in front of a pole, he pulls on ever-increasingly burden-some life as a slave to his cravings, always thinking “I will be happy when I get this thing or that thing.” When will that day come? Be happy now, this minutes. As soon as the thought of God comes in the mind, grasp it with devotion, strengthen and enliven it by making all other desires subservient.

## All Can Realize God

—*Brahmalina Swami Ramsukhdas*

There is one such thing whose glory I cannot encase in words. If you pay heed to it, you will be blessed and fortunate forever. That is this : there is not a single spiritual discipline or practice about which we can say that this we cannot follow; and there is no such worldly work which all can do and accomplish. Reason, being that the ability and power to realize God is inherent in all men; but the ability and power to gain worldly object is not in all men. For example, there are two things : fulfilment of desire and foresaking of desire. No one can ever accomplish the fulfilment of desire. We may become an Indra, an Emperor, a Mahārāja or a rich man or we may amass any amount of wealth, then too the fulfilment of desire can never be a reality. But renunciation of desire one certainly can. None can ever satiate worldliness; and God-realization all can have. No one is unable in this act. Because, human birth is meant only for it. What work will he be able to do if he cannot fulfil the work of God-realization for which alone human life has been bestowed? Human body is not gotten for satisfaction of worldly desires, then how can he succeed in doing this work? He can never.

One to all are free to realize God and renounce worldly desires; one to all are unfree in the fulfilment of worldly desires. Who is there in this assembly, please say, who is capable enough to satisfy all his worldly desires? Never is anyone able to do so. But in God-realization and desire-renunciation all are capable, none is incapable; all are

eligible, none ineligible; all are able, none not able. No two persons ever have the same sort of achievement in worldly life, but God-realization is the same with one and all. The nature of the realization of God, the Real, which was envisioned or experienced by the sages like Nārada, Vyāsa, Śukadeva etc., in ancient times, can even today be gained by any man, if he so desires. All are rightfully eligible to God-realization—whether he be *Brāhmaṇa*, *Kṣatriya*, *Vaiśya* or *Śūdra*; whether *Brahmacārī*, *Gṛhastha*, *Vānaprastha* or *Samnyāsī*; whether sick or healthy, illiterate or educated, poor or rich, You may immensely doubt its veracity, but doubt will not hold true. None is free in gaining the worldly objects or goods; because their realization is under the control of others. Without acknowledging the suzerainty of others, without seeking the support or aid of others, not a single one can enjoy the objects of worldly enjoyments. But any lone man can have the realization of God, because in God-realization there is no necessity at all of anybody's help. One-to-all are free in God-realization.

They who show the spiritual path are also everytime free. Dattātreyā Mahārāja had twenty-four '*Gurus*'; they were all spiritual masters otherwise why should he accept them as his *Gurus* ! *Guru* is omnipresent. There is no dearth of *Guru* !

There is a desire for toys in the childhood, but do you have that desire now? Obviously it is proved that desire does wither or wane. This is a thing of your experience. No worldly desire endures. When one declines, you catch up another desire. Thus you get at new desires everytime. If you give up entertaining desires, you will be exceedingly happy and fortunate. The desire to realize God never dies, it only becomes dormant. You catch up desires, which

endure not and pay no attention towards that desire, which dies not—such is our real state ! You are all strong enough in God-realization, not weak; but you are all weak in fulfilling worldly desires, none is too strong.



Tell me, what hard labours are involved in treading the path of *Bhakti*; it requires neither *Yoga* (mind-control), nor sacrifices, nor *Japa*, nor penance, nor fasting. A guileless disposition, a mind free from perversity and absolute contentment with whatever one may get—this is all that is needed.

—*Lord Rāma in Rāmāyaṇa*

If you please the whole world, so that everyone at your feet, if you have all the riches of the world can offer, what then? Everything we pursue internally, leads eventually to satiations and after satiety comes boredom the only experience that gives complete fulfilment, complete contentment that can never satiate or bore us, is communion with the ever-new, ever-joyous Lord.

# Significance of Celibacy

—Swami Rama Tirtha

Do not waste your vital energy or else you will suffer and ruin your country. Sublimate this energy into Divine-bliss and spiritual power.

Sir Isaac Newton, one of the greatest mathematicians of the world, lived above eighty years. Why? Because he lived the life of *Brahmacarya*. Kant, the biggest philosopher of the western world, lived a long life because he was also a *Brahmacārī*. Herbert Spencer and Sweden Burg who changed the ideas of this world, were *Brahmacārīs* and observed a life of celibacy.

Some English newspapers have spread the wrong idea that *Brahmacarya* or life of restraint lessens human life. You will know it, through your own investigation, that this inference was drawn from the special census-reports of a few years only of Paris and Edinburgh. Investigation will clearly show that in Paris and Edinburgh only those persons remain unmarried who are sickly, poverty-stricken or unemployed. Thus, you will see that in these countries bachelor-hood or single life is not responsible for early deaths. But their early death is due to their bad health, poverty or similar causes. Such unmarried persons who are void of spiritual or intellectual assets, cannot be called *Brahmacārīs*. It is therefore, altogether erroneous to raise this objection against *Brahmacarya* or celibacy.

I will now finish the lecture, after narrating to you the lives of some foreign *Brahmacārīs*.

The ancient knowledge of our Bharat, the India, was acquired by the foreigners and they also utilised it to their

advantage. But the pity is that we have failed to derive the necessary benefit out of it. Our thirst will not be quenched by simply repeating that our forefathers had constructed the well. Our thirst will be quenched only by drinking water. Similarly we shall derive *Ānanda* or Eternal bliss by regulating our actions, according to *Śāstras* or our sacred scriptures.

The master of Emerson, was Thoreau. He writes about *Bhagavadgītā* in these words, “Every day I take my bath in the celestial waters of *Gītā*. There is no book equal to it so far, in spite of the fact that this book was written thousands of years ago. It is so much superior in grandeur and beauty to the present day works that many a time I have thought that perhaps its age of composition must have been quite different.” *Upaniṣads*, *Bhagavadgītā* and *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* were for the first time introduced into America by this very gentleman (Thoreau). These books were translated from the original Sanskrit into Persian, during the Muslim period in India. Sir Thomas Roe and others, who visited India, took away the Persian translation of these books to Europe. These books were then translated by the Europeans from Persian into Latin Language, because at that time Latin was the literary language of Europe and often great works were written in that language. It was Thoreau who took the Latin translation of these books to America. To tell you the truth, the banner of the *Vedānta* was first pitched in America by this very gentleman. One day, while walking through the woods, Emerson asked him as to where they could find the arrows of Red-Indians. As usual, he gave the same reply, “Wherever you like.” He then bent forward and picked up an arrow and gave it to Emerson, saying; “Here you are.” Emerson was very much surprised at it. Emerson then again enquired of him as to which country was the best. Thoreau answered. “If the land under

your feet does not appear to be better than Heaven, you are not fit to live in that land.” His doors were always open and there was no obstacle to light or air, Emerson writes that in the ceiling of Thoreau’s room, there was a hive of wasps and that he himself had seen wasps and bees sleeping with him on the same bed, but they never harmed that saint who regarded everybody as his own self. Snakes often coiled round his legs, but he never cared for them. How could they bite him? The rays of sympathy and universal love were radiating from his body. He was embodiment of kindness and love. He could be compared with Śaṅkarācārya in his knowledge, both theoretical and practical. The man who is not moved by the charming attractions of this world, is sure to move the world with his indomitable character.

Recently there was another great man of America, Walt Whitman. He used to sing songs freely, during the days of American war of Independence. His face glowed with cheerfulness. He was used to manual labour. His only work in the war was to nurse the injured and the wounded, to quench their thirst and to supply bread to the hungry. He would inspire life and courage into the hearts of men through his invigorating songs, which he would sing merrily. His eyes expressed joy and cheerfulness and his voice was full of love and ecstasy. He used to move freely in the battlefield of the American war of Independence, like Lord Kṛṣṇa in the battlefield of Kurukshetra or like Lord Śiva amongst the demons and the evil spirits. He also wrote a book, “Leaves of Grass.” It inspires the reader with feelings of exaltation. It may be mentioned here that both these great Saints, Thoreau and Walt Whiman, were *Brahmacārīs* or celibates.

## Gāyatrī-Upāsanā

—Atmananda

गायत्री वेदजननी गायत्री पापनाशिनी ।  
गायत्र्यास्तु परं नास्ति दिवि चेह च पावनम् ॥  
न भिन्नां प्रतिपद्येत गायत्रीं ब्रह्मणा सह ।  
सोऽहमस्मीत्युपासीत विधिना येन केनचित् ॥

“*Gāyatrī* is the mother of the *Vedas*, *Gāyatrī* is destroyer of sin; there is nothing superior to *Gāyatrī*, either on earth or in heaven; *Gāyatrī* should not be considered separate from Brahma and should be meditated upon as indicated in *So’ham* (I am He) in any method.”

*Gāyatrī* is the name of the higher aspect of the innate nature (*Prakṛti*) of *Saguṇa Brahma* of the *Vedānta* Philosophy, of *Bhagavān Īśwara* of the Hindu mythology, who is the all-pervading Lord of the universe. It is the adorable Light of the Lord called *Parā Prakṛti* in *Bhagavadgītā*, chap. VII. 5 and is the life aspect of nature. This divine light provides the medium of worship of or meditation on the Lord; therefore, this form of His worship is called *Gāyatrī-Upāsanā*. The word *Gāyatrī* implies *Japa* (silent repetition) and *Mantra* implies meditation on Him. *Gāyatrī-Upāsanā* therefore, includes in it *Japa* of the *Gāyatrī-Mantra* coupled with meditation on the Lord. The word *Upāsana* implies the dualism (*Dwaita*) of *Upāsaka* (worshipper) and the *Upāsya* (worshipped) called *Upāsya-Upāsaka Bhāva* in the scriptures. The worship is called *Saguṇa Upāsanā* in contrast to *Nirguṇa Upāsanā*, which is worship of unmanifest God, the *Para-Brahma* of *Vedānta*. Scriptures say that *Para-Brahma* is one without a second (*Ekamevādwiṭīyam*



*Brahma, neha nānāsti kiñcana*), hence in the absence of the second, i.e., the worshipper, worship of *Para-Brahma* in dualistic spirit, is inconceivable and it simply means the *Sādhaka's* meditation on the oneness of his soul (*Jīvātmā*) with *Para-Brahma*. Thus *Upāsanā* really means worship of manifest God or *Saguṇa Brahma*.

