

Kalyana-Kalpataru

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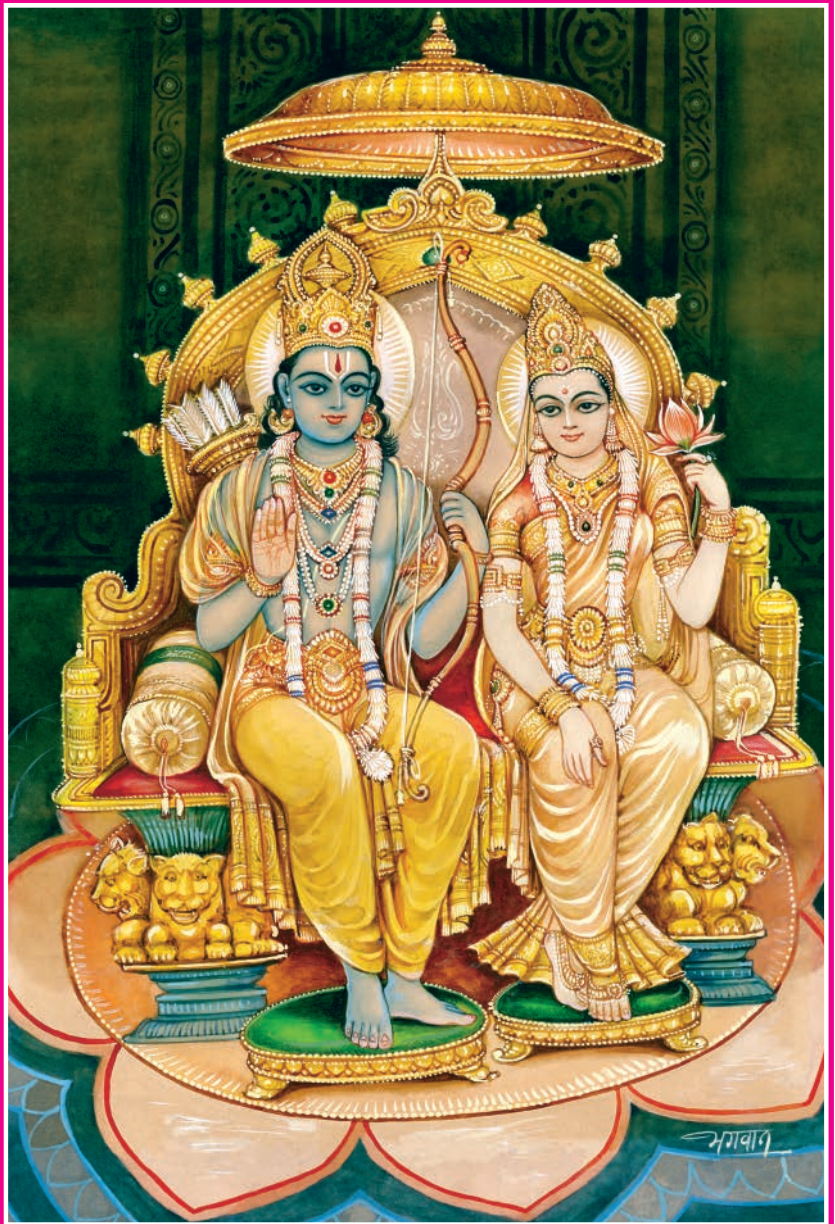


Siddhi Vināyaka

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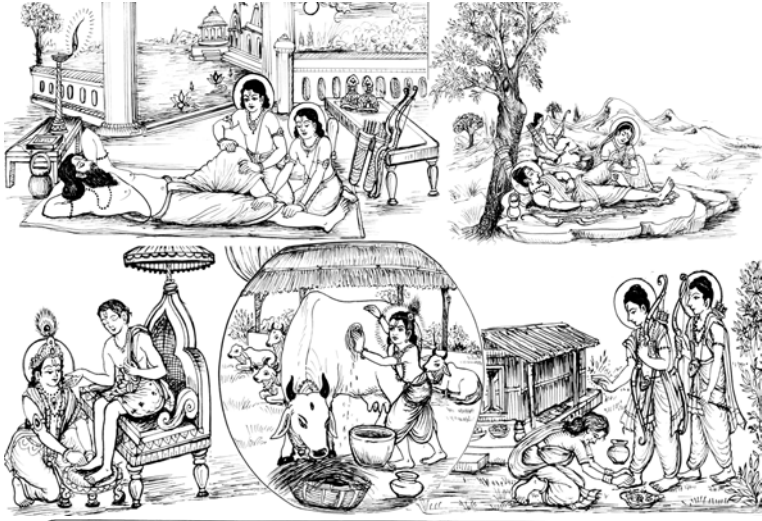
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Śrī Sītā-Rāma

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



KALYANA-KALPATARU

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

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Subhāṣitam

हस्तस्य भूषणं दानं सत्यं कण्ठस्य भूषणम् ।
श्रोत्रस्य भूषणं शास्त्रं भूषणैः किं प्रयोजनम् ॥

Charity is an adornment for the hand, speaking the truth is an adornment for the throat, listening to holy texts is an adornment for the ear, (when that exists) why search other ornaments?

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Way to Instant God-realization

—*Brahmalina Sri Jayadayal Goyandka*

A majority of strivers suffer from a great defect, viz., that while engaged in spiritual endeavour, they also take delight in the pleasures of sense and fail to give up even evil propensities, immoral conduct and vices. But it should be borne in mind that this is due to lack of single-minded devotion. These evils can no longer persist where there is unquestioning faith in God, exalted souls and sacred books; and so long as they are present fruition of one's spiritual endeavour is out of the question. Hence it is most essential to pursue one's spiritual endeavour, getting rid of concupiscence, anger and other evils.

The Lord says in the *Gītā*—

“Desire, anger and greed—these triple gates of hell, bring about the downfall of the soul. Therefore, one should shun all these three. Freed from these three gates of hell, man works for his salvation and thereby attains the supreme goal, i.e. God.”

If due to vicious habits evil propensities like concupiscence, anger and greed, immoral conduct and vices appear in a man when occasion arises and if in spite of repeated deliberation, they do not leave him, a striver should feel most unhappy over this and give way to repentance. True repentance lies in the fact that a man does not repeat his mistakes and does not allow any such thing to enter his mind as may stimulate in the least the aforesaid evil propensities such as lust and anger and evil practices. Getting rid even of his minutest faults, a striver should ever

scrupulously remain intent on his spiritual endeavour. He should reckon his spiritual endeavour alone as more valuable than his life, wealth, nay, his very life-breath. He should regard his spiritual endeavour alone as of primary importance and everything else as of secondary worth. And he should never defer his spiritual endeavour to the morrow.

In the *Mahābhārata* we read—

“A man should perform this very day what is intended for the morrow and finish in the forenoon what is scheduled for the afternoon; for Death does not wait to see what has been done by him or what has been left undone.” (*Śānti*. CCLXXVII. 13)

This very idea is echoed in the following Hindi couplet, which is attributed to Kabīra—

काल्ह करै सो आज करु, आज करै सो अब्ब ।
पलमें परलै होयगी, बहुरि करैगा कब्ब ॥

“Do this very day what you propose to do tomorrow and do this very moment what you intend to do today. Death will overtake you in a moment; when will you do it, then?”

Bearing this warning of holy men in mind, a man should strive for the fruition of his spiritual endeavour while he is still alive.

“Strenuous endeavour should be made by a knowing man for the redemption of his soul till this habitat in the form of the body is in a sound state, so long as old age is at a distance, the capacity of the organs of perception and action is unimpaired and the sands of life have not yet run out. Of what avail is one’s effort for digging a well when the house is on fire?” (*Vairāgya Śataka* of *Bhartrhari*)

If a man’s habits do not get mended in any way and

if no effort for mending them proves fruitful, he should take refuge exclusively in the Lord and pray to Him in the following words of Gosvāmī Tulasīdāsa for the eradication of his vices:—

“To whom should I speak about my very great adversity (if not to You), O Hero of Raghu’s race, wise and beneficent as You are? (You know) my heart, O Lord, is Your abode. A number of thieves have come and made it their home. Most inexorable as they are, they practise coercion and pay no heed to my supplication and entreaty. Their names are Ignorance, Infatuation, Greed, Egotism, Arrogance, Anger and Cupid, the enemy of Wisdom. They create much trouble, O Lord and handle me roughly, knowing me to be helpless. While I am alone, the robbers are without number; none hears my cry for succour. There is no escape for me even if I run away. (Therefore, pray) take care of me, O Leader of the Raghus! Listen, O Rāma, says Tulasīdāsa, robbers are looting Your house. Infinite is my anxiety lest You should incur a bad name (for not being able to protect Your abode).” (*Vinaya Patrika*, 125)

In this way for getting rid of one’s evil propensities, immoral practices and vices and for developing disinterested and exclusive reverence and love for the Lord one should address the following prayer to Him in a piteous tone:—

“Armed with a bow and arrow and accompanied by Your younger brother and Janaka’s daughter (Sītā), O Lord Śrī Rāma, pray, dwell for ever like a moon in the firmament of my heart, though free from every desire.” (*Rāmacaritamānasa* III. 11)

“You are Supreme Bliss personified and the abode of mercy and fulfil the desire of Your devotees heart. Pray, grant me the boon of unceasing love and devotion (to Your feet), O graceful Rāma.” (*Ibid.* VII. 34)

“O my Lord, Śrī Rāma, Tree of paradise to the devotee,

Friend of the suppliant, Ocean of Compassion and Abode of Bliss, in Your mercy grant me that devotion to Your feet, uninterrupted and unalloyed, which the *Vedas* and *Purāṇas* extol, which is sought after by sages and great *Yogīs* (contemplative mystics) but attained by few and that too by the Lord's grace."

(*Ibid.* VII. 84 (b))

If one prays in a piteous mood on the lines indicated above, one can be rid of all evils and attain God-realization by His grace.

If in spite of our striving for God-realization in the form of spiritual discipline we are not able to realize God, we should feel sorely repentant as above and should pine for His sight like Bharata and the cowherdesses of Vraja so intensely that we may feel suffocated in His absence. Of Bharata we read in the *Rāmacaritamānasa*—

"The term of Śrī Rāma's exile which was the sole hope of his life, was going to expire only a day hence: the thought filled Bharata's mind with untold grief. How is it that the Lord did not turn up? Has He cast me out of His mind, knowing me to be crooked?..... But if I outlive the expiry of the time-limit, no one would be so despicable in this world as I."