2. *Gāyatrī-Upāsanā* consists of two parts, viz., *Sandhyāvandana* and *Pañca-Mahāyajñas*. *Sandhyāvandana* means offering of prayers in the morning, noon and evening twilight and its chief part is *Japa* of the *Gāyatrī-Mantra*, coupled with meditation on the self-illuminated *Īśwara*, the *Upāsya*. The various parts or *Āngas* of the *Sandhyā* worship practised before and after the *Japa* of the *Gāyatrī-Mantra* have their own importance and rich occult significance. The meaning of the *Gāyatrī-Mantra* according to Śrī Sāyaṇācārya, the celebrated commentator of the *Vedas*, is:—“We meditate on the Supreme-effulgence of the Radiant Being (the indwelling controller and director of all things); may He stimulate our intellect entirely (to enable us to realize the truth).” This great *Mantra* has come down to mankind as a sacred inheritance, from generation to generation, from the most revered *Brahmarṣi* Viśvāmitra of yore, who achieved his spiritual greatness by the practice of the sacred *Gāyatrī-Upāsanā* and attained the distinction of being the seer of the Great *Gāyatrī-Mantra*. This *Mantra* has two parts; the first part of it from ‘Tat’ to ‘*Dhīmahi*’ consists of praise of *Saguṇa Brahma* (*Īśwara*) on whom the *Upāsaka* meditates with reference to the Lord’s glory; the remaining part of the *Mantra* from “*Dhiyo yo naḥ*” to the end of it is prayer to the Lord for enlightenment, to enable the practisant to realize the truth, which is that of the spiritual oneness of the *Jīvātmā* with *Para-Brahma*.

3. The *Jīvātmā* is a manifestation of *Para-Brahma* in

*Avidyā* (the lower aspect of divine *Prakṛti*) and his sacred mission during his earthly existence as a human being, is to ensure his liberation from bondage in *Avidyā*, by realization of his oneness with *Para-Brahma*. From his manifest state in *Avidyā* his rise to the spiritually highest state of the unmanifestedness of *Para-Brahma* is indeed a very difficult task for the *Jīvātmā* to achieve (*Bhagavadgītā* XII. 5). To be able to attain that high goal, he has necessarily to pass through an intermediate stage in which *Para-Brahma* happens to be manifest as *Saguṇa-Brahma* (i.e. *Īśwara*) crowned in *Vidyā* (the higher aspect of divine *Prakṛti*). The process of reaching *Īśwara* consists of the contemplation on his Light (*Vidyā*) and is called the *Gāyatrī-Upāsanā*. For ensuring attainment of the supreme goal of realization of his oneness with *Para-Brahma*, *Jīvātmā* (the *Upāsaka*) is advised to meditate on *Īśwara* (the *Upāsya*) in the manner indicated in “*So’ham*”, which means “I” i.e. the *Jīvātmā* (the *Upāsaka*) am He, i.e. *Īśwara* (the *Upāsya*), in spirit. “*So’ham*” forms a happy spiritual link between *Īśwara*, Lord of *Vidyā* and *Jīvātmā*, a prisoner in *Avidyā* and facilitates the spiritual union between the two. In this meditation the *Upāsaka* perseveringly practises to give up the long-standing habit, brought forward from birth to birth, of considering himself to be the perishable body which is a bundle of flesh, blood, fat, filth and bones packed up in skin; and practices to mediate that he is the immortal *Ātmā*, who is spiritually one with *Para-Brahma*. When this twofold practice gains root in the heart of the devotee, *Īśwara* crowned in his heart (*Gītā* XVIII. 61) lifts the devotee from the depth of *Avidyā* to his own high level of *Vidyā* and the happy union between the two is the result. In course of time when the *Upāsaka* gains fitness to rise higher, the Lord throws off His mantle

of *Vidyā* and reveals Himself to the devotee as *Para-Brahma*. This is realization by the *Upāsaka* (*Jīvātmā*) of his spiritual oneness with *Para-Brahma*, which is the highest spiritual goal achievable by man. After this realization there remains nothing for the *Sādhaka* to do in the shape of *Sādhanā*, except to meditate on the goal already achieved, till he quits his body. Such is the greatness and efficacy of the *Gāyatrī-Upāsanā* in ensuring salvation of the *Upāsaka*. Hence the person who is entitled to practise the *Upāsanā* but neglects to do so is described in scriptures to be one who commits spiritual suicide (*Īśa-Upaniṣad* verse 3). Till his union with the Lord actually takes place, the *Upāsaka* cannot speak with authority on *Advaita-Vedānta* and is advised to concentrate on achieving the union.

4. *Pañca-Mahāyajñas* are the five great sacrifices, which a *Gāyatrī-Upāsaka* is required to perform every day as part of the *Gāyatrī-Upāsanā*. They are symbolic of the worship of God in his all-pervading aspect, i.e. in His Universal form (*Virāṭ-Śarīra*) containing in it all categories of life (i.e. *Jīvātmās*) in the universe, as manifestations of *Īśwara*. The five sacrifices are as described below—

(a) **Brahma-Yajña**:—This is worship of or meditation on, *Brahma*. It involves devout study of the *Vedas* called *Swādhyāya*, which teach all about *Brahma*, which is the basis of the manifestation of the universe and show the way to the realization of *Brahma*. It is said that the devotees of *Brahma-Yajña* attract sympathetic attention of the *Muktātmās* or liberated souls, who reside in the higher planes of the universe, look after the spiritual elevation of the human race and inspire the latter. *Ākāśa* and *Vāyu Tattwas* (ether and air) are involved in the worship.

(b) **Deva-Yajña**:—This is worship of *Devas* (minor gods) who are agents of *Īśwara* in the spiritual administration

of the universe, by oblations of *Sāttvika* food (mixed with ghee) into fire (*Agni Tattwa*).

(c) **Pitr-Yajña** is propitiation of *Ṛṣis*, *Dharmācāryas* Manes, etc., by means of oblations of water (*Jala Tattwa*).

(d) **Manuṣya-Yajña** is service of humanity principally by offering food to the hungry, clothing to the naked, medicine to the sick, etc., all products of the Earth (*Pr̥thwī Tattwa*).

(e) **Bhūta-Yajña**:—Kindness to all categories of life, other than man, such as animals, birds and other living creatures. This sacrifice is supposed to include worship of plant life also. *Pr̥thwī Tattwa* is involved in the *Bhūta-Yajñas* also.

5. The *Gāyatrī-Upāsanā* is a combination of *Karma*, *Bhakti* and *Jñāna*. The *Japa* of *Gāyatrī-Mantra*, coupled with the preceding and subsequent parts of *Sandhyāvandana* and the practice of *Pañca-Mahāyajña* represent the *Karma* aspect of the *Upāsana*.

Contemplation on the glory of the Lord indicated in the first part of the *Gāyatrī-Mantra*, more especially in the spirit of “*So’ham*,” is the *Jñāna* aspect; and the prayer contained in the last part of the *Mantra*, represents the *Bhakti* aspect of the *Upāsanā*. This happy combination is indispensable till perfection is attained by the *Upāsaka* to ensure even progress of the *Upāsanā*.

6. **Sandhyāvandana** is the analytic (*Vyatireka*) part of the *Gāyatrī-Upāsanā*, because it involves the practice of elimination of the body (*Śarīratraya*) during meditation and an attempt on the part of the *Upāsaka* to realize *Para-Brahma* in his own heart as *Pratyagātmā*. Through the practice of the *Pañca-Mahāyajña* the *Upāsaka* seeks to realize *Para-Brahma* outside himself in Its all-pervading aspect as *Paramātmā* and this may be called the synthetic

(*Anvaya*) part of the *Upāsanā*, though there is in it too some amount *Vyatireka* to be gone through during the process of elimination of *Nāma* (name) and *Rūpa* (form) of every object in order to find the existence of God in it. The two aspects together make the *Upāsanā* complete and effective.

7. **Gāyatrī-Upāsanā** may be treated as the kernal of universal religion, because the goal aimed at by its practice, viz. union of the human soul with God, is what all great religions of the world have in view. Hence followers of the different religions are *Gāyatrī-Upāsakas* in their own ways and should know that they are a great Universal Brotherhood. The differences in the forms of practice of the different religions by their followers hailing from different parts of the world, due to differing local conditions, are of minor importance and make no difference in their spiritual brotherhood and in the goal to be attained by them. To ensure the natural spiritual progress of the human race, the underlying common basis of religion should be respected by all possible means. May God grant the unhappy world the happy day when there will be an end to all forms of strife in the name of religion, when mankind will be free to profess the religion it chooses to do with a view to ensure its spiritual progress and realize the ideal of universal brotherhood in everyday life.



You must keep your mind riveted to God no matter what comes. Then you will find great peace and joy.

—*Man's Eternal Quest*

## Counsel to Lakṣmaṇa\*

—*Swami Siddhinathananda*

Kaikeyī was adamant in her demand for the banishment of Rāma into the woods and the installation of her son on the throne. It was a bolt from the blue for that the aged Daśaratha. He dared not open his mouth regarding the disastrous demand of Kaikeyī to Rāma. She herself broke the news of the Prince. Śrī Rāma calmly and coolly accepted the behest. He immediately hastened to the apartments of Kauśalyā to take leave of her for His imminent exile. Anxiously Kauśalyā enquired of Him the reason for His unexpected appearance. He informed her His immediate purpose. The news all but broke her heart. She demanded Him to resist the order of the old monarch and refused Him leave to go. She claimed equal regard and obedience to her words as to His father Daśaratha. Or she pleaded to be led into the forests along with Him. The scene was heart-rending. The grief of the mother's heart at the thought of separation from the beloved child was inconsonable. Lakṣmaṇa was furious. He offered to imprison the senile, hen-pecked dotard of a Daśaratha and install his beloved brother on the throne of Ayodhya. He even threatened to reduce to ashes one and all who stood in the way of Rāma's succession. His eyes were sparkling and crimson his visage. "He who acts unjustly, deserves to be checked and chastized," roared he, "no matter whether father or anyone else; and I am capable to fulfil my purpose."