(The initial *Caupāis* of *Ibid.*, *Uttara-Kāṇḍa*)

The *Gopīs* said—

"When You proceed to the woods during the daytime, (even) half a moment becomes an age to us, who fail to see You. And dullwitted is he (*Brahmā*) who has created a row of hairs on the edge (and thus interrupted the joy) of eyelids of us (all), that eagerly behold (without winking) Your splendid countenance overhung by curly hair (on Your return from the woods at eventide)."

(*Śrīmad Bhāgavata* X.31.15)

Sage Śukadeva remarked to king Parīkṣit—

“Thus singing at the pitch of their voice and raving in various ways, the cowherd women loudly wailed, O king, seized as they were with a longing to behold Śrī Kṛṣṇa.”

(*Ibid.* X. 32. 1)

When one pines in this way in separation from the Lord, one’s spiritual endeavour reaches its fruition and God-realization takes place at once.



Those who are votaries of pure knowledge labour hard to arrive at the unmanifested and ineffable absolute *Karma-Yoga*, again is only an indirect means to *Mukti* and is therefore, remote from its final result. But the path of *Bhakti* is sweet from the very beginning and quick in leading a devotee to Thee. May I, O Lord, have more and more of *Bhakti*!

—*Nārāyaṇīyam*

He who neither rejoices in good fortune nor grieves when things go wrong, who judges matters as neither good nor evil, who is devoted only to Me (Lord Kṛṣṇa) such one is dear to Me.

—*Swami Kriyananda*

Methods for Cultivation of Dispassion

—*Nityalilalina Sri Hanumanprasad Poddar*

So long as one is attached to things of the world one cannot expect to get rid of the wandering nature and instability of the mind. And one can never attain peace simply by regulating the external circumstances of life, if the mind remains unstable and fickle. If you really desire peace, cultivate dispassion towards all objects of enjoyment. Remember that supreme peace can be attained only by one who has cultivated supreme dispassion.

This dispassion is not developed merely by the forcible renunciation of external objects. One cannot be said to have cultivated genuine dispassion if the taste for enjoyment lingers in the heart. When this taste itself disappears, then only should the dispassion be regarded as genuine.

Spiritual aspirants may try the following methods for cultivation of dispassion. These or other methods of a similar type, may not be invariably helpful to all, nor may it be uniformly possible for all to practise them. Practices will vary according to the circumstances and needs of each individual case. Of course, those who adopt these methods, will no doubt derive some amount of benefit. The result in every case will be commensurate with the effort put forth by an aspirant.

1. Argue in your mind that there is no attraction in the objects of enjoyment; the beauty that we attribute to such objects lies only in our imagination. The beauty of the female or male form which attracts the opposite sex, what is this beauty after all? Is it not a creation only of

our imaginative faculty? The skin, bones, hairs and nails, faeces, urine, fat, marrow, blood and flesh—what is after all attractive in all these things? Why does the same form, when dead, appear frightful? It is because the mind does not imagine beauty or attractiveness in that form.

2. Argue to yourself that happiness is nowhere found in the objects of enjoyment, it is through a delusion that you have accepted pain as pleasure. In the *Gītā* the Lord has described all objects of enjoyment as ‘the root and source of suffering’ and the world outside consisting of such objects as devoid of happiness and as a ‘home of misery.’ Direct your reasoning to understand the truth of this divine pronouncement and consider whether objects of enjoyment are really painful as they have been described to be. Want of these objects is attended with misery; nay, one has to take considerable pains in order to be able to acquire them and lastly, their possession, too, is painful. Similarly, their end is painful, their memory is painful and the conflict between the various tendencies of the mind in connection with the acquisition of worldly objects is also painful. The suffering caused by want of these objects is patent enough. Those who are mad after wealth, know what amount of trouble they have to take in earning wealth. Night and day they are veritably roasted in the fire of anxiety and care.

The acquirement of an object of enjoyment appears in some cases through error to bestow some amount of happiness, but the truth lies the other way. There is no object in this world which does not possess the property of creating a sense of burning; every such object is incomplete in itself and requires something else to make it complete or whole. If you have got a son, you have to make arrangements for his education and training, you

have to arrange for his marriage and find ways and means to establish him in life. These and similar other problems and wants continue to trouble you. You find your rival leaving you behind in the race, outrivalling you in wealth and honour and his son better qualified than yours; these and other imperfections continue to burn your heart. Yet these limitations can never be remedied in their entirety through pursuit of objects of the world.

Again, what you possess today may be destroyed tomorrow, or you may be forced to leave it and this will make you very unhappy. This is true in relation to every object of the world. What you find today perishes the next day, or leaving it where it is you may have to shift yourself to some other place. If this is not a painful end, what else will you call it? The fact is that by their very nature all worldly objects are painful in the end. They appear to gratify us through error only at the moment they are enjoyed. The ringworm gives us momentary relief when scratched, but the after-effect of such scratching is painful inasmuch as it causes a burning sensation in the skin. The momentary pleasure derived from contact of the senses with their objects is exactly of this nature.

‘O how happy I was in former days! I had plenty of wealth and my house was humming with children and attendants; I had the vigour of youth; as for my wife, she was a paragon of beauty and good manners. My fame was spread over the wide world. Alas! Everything is lost now. There is no one so wretched and miserable as I am. This is how the memory of things we possessed heretofore, gives us pain in the end. Suppose we want something, how is that to be obtained? A certain method is suggested by a friend today. Next day he says, no, that is not the way, do this. The original method suggested by him was

harmless, there was no sin involved in it; the alternative method involves sin, but what is to be done? The object has to be achieved somehow. The struggle between pure and impure impulses upsets the mind. There is no end to our misery. We find ourselves placed on the horns of a dilemma. The internal struggle continues to burn our heart.'

Thus realizing all objects of enjoyment to be full of misery, withdraw the mind from them. Cultivate the firm belief that there is neither attractiveness nor happiness in these objects. Know them to be full of imperfections and painful by nature. Feel the burning heat of fever when the pride of wealth or youth peeps within the heart or when you find yourself amidst circumstances, which conduce to easy comfort, honour and position or make you the cynosure of all eyes, the central figure in a social gathering, a special object of worship and adoration. Take fright in such situations; regard them to be deadlier in effect than the poison of a snake or a scorpion, more terrible and vicious than a malignant spirit. Let no desire or greed, no wrong idea of public duty tempt you to yield and accept a position like this. Knowing the enjoyment of worldly objects to be something that leads to deterioration of the body, courage and peace of mind attempt repeatedly to withdraw the mind from such enjoyments.



Even aeons of ignorance and wrong actions could not change the eternal soul's intrinsic divine nature since the soul is an emanation of God's own being, it is manifestly impossible for man's true self to be degraded into an evil entity meriting everlasting damnation.

What is Real Service?

—*Brahmalina Swami Ramsukhdas*

‘We will serve others by wealth and do good to them thereby’—is a very gross mentality. I may say it is a mean mentality! Because by such a service importance is attached only to ‘money’ and not to service. He who gives importance to wealth or riches, is a mean man. That which is your hand’s product, to that you give more importance than to yourself, and you deem money’s necessity for rendering service, this is a very bad mind or low attitude indeed! Service done through wealth etc., is a factor in generating ego or sense of pride, in doing dishonour; because you will impose your ego by serving him through wealth, by giving him the feel that you have helped him to that extent. If he perchance, goes against you, then you will denounce him, speak ill of him that though you helped him so much, he turned out to be an ungrateful wretch! Thus, it will create an air of conflict. If you serve somebody with your wisdom or intelligence and if others also do the same kind of service, then it will create envy or jealousy. We deliver fine lectures and if the lectures of others happen to be finer or better than ours, then the result would be ‘jealousy.’ We say we serve the people, but in reality we only wage a war.

Few and far between are they, who really serve people. We tell you the glory of ‘*Rāma-Nāma*’, we yoke people in the act of recitation of Lord’s name; but if any other one comes and tells you to do Name’s recitation, it does

not make much appeal to you. If you engage yourself in doing *Nāma-Japa* on our telling you, we are pleased; but if anyone begins to do *Nāma-Japa* at the behest of other people's telling, we do not get pleased that much. We should instead be more pleased because without our effort our work has been done !

If somebody does not conform to our views, does not believe in our doctrines and rebuts and refutes instead our beliefs, doctrines and ways of spiritual practices, but propagates at the same time the glory and greatness of '*Rāma-Nāma*,' then what sort of mental reactions it is going to produce in us? The Name's propagation will certainly make an appeal to us, but this will not be palatable that the people recite the Name of God at his calling, because he refutes our opinions, rebuts our doctrines and condemns our method of '*Sādhanā*.' This way we do not give as much importance to the propagation of *Rāma-Nāma* as to the refutation. We are not lovers of Rāma's Name, but we are lovers more of our views, more of our *Guru*. If you respect and regard our *Gurujī*, then it is alright. But if you do not believe in our *Gurujī* and yet you carry on the Name's recitation, it will do you no spiritual good—such view belongs to those who love their opinions much more than they love the Name of the Lord ! If the glory of Name is dear to your heart, then even a staunch atheist, or, even the lowest of the low ones sings the glory of God's Name, your heart must dance with enthusiasm and feel intrinsically immensely happy that he has sung the best thing. Its name is—'Service.'

The Brotherhood of Man

—Swami Rama Tirtha

You see that in your deep sleep state, all of you are one. Sleep is a great leveller. No difference is left in the deep sleep state, the king and the poor fellow, the king sleeping on those velvet cushions, covered by those magnificent sheets and the poor beggar lying down in the streets are in the same state. Consider both of them in the deep sleep state. Where is the difference? Both are one and the same. In your deep sleep state you are one, in your wakeful state your bodies are all one; and your minds and feelings, which live in the dreamland, are all one. Now we come to consider the real *Ātman*, the true reality. Oh, the one *Ātman*, the true reality, the real Self. There is no room for language or any expression of difference. There even the word 'wave' or 'ripple' cannot apply, there you are all one. You will say, no, my son is mine, but this fellow is not mine. You are mistaken if you think that. It is not. Those whom you call as different from you are just as much yours as your son is. How many times were you connected with them in your past births as brothers, sons or daughters or fathers? Do you know that? The same person who is now your enemy may have been your father or your son in the past birth. That man who is your father in this birth may not be your father in your next birth. In your next birth you will be born of some different parents. Your feelings and sympathies are continually changing and so your relatives and friends, sisters and brothers are also continually changing. Does it not happen

that a man who is born under the same roof with certain girls and boys, passes all his life apart from them, never sees them again in his life; and does it not happen that a man born in this country passes all his life in other countries? The reason is that the people who were born in other countries, happen to be his spiritual relatives. There you see that you ought not to confine brotherhood only to those whom you call your sisters and brothers, wives or husbands. All, all, each and all are your own Self. Realize that. Science proves it.

Now Rāma is going to sum up. Science shows that just as this particular body which you call yourself is one; the toes of the feet are connected with the heel and that is connected with other parts of the body. There is the law of continuity running through all the particles of your body, and your body is one, indivisible whole and on that ground you see that it is only one power, the *Ātman* which fills the head as well as the feet. The same Self pervades the feet and the hands. You see that. Now Science proves that different objects in this universe are so related to each other that if by the side of the most undeveloped protoplasm, we place a higher form of protoplasm and next to that we place the next higher form and so on, and if we could arrange everything in this universe in the right order, we would find a continuity running through every objects in this universe. We find the whole world held up by this most inviolable continuity. That being the case, the whole universe is a single, indivisible body. Now as in the case of one whole body you are forced to believe one Self pervading the ears as well as the feet, so in this whole universe, which is a single continuous body, you will have to believe one Self or *Ātman* filling or pervading the minutest microbe as well as the highest angel. Thus the

Self or *Ātman* of the highest angel is the same as the Self or *Ātman* of the most insignificant worm. Therefrom the standpoint of the *Ātman* you are all one.



When threatened by lust, argue in your mind that the accumulated Beauty of the entire world is only an insignificant fragment of the Beauty of your Lord. It is through delusion that you have turned your face from that Supreme Beauty and feel attracted towards a bundle of flesh and bones: this is nothing but ignorance. Believe that through the Lord's unflinching grace, you cannot be overcome by this ignorance. Be assured in your mind that you are pure and free from all attachment, that Śrī Rāma resides in your heart and you belong to Him, that He belongs to you and regards you as His own reflection, therefore, lust can never come near you. Before the transcendent Beauty of Śrī Rāma all objects of beauty of this world pale into insignificance as the glow-worm in the presence of the sun.

—*Hanumanprasad Poddar*

A Guru

—Rukmini Ramamurthy

When a person develops a serious quest for Knowledge, especially spiritual knowledge, God Himself appears to him as *Guru*. In his '*Praśnottara Ratnamālikā*, Śrī Ādi Śaṅkarācārya raises the question “को गुरुः ?—who is a *Guru*?” and he gives the reply as: “अधिगततत्त्वः शिष्यहिताय उद्यतः सततम्” a man who is established in the Truth and who works relentlessly for the welfare of the student. The *Vedas*, the *Bhagavadgītā*, works of various *Ācāryas* and life stories of great traditional teachers present the *Guru* as a gentle, approachable, kind-hearted person with the knack of putting the student at ease. It was common in the ancient times to stipulate a period of strict *Brahmacarya* ब्रह्मचर्य—a life of celibate who serves the *Guru* in the latter's *Āśrama*. The *Guru* observes this *Brahmacārī* for some time—it would be for months or even years—to assess his ability, potential and inclination. It is only then the *Guru* commenced the actual tutelage.

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* in the eight *Adhyāya* narrates an incident about *Devarāja* Indra and *Asurarāja* Virocana when they went to Prajāpati to gain the knowledge of *Ātmā*. Prajāpati instructed both of them to spend thirty two years of *Brahmacarya* with him. Then, he taught them that the Physical body which is well dressed and ornamented is the *Ātmā*, both the students went back. Virocana spread this teaching to the *Asuras*. Indra on the other hand, reflected upon the teaching and he felt that there was something more to it. So he went back to Prajāpati. He

served him another thirty two years of *Brahmacarya*. This time, he learnt about the dream-man. On reflection, he realized that this did not give finality. He went back to Prajāpati and after yet another thirty two years of *Brahmacarya*, he learnt about deep sleep. Now he had more to learn. Deep sleep was clouded over by *Ajñānam*. He went back to Prajāpati. This time, he lived five years in *Brahmacarya*. Thus, after one hundred and one years of *Brahmacarya*, Indra finally learnt the *Ātmā* which is effulgent and immortal.

There is a well known verse in Kālidāsa's *Mālavikāgnimitra* which talks about the prerequisites of a *Guru*—

शिष्टा क्रिया कस्यचिदात्मसंस्था
 संक्रान्तिरन्यस्य विशेषयुक्ता ।
 यस्योभयं साधु स शिक्षकाणां
 धुरि प्रतिष्ठापयितव्य एव ॥

(16)

Kālidāsa says a man may be very learned and informed and another might be very talented at communication. However, he who is an expert in both the above mentioned qualities, has to be established as the foremost among teachers.

Śāstras categorize *Gurus* into three varieties namely—

- (i) *Śrotriya Brahmaniṣṭha*. (ii) *Kevala Śrotriya*
 (iii) *Kevala Brahmaniṣṭha*

(i) The *Śrotriya Brahmaniṣṭha* is a *Guru* who has learnt the *Vedānta Vidyā* with the guidance of a *Guru*. He is therefore, familiar with the methodology of teaching the *Vedānta Vidyā*. When he studied in a Gurukulam, he had the occasion to witness many types of co-students and their ability to grasp the *Śāstra*. Therefore, when he became a *Guru* in turn, he was an excellent *Guru*. Not merely that, he was a *Brahmaniṣṭha*. *Brahmaniṣṭha* means he was established in Brahman—such a person is a *Jīvanmukta*, a

liberated saint, when the teaching comes forth from such a *Guru*, it has an unparalleled impact. Therefore, the *Śrotriya Brahmaniṣṭha Guru* is the best type of *Guru*.

(ii) The *Kevala Śrotriya* is a person who has studied the *Śāstra* in great depth. He, like the *Śrotriya Brahmaniṣṭha*, has studied methodically with the guidance of a *Guru* and is therefore, familiar with methodology of imparting *Vedānta Vidyā*. But he has not attained *Brahmaniṣṭha*. He is not established in Brahman because of some personal obstacle. His teaching will be technically perfect but lacking in force.

(iii) The third type of *Guru* is the *Kevala Brahmaniṣṭha*. The *Guru* is an exceptional saint. Because of some great spiritual achievement in some past birth, this saint was on the verge of *Mukti*, when his *Prārabdha Karma* was over. Therefore, he needed one more birth. In this present birth, he hardly needed any Vedantic study. Due to the force of his study and *Sādhanā* in a previous birth, he gained *Niṣṭha* or establishment in the self. He was a *Jīvanmukta*, but since he did not undergo any systematic teaching in this *Janma*, he is not in a position to unfold the *Śāstras*. He is a great saint. His mere blessings are sufficient to instigate a person into greater spiritual growth.

Ādi Śaṅkarācārya in His *Śataślokī* says that there was a very rare gem which was capable of converting whatever it came into contact with, into gold. But the *Guru*, he says is incomparable because the *Guru* converts each student into a *Guru* like himself. Each student in turn teaches many more. But this gem converts other objects into gold, but those golden objects do not have the capacity to further convert objects into gold. The *Guru* is unparalleled! The *Guru* is indeed God!.

A Test of Faith

—*Sri Paramahansa Yogananda*

I will tell you a little story about Divine Mother and an experience I had with Her. On the grounds of Self-realization Fellowship headquarters, there is a small wishing well of cast concrete. Shortly after its purchase I was helping the boys to move it into place. The well accidentally slipped and fell with all its terrific weight on my foot. There was terrible pain and much swelling in the foot, which seemed completely mashed. I was carried to my room. My friends wanted to call a doctor.

“If Divine Mother tells me to see a doctor,” I said, “I will go to one. If She does not, I won’t go.”

I waited, hoping to feel inwardly what Her wish might be. Day by day the pain in my leg became almost unbearable; there was no sign from Divine Mother.

The following Sunday I had a large class to teach. It seemed that I would have to be carried to the platform. I could not get my foot into a shoe. Satan tempted me that Sunday, saying, “Why don’t you pray to be healed?” but to pray would have been to doubt. Divine Mother knew my plight and I was willing to abide by Her wish.

“I am not going to pray,” I said. “The Mother knows what is wrong with me.” Inwardly I vowed my unconditional surrender to Her: “Whether sunk beneath the wave of death or moving on the oceanic waves of life, I am with Thee evermore.”

“Look at these people, “Satan spoken again. “They will all laugh at you. They have never seen you sick before,

and now they will see you with an injured foot.”

“I don’t care.” Once you have Divine Mother’s love, neither praise nor blame can touch you.

I was limping along towards the platform where I was to speak, when inadvertently I slipped on the threshold, my injured foot was badly twisted. So great was the pain, I felt as if every bone in it had splintered. But the moment I stepped forward again, the terrible swelling collapsed suddenly, all pain gone; I was able to slip my foot into a shoe.

That was one of the greatest demonstrations of the power of love that I have ever experienced. I walked as if nothing had ever been wrong with my foot. Needless to say, I was thrilled—not because of the healing, but because of the Divine Presence. She wanted to see if I would pray for a healing. Had I prayed, perhaps in due course of time, the injured foot would have had a natural recovery; but I would not have had that all assuring divine experience.

Another time, in Palm Springs, I was singing to the Divine Mother: “Mother, I give You my soul call. You can’t remain hidden anymore! Come out of the silent sky, come out of my cave of silence.” Suddenly She appeared! I saw Her in the stones, the palms, everywhere! God has no form, but to please a devotee He can take any form that devotee desires. You have no idea how wonderful the Divine Mother is; how great She is; how loving She is!

There is no greater experience than to feel and know that the Cosmic Mother is with you. Watch for the presence of the Mother, because She will look after you in every way, whether your trouble is sorrow, pain or sickness. Pray to God as the Divine Mother when you crave solace and when you seek wisdom pray to God as the Divine Father.

Mothers do not limit to your child alone the all-forgiving love you bestow on him. Give to everyone the love and understanding of the Divine Mother and you will be bound no longer by the limitations of an earthly mother's love, you too will be a divine mother. When you can truly say, "I feel as a mother to all mankind," you will no longer see others as strangers; you will recognize and love all children of the world as your own. All forms of human love, in the perfect state, are encased in the love of God.'

Judge yourself no more a sinner; cast off your wrong habits and pray, "Mother, I am Thy child. Reveal Thyself!" If you send this appeal to God as the Divine Mother night and morning, unceasingly, She will manifest Herself unto you.

Let us give thanks to God and pray for His blessing on all mothers, that they be enabled to manifest His qualities.

May all the sons and daughters of the world be filled with that motherly affection which is the reflection of the Divine Mother's unconditional love; and may they give that unconditional motherly love to one another, that we have peace and heaven on earth.