With a smiling face Rāma gathered him up in His arms

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\*Based on the *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa* of Tunchath Rāmānujan Ezhuthachhan in Malayalam.

and bound him in a warm embrace. "Hearken ye to my words," quoth He, "without pride or passion, my dear. I know that there is nothing impossible for Thee under the sun. But pray, patience; hear Thou me. Thinkest Thou the world and the things therein abide for ever? If they do, right Thou art; otherwise, why all this vexation? Know Thou all pleasures are as fleeting as the lightning; consider also the uncertainty of life itself. Human life is like unto a drop of water on a red-hot iron. Now it is, next moment it disappeareth. Alas, the world runs after the pleasures of the flesh like the frog in the jaws of a serpent. The sword of Death is at his very neck. The joy of life amongst one's own kith and kin, wife and children, is very very short-lived indeed. Life in the world is only a coming together of weary pilgrims in a wayside rest-house. It is only a floating twig on the wavy waters."

"Wealth vanishes, body ages and aches, life flies, the pleasures of the flesh are momentary. This pain-infested writhing of life is not worth anything. It is but a dream."

"Fools live in a paradise of their own. The sun riseth and it seteth. Sleep swallows up everything. Soon again the sun makes his appearance. Thus, passes the life of the greenhorn and he realizes not the loss of his life, for he is quite content with wallowing in the welter of this world. Decay and Death take him captive and he quits the stage in a worse condition than when he came in. Strange, indeed, man knows not the way of *Māyā*! Seeing, he seeth not. He passes his days in his own ignorance and takes no thought of his soul; and he faileth to grasp the meaning of the Lord's *Līlā*. Life ebbs off as water from an unbaked mud-pot. Know Thou for certain, this body is a sure prey to Thy enemies in the shape of ailments and afflictions. Senility lurks in you like a hungry tigress and death is

biding his time to pounce on you. The vain man takes pride in this perishable package of flesh and thinks, 'I am wise, I am a prince, I am high; but alas! next moment he may be reduced to a handful ashes or he may wallow in dung heaps as worms and maggots. Verily pride of body is bad. Know Thou for a fact, this conglomeration of skin and flesh, blood and bone is of the earth and is subject to decay and death.'"

"Out of delusion due to this dying body, Thou threatened all with fire and sword and it is due to Thy want of wisdom, my dear."

"Know Thou rage to be the matrix of all misery for man. Out of his ignorance, man substitutes his body for the soul. It is wisdom to know that 'I am Spirit.' Ignorance impounds, Wisdom absolves. Thou, therefore, if Thou art serious about the welfare of Thy soul, seek wisdom and live it. Take it from me, lust, anger, greed and desire are Thy sworn enemies. Of them all know anger to be the most puissant to prevent you in your ascent to freedom. Anger, maketh a man kill his parents and friends; it bringeth grief and ruin. Verily anger is the root of the mundane bondage. It reduces to naught a man's good actions and therefore, the wise have no truck with anger. Anger verily is death and desire, the hell-fire."

"Calmness and contentment are the garden of the gods and peace, the perennial spring therein. Therefore, court Thou peace and Thou art safe and secure in Thy soul for ever. Thou art the soul in Thy essence. It is light and bliss, eternal and all-pervasive. It moveth not and changeth not. Out of it cometh the world and the universe. It is the witness of all. It knows everything. It is God. Realize Thou It always in Thy heart."

"Brother, Thou art wise. Thou hast to enjoy Thy share



of life and its woes. Do Thou perform Thy duty with Thy bodily organs; but be not bound by it and hanker not for its fruits. Make Thou an offering and a sacrifice of Thy duty unto Thy Lord. Duty has no fangs to sting the pure one. Discard Thy passion and devote Thyself to what I have enjoined on you and know Thou the Light and be wise and blissful.”

Lakṣmaṇa fell at Śrī Rāma’s feet and said in a stammer, “Gone are my doubts at Thy words, Brother Dear. Pray grant me leave to share your fate in the forests and the privilege of serving my brother and my Lord.” And Rāma graciously granted him the boon.



Only those who have developed *Rāga-Bhakti* for God, may be called His sincere devotees. God becomes responsible for them. When one develops love of God, one likes to talk only of God.

—*Sri Ramakrishna*

Most people give up because they have the notion that God is not responding, but He does make known His presence in His own time and in His own way.

—*Sri Daya Mata*

## Songs of Kabīra

Saints are ever content,  
Their talk is pure and chaste;  
A sight and touch of theirs,  
Brings internal peace and rest.

Cows, elephants, horses,  
Gems and jewels, riches untold;  
Acquired the wealth of content,  
Same as dust are silver and gold.

Desire gone, fear fled,  
Of course the mind is free;  
Who has no wish, no want,  
A King of kings is he.

Begging is same as dying,  
None should turn a beggar;  
This is Satguru's teaching,  
Begging is worse, dying is better.

In due course what comes,  
Regard it tasty food;  
What is obtained with struggle undue,  
Is gall and wormwood.

## The System of Nyāsa

—Swami Krishnananda

In certain forms of ritualistic worship performed in temples, the person performing the worship makes certain gestures called *Nyāsa*. There are varieties of *Nyāsas* called *Aṅganyāsa*, *Karanyāsa* etc. Only religious priests or a person expert in performance of ritualistic worship will know what *Nyāsa* actually means. It is a Sanskrit word which means ‘placing oneself’ or ‘the placement of anything,’ in a particular location, in a given manner.

This system of ‘placing’ is followed in ritualistic worship of a deity in a temple by touching different parts of one’s body and concentrating in the mind at the same time the corresponding part of the object, the deity or divinity concerned. We must remember that ritualistic worship also is a kind of meditation. Worship is not a mechanical action. The mind is actively operating there; otherwise, it would become lifeless and would not bring the desired result.

In this placement of the process of *Nyāsa* the parts of the shape, contour or bodily structure of the divinity adored are correspondingly placed in the respective parts of the body or the personality of the worshipper. When I touch my forehead or a part of my head, I utter a prayer, a word, a *Mantra* signifying that the forehead or the head of the divinity has entered my head and is my head. So, I am not seeing the head or the forehead of the divinity with my eyes as something looking at me; rather it looks through me, through my eyes and is ‘me.’ A little bit of strong

imagination and feeling is necessary here, in this practice.

Suppose, instead of the idol or the *Mūrti* of the divinity worshipped, we consider a person in front. You have to make that person one with you. There is a great philosophy behind this technique. It is highly beneficial and also dangerous, if the mind is not pure while attempting the technique.

I am looking at you and when I look at you I am seeing your eyes: they are outside me. But that is not the proper way of looking at you. You have to look through my eyes and I have to look through your eyes, so that instead of myself and yourself being face to face, we stand in collaboration parallelly—one ‘enters’ the other. The two eyes have become one eye; the two heads have become one head and they come to a state of coalescence. Who is seeing? This question will not arise at that time. Are you seeing the object or is the object seeing you? You may say it is either way. It may be that you are seeing through the eye of the object or the object is seeing through your eyes. If this practice of *Nyāsa* in the process of worship becomes successful, divinity will enter the worshipper.

The great God, the incarnation, whoever be your ideal you are worshipping, is seeing through your eyes and you are seeing through its eyes so that it ‘is’ you and you ‘are’ it. I hope you are able to appreciate what this means. Its hands are your hands and your hands are its hands. Your heart is its heart; its heart is your heart. Your feet are its and vice versa. Every part of your body is correspondingly the part of the body of that divinity you are adoring in meditation.

Then what happens? You have absolute control over that object in the same way as you have complete control

over the limbs of your own body. I can tell my hand to lift and it lifts; I can tell my legs to walk and they walk. But if I tell the legs of somebody else to walk, they need not, because they are not identified with my consciousness. The legs of another person have not become one with my legs; therefore, I cannot tell them to walk. They will not move. But if my legs have become another's legs and if I tell them to move, they will move.

The whole building will move if your consciousness has identified itself with it, part by part, little by little, bit by bit, in every little detail and you become the whole building itself. This is the secret behind the *Nyāsa* technique of worship in the ritual of daily performance in temples or even in one's own altar at home. Such a process has to be adopted in our meditation on the object, whatever be that object which we have chosen for the purpose.

There is an interesting aphorism of sage Patañjali in his *Yoga Sūtras* which refers to this kind of process: The identification of yourself with the object of meditation is somewhat like the identity seen when a coloured object is brought near a clear crystal, so that the colour has entered the crystal; the crystal becomes red if a red flower is brought near it. The objective and subjective sides enter into each other and the one is indistinguishable from the other.

The crystal may be compared to the meditating consciousness. The object of meditation may be regarded as something similar to that which is brought near the crystal. In the process of the entry of the structure of the object into the structure of the crystal and the very substantiality of the crystal itself, the two get identified into a single mass of being, so that one will see that the object itself has become the crystal or the crystal has become the object.

The object 'flows' into the subject; the subject 'flows' into the object. Or to cite another illustration, imagine that there are two tanks filled with water up to the brim and they are on equal level (not one high and one below). There is a passage between one tank and the other tank so that water flows slowly through that passage from one tank to the other tank and from the other tank to this tank. One will not know the water of which tank is flowing to which tank. There is a mutual commingling of the waters of two tanks. The water in between, in that passage, may be considered as the water of this tank or that tank.

In this consciousness of the identification through the placement of *Nyāsa* mentioned, the object becomes united with the consciousness of the meditator in such a way that, at that time, in that experience, one will not know whether the object is within oneself or oneself is within the object. Who is in whom? Is the object meditating upon you or are you meditating upon the object? If the great God is in front of you, is He contemplating you when He gazes at you or are you contemplating on Him? Either way the answer is correct.



'Throw the dog a bone.' If the body eats a little, all right, if it sleeps a little, all right. The more one fusses about it, the more demands it will make. One should do his duties to the body and forget it. Remember, we are sons of God; we are not the body.

—Sri Yukteswaraji

# Ātmā

—Sri Kanchi Mahaswamy

Without *Ātmā* there is no activity at all. But *Ātmā* remains aloof from everything. This mystery is called *Māyā*. It is very difficult to comprehend it. Though not related to anything. *Ātmā* functions as if it were related with everything. This is explained by the following example.

Because of Sun, the trees and plants grow, bear raw fruit which ripen later. If it were not for the Sun, these would not have been possible. But can it be said that the Sun functions keeping these in His view? No. If there is no sunlight, no work can be done in the darkness. We light a lamp to ward off darkness. In the light emitted by the flame, one reads a divine story. In the same light, another reads an undesirable story. Can we attribute this contrast to the lamp? No. Still both will not take place in the absence of the lamp. This is the exact position of *Ātmā*. Without its indirect influence or without its latent presence, the body and mind cannot function at all. *Ātmā* is behind all happenings.

—Sender—*R. T. Nathan*



## Until the Very Last Breath

—Swami Chidananda

To enter into the spiritual life is a rare blessedness; it is a great good. To take it seriously and engage in active spiritual *Sādhanā* is a second blessedness and a still greater good. But, to persevere in the spiritual life, to be ever progressive and ceaseless in one's spiritual life, is the greatest good, the crowning blessedness.

One makes up one's mind: "Come what may, until the very last breath persists in this body, I shall not swerve from the path of *Sādhanā*. Until the very last breath is in the body I shall persevere, I shall dedicate myself to the divine life. I shall be a *Yogī*, I shall ever be intent upon attaining the Goal. I shall never slacken my efforts, much less cease my endeavour.

"Till the very last breath I shall be a *Jijñāsu*, a *Sādhaka*. Come what may I shall be a *Yogī* till the very last. Anything else may be uncertain, but this is certain. All else may be undecided, but this is decided once and for all. I am determined that the spiritual life will be my life, the spiritual goal will be my goal. And God will be the central fact in my life. I shall live my life for God and His attainment."

Thus, if one gladly takes upon oneself, after serious deliberation and firm conviction, this "do or die" approach and attitude to life, that would indeed be the crowning glory of one's *Sādhanā* life. This is the greatest good; it is the supreme blessedness. And it is to such a *Sādhaka* that success comes, success is sure, fulfilment awaits.

Here there is no doubt or vagueness. The Cosmic Being gives Itself to one who has totally given oneself to the Cosmic Being, to one who is prepared to live or die for



That. This is for sure. One who has left everything and asks only for That, that gives itself fully and totally to such a one. This is the truth.

Therefore, rejoice greatly that this choice is before you. Rejoice greatly that this opportunity beckons you. Rejoice greatly that the dispensation of the Divine is that to each seeking soul belongs that for which its life is offered and lived until the last. "Those that give themselves unto Me, to them I give Myself." This is the declaration.

Therefore, this is the life, this is the time, this is the great opportunity. Let each day be lived with the awareness of this great good fortune, with the awareness of this supreme blessedness, of this golden opportunity. Then we shall have nothing to regret. Rather, we shall have all reason to rejoice.

There is a concept in the West which is applicable to the field of heroics: "Success and victory is to those who dare." Again: "A coward dies a thousand times, a brave man but once." And that one death comes in triumph, in success and in victory. It is the crowning glory and it is assured for those who dare. More than in any other field of human endeavour, such daring and dedication, such defying of death itself is called for in the life spiritual.

May the grace of God and *Gurudeva*, make you of that stuff. Coming into contact with the philosopher's stone, iron no longer remains as iron; it becomes pure gold. Not without meaning has the Cosmic Being brought you into living contact with the sublime, life-transforming, spiritual wisdom teachings of blessed and beloved Holy Master *Gurudeva* Swāmī Śivānandajī. Having thus, come into contact, be heroes in this strife. Dare to live the spiritual life unto the last and crown yourself with the supreme blessedness of success, victory and a life triumphant!

## Read and Digest

Why does not this 'I' attain Eternal life? Because it contents itself with transitory life.

\* \* \*

If we live with noble thoughts as our companions, we are trying to be better. Time is slipping away, why do you let yourself forget God? Why leave this earth without knowing the mystery of life? Why you are here and whether you go?

\* \* \*

Selfless service will purify our heart and rid us of desires.

\* \* \*

The pleasure, which comes to us by causing sorrow to another, eventually turns into sorrow to ourselves; for it was born of sorrow. A pain which we take on us by giving pleasure to another; is sure to turn into *Ānanda*.

\* \* \*

Pleasure suppresses pain, *Ānanda* obliterates pain. Suppressed sorrow emerges again and again, whereas sorrow obliterated never rises again.

\* \* \*

The test of righteous favourite is whether we are doing to others what we would like others to do to us.



## Tārāpura—A Siddha-Pīṭha

—*Akshaya Kumar Banerjea*

Tārāpura is a small ancient village in the district of Bīrbhūm in Bengal. It owes its name to Tārā-Devī, who is its presiding Deity. It has from time immemorial been regarded as a holy place of pilgrimage by the Hindus in general and the Tantric worshippers in particular. The temples and images of Tārā-Devī, the salvation-giving Divine Mother of the Universe and *Candra-Cūḍa Śiva*, the Divine Father with the moon of bliss on His forehead, are the special objects of devotional interest there—Pious Hindus from various quarters pay visits to this sacred place, purify themselves by taking their bath in the holy waters of the Dwarka, a small river flowing gently by its side, and offer worship to the Divine Father and Mother for the fulfilment of their most cherished desires as well as for emancipation from all worldly sorrows and bondages. There is nearby the temples a small *Kuṇḍa* or tank, known as *Jivita-Kuṇḍa*, the water of which is believed to have a life-giving power. A big *Smaśāna* or cremation ground,—which is believed to be the most favourite abode and play-field of Śiva and Tārā,—greatly adds to the extraordinary serenity and sombrousness of the locality. People from distant places carry the dead bodies of their dear relatives to this *Śmaśāna* to offer them to the Divine Mother and Father.

Various legendary tales are associated with the sacredness of this place. Countless devotees and truth-seekers are said to have attained the highest object of their spiritual ambition on this sanctified soil through systematic self-discipline and by the grace of the Divine Father and Mother. It is regarded

as one of the *Siddha-Pīthas* of India,—a holy seat of the Divine Mother,—a place of which the soil as well as the whole atmosphere is saturated with dynamic spiritual energy. An aspirant for spiritual advancement can, it is believed, attain success here with much less effort and within a much shorter period than in other places. The Divine mercy is easily and visibly experienced even by an ordinary man in a place which is spiritualized by the *Tapasyā* and God-realization of earlier extraordinary saints. The Divinity, which is immanent in all parts of the universe, becomes visibly manifested in such a locality. Such a spiritualized locality is the *Tārā-Pīṭha*.



The gentle conquers the gentle. The gentle conquers the hard. There is nothing that gentlemen cannot gain. Therefore, gentleness is the highest virtue. *Mṛdu* or gentleness is the most powerful thing, the most penetrating thing.

—*The Mahābhārata*

Whatever is sweet and good for the people, which is truthful, which is for the welfare of all, utter only such words.

—*Sri Shankaracharya*

# Nectarean Bliss of Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava

महाभाव-रसराज-वन्दना

दोउ चकोर, दोउ चंद्रमा, दोउ अलि, पंकज दोउ ।

दोउ चातक, दोउ मेघ प्रिय, दोउ मछरी, जल दोउ ॥

आस्रय-आलंबन दोऊ, विषयालंबन दोउ ।

प्रेमी-प्रेमास्पद दोऊ, तत्सुख-सुखिया दोउ ॥

लीला-आस्वादन-निरत महाभाव-रसराज ।

वितरत रस दोउ दुहुन कौं, रचि विचित्र सुठि साज ॥

सहित विरोधी धर्म-गुन जुगपत नित्य अनंत ।

वचनातीत अचिन्त्य अति, सुषमामय श्रीमंत ॥

श्रीराधा-माधव-चरन बंदौ बारंबार ।

एक तत्त्व दो तनु धरै, नित-रस-पारावार ॥

Salutations to Śrī Rādhā (the Embodiment of Love Supreme) and Śrī Kṛṣṇa (the Highest Bliss personified)

Both are *Cakora* birds (noted for their love for the moon) in relation to each other and both are the moon (the beloved of the said bird). Both are *Bhramaras* or black bees (in relation to the other) and both are the lotus (the beloved of the bee). Both are *Cātaka* birds (noted for their love for the rainy cloud) and both represent the cloud, the beloved of the *Cātaka*. Both are fish (that cannot live without water) and both represent water (the beloved of the fish).

Both are repositories of Love, in whom Love abides (आश्रयालम्बन) and both are the object of Love, on which Love fastens itself (विषयालम्बन). Both are Lovers as well as the Beloved; the happiness of each hinges on the other's happiness.

Both Śrī Rādhā (the Embodiment of Love Supreme) and Śrī Kṛṣṇa (the Highest Bliss personified) delight in enjoying their blissful pastimes and creating diverse lovely accessories and materials, afford delight each to the other.

The two are eternally endowed at once with endless contradictory traits and attributes completely defying speech and thought and full of surpassing charm and elegance.

I bow again and again at the feet of Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the one essence appearing in two forms, the oceans of eternal Bliss.