What is the use of just crying and bewailing your lot? Make up your mind that you can have God in this lifetime. To Him you must go, because in Him is your home. As long as you stay away from God, there will be no end to your troubles—physical, moral or mental or spiritual.

Accept Me as Your Own

जैसेँ राखहु तैसेँ रहौं ।

जानत हौ दुख-सुख जब जन के, मुख करि कहा कहौं ॥

कबहुँक भोजन लहौं कृपानिधि, कबहुँक भूख सहौं ।

कबहुँक चढ़ौ तुरंग, महा गज, कबहुँक भार बहौं ॥

कमल-नयन, घन-स्याम मनोहर, अनुचर भयौ रहौं ।

सूरदास-प्रभु भक्त-कृपानिधि, तुम्हरे चरन गहौं ॥

(*Sūra Vinaya Patrikā* 230)

O Lord! I will live as You wish to keep me living. You are indweller of all beings and You are knower of pleasure and sorrow of Your votary (true devotee), then what to pray for. O merciful Lord! Sometime food is available to me and sometimes I remain without food which I forbear happily. Sometimes I am a rider on big elephant or horse and sometimes I am a load-bearer. Sūradāsajī says—O Lotus-eyed Lord! O heart-ravishing one black as cloud! Whatever my condition may be in this world, but my only yearning is to remain always Your attendant. O ocean of the love Lord Śyāmasundara! O merciful to the true Devotee! I clasp Your feet, please accept my this prayer.

□□

Choose to Dwell in Truth

—Swami Chidananda

Yesterday, we briefly dwelt upon the central experience around which the whole edifice of the Vedic religion is built. The sages who had this exalted experience declared that everything here is indwelt by the presence of God. God is immanent in all existence. *Īśāvāsyamidam sarvaṃ yat kiñca jagatyām jagat* (All this whatsoever in this universe that moves or moves not is indwelt by the Lord). Thus they declared this central experience upon which the whole of Hinduism is based.

This central experience was once again granted to Arjuna in the astounding and amazing vision by which he was blessed, through the grace of Lord Kṛṣṇa in the eleventh chapter of the *Bhagavadgītā*, when Lord Kṛṣṇa granted him the vision of His cosmic form. Arjuna saw God and God alone everywhere. Wherever he turned, wherever he gazed, he beheld nothing but God. He was thrilled, exalted, awe-struck, overwhelmed by this great vision.

Sarvaṃ khalvidam brahma. Neha nanāsti kiñcana (Verily, everything here is *Brahman*. There exists nothing other than This). In the light of this great vision, this great experience, this central fact of the Vedic vision and the Vedic way of life, how should one conduct oneself? These detailed instructions were given by the same Lord Kṛṣṇa in the eleventh book of the great scripture the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* when He declared His last and final departing message to the great devotee, Uddhava.

Through him, He taught what it means to live in the light of this great vision, to remember it and to bring it into your feelings, your thoughts, your view of things and the way in which you relate yourself to life. And this vision and this teaching gives you the key to how to spiritualise all your life, your actions and your day-to-day dealings with this world in which you have to live, move and have your being, physically speaking.

Can this physical aspect of your life also be spiritualised, raised up to a spiritual height? Yes. Not only yes, but if you wish to enter into God-experience, it is indispensable. Otherwise, you will always be held prisoner to this gross level of consciousness. You will ever dwell in physical consciousness and relate yourself to this physical world outside on that level only. There will be no possibility of your rising beyond and going into a higher plane of spiritual consciousness unless and until you spiritualise the physical—transform it—and through it raise yourself to a higher level of spiritual consciousness. It is through your day-to-day life that you have to gradually proceed upon the ladder which ascends into the supreme realm of God-vision.

It is up to you to decide whether you will allow the changing appearances to completely fill you and dominate your life or whether you will allow the inner spiritual fact to infill you and transform your life. You have to choose.

What is your choice—to allow the ever-changing, physical appearances to be the basis of your life and actions or to choose to make the great spiritual experience and fact of your ancestors to be the basis and means of relating yourself to this world outside? If you clearly recognise that it is upon this choice that the vision and quality of your life depends, you will reach the ultimate experience.

If you choose to set aside this great truth, shove it to

the sidelines, your life will be an everlasting groping, stumbling, falling and moving around in circles. If you choose to live in the light of this truth, then your entire life becomes illumined. You no longer live in the dark; you walk in the Light. You are able to declare: “I am in the Light; the Light is in me; I am the Light.”

Then your whole life becomes spiritualised. This is a matter of your choice—whether in the presence of Light you choose to dwell in darkness or whether you choose to come out of the darkness once and for all, refusing, rejecting, all possibility of return to that darkness. You say: “*Tamaso mā Jyotir gamaya*. Never more, after having come into contact with the *Īśa Upaniṣad*, the *Bhagavadgītā*, the *Bhāgavatam* and with *Gurudeva* who lived all three, never more shall I live in darkness in the midst of light, I shall ever dwell in the Light, move in the Light and ultimately attain illumination.”

If that is the determination, then nothing in this world can prevent you from becoming a *Jīvanmukta*, from living a radiant life of divine vision and quality. For in this awareness anything that is petty, ignoble or unspiritual cannot prevail—impossible! Anything that is petty, that is unspiritual dare not enter into such a life. Even if it enters, it will be discovered immediately, put to shame and hastily got rid of, not allowed to proceed further. Such is the power of the radiance, the power of the light of God, that you invoke if you choose to live in this vision.

The choice is before us each day, each dawn. As a matter of fact, the *Kaṭhōpaniṣad* goes one step further and says that the choice is before you each moment, at every step. The choice is always before you within and without, in the realm of your thoughts, your sentiments and feelings as well as your actions, which are only a pale reflection

of that which you are, that which, in fact, is your true field of action.

The *Kāthopaniṣad* also says that it is not realised, it is not attained, by one who has not turned away from the wrong ways of living. It cannot be attained by one in whom serenity has not been established through renunciation, right perception, detachment and the giving up of delusion. It cannot be attained by one who has not ingathered his mind, overcoming its restlessness and ceaseless tendency to move outwards and lose itself among the objects of the senses. Unless the mind is resolutely brought inside and made to stay upon the *Ātman*, one cannot attain illumination.

It can be attained only through the wisdom that dawns when these conditions have been met. Therefore, verily, every moment of your life you have the choice of adopting a spiritual vision, of invoking a spiritual *Bhāva* and attitude, and seeing in every act that you do an association with that great Reality that is immanent in all creation.

“I am not far away from God. God is never far away from me. He is everywhere, all around, within and without. This is the truth. In this truth I shall strive to live.” If you choose thus, you are on the way to immortality, to liberation, to divine perfection.

All the scriptures are a call to this choice, the right choice: Arise, awake and seek enlightenment. All the scriptures are a great clarion call to adopt this vision, to live and act in the light of this vision and to attain illumination. That is the great, eternal call of the *Upaniṣads* to each and every one of you.

Outer circumstances do not matter. Because it is the inner view and vision that has the power to transform, to overcome all outer circumstances and to make you see the Divine indwelling the so-called gross physical universe.

There is no gross physical universe at all. Everywhere only God prevails. Everywhere only the Divine pervades. You live in that Divinity. The so-called gross world and earthly circumstances are our creation, our imagination. Brahman alone exists.

Let us live in truth. Let us affirm and assert the truth and not commit the great error of choosing to live in falsehood. Reject falsehood. Affirm truth. That is the whole of *Viveka* and *Vicāra*, of discrimination and enquiry. May God and *Guru* enable you to lead this lofty life of the truth-vision and crown yourself with supreme blessedness in this very incarnation, in this very body!



It is so wonderful to love God and to love all as a part of God. To find Him you must feel His love in all. There is no greater force than love. If any time you clash with others, give love to them mentally. If you remain calm when others try to hurt you, then you are a god.

—*Sri Paramahansa Yogananda*

Pleasures continually disown us, but we never disown pleasures, even though each time we invoke pleasures, sorrow appears. We know from experience that there is no pleasure without pain in its wake and yet we go on invoking pleasures.

The Divine Pair

—*Sree Rama Devi*

(Continued from February, page 39)

Every saint of God has extolled the Name, because the Name is the word-symbol of God. People imagine that the practice of the Name is very easy but forget to remember one important aspect of this *Sādhanā*. Each repetition of the Name should be an invocation of God's presence through His remembrance. You should know and feel that you are calling God Himself with His Name, just as you call any one who is intimate to you. Remembrance of God is the vital aspect of this *Sādhanā*, without which the sweetness of the Name cannot be experienced. Moreover the practice will become mechanical also. You should love God. You should remember His eternal presence within your heart. You should call upon Him with a mood of prayerful supplication with the help of this mental repetition of His Name and you should have the faith that the Merciful Lord will respond to your prayers and *Japa*. All these should be combined and then alone you commune with God through His Name and enjoy the nectarian bliss that the Name yields.

You may not be able to worship the image at all times in all places. But you can worship the Deity at all times through the practice of His Name. That is why it is said that *Japa* is superior to external worship. Practice *Japa* in right earnest and you will know for yourself its efficacy. Devotion is the most important thing. If you have devotion, at each repetition of His Name, the waves of bliss will arise and play in your bosom and you will feel that you

are floating on the ocean of *Saccidānanda*. But one should know God first; then only His Name sends him to such a state of self-forgetting thrill and ecstasy.

Kṛṣṇa of your devotion is not merely Devakī's son, born in the *Dwāpara* Age. He is the eternal reality, dwelling in everybody's heart, immanent in every particle of the universe, yet transcending the universe. He is the Supreme Brahman of the *Upaniṣads*, the Puruṣottama of the *Gītā*.

In His all-transcendent aspect, He is the nameless, formless, attributeless Absolute, the infinite ocean of Being-Consciousness-Bliss. No one has seen Him, as an object for He is the Unknowable, non-dual relationless Reality. It is said that Sage Nārada got a glimpse of Brahman from a distance and he fell into *Samādhi*. Śuka Muni touched the ocean of Brahman and he too followed suit. Only Lord Śiva could take a handful of water and drink and that sent Him to the world of profound silence.

This Supreme Consciousness manifests Itself as a twin Personality, Śiva and Śakti. Śiva means quiescent Consciousness, Śakti signifies the dynamic aspect of the Divine. Brahman is thus, "*Śiva Śakti Iykya Swarūpam.*" Where Śiva and Śakti become indistinguishable, there the silence of the relationless Absolute is.