□ □

### श्रीकृष्णके प्रेमोद्गार—श्रीराधाके प्रति

राधिके! तुम मम जीवन-मूल।

अनुपम अमर प्रान-संजीवनि, नहिं कहूँ कोउ समतूल ॥

जस सरीर मैं निज-निज थानहिं सबही सोभित अंग।

किंतु प्रान बिनु सबहिं व्यर्थ, नहिं रहत कतहुँ कोउ रंग ॥

तस तुम प्रिये! सबनि के सुख की एक मात्र आधार।

तुम्हरे बिना नहीं जीवन-रस, जासौं सब कौ प्यार ॥

तुम्हरे प्राननि सौं अनुप्रानित, तुम्हरे मन मनवान।

तुम्हरौ प्रेमसिंधु-सीकर लै करौं सबहि रसदान ॥

तुम्हरे रस-भंडार पुन्य तैं पावत भिच्छुक चून।

तुम सम केवल तुमहि एक हौ तनिक न मानौ ऊन ॥

सोऊ अति मरजादा, अति संभ्रम-भय-दैन्य-सँकोच।

नहिं कोउ कतहुँ कबहुँ तुम-सी रसस्वामिनि निस्सँकोच ॥

तुम्हरौ स्वत्व अनंत नित्य, सब भाँति पूर्न अधिकार।

कायब्यूह निज रस-बितरन करवावति परम उदार ॥

तुम्हरी मधुर रहस्यमई मोहनि माया सौं नित्य।

दच्छिन-बाम-रसास्वादन हित बनतौ रहुँ निमित्त ॥

## Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Love-utterance to Śrī Rādhā

You are the very source of My existence, O Rādhā! You are the peerless immortal elixir of My life, none can equal you anywhere. Even as every limb is charming in its own place in the body, but without life they are all useless and devoid of charm, so, My darling, you are the sole substratum of the joy of all Life, which is dear to all, becomes insipid without you. Your life alone breathes life into Me; it is your mind which has endowed Me with a mind. With a particle from the ocean of your love I afford delight to everyone. It is from your sacred store of Bliss that beggars get their pinch of joy. You are your only compeer—pray, do not conceive an iota of untruth in this. Even though (as I have told you just now) I dole out joy from your store of Bliss alone, I do so with great reserve, with utmost restraint, apprehension, chariness and diffidence. There is no such liberal-minded possessor of Bliss as you existing anywhere at any time. As regards myself you have an infinite eternal claim on Me and have a full right on Me in every way. That is why (making Me an instrument of your munificence) you get your own other selves (the cowherdesses of Vraja) to dispense Bliss most liberally. I only wish that through your mysterious and enchanting sweet love, I may ever continue to serve as an instrument for the enjoyment of your pliant and sullen moods.



## True Religion Satisfies the Demands of Your Soul

—*Sri Paramahansa Yogananda*

Dogmatic religionists are convinced that if you do not believe in a certain way you are doomed. Science does not teach you in that way; it proves its points. And true religion satisfies the demands of your soul, not by words but by proof. I wanted never to be so dogmatic that I would stop using my reason and common sense. When I met my *Guru*, Śrī Yukteśwara he said: “Many teachers will tell you to believe; then they put out your eyes of reason and instruct you to follow only their logic. But I want you to keep your eyes of reason open; in addition, I will open in you another eye, the eye of wisdom.” Śrī Yukteśwarajī gave me a teaching whose truth I could realize for myself. That is why I followed this path. No one can shake me from it.

The liberalist is the other extreme of the dogmatist. He follows everything! In the belief that he is being broadminded he says, “All spiritual paths are good; therefore I will not bind myself to any one of them.” While respecting all, it is better to adhere to one path than to be a religious butterfly, flitting everywhere. Avoid both false liberality and blind dogmatism. Cling dogmatically only to wisdom and you will find God.

Every effort one makes for God will be noticed by Him. However, if one doesn't follow a proven scientific way to God, his progress is comparable to riding in an old bullock cart. Sincere seekers will receive some realization,



no matter what path they follow; but with only blind belief and mechanical prayers it could take them incarnations to reach the Lord.

### **Whatever Religion You Choose, Give It a Good Test**

Seek until you find the path most suited to the spiritual inclination of your heart, mind and then be steadfast. Whatever you take up, give it a good test. In the same way give the Self-realization (*Yogoda Satsaṅga*) teachings a chance. Jewelers can tell a good gem from a fake and the genuine spiritual teacher can differentiate between sincere and idle seekers. There are some who take the Self-realization Fellowship (*Yogoda Satsaṅga*) Lessons but do not study or practice them. Ask them what the teaching is about and they reply vaguely, “Oh, it is grand!” If you ask what they have learned, they go on about what a good teaching it is, “but I haven’t practised it.” Those who practise know the blessings of this path.

Seekers should be taught to find God first. To concentrate on money or health as primary objectives in following a religion is to become sidetracked. True, it is through God that one receives everything else; but he who seeks other things first, will feel the bonds of limitations. A qualified spiritual teacher knows and loves the Lord, his supreme interest is in God. One teacher tried to persuade me to accept his spiritual guidance with the promise that I would have a great many followers. His offer did not attract me, because I wanted God alone. Great teachers will always seek to interest you in knowing the Lord. They will not take you up a blind alley.

Without God-communion, the lifeblood of religion is missing. Church is not the place for dances, movies and frequent social gatherings. These divert people from God. One can find sufficient worldly entertainment in town. Go

to church for one reason: communion with God. Divine communion is the criterion of religion. That is what my *Guru* taught me and that is why I have followed him unconditionally and wholeheartedly. As a result of his teaching I am enjoying that sacred communion with the Lord every moment of my existence. That is what religion must be.

If I tell you of a wonderful fruit I have found and describe it to you in detail every day for a year without ever giving you a taste of it, you won't be satisfied. Hearing about truth cannot relieve the soul's hunger; if you are content to hear truth without making any effort to know God, it has falsely satisfied you. You must hunger so deeply for God that you will seek Him out in earnest. The purpose of religious lectures and sermons is to awaken in you that irresistible soul-longing for Him.



Know for certain; because you are a child of the divine, you have within all the power you need to conquer your weaknesses.

Develop love for God. Hunger for just one attachment to God. Become drunk with God.

Nothing can touch you if you inwardly love Him.

## **The Boy, Who Protected the Villagers from Being Drowned**

In Europe, a region of Holland is below sea level, and so sometimes the water of the sea was filled in that region and caused terrible havoc to the villagers inhabiting those villages. In order to escape this calamity the people had built a high dam on the shore of the sea. Even then sometimes the water flowed with such a force that it damaged the dam and caused great loss to the people. The elderly people explained to their sons the loss that they had to sustain in the past, when the dam was damaged. They said to their sons, “If even a little water starts leaking through a crack, it should be mended immediately, otherwise, having broken the dam, water will flow with such a force that it will cause great loss to life and property.”

One day in the winter season, a boy was passing by the dam. He saw that water was leaking through a hole in the dam. At once he was reminded of what his father had said to him. He thought that either he should run and convey the message to his father or he should save his life by standing up on a place higher than the dam. Then the second thought came to his mind that by standing at a higher point, he alone would be saved but other people would be killed. He thought how to save other people also. An idea came to his mind that he would quickly inform all the people, but in the meanwhile if the water rushed forcefully, the hole would become larger and the lives of all the villagers would be endangered. Therefore he thought that somehow or the other, he should stop the flow of

water, then only he, his father and other villagers would be saved from being drowned.

After that he fixed his hand on the hole through which water was flowing. Thus, the flow of water was checked and the hole could also not become larger. Thus, he checked the flow of water throughout the night. But it was bitter cold, the place, where he was sitting, was also cold and his wet hand had also become very cold. Because of these factors he was shivering. But without taking any heed of his body, he remained sitting there. At home his father was waiting for him. In the morning, a man passing by that way, saw that boy, sitting near the dam, with his hand thrust into the hole. The man asked him, "What are you doing here?" The boy in a faltering voice replied, "The water flowed through the hole, I have stopped it, by thrusting my hand, otherwise the village will be flooded and destroyed." He could not speak more than this, because he was hungry and he had become unconscious because of extremely cold weather. After it, that man pulled the boy's hand out and pushed his hand into the hole and cried for help. Hearing the cry for help, people assembled there and they filled the hole well with earth and sand etc. Then the people paid great honour to the boy because he had staked his life in order to save the village from annihilation. Had he not put his hand into the hole, the villagers would have been drowned in the flood.



Sweet is Thy name, O Refuge of the humble!  
It falls like sweetest nectar on our ears  
And controls us, Beloved of our souls!

—Swami Vivekananda

## Dispassion of Tulasīdāsa

—*Nabaji Siddha*

O Siddhas, you are truly worthy instruments to listen to this fateful event, which caused a dramatic change in the life of Tulasīdāsa—how a lascivious youth made a sudden turn around overnight and blossomed into a passionate lover of God!

When Tulasīdāsa heard Mamatā Devī’s outburst, he stood transfixed. His dazed condition was like that of an elephant struck with terror on hearing a lion’s roar or like a snake mesmerized by the snake charmer’s piped music or like the shock of the herd of cows caused by the growl of a tiger. Tulasīdāsa staggered as if he was hit by a thunderbolt. Mamatā Devī’s words pierced his heart like a poisonous arrow. Suddenly, his bond with the outer world and attraction to its pleasures snapped.

Her words acted like catharsis. He felt a deep anguish, “Oh! I am being ridiculed by one and all because of my deviant mind and errant behaviour. My depravity has landed me in this condition wherein everyone takes liberties to give me a piece of his or her mind. I have taken this birth only to bear with all these insults. I ignored my father’s wise counsel. I caused great suffering and heartache to my mother. I felt no sense of shame or self-respect.

“Earlier, my noble father saved me from my madness for a strange damsel through his mystical powers. Thereafter I didn’t think of her even in dream. He also removed any vestige of desire in me for the company of prostitutes by taking me to the company of saints and *Satsaṅgas*. He

dissolved the thick crust of impurities in me by drilling wise words into my mind. Then, restraining his own senses, erasing the mind-stuff, looking upon the body as transient and considering the worldly success as a mere trifle, he left for the solitude of the forest. Subduing the function of vital organs he became absorbed in meditation. How unfortunate that the example of an exalted father like him, could not keep me on the right track!”

“On the contrary, I ruined my reputation, lost all self-worth and came to be despised by parents and wife and loathed by one and all. O ignorant mind, why have you subjected me to this ignominy? You made me behave stupidly. There is no point in blaming you. I am responsible for my condition. Whatever carnal desire I nurtured, you made me dwell on that constantly, bringing about my doom.”

“Now, I have turned to the Lord. O mind, you cannot play tricks on me any more. Hereafter, don’t even think of seductive charms of women or try to draw their attention. Your focus will be on uttering the names of Hari and reminding yourself of my father’s advice.”

Tulasīdāsa, mind dwelt less on the infamous deeds of the past and immersed itself with a vigour in the remembrance of Lord Hari. He bowed to Mamatā Devī and said, “You are my *Guru*. I look upon you hereafter as mother.” With these parting words, he left the house and started walking in the street.

Disconcerted by the unexpected turn of events, Mamatā Devī ran after him in the street. Prostrating at his feet again and again, she begged him humbly, “O Swāmī, I drew your attention to the path of devotion. Does that mean you should reject me outright, calling me mother? Don’t withdraw your affection from me. You are literally killing

me. Please don't be obstinate. Come back to the householder's life which is your *Dharma*."

Tulasīdāsa replied, "O Mamatā, from this day, the bond between us stands severed. The obsession with sensual pleasures had burnt into my soul, but now it has ultimately left me. God-thought has taken custody of me. O noble woman, while I heaped humiliation on you, you have bestowed a precious gift on me. I brought about downfall, whereas you have conferred salvation. Will I ever forget you? Can I bring myself to despise you? Hereafter you are my mother. Give up your attachment for me, restrain your restless mind and focus it on the Lord alone. Get a hold on the down pulling forces which are weakening you and place your mind at Śrī Hari's feet. I am firmly set on my course." With unshakable determination, he walked away from home and towards the forest.

The relatives and neighbours, looking upon the scene, were struck with amazement at the transformation of Tulasīdāsa. They started praising Tulasīdāsa for his firm devotion and censuring Mamatā Devī. She pursued him and blocking his path pleaded, "O life of my soul! How do you have the heart to forsake me like this? Don't you recall our days of love and union? Have I wounded your feelings with my harsh words? Please be kind and overlook my faults. I beg you to return home."

He smiled tolerantly and said, "I will not swerve from my firm resolve."

Overcome by a terrible sense of desertion, she ran after him, begging him to return home.

He was implacable. Annoyed at her persistence, he replied firmly, "Why do you continue in this futile exercise, even after my rejecting your company? Return to your parents home forthwith and turn your attention to God. If

you attach any value at all to your husband's words, prove it by obeying me now."

Her face blackened with sorrow, Mamatā prostrating at his feet lamented, "How can I remain alive if you desert me? My heart will break with grief. Is the bond between us broken for ever? Alas, how my thoughtless words have brought about this calamity? How can I live without you? Is it possible to forget you? Who will be there to speak loving and comforting words to me? Whom will I address as 'my Lord'? Who will take care of me through thick and thin? With whom will I spend pleasant and playful evenings? Whom will I please with fragrant unguents? Who will speak endearing words to me? For whose sake I will decorate myself with fineries and flowers Oh God! When will my grief be assuaged? How can I withstand this bleak prospect of living without you? Will the wound in my heart ever heal?" Sobbing helplessly, she lost consciousness.

Her heart-rending cries made no impact on Tulasīdāsa. He remained dispassionate and steadfast and walked ahead with resolute steps. All the worldly love he had cherished for his wife did a volte-face and now his heart pined for the divine love. The carnal love, which tormented him day and night was transmuted into an all-consuming love for God, shining brightly in his heart.

Whoever he met on the way, he would ask, "O sadhu, you look joy-permeated. You must have seen Hari! Did you place your head at his feet when He was with you?"

"O Brahmin!" he would run behind another and ask, "Have you destroyed your worldly desires? Have you rooted out your ego? Did Hari come to meet you? Did you shower your wholehearted love on Him? Did you melt away in your love for Him? Did He give you His divine vision?"



“Alas! Fool that I am,” he would weep with deep remorse, “How I have wasted my life! Knowing about my depraved life, wise ones don’t even cast a glance in my direction. Oh, my misfortune is fathomless!”

Tulasīdāsa wandered around talking like a madman or like one possessed by a ghost. His plight was like that of a man losing his only son or a young faithful wife losing her husband or a cow losing its calf. Unconscious of his body and surroundings, he stumbled on sharp stones and thorns, wailing loudly and calling the name of Hari.

In her hometown, Mamatā Devī recovering her senses and remembering the tragic events of the night wept once again with a heavy heart, rolled in the dust and sobbed inconsolably, “Ha.....! Ha.....! I have dug my own grave. How will I cross this ocean of desolation and spend the rest of my life drowned in utter misery?” Gloom and grief shook her physical frame which was drenched in tears. Her heart felt the deep pangs of remorse. She tried to follow the trail of Tulasīdāsa. Her parents, equally helpless and unhappy, intervened and tried to comfort her saying that they would search for Tulasīdāsa at the dawn and bring him back. They tried to lead her into the house.

The noble woman said, “Please fetch my mother-in-law. She alone can stop him and bring him back.”

Her brother left immediately on the mission, but intimidated by the rising waters in Yamunā, he had to wait on the bank till morning. Whereas Tulasīdāsa undeterred by the storm, wind and flood crossed the river and entered the forest. Stumbling in muddy water and stepping on thorny bushes, he somehow managed to reach the top of a hill before the hour of dawn. He rested his fatigued body for a brief-while and with the rising sun, he started racing in the vales and dales like a madcap muttering, “O Hari,

Hari, will I adorn myself with the jewel of bliss of Your divine vision before dusk? Alas, the sun has already reached the top. I have lost one more day. Can I get a glimpse of His lotus feet by evening?”

Mumbling to himself in this vein, he would roam the forest in the scorching heat of the day and reach a temple in a wayside hamlet at nightfall, Standing before the idols, he would sob, “If the idols are God, why don’t they speak to me? Why doesn’t He come forward joyfully to meet me? Why doesn’t He bless me by placing His lotus feet on my head?”

In some temples, he sang adorations and holding the idols close to his bosom asked piteously, “O my Beloved! Don’t You know that I have been wandering like a man out of his senses just to have Your *Darśana*. My legs are aching, my feet are worn out and the sun has gone down. But You remain a stone without moving a muscle. Forsaking food and sleep I have been crying my heart out calling Your name. I am yearning for You day and night. But you remain deaf and dumb to all my appeals. Is this Your response to Your devotee? Is there a mystery hidden in Your silence or is it my *Karma*? Perhaps You are the motionless Brahman!”

After sunset, Tulasīdāsa trudged on to a temple and laid himself down with anticipation, “Perhaps He will come in my dream and make me His own. He will unfold His divine vision tonight. I will feast my eyes on His lotus feet and bathe in the sea of bliss. At that moment, will I sing hymns in His praise or fall silent? O Lord, when will I cross this ocean or worldly existence? When will my worries be set at rest?” Absorbed in these thoughts, he lapsed into sleep.

Suddenly he woke up with a start and moaned in

anguish, “O God, how did I forget You and lose myself in sleep? When will I see You, talk to You and serve You to my heart’s content? When will You apply the cooling balm to my aching heart? I want to sing before You, dance with You joyfully and lose myself in that state.”

Ceaselessly uttering the name of Hari and singing His glories, Tulasīdāsa wandered in the sun, rain and wind in winter and summer. He walked through towns, villages and hamlets aimlessly. His feet were bruised, his body ached, his heart burnt with fervour and his face became pale. He entered the city of Varanasi, worshipped Lord Viśwanātha and keeping the company of Sadhus and glorifying the name of Viṣṇu, he spent his days immersed in devotion.

Meanwhile, Tulasīdāsa’s mother became fretful when he did not return home in the morning. She looked for him in all corners of the town. Then she reached the bank of Yamunā to go to Mamatā Devī’s house on the other side. As the river was inundated, she waited anxiously for some time for the water to recede and then took a boat to the other side. She noticed Mamatā Devī’s brother standing there. She asked him whether he had seen Tulasīdāsa. Thereupon, he apprised her of the happenings of the previous night. She felt great distress at this and rushed to Mamatā Devī for more details.

Mamatā Devī bowed to her and with a tinge of reproach in her voice said, “O mother, had you not sent me here, this catastrophe would not have befallen me.” Her sorrow was all the more poignant.

Tulasīdāsa mother also wept copiously, “O handsome boy, why did you desert us like this, forgetting us and renouncing home and hearth? Where are you wandering? Did you get anything to eat? Are you afflicted by thirst and hunger? Are not your feet hurting? How will you

survive without any means to support yourself? Has your passion gone to your head and turned you delirious? Have the harsh words of your wife made you bitter and driven you to the forest? Have you lost your head or got tired of this town? I must have been a worst sinner to be denied of the son's protection in my old age. When you left, you took my life-force also with you. I may breathe, yet I am as good as dead without you."

With pity welling up in their hearts at her condition, Mamatā Devī's parents spoke to her lovingly, "O mother, we are dispatching our son and servants to search for him. They will bring him back safely. Please calm down and put your mind at rest."

The search party combed the entire region for signs of Tulasīdāsa. People in the hamlets and towns remembered seeing a man in mad condition, but the searchers could not locate him. Finally, when they arrived in Varanasi, they were baffled to see Tulasīdāsa's distraught state. They returned home and reported about his mad state. This renewed the unhappiness of mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. They set out immediately for Varanasi in a palanquin followed by servants.



The true equality of man lies not in the social nor political nor economic equality that people wrongly imagine, will arrive someday, but in the equality of every soul before God, and in their equality to seek Him and to know Him.