It is *Śakti*, this dynamic divine, that embodies itself in the enchanting spiritual form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in His eternal divine abode Goloka. The quiescent aspect, Śiva, manifested itself as Rādhā, the queen of Kṛṣṇa's Heart, the incarnate form of purest ecstasy inherent in the almighty *Prema*. Kṛṣṇa is the infinite ocean of *Prema* and Rādhā its indescribable, matchless ecstasy. Kṛṣṇa is Beauty, Rādhā its expression. Kṛṣṇa is the ineffable, immortal Spirit; Rādhā its soul-entrancing lustre.

Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are not two, but constitute one

integrality of Truth, shining in two aspects, with their unique excellences of Supreme Perfection.

The spiritual form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is supreme love made visible to the purest heart in an enchanting beauty and divine radiance. That which sustains the universe as an ordered and integrated cosmos, is the power of love inherent in Kṛṣṇa.

The conquering smile that plays constantly on the lips of Kṛṣṇa, is the surpassing tenderness of *Prema*, the grand efflorescence of Bliss and an assurance of compassionate Grace which is inherent in the Divine Manifestation. It is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lovely smile that has reflected itself in the attracting beauty of Nature.

Kṛṣṇa's love is a dynamic force. Every heart bears that oceanic love. But it is only when layers of dirt and delusion are peeled off that the love that is Kṛṣṇa makes itself manifest in the human heart.

The perfect realization of Kṛṣṇa's divinity is possible only to Rādhā. Rādhā signifies 'Arādhana' ecstatic, self-forgetting rapture of perennial worship through body, mind and soul.

Rādhā represents the unique perfections of renunciation (*Tyāga*) and dispassion (*Vairāgya*). This synthesis of *Tyāga* and *Vairāgya* is what is sculptured in the spiritual personality of Śiva.

Śiva Swarūpa is the exemplar of Purity and Rādhā's body and soul are saturated with this Purity.

Tyāga means utter self-annihilation in the burning fire of the yearning for the Absolute. It is self-withdrawal from self-consciousness to the Supreme Consciousness, Brahman. It is an ecstatic embrace of the infinite.

Vairāgya is the matchless purity of a mind which is gifted with a strong, spontaneous dislike and non-attachment

for all pleasures, earthly and heavenly alike. It is co-existent with exclusive love for the Eternal.

When *Tyāga* and *Vairāgya* are perfected, the mind sinks into an absolute quiescence of the supreme silence of Brahman and remains concentrated on the Divine Bliss. This is what signified by Śiva's famous and auspicious concentration.

This *Tyāga* and *Vairāgya* blended in the deep concentration of Self-Delight, is what Rādhā expresses in her self-absorbed personality, in her ecstatic dance, in the copious tears of her ecstasy, in the grace of her purity, in the pang and pain of her separation from Kṛṣṇa as well as in the bliss and quiescence of her reunion.

No one can secure the vision of Kṛṣṇa's transcendental form, unless he wins first the favour of Rādhā. Devotion to Rādhā means passion for purity, dispassion to the ephemeral pleasures, concentration on the Eternal and sacrifice of the ego-self. Then alone is possible the face to face vision of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

The vision of Kṛṣṇa is the experience of Cosmic Prema, as a result of which the human personality gets instantaneously transformed into a vehicle of divine effulgence and sweetness. He who claims to have got the vision of Kṛṣṇa and at the same time entertains subtle cravings for sense-pleasure and ego-love, has in fact seen only a phantom of his own mind.

Beloved child, for worship of Kṛṣṇa, adore the gracious attributes of Rādhā Devī. Where passion dwells, where sensuality has not disappeared, where the ego still holds sway, where clinging to the shadows of the world still persists, there Kṛṣṇa cannot appear.

The demands of Vraja, were incarnations of supreme bridal love, '*Madhura Bhakti.*' They were born with that

peculiar bent of mind and divine *Samskāra* of the soul. Hence they could achieve a remarkable state of union with Kṛṣṇa through simple love. They stand out as supreme ideals of profound love that is capable of being manifested in a perfected human personality. Those who are born without any binding *Samskāras*, without any attachment to earth, alone are fit to adopt the path of bridal love which is not at all an ideal for the commonality of man. Far beyond the reaches of ego-love, absolutely devoid of sensual attachment, poised in the purity of Self, established in the Supreme perfection of self-abnegation, is the attitude of bridal love in the approach to the Supreme Person. From spiritual point of view, *Gopīs* signify the modes of the God-intoxicated mind shining in the luminous purity of divine love. The source of their attraction, the captivating embodiment of love, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, verily stands for the Inner Self, which alone is the seat of supreme love.

Approach Kṛṣṇa with an attitude of submissive reverence, with a resigned mood of adoration, with a love that rejoices only in service and the path will be smooth and safe for you. Attempt not the path of *Madhura Bhakti* which requires a deep, one pointed, super-sensuous love for the Supreme.

Kṛṣṇa is present not only in the image, not only in your heart, but in everybody's heart. Heart is only one and that is infinite. You have to sink into it and become one with all. The infinite Being resides in the infinite heart; when you discover Him in the heart, you will see Him everywhere in every-form in every-mode of expression. Hence, along with the worship of the image, cultivate an equality of vision by endeavouring to Śrī Kṛṣṇa's presence in every one. Love everybody with kindness and sweetness, for so only can you transform your personality for the expression of Kṛṣṇa *Prema*.

Be humble, He who condescended to be a charioteer to His devotee, He who courted the company of the poor and the lowly in preference to that of the princess and the pundits, He who delighted the hearts of the simple-minded village folk, He who did not hesitate even to remove the leaves from which others had eaten during the *Rājasūya Yajña*, He for whom the humble offering of the matted rice from the poverty-stricken Sudāmā was as sweet as the nectar of love, He, that great Lord, the beloved of the devotees, the friend of the poor and the lowly, is your Deity of worship. Allow not the pride of devotion to grow in your bosom. In true devotion, there is no place for pride and vanity.

To transcend the duality of the worshipped and to be immersed in the deluge of love in identity with the Supreme—let this be your aim in life and the goal of your spiritual endeavours.

—*Deepak Patel*



As a son belongs to his father, so do we more singularly belong to God. But we, instead of accepting God as ours, have assumed the body, senses, mind and intellect which abide in *Prakṛti* (Nature) ours—this is bondage.

—*Swami Ramsukhdas*

Ātmā is Changeless

(From the divine voice of Sri Kanchi Mahaswamy)

We normally believe that the mind is *Jīva*. We identify ourselves inadvertently by colour, name, place and house we hail from, parents, education, occupation, etc. We also identify us by qualities like short tempered, ever happy, clever, useless, etc. This is due to the *Jīva* identifying with the mind. The *Jīva* attributes to itself the identities of the mind.

When the man sleeps or he is made unconscious under total anaesthesia or he is under deep *Yoga Samādhi*, his mind does not work. So there is no thought also. He is unaware of his identities and qualities. In these states, the *Jīva* is the same whether the man is a king or a beggar. No regal awareness or poverty idea. Not aware of his learnedness or idiocy. Quite unaware of gender, age, etc., also. With minds not functioning crores of men different in many respects, become one. Still they are all these without any identities and qualities. In all these states man is dying. *Jīva* is in him. That is *Ātmā*.

Ātmā has no death or any change. Change is also death in a way. Death means end of existence. Change is the end of existence of a stage prior to the change.

Flower changes into raw fruit, raw fruit changes into ripe fruit. Worm turns into a butterfly. We can say that flower, raw fruit, worm etc., ceased to exist. They adopt new forms leaving the old forms. The earlier forms are no more (dead).

This is the case with our body and mind also. Both change from moment to moment. The body grows from

infant state by stages of boyhood, youth, old age, etc. The body's appearance changes continuously. Mind is changing every moment. The mentality of the child is not there when we grow. It changes according to circumstances and situations. So we can say that both, body and mind are dying every moment. Yet we do not view them as dead. This is the Principle of life (*Prāṇa Tattwa*) and that is *Ātmā*. *Ātmā* has no death because *Ātmā* does not undergo any change. It is that which is 'WE' (individually 'I').

When the body and mind change all through the life, *Ātmā* remains the same, being quite sure that it is not that changes, in spite of the body/mind changing every moment under the analogy of "*Sūtra Maniganāiva*" and quite distinct from them, as the thread running through the beads. *Ātmā* is changeless! *Ātmā* is deathless!! (*Ātmā* is God!!!)

Sender—*R. T. Nathan*



A human being who considering the ephemeral, perishable sense-objects as real and pleasure giving, dwells upon them and loves them and through ignorance indulges in them, is a rank fool.

—*Jayadayal Goyandka*

Read and Digest

To offer criticism—even constructive criticism—is risky; but to be able Thyself to stand criticism is a great benefit.

* * *

Do not speak of others faults. Never write about them or make them public.

* * *

Harp not on sins of others, neither in Thine own—forgive and forget past error. Give no life and form to Thine own or others errors.

* * *

Be busy in making Thyself good, Thine example would talk a million times louder than words.

* * *

Reform Thyself: and by watching Thine example, let others be inspired to reform themselves.

* * *

Conquer vice by virtuous example, error by truth, hatred by love, ignorance by wisdom, fear by courage, narrow-mindedness by understanding.

* * *

Perennial peace lies within, not in outer possessions and conditions.

A Princess Having Faith in God

King of Karmana country was a great devotee and had faith in God. He had a daughter, beautiful and superb devotee. The king determined that he would marry his daughter to a person who is a true renunciant and has unshakable faith in God. The king remained on the lookout of such a person but he could not find one. His daughter became twenty years old. One day the king came across a cheerful and renunciative young man. He had no clothing on his body and he had nothing in his possession. The king saw him steeped in devotion before the idol of God. When he came out of the temple, the king inquired of him, "Where is your house"? He replied, "Wherever God keeps me." Further the king asked, "Do you possess anything"? He replied, "God's mercy is my possession." Again the king inquired, "How do you pass your life"? He replied, "As God dispenses."

From his versions the king concluded that this man is a renunciant and has faith in God, for my virtuous daughter the groom, I was looking for, God has sent to me.

After much insistence, the king persuaded the man to marry his daughter revealing to him the dispassionate and renouncing disposition of his daughter. The marriage was solemnized in very simple way.

The princess along with her husband arrived under a tree in a forest. There she saw in a hole of the tree there was a piece of dry bread kept above an earthen water pot. The princess enquired, "O My Lord! For what purpose this piece of bread is kept here?" The young man replied,

“I had saved it while dining yesterday, thinking that it would be utilized next day night.

The princess started weeping and being disappointed, she readied herself to depart for her home, the young man said, “I was already aware of this fact that being brought up in a palace, you would not pass your life with a poor man like me.” The princess replied, “O My Lord! I am not returning to my parents house being sad due to the misery of poverty. I feel weeping on your lack of faith in God that you saved this piece of bread due to worry in your mind that what would you eat tomorrow. I was virgin till now for winning the hand of a person who has full faith in God. My father after a long search, selected you as my husband. I thought that my ambition in life got fulfilled. But I feel very sorry that you have no faith in God even equal to a piece of bread.”

Hearing the reply of his wife, the young man felt ashamed for his spirit of renunciation. He replied very shyly, “Really I have committed a great sin, tell me what atonement should I do for it?”

The princess said, “Nothing to amend for. Either keep me or keep the piece of bread.” The young man got awakened and he threw away the piece of bread.



It is no use knowing the truth unless we act in the light of that truth until scholarship has made some impact on our character, it is nothing. Only when it makes us a new individual, do we become truly enlightened.

—Swami Lokeswarananda

Focus on Relationship with God

—Sri Mrinalini Mata

Sometimes in the beginning of our *Sādhana*, when we are very enthusiastic, we look around at other devotees and we begin to say to ourselves: “Well, that person doesn’t seem to be following this rule, so I don’t see why I have to.” And you begin to excuse yourself. Does this do you any good? Even if someone else has lapsed in a duty, if you neglect that duty too, who has to reap the consequences? You do.

It is human nature to excuse ourselves. I don’t think there is anyone who at sometime or another hasn’t felt thus justified; this is human thinking. But remember why we are on the spiritual path. We are here to overcome that human nature and to develop our divine nature. And that divine nature, the voice of the soul within us, says, “My only concern on the spiritual path is whether or not I am pleasing God and *Guru*. What others do or don’t do has nothing to do with me. It is only God with whom I have to do.”

Have the determination that you will go on making the effort even if the whole world forsakes God, even if everyone around you seems to be neglecting what the *Guru* says. You will find that when you are looking not to what others are doing, but to what you yourself are doing to follow *Guru’s* guidance, his principles, the rules and guideposts he has set for you, you will be the one that will be blessed. You will be the one who gains the benefits that *Guru* has promised from such a life.

Remember, when you begin on the spiritual path and as you go along on the spiritual path, you are establishing a direct relationship between yourself and God. What you do, what you think, how you act, what your attitudes are, the depth of your enthusiasm, joy and initiative on the path or your lack thereof—these are what God watches. These are what are either building you gradually into a perfect devotee who one day will merit the blessing of God's presence—the blessing of constant attunement, constant oneness with God—or whose lack will cause you to fail on the spiritual path. So never, never look around; never analyze or judge anyone else's life on the spiritual path. That is one of the greatest pitfalls, one of the greatest mistakes that you can make.

You will find that as you cultivate this attitude everyday and as you begin to gain the blessings from following the *Sādhanā*, then your understanding will also increase and you will begin to see the good, the divine, within others. You will begin to see God in all circumstances and conditions of your life—the beauty and the perfection in whatever conditions or situations God sends to you each day to hasten the unfoldment of your divine nature and your progress toward liberation.

Devotees who adopt the attitude of inward criticism of others and their activities—not even criticism, but just judging or analyzing what someone is or isn't doing—or resentment of the circumstances and conditions in which they are placed each day, will build up in their consciousness a wall that shuts them off from attunement with God. Attitudes are very subtle things and we don't always even know when we are harbouring wrong ones. That is again why self-analysis, daily introspection, is so vitally important—to always watch our motives, to always watch our actions

and our thoughts, to always observe what we are and what we are becoming, so that when we begin to go off into negative directions in life, immediately we can correct our course. Otherwise it will be to our detriment. We will fail to reach the goal of the spiritual path.



Resolve once for all that evil thoughts can never arise in your mind, that you are pure, that through the grace of God all the impurities of your heart have been washed away. The protective hand of the Almighty Lord is always over your head, you are under His sheltering wing. Sin and its concomitant woe can never come near you.

—*Hanumanprasad Poddar*

“If the heart and mind are pure, you will see Me.” When the heart is pure and filled with light, God is perceived everywhere through human sight. God dwells in a pure heart and mind. Therefore, make yourself radiantly pure, immaculate. That is the key, that is the secret.

—*A Call to Liberation*

The Golden Chariot

—Arundass T. P.

With all blessings of Lord Brahma
Golden Chariot takes its form
Leaving it to Lord Narasimha
When the horizon were shaded as Dawn.

Golden Chariot flutters it's wing
In-between the vast ocean of hell and heaven
Lies the creepers of Curse and Horror
The Golden Chariot moves fast.

He who is in power of the Golden Chariot
Moves through the path of *Dharma*
Carrying the majestic flag of truth and wisdom
In-between Dawn and Dusk.

Until the destiny
The Lord possess the soul
Protecting from evil desires
Hanging from either side.

Faster the Golden Chariot
A rope of darkness grabs the horizon
Appears still and calm,
A mystic fragrance passed the way.

Abandoning the Golden Chariot
Lord start Crushing it into dust
Throw's all along the heaven
Roar's aloud, in a thunderous voice.

Echoed all along heaven, trembling
Kalakala and Mahākali aroused
Like a lightning appeared, grabing the soul
Vanishing in the abyss.



Wherever those you love, may be in the world, your heart is drawn to them. You must feel that way about God, you must love Him with all your heart.

To do duty to God without duty to the world, is all right. And to do duty to the world not to God, is to like a mule carrying a bag of gold.

Yoga—The Ultimate Path

—Prof. Sudesh Gogia

Abraham Lincoln said, “Most folks are about as happy as they make up their ‘minds’ to be.” It is difficult to argue with that. The search for peace, happiness and ecstasy need not be a long or difficult one. You can find the same within yourself. Lord Kṛṣṇa says in *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*, “One can use one’s mind with ‘*Abhyāsa*’ much more efficiently and effectively.” Samuel Johnson further adds: “The fountain of content must spring up in the mind and he who has a little knowledge of human nature as to seek happiness but changing anything but his own disposition will waste his life in fruitless efforts and multiply the griefs which he purposes to remove!”

Most of us, at some point in life, might have felt confined by external circumstances, personal relationships and internal conflicts. Deep down, there is always a thirst for greater freedom and people try to overcome constraining forces. And yet, each freedom won is accompanied by newer bondages. After several such attempts, the individual might feel disillusioned and give up. But the real source of freedom lies within and one can achieve thorough emancipation by transcending one’s own nature.

In the first book of *Yoga Sūtras*, the *Samādhi Pada*, Maharṣi Patañjali shows us the path to complete freedom. According to him, within each one of us exists the ‘*Puruṣa* the cosmic self’, ‘eternal bliss’, ‘pure awareness’ that is beyond time and space, witnessing all that happens, rather, than uniting with this *Truth*, we tend to identify with the

contents of our mind. The mind is meant to be just an instrument of perception and consists of factual knowledge, false knowledge, fantasy, sleep and memory. Each of these components take turns to manifest in our consciousness with great intensity. Due to our ignorance, we get carried away with the force of these currents. We forget that we are *Puruṣas*, Pure Consciousness and not these fleeting expressions.

Until we still these distractions and accord *Puruṣa* its original position, there will be little respite from bondage and suffering. Given our many psychological vulnerabilities and external temptations that compound our ignorance this sees a difficult task. Perhaps that is why many people make peace with ignorance. But for those who zealously seek light and don't want to settle for any approximation of the light, *Yoga* is the way to go. Nowadays, when beginners come to learn *Yoga* they often want to learn techniques to make swift progress. However, despite mastering one technique or other, people remain far from instituting the mind in stillness. The reason being that in order to progress, what is needed first is the cultivation a Yogic attitude; grasping a technique is secondary to that.

In the *Samādhi Pada*, Maharṣi Patañjali elucidates the right *Yogic* attitude. According to him, *Abhyāsa*, continuous endeavour, *Vairāgya* (non-attachment) and surrender to the Divine, are the important aspects to be cultivated in oneself. Perhaps one can practice any *Yoga* technique but what makes it effective is *Abhayāsa*, the incessant desire and effort to see beyond distractions and imperfections of the mind. The ardent seeker continues to make this effort despite repeated hardships and failures. Secondly, one must develop *Vairāgya* keeping in mind that attachment arise from a false sense of separateness between us and others.

Therefore, they don't represent the 'Truth' and Salvation, lies in moving away from these illusory cravings and experiencing the wholeness and salvation.

Īsavara, the Divine, is the source of all creation, bliss, insight and wisdom. He is the greatest *Guru* of all times and has assumed different names and forms in different periods to enlighten the seekers. In order to make any progress in *Yoga*, we need to surrender ourselves to the Divine and pray for grace. 'Divine Grace' alone is sufficient to accomplish our *Yoga* and make us liberated for eternity. Therefore, let's uproot all that is non-conducive to *Yoga* in our nature.

Lack of effort, world cravings and egoism could be replaced by determination, detachment and constant surrender to the Divine in order to experience liberation. You thus, organize your mind for full efficiency. This is the only power that can help you avoid chaos in this 21st century in all endeavours of life, in business in social dealings and in life's all pursuits and that is known in business circles as 'Organization'! Without it everything would fall apart, there would be no learning, no science, no technology, no knowledge no writing no creative thinking no competitive business—nothing! One's entire life is built around organization through the *Sūtras* of *Yoga*.



The important thing is somehow to cultivate devotion to God and love for Him. What is the use of knowing many things? It is enough to cultivate love of God by following any of the paths. When you have Thy love, you are sure to attain God.

—*Sri Ramakrishna*

Change Versus Transformation

—*Swami Jyotirmayananda*

When you have turned away from your anger, greed and pride for a short time, you have merely changed. But when you turn away from these saying a final good-bye, you have brought about a spiritual transformation within yourself. You have merely changed when you no longer find pleasure in the toys of your childhood, because you have only changed your toys. The inner weakness that drives you to find happiness in the objects of the world has not been overcome. But when you become free from that illusion, you are transformed.

When you bring about a vital change within yourself as a result of increasing integration and spiritual understanding, you become transformed. You are filled with new energy, new insight and new inspiration. In the process of eliminating the roots of your negative traits, you continue to discover increasing expansion of your inner Self. Your life becomes a song of success; it flows with joy, vitality and spiritual aspiration. But when you simply change in terms of your external surroundings, objects and relationships, without changing at the deeper level of your personality, your mind gradually becomes burdened with an increasing sense of boredom.