—*Sri Paramahansa Yogananda*

## Understanding the Power of Habits

—*Sri Mrinalini Mata*

By introspection you discover your faults, but then what do you do? You analyze “What is exactly the opposite quality to this particular fault?” For instance, say you have the fault of a quick temper. All right, then concentrate on the opposite of temper, which is calmness and self-controlled speech. It is not helpful to think, “Oh, I am so terrible. I’ve got so much anger. I just can’t control it. I’ve got to control my bad temper.” When you think in this way, you give strength to that imperfection by identifying with it. Don’t even admit that it is a part of you. Master taught us to do just the opposite: You discover a fault and recognize it for what it is—a temporary graft of the ego upon the pure nature of the soul. Then, instead of thinking, “I’ve got to get rid of my bad temper,” you start thinking about and working toward its opposite: “I will manifest calmness and self-control.” In the concentrated state of meditation, you impinge that thought in your mind, so that as you go about your daily activities, duties and association with other people, even when facing difficult circumstances you are constantly remembering: “Remain calm; act in a calm, self-controlled way; watch your speech; speak kindly as you would want others to speak kindly to you; show understanding as you expect others to show understanding to you.” Keep on until that becomes a habit.

If you have a thorn in your skin, you can take another thorn and dig out the bad thorn that is hurting you; and then you can throw both thorns away. So when you have

a bad habit, you can get rid of it by cultivating a good habit. Ultimately you will come to the point of the saint or sage, who can “throw both thorns away.” He is no longer bound by any kind of habit, good or bad; he is always operating from the plane of soul discrimination, able to act rightly by wisdom-guided free choice in all situations, not governed by habits of the ego.

To be compelled to act in a certain way by the dictates of one’s instincts and habits is slavery. To be good because you are habitually good or to refrain from evil because you are accustomed to shunning wrong actions, is not true freedom either. When your will is guided by soul discrimination to choose good instead of evil—anytime, anywhere—because you sincerely want good for its own sake, then you are really free.

This, then, is the object and the ultimate goal of our periods of introspection. But when we are at the beginning of our journey of spiritual growth, until we have that perfect discrimination and willpower to guide our every action by wisdom, we progress, as I have said, by concentrating upon cultivating whatever good habits are the opposite of our bad habits.



And don’t think so much about reforming others; reform yourself first. The greatest field of victory is your own home. If you are an angel at home, you can be an angel everywhere. The sweetness of your voice, the peace of your behaviour, is needed in your own household more than anywhere else.

—*Journey to Self-realization*

# The Ending of Karma

—M. R. Kodhandram

The events in our daily life occur to us based on the *Vāsanās* stored on our soul and we are made to experience them as per our *Prārabdha*. These events induce us to perform various actions through the body, mind and speech. Every event occurs before us like a 3D film show; the scenes are already there in our system and are projected outside at a preordained time. The actions we have to perform are also there in the film. This we call as *Karma*. Our *Karma* begins to work the moment we wake up and subsides when we go to sleep. It works even in our dreams wherein we take a dream and body perform various actions. The body lasts in the world so long as *Karma* for it exists.

Thus our whole life is a sequence of actions performed by us till our death. How do these *Vāsanās* occur in our system? They are the results of our past actions based on desire or will (*Saṅkalpa*). The results of such actions become the seed for future actions. Thus, a chain of actions and results make up our life, giving us birth after birth. The same actions we keep doing again and again. Is there any glory in such repetitive existence? How does one terminate this vicious and seemingly unending cycle of birth and death syndrome in which we are inextricably caught?

The answer lies in the way we perform our actions or *Karmas*. *Niṣkāma Karma* or desireless action performed as an offering to the Lord purifies our mind and orients it towards the path of Liberation (*Upadeśa Sāram*, verse 3). If our *Karmas* are performed in such a way as not to leave

any residue, then their seeds will die off. This is called *Karmakṣayam*. This means, we have to perform our daily actions in a detached manner without any expectation of a favourable result or craving for more of such actions if found pleasant. We should also not feel upset if actions we have to perform, are unpleasant. That is, we should not have elation or dejection on any account in the performance of our duties. All such dualities are not good. *Bhagavān* says that we should see through all events in life as a mere witness, as one who watches a film-show knowing that it is a film-show. That is, we should not get deluded by the events that occur and get emotional in the process.

This means, we should play the allotted roles of our life well as the situation demands—a mother, father, daughter, teacher, wife etc.,—without forgetting our true nature as the unchanging and eternal Self that is the same in all. (All the changes that take place in our life pertain only to the body and mind, and our real Self does not undergo any change.)

Thus, we should perform all our duties without any attachment or expectation of a particular result and remain balanced even while facing adverse situations or provocations. However, if we are finding it difficult to face a situation, we should quickly seek the help of *Bhagavān* by praying to Him to give us the strength to manage the situation. And with *Bhagavān's* Grace, we will be able to see through the situation without reaction.

Thus, we have to be constantly alert and aware of ourselves so that we don't react to the situations we face. We should realise that all that we see and face in the world, are unreal, a film already shot and kept inside us and being projected before us outside so that we may experience the



fruits of our past actions. The total lot of *Karmas* accumulated on our soul, based on our actions done in the past births, is known as the *Sañcita Karma*. Out of this, some are chosen for experiencing in this birth and is known as the *Prārabdha Karma*. In addition, we have made fresh *Karmas* in this birth which come under the category *Akāmya Karma*. Even some of this is chosen for experiencing in this birth and the rest are added to the *Sañcita Karma* for experiencing in future births.

This is the way the Nature settles our accounts. If we remember this, we will be careful the way we lead our lives so that we don't add fresh *Karmas* in ignorance. Also, we will be able to play our roles carefully without getting entangled anywhere and allow the scenes to go off smoothly. If we forget this truth even for a while, we may react and get emotional due to involvement and interfere in the event, thereby not allowing the film to proceed smoothly. If the film proceeds smoothly, then the *Karma* would end smoothly without leaving any residue, thereby lightening the burden on our soul. If there are reactions to the events as mentioned above, then *Karmas* will not end fully and there will be a residue like how a candle leaves a residue on burning. The residue we leave will come back to us later on and we have to face them willy-nilly.

Ideally, *Karmas* should burn off like camphor without leaving any residue. Then the *Karma* would end fully and the soul would be lighter on its load. This is the way to end all our *Karmas* so that we can lighten the load on our soul and become fit for pursuing the *Sādhanā* of self-enquiry that would take us to our Supreme destination of no return.

*Bhagavān* cautions us against getting involved or

interfering in other's affairs by identifying oneself with them. This normally occurs out of attachment. Our involvement or interference should be only based on duty or when specifically requested for. Even then, we should do such actions in a detached and disinterested manner. Thus, we should not think much of others' problems and get involved because each person suffers only on account of his own past misdeeds. However, if we are affected by others sufferings, we can pray to God to help them. This will surely benefit them. Suffering is the way Nature teaches us to make corrections and thus, purify ourselves.

*Bhagavān* teaches us to enquire into the reasons for our reactions or emotions—anger, quarrels, jealousy, pride etc.,—and identify the root-cause and resolve not to repeat them in the future. We can also pray to *Bhagavān* to strengthen us in our resolve. Such enquiry and resolve would destroy the residue formed (if small) and also serve as a superimposition on our weak spots, thus, providing a check on our mind's reactions for similar situations in the future. Thus, we should steady the mind again and again through enquiry and make it positive till we are stabilised in the Self. The enquiry should be done at the heat of the moment when the *Vāsanā* is rising and done so thoroughly as to develop a distaste or disgust for our tendencies.

Also, whenever our Conscience pricks while doing an action, we should quickly enquire into the correctness of our action and understand whether such an action is good or bad and whether it will subserve the purpose of our life. For instance, a smoking tendency will induce us to smoke. If we are alert, we can enquire and realise that it is harmful and we have got the urge through the genes we have inherited from our father or grandfather who are smokers. Such an enquiry will help us not to smoke. But

if we have already fallen a prey to it, enquiry will still help us to come out of the habit by superimposing correct knowledge on this bad habit. Thus, whenever we are attracted to smoking, if we enquire, the tendency to smoke will progressively weaken and we will be able to strike it down in the course of time. If we also pray to *Bhagavān* to help us to give up the bad habit, we will receive the benefit of His Grace which will speed up the process.

Similarly, we can enquire into all our bad actions and habits and correct them. Also, whenever the mind develops negative thoughts or projects into the world and craves for this and that, we can put an end to them through a proper enquiry. Thus, enquiry is the best way to end all our faults, desires, attachments, negative emotions and bad qualities and thus, purify the mind and make it fit for pursuing the spiritual path.



But today, there is no ideal of service whatsoever and enjoyment is the only ideal. I am sorry to say that the father and mother go about doing whatever they like attending clubs and cinemas, and they expect their children to become saintly people, that is not at all possible. You must create a good environment for the children, and then they will imbibe from it what you expect them to do. But if the proper environment is not there at home or in the schools, you cannot blame children if they do not behave properly or do not have a proper ideal of life.

—Swami Vireswarananda

# Glory of Human Personality

—A Seeker of Truth

From all points of view, it is realized by every thoughtful person that human personality is the noblest creation of Providence or the highest stage in the process of evolution.

Human nature is a very complex, complicated, comprehensive and almost unfathomable entity. From the dawn of civilization, the subject has been studied and carefully considered by many men of calibre and character in various climes and countries and a good deal of light has been thrown on the subject. But still much remains beyond the reach of human understanding. For instance, the origin of life, the purpose of life, the steps which lead to its sublimation and the causes which lead to its degradation and decay have not yet been established beyond controversy, confusion and disputation.

One fact, however, seems to be well established and it is that human nature is full of potentialities for good and it is also full of infirmities. The task is, therefore, to develop the potentialities on proper lines in order to make human life full of happiness and sublimity for the benefit of the individual as well as of society and to practise certain disciplines in order effectively to control the infirmities.

There are four spheres in the human personality. viz, (1) physical, (2) intellectual (which covers various factors, e.g. economic, political, social etc.), (3) ethical and (4) spiritual. These are inter-related, but each succeeding plane is higher and must be carefully understood and appreciated.

**1. The Physical plane:**— deals with the fundamental needs of the body like hunger, thirst, feeling of heat and cold, craving for family life, etc.