An ordinary clerk may become a government official. A lawyer may become a judge. An ordinary student of philosophy may become a professor. But the deeper part of their personalities continues to be the same. When deprived of their favourite objects, they still grieve and

lament just as they have done in their earlier years. When encountering objects of their liking, they lose their balance of mind through elation. Veiled by the mask of external prestige and public recognition, they continue to be what they have been all along. The external mask has further hindered them from receiving the healthful atmosphere of nature. Men who mask their old uncultured self with glittering degrees and titles received from the world become more uncontrolled with reference to their defects and negative habits.

As an example, a short-tempered student becomes a professor. Now, he does not feel the necessity of controlling his temper. Rather, he thinks he is licensed to express his “righteous indignation” towards his students “for their own good.” And at times, overpowered by the grossest form of his uncontrolled nature, he is unable to recognize that he is humiliating and degrading himself in the light of his own reason. A person who continues to ignore the inner voice of conscience and tries to seek consolation in the illusory masks of this glittering world, cannot hope to experience true forms of joy and abundance in life.

On the other hand, you may change deeply within yourself without changing your external makeup. You may remain the same old clerk, but not the same old personality. You may remain the same old farmer, but not the same weakling of a few years ago. When you simply change, you remain the same personality. But when you bring about a transformation, you come closer to the Universal Life that flows through you. This inner transformation is what you need to bring about in your personality.

While a life of undisciplined senses beckons you to the lures of external changes, a life dedicated to *Yoga* urges you to bring about a vital and profound transformation in

your life. The external changes are like a piece of iron being moulded into different forms, while mystic change is like iron being transformed into gold. The change that *Yoga* professes to bring about, is like converting the iron of your personality into the shining gold of inward unfoldment. So too, when you have brought about a spiritual transformation in yourself, your virtuous qualities will continue to shine more and more. You will not be drawn back to the quagmire of your old uncultured habits.



One's store of good *Karma* and spiritual tenacity determines one's heavenly reward in life or in the after life. Advanced souls, those who by meditation, are able to experience the ever-newly joyous state of self-realization and who can remain constantly in the inner heavenly bliss where God dwells, carry with them a portable heaven wherever they go.

Man is the light of the world. No other being creature, only human consciousness is endowed with the all-revealing lamp of a potentially limitless intelligence.

Kanakadāsa

(A Mystic and A Poet)

—R. R. Gandikota

Kanakadāsa was born at Bada, in Dharwar district of Karnataka State. His father's name is Birappā and mother's name is Baccammā. He belonged to Shepherd (or of hunter Beda) caste. He was a warrior (Chieftain) a dandanayaka hereditary post. Kanakadāsa had several dreams in which Lord Cennakeśava used to appear and guide him to take up spiritual life. He took it lightly for a long time. Perhaps to teach him a lesson, in a war he received a terrible inglorious defeat, which acted as a 'Dark Night' effect on him and took to devotion.

The above fact can be ascertained by this *Kīrtana* in which Kanakadāsa sings “*Oh Hari!* having relieved me of the burden of the environments of great soldiers, marching towards the battlefield with the armour and the consequent announcement by means of drumming etc., Thou didst pickup the pearl having dissociated itself from water. So I join Thy feet” (Kanakadāsa *Kīrtanegalu* Edited by P. Guru Rao, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Press, Udipi).

Kanakadāsa's spiritual inclination was not favourably approved by the then orthodox system. But the great saint Vyāsarāya offered him holy Tīrtha and took him in to the fold of *Bhakti Sampradāya* in the year 1525 AD. Except for this year of initiation, we do not have any other dates pertaining to him. After this initiation into *Dāsa-Kuta*, Kanakadāsa was known by the nomde plume 'Kaginele Adikesava, (or Badada Ādikeśava, after his place of birth)'

“Kanakadāsa is said to have lived for about 91 years.

Philosophy—

Originally Kanakadāsa belonged to the school of Śrī Vaiṣṇavism, as it appears from some of his works (Kavi Kanakadāsaru—by Kaṭi Śeṣacāryulu). As Vyāsarāya Tīrtha initiated him to *Bhakti* cult and took him into the fold of ‘*Dāsa Kuta*’, he took to *Madhvism* (Dualism of Madhva). Kanakadāsa is a reformist par excellence. Though he took Madhva dualism—he remained more a Madhva mystic moving in higher sphere and thinking of none else except the Lord Hari, the supreme Lord of the universe. He did not give much importance to the ‘*Ācāra Vyavahāras*’.

Kanakadāsa is an eminent scholar in Kannada, who composed several *Kīrtanas* hailing Kṛṣṇa. He wrote some spiritual allegories (Mundagis—as known in Kannada literature). The following five works (i) *Narasimha Stotra*, (ii) *Mohana Taraṅgiṇī* (iii) *Rāma Dhyāna Mantra*, (iv) *Hari Bhakti Sāra* and the (v) *Nala Caritra*, are also to his credit.

Kanakana Khindi (Window of Kanakadāsa)—

The anecdote that is popular now is that Kanaka was not allowed to enter the temple of Kṛṣṇa at Udipi. Originally the idol of Kṛṣṇa was facing East and as he was not allowed to enter into the temple, Kanaka however, went behind the temple and stood there praying Kṛṣṇa to give him *Darśana*. The Lord is said to have turned around and gave *Darśana* to Kanaka, through a hole that formed which later was designed as a window.

But the earlier version of the anecdote in the olden days is different. The idol was facing the West from the very beginning and Kanakadāsa came to Udipi as a pilgrim. Saint Vādirāja knew about this pious devotee. He made arrangements for his stay in a hut on the roadside, in front

of the temple.

Kanakadāsa used to sing his devotional *Kīrtanas*, playing on his ‘Tambura’ in his hut. Kṛṣṇa’s shrine was there in front of him. But the wall of the temple was there in between the idol and himself. It was of course a barrier to the physical eyes. But who can prevent the vision of the inner eye? That was fully open and the idol of Kṛṣṇa was visible to Kanakadāsa.

After a few days on a night, there was an earthquake in which a crack formed on the wall through which one could peep in and have the vision of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Saint Vadirāja saw this and instead of plastering the crack, he mounted a window to commemorate Lord Kṛṣṇa’s *Darśhana* to Kanakadāsa.

Since the time of Madhwācārya, who installed the idol of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the idol was facing the West itself. The architectural plan and *Vāstu* too prove it. The portico where *Tīrtha* and *Prasāda* are distributed, *Tulasī* plant, discourse-hall, all these are to the West. Hence it is quite unlikely that the idol alone was facing the East. Madvācārya installed the idol of Kṛṣṇa facing Westwards and that is why all the shrines of the Eight Maṭhas in Udipi have their shines facing the West. There is an entrance to the temple from the East too. That door is now closed with a statue of Cennakeśava. Through this door the Swāmījīs used to go out for their ablutions. After taking bath in the Madhva Sarovara, the sacred tank, the Swāmījī’s used to enter the Sanctum-Sanctorum, through this door.

In a book “*Samnyāsa Paddhati Tīkā*,” a commentary written by Śrī Surottama Tīrtha, brother of Vadirāja, who was the pontiff of Bhandārkeri *Maṭha*, clearly states that Madhvācārya installed the idol of Lord Kṛṣṇa-facing the West.

As Kanakadāsa could have the vision of Lord Kṛṣṇa, through the cracked wall (due to earthquake), to perpetuate his sacred memory, the tradition of looking at the God, through this window and then entering the shrine has started. Not only the pilgrims, the pontiffs of the eight *Paryaya Maṭhas*, who go in to take charge (every 2 years on rotation), come in procession and walk up to this window and only after looking at the idol through this window, do they enter the Shrine. This tradition has been there since the time of Vadirāja.

Kanakadāsa's Rice Gruel and Cake—

As per the booklet published by the Paryaya Śrī Pejavar Maṭha, Udipi 1984, there is an anecdote connected with this Haridāsa. Kanakadāsa, poor as he was, used to offer just Rice Gruel and Cake made of flour of rice in coconut shells, which the Lord was pleased to accept. To commemorate this great devotee's offer with sublime devotion, even today Lord Kṛṣṇa is offered Rice Gruel and Cake, along with several delicious dishes that are offered at the time of *Nivedana*. Now a days the coconut shell is replaced by a Silver goblet.

Dark Night—

His ignoble defeat in the battlefield, was a turning point in the life of Kanakadāsa. He got tired of the service to other men. "Enough with the service to other men. I am completely tired.....I spent my days having wandered like a street dog. I do not see any pleasure in the least. Just as a fly falls in to honey, I have fallen in the abyss of *Samsāra* for the sake of this belly—I am struggling hard, Oh! Release me", wails Kanakadāsa in a song. As is the case with majority of the mystics of the world, Kanakadāsa, passed through the "Dark Night." The Pangs of poverty, more so after his defeat in the battle, made him desperate.

Pañcendriyas—Mans' Main Enemies—

In a heart rending *Kīrtana*, Kanakadāsa admits that the vain desires would not forsake him. In a helpless state, he wails, “What can I do? Vain desires would not forsake me. Oh! Rāmacandra, lion amongst men! Just like the moth having seen the splendour of the flame, Jumps very eagerly into it, even so, what is to be done to my eyes which gaze at women who look beautiful on account of gold and ornaments? What can be done to the same? Just like a bee, having swallowed the fragrance of a Campaka flower, falls down to the ground, without looking further, what is to be done to my nose that smells the fragrance of the flower worn by women, whose pacing resembles that of an elephant. What is to be done to my tongue which relishes very deliciously, the nectar on the rosy lips of young women, which act just like a fish that dies after swallowing the worm stuck up to the hook?” What is to be done with my ears which feel pleasure through lust, by hearing the sounds of the beautiful damsels, just like a deer that becomes enamoured by the sweet sound of the bell and consequently dies. ‘Oh Ādikeśava! Do not see me having fixed in, but take me out from the attachment of these five organs of senses. Thou art the only guide. So fix my mind at Thine feet.’”

Kanakadāsa is a mystic par-excellence. His songs are more philosophical in tone. At the same time he handles the most subtle problems with the greatest ease and lucidity.

A Real Jñānī—

Kanakadāsa is a real *Jñānī* who has realised that nothing belongs to man in this world. He says, “Oh wicked man! Do not say myself and Thyself, But consider within yourself through knowledge, who you are? Are ladies, land and wealth, yours? is the desire accrued from food, yours?”

Is the sound accrued from your ears, yours? Is the body that is once leaving you away, yours? Are you the one, who has come through the several births and are you the one that resided in the womb full of dirth? Are you the one, who has come through the canal of urine or are you the one, who has got caste, creed and Gotra? Do the time, working, purity and method belong to you? Does the idol (body) of nerves fastened to plugs of bones, belong to you? Yea! you become the devotee of the joyous Ādikeśava.”