**2. Intellectual plane:**—This plane is meant to enable human beings to acquire that kind of knowledge which will enable them to lead their lives happily and successfully (according to their talents, inclinations and circumstances).

**3. Ethical Plane:**—This deals with a man's duties and obligations towards society, from which people receive so many benefits and to subordinate their desires to the task of their evolution towards a higher life.

**4. Spiritual plane:**—It deals with a factor inherent in the human personality, which is the source of perennial joy and inner illumination and tranquility.

Progress towards sublimation by the process of evolution requires that an individual should reduce his bodily wants to the minimum in order to be able to devote himself to more solid and profitable things.

Food, clothing, shelter (dwelling-place) and family life will have to be obtained and this would be easily and effectively done by development of the intellectual faculties and their proper use. Knowledge in all its branches is so vast that one human life is quite inadequate for acquisition of even a small portion of it. Therefore, the proper thing to do is to obtain that kind of knowledge which suits our inclination and circumstances and make effective use of it for the maintenance of oneself and one's dependants in comfort and dignity by earning an honest living and cultivating and maintaining good morals and good manners. This will apply to persons engaged in various professions and activities and placed in different stations. Every individual has his limitations and therefore, he should not make himself miserable by comparing his conditions with

those of his betters. It will be futile and demoralizing. Instead of this, he should work harder and with more scruples and make his life peaceful and honourable by right living. Pump and show. Luxury and vanity are, in the long run, bound to lead to difficulties, degradations and frustrations and therefore they are things to be avoided and not to be coveted.

**Morals:**—It is the tendency of human beings, generally speaking, to be selfish and to exploit others for their own comforts and advantages. This is an infirmity of human nature and has got to be effectively controlled and the other higher tendency should be cultivated and developed. This is to give more and take less because giving ennobles a man and taking humbles and humiliates him in his own eyes and in the eyes of society. Society can prosper and make progress only if every member deems it his duty and makes honest efforts to give an adequate and honourable return for everything that he receives from others. The highest esteem, throughout the ages, has been enjoyed by those persons who gave their maximum and took the minimum. A human being's goodness and greatness is to be judged by the development of his moral plane and not by his wealth or power. Wealth and power are of value only if they are devoted to the benefit of society because they come from society and must be utilized for its welfare. There is also another danger in the abuse of power and wealth. They destroy the person concerned and his family, in the long run, materially as well as morally by creating wrong habits and behaviour resulting in injuries of various kinds. This has been amply illustrated in the records of humanity prepared by the historians and the scholars and our own experience should be able to confirm this fact.

It is a tragedy of human nature that in most cases the

individual comes down from the intellectual plane to the physical plane and thereby, pampers his animal nature which he shares with all other living beings and loses the opportunity for true progress, happiness and inner peace and tranquility. He runs after fleeting pleasures and frivolous enjoyments, enjoys the company of wicked persons, injures his health and squanders his wealth and loses the golden opportunity which human life offers to every individual. One basic fact should always be remembered in this connection. Company plays a vital part in moulding a man's character and there is a common saying that a man is known by the company he keeps; therefore, everybody who wants to avoid disaster should shun the company of wicked and undesirable persons as he would guard against the germs of plague and cholera. On the other hand, he should earnestly and zealously seek the company of men of calibre and character, read and assimilate good literature so that he may be able to keep his mind and body in discipline. True happiness comes only from wisdom, which gives us the discrimination to do what is right and not to do what is wrong. There are many sources of acquiring wisdom for those who honestly seek it and the two main items in this connection are (1) company of good men and (2) reading and assimilation of good literature.

**The Spiritual Plane:**—There is an inherent desire for permanent happiness in every being. But happiness is to be distinguished from fleeting pleasure and frivolous amusements. Happiness is a state of mind and body which comes from a feeling of contentment and satisfaction and freedom from pain, fear, trouble and worries. Human life and the world are so constituted that this kind of happiness is most difficult to obtain and maintain. But vigorous and persistent efforts should be made for it by everybody

subject to this one overriding principle that in seeking one's happiness, one has no right to destroy or injure the happiness of other beings because this will ultimately recoil to one's own injury and misery. There is, however, one source of permanent happiness which is described in different ways by different philosophers and religious leaders and *Yogīs* and it is that there is an element in human life which is the source of permanent joy and happiness here and hereafter and the highest goal of human life is to find out that element and merge in it; this will lead to the elimination of all kinds of desire and attachment, which are the real sources of trouble and misery in the world because they deal with transitory objects.

There is an illuminating *Śloka* in the *Bhagavadgītā* on this subject and it should be carefully considered and assimilated:—

ये हि संस्पर्शजा भोगा दुःखयोनय एव ते ।  
आद्यन्तवन्तः कौन्तेय न तेषु रमते बुधः ॥

(V. 22)

“O Arjuna, wise men find no satisfaction in and have no inclination for enjoyments that come from contacts of senses with worldly objects because these enjoyments ultimately lead to pain and misery as by nature they are impermanent.”

(To be continued)



Time is speeding. It should be spent in valuable deeds. That valuable deed is adoration of God and association of exalted souls.

—Jayadayal Goyandka



# Adversity is a Blessing by God

—*Swami Jyotirmayananda*

When there is adversity, develop the spirit of austerity. Think of it like this: you are given adversities because God wants you to be qualified for something great. For example, when you want to test the value of a metal such as gold, you have to give it a harsh test. You might subject it to intense heat to melt it down a little or you might treat it ruthlessly with chemicals to determine if it has any value. The same applies to the metal in your personality. If the gold within your personality is to shine forth, nature must give you severe tests. The greater the severity of these “tests,” the shinier will become the metal within your personality.

So, instead of feeling that adversity comes to you because of bad luck (“I am the most miserable person in the world. Oh poor me!”) you must realize that God has chosen you for something great. If everything that your ego wants, God takes away, then understand that God has a much greater interest in you than you think; he has invested deeply in you. Therefore, develop the strength to wait and watch. Say to yourself, “What wouldst Thou have of me, O Lord?”

There is a story that speaks of this theme: Once upon a time in ancient India, in the time of Kṛṣṇa, there lived a Brahmin. Over the years, he had lost everyone in his family and was all alone. The only thing he had left was a milk cow which he would milk everyday. Not only did this cow provide him with delicious milk, but she also

provided him with companionship because she was his pet; she was the only association he had.

One day, the cow became sick and died. Arjuna heard about it and asked Kṛṣṇa, “Why is it, O Kṛṣṇa, that this man, who has been such a great devotee of yours, has lost the one little thing that gave him some consolation? Why did you take away his cow?”

Kṛṣṇa answered, “I did it because he is such a great devotee of mine. He had given up everything else in his life except the cow, which happened to be the only attachment that was obstructing his spiritual movement. I didn’t want his mind to remain attached to such a small thing.”

The idea behind this, is that, there are two ways of looking at things. If you look at things egoistically, you are bound to become miserable. If you look at things from God’s point of view, you are being fashioned by His plan for greater things. The more austerity God wants you to perform, the more trouble He puts you through—the greater is His interest in you. You are being prepared for the profounder joy of greater attainments. This type of feeling and understanding must develop.



The eyes which are not wet in love for God are rather fit to be blinded. A callous heart should rather be destroyed.

—*Swami Rama Tirtha*

## Value of Recounting God's Stories

राम चरित जे सुनत अघाहीं । रस बिसेष जाना तिन्ह नाहीं ॥  
जीवनमुक्त महामुनि जेऊ । हरि गुन सुनहिं निरंतर तेऊ ॥

They who feel satiated with hearing the exploits of Śrī Rāma have not tasted their (legends') peculiar sapor (आनन्द रस). Even those great sages who have attained final beatitude in their very lifetime constantly hear the glories of Śrī Hari.

भव सागर चह पार जो पावा । राम कथा ता कहँ दृढ़ नावा ॥  
विषइन्ह कहँ पुनि हरि गुन ग्रामा । श्रवन सुखद अरु मन अभिरामा ॥

To him who seeks to cross the ocean of worldly existence, the narrative of Śrī Rāma serves as a secure bark. Nay, the glories of Śrī Hari are delightful to the ear and pleasing to the mind even of a sensualist.

श्रवनवंत अस को जग माहीं । जाहि न रघुपति चरित सोहाहीं ॥  
ते जड़ जीव निजात्मक घाती । जिन्हहि न रघुपति कथा सोहाती ॥

Who is there in this world, with ears to hear, who does not relish the exploits of Śrī Raghunātha? Stupid are those creatures, indeed killers of their soul, whom the narrative of Śrī Rāma does not enthrall

हरिचरित्र मानस तुम्ह गावा । सुनि मैं नाथ अमिति सुख पावा ॥  
तुम्ह जो कही यह कथा सुहाई । कागभसुंडि गरुड़ प्रति गाई ॥

While You sang what You have chosen to call 'the *Mānasa* lake of Śrī Rāma's (Hari) exploits' (श्रीरामचरितमानस), I listened, my Lord, with boundless joy. You have just told me that this charming story was recited by Kākabhuṣuṇḍi to Garuḍa.

—*Rāmacaritamānasa* (VII. 52. 1—4)

## Realization of Brahma through Evenness of Mind

God is within one's heart. He is equally present in all beings. One can oneself see Him through a concentrated mind. He who causes fear to none, nor is himself afraid of any being, he who neither seeks anything, nor hates anything, attains the realization of *Brahma*. God is realized when there is cessation of attribution of evil to any being whatsoever, through mind, speech and action. When renouncing envy, which brings delusion to the mind, man fixes his mind, freed from lust and infatuation, on the soul, he realizes *Brahma*. When cultivating an equal attitude towards all objects of hearing and sight and towards all creatures, man rises above pairs of opposite feelings, he attains the character of *Brahma*. When he begins to look upon praise and blame, gold and iron, pleasure and pain, heat and cold, fortune and misfortune, kindness and unkindness and life and death with an equal eye, it is then he attains the character of *Brahma*.

—*Mahābhārata (Śānti Parva, chap. 326)*

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