He questions point blank “What is the use of practising meditation and penance, when they are possessed of decept, sins and wickedness.”

In a Kīrtana, Kanakadāsa describes the characteristics of a *Paramayogin*, which is highly philosophical. One who realises the Self, by superior intellect, is a *Paramayogin*. He is a *Paramayogin*, who, without being enslaved in such dreadful body, stands aloof like the seed of the cashew-nut and relies on the lotus-feet of Kagineḷa Ādikeśava.

No Caste Discrimination—

Kanakadāsa is a reformist. He does not make any distinction in caste in the cause of devotion. In one of his songs, he strongly criticizes those, who profess too much about the distinctions of Caste. He says—“The world is murmuring, in vain, saying. “Caste, Caste, Caste.” But, really what is the caste of the Righteous? Is not a lotus, which grows in the mud, brought and used in worshipping God?.....To what caste does Nārāyaṇa belong? And to what caste does the Lord of Pārvaṭī belong? What is the Caste of the Soul (Ātman), what is the caste of *Jīva* and what is the caste of the five principle organs of Knowledge? When Ādikeśava, the indweller is pleased, where does the question of caste, remain?

In view of the above *Kīrtanas*, we can very confidently say that Kanakadāsa was one of the most sub-lime thinkers of his age. He lived a long life of about ninety one years. He was a great mystic of the age. He still stands supreme both as a mystic and poet of high order.



To keep dwelling on one's faults beyond the time when the fault was committed, is an even greater fault. The constant feeling 'I am a sinner' makes a vicious circle. 'I am a *Sādhaka* aspiring for the sinless state' should be the right positive attitude.

—*Swami Sharanaranda*

Limitation of virtue is vice. Kindness to all is virtue, but when that kindness is limited to a particular individual, sect or region, it becomes vice.

Divine love is that nectar, which knows no decrease; and however much you may drink thereof, you will feel never satiated with it.

Rise above Desires

—Swami Akhandanand Saraswati

The seeds of desire are sown much earlier—some in the previous birth, some during this life, some inherited from parents and grandparents or companions, etc. The heart contains both positive and negative desires. According to modern psychology, only negative tendencies are natural. However, according to our ancient sciences, both types are inherent. Sometimes one and sometimes the other dominates. However, we

‘Pauruṣe’na prayatne’na yojanīyā sadā pathi.’

should use our willpower to move along the positive, righteous path. When a person indulges in desires which pull him down, the negative desires gain strength and the person moves towards his downfall. We should, therefore, always endeavour to save ourselves from downfall.

The first step for protecting ourselves from our own wrong urges, is to resolve firmly to never again succumb to any wrong urge. You know perfectly well what wrong urges are—to take what is not rightfully yours, to touch a woman who is not your wife, to indulge in violence, etc. Decide for once and for all, that you will never indulge in any of these. Grit your teeth. Clench your fists and refuse to walk the downhill path with unrelenting determination; because once you give in to the wrong tendencies, there is no end to it. The stream of wrong urges drags you down into a bottomless pit. Bharṭṛhari has written:

शिरः शार्वं स्वर्गात्पशुपतिशिरस्तः क्षितिधरं ।

महीध्रादुत्तुङ्गादवनिमनवेश्चापि जलधिम् ॥

The Gaṅgā falls from the feet of the Lord into the *Kamaṇḍalu* (vessel) of Brahmā. From there she falls on the head of Śiva, then on the mountaintop and flows down to the plains and finally ends up in the salty sea.

*Adhoadho gange'yam padamupagatā stokamathavā,
vive' kabrashtānām bhavati vinipātaḥ satamukhaḥ.*

Similarly, when anyone abandons the path of discrimination and indulges in wrong urges, he continues to fall. He finds no way to rise because all his paths lead downwards. If you think you can rise up again, you are making a mistake. You will not be able to escape the pull of the strengthened negative tendencies. Even in the Himalayas (where a recluse tries to attain spiritual progress) there are women and opportunities for violence and to cheat others. Therefore, if you want to save yourself, first save yourself from wrong urges.

So, take an irrevocable decision to stick to the right track only. Place your hand on your heart and examine yourself honestly: does the fulfilment of desire bring a greater joy or does freedom from desire bring greater joy?

The second step is avoiding the company of people who indulge in these wrong tendencies.

The third step is to stop thinking that people who blindly follow their desires, are happy. They are not happy. In fact, they are deeply unhappy.

How many instances should I narrate? A lady from a prestigious family once came to Bhāijī (Hanumānaprasāda Poddara) and began to weep-for her brother. Bhāijī asked why she grieved for her brother when he was known to be a religious person. “That’s all very well,” she answered “but each day he wants a new girl.”

Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahansa started weeping one day. Why? A group of people, singing devotional songs and dancing, was passing by. When Paramahansa saw this

group, he became agitated. People close to him asked why the sight of this group distressed him.

He replied this group consisted of robbers and dacoits. After midnight when others had left, this core group would plan where to strike and who to rob.

What does this mean? Be very careful about subtle desires. They pull you down sharply and suddenly. You are on the wrong track if you try to obtain happiness by fulfilling desires. If you choose the path of giving up desires, you are on the right track. Keep away from whatever gives rise to desire; whether it is sweet talk, beautiful faces or alluring gestures. The fourth step is to eat pure food. The fifth is to stay in a pure ambience.

The sixth step is—never remain idle, never waste your time. I know one mother who uses her spare time to make *Roṭīs* or knit sweaters, to give to the poor and needy. On her lips is the name of the Lord. Neither her tongue, nor her hands are ever idle. Cultivate a desire to do good to others, for saving yourself from selfish desires.

The seventh step is to worship the Lord. The Vedantis may laugh at you, the Ārya Samājīs may call you stupid and the Muslims accuse you of idol worship. Let them. Spend your time in worshipping the Lord and chant His name and study the scriptures and other good books.

Mentally, reject the idea that desires culminate in happiness. There is an episode in the *Mahābhārata*, called the “Yakṣopākhyāna.” It describes a Brahmin who yearned for wealth and a wife. He started a ritual worship of a Yakṣa (demi-god and guardian of wealth). The Yakṣa appeared and told the Brahmin, “I can grant you wealth and arrange for your marriage, but I can’t give you happiness. Don’t ask for wealth, because happiness does not lie in wealth. If you worship me, it is to my discredit and yours, that you desire wealth and a wife and I grant you these boons.” The

Brahmin refused to accept the Yakṣa's advice. Thrice the Yakṣa tried to convince him, but in vain. Ultimately, the Yakṣa took the Brahmin on a tour of hell. The Brahmin saw souls crying out in pain and sorrow. The Yakṣa began to narrate the histories of the souls, "See here—do you recognize this one? He was a King on earth and has come to hell because of his desires. That one was a famous millionaire. That other was a political leader. That one was a minister. That one was a Pundit." The Brahmin saw these souls surrounded by the menacing figures of personified lust, anger, greed, fear, arrogance, sloth, etc. Seeing these terrible conditions he abandoned his desires for wealth and a wife. He fell at the feet of the Yakṣa in profound gratitude, thanking him for saving him from his own desires. The Yakṣa embraced him warmly and disappeared.

So, on the one hand, the Yakṣa saved the Brahmin from the pitfall of his desires and on the other hand, prompted him towards spiritual progress. The Brahmin started a period of intense ascetic worship. He gained supernatural powers and salvation. So, first bind yourself to righteousness, according to the tenets of religion and save yourself from wrong urges. "The only woman for me is my wife. The only wealth I will use is that which is rightfully mine." Don't try to become rich overnight.

I will tell you of a true incident, about two rich men. One lived in Bombay and the other in Calcutta. About fifty years ago, they made a plan to raise one crore rupees (ten million rupees), hire a few cars and a couple of buses and take a few *Mahātmās*—with a full entourage of servants—spreading the *Sanātana* religion all over India.

These two men tried to raise the money through speculation. They raised about half, but then lost everything, including their own properties. So, my brother, raise money

only through hard work. Wealth won by the easy way is difficult to keep. It may be spent on doctors, medicine, the police or you may be cheated. Beware!

One more thing I would like you to make a note of, even though it is not connected directly to the topic under discussion, but I would like to mention it. Do not get caught in the toils of a person who loves somebody. He can, someday, betray you for the sake of the one he loves; he can cheat you or even go to the extent of killing you. A person who is completely attached to somebody, may claim to be your friend, but you cannot depend upon his loyalty and friendship.

I know of many people here, who got attached to cine stars and rejected their devoted wives, but who were, in turn, abandoned by those women. Desire is a prostitute. She will betray you. Therefore, be careful. Protect yourself by binding yourself to the tenets of religion. Pray to God and watch the ways of the world with detachment. Desires are given to carry us forward on the right track—not on the downhill path. Always choose the path of righteousness. Keep to the four stages of life: *Brahmacarya* (celibate student), *Gr̥hastha* (householder), *Vānaprastha* (semi retired spiritual life) and—if you take the vows of *Samnyāsa*, keep to the rules for *Samnyāsa*:

Jo hatha rākhai dharma ko te'hi rākhai karatāra.

God guards you, when you protect your religion. “*Dharmo rakṣati rakṣitah*” Don’t allow your intellect to give credence to any wrong desire and certainly don’t allow yourself to succumb to a wrong action. These desires will appear and disappear like dreams. They won’t harm you, if you don’t succumb to them. To fall as you walk, is not a fault. It is a fault when you refuse to rise and go forth again.

Think of God Day and Night

—*Sri Daya Mata*

So it is important on the spiritual path, if you want to know God, to begin to cut new grooves in your brain, new grooves of positive, devotional thoughts about God. Whether you are a teacher or working with mathematics or lecturing or cooking in a kitchen as a housewife or doing any other kind of work, every moment cut one single groove: “My God, my God, my God, my God.” You must not be absentminded though. All the time I am thinking: “O my Lord, show me the way to please You. I want to live in this world only to please You.” I find such intoxicating joy in that. I can’t imagine any other way of living. It is blissful. Every time you take His name you find a fresh flow of joy, a fresh flow of love pouring into your heart, pouring into your consciousness.

Practice the presence of God and meditate; this is the way one learns how to live happily amongst his fellowmen in this world. You don’t have to tell everybody your feelings. In fact, it is a great mistake to tell others about your spiritual life. The moment you do it, you lose something of your spiritual strength. *Guruji* told us that. You may have found it so in your own case; you had a wonderful experience, but the moment you told it to someone you suddenly felt, “Oh! I have lost something.” There was an intrusion of another person’s consciousness upon something that was so sacred to you. This is why *Guruji* always told us devotees, “Don’t talk about your divine experiences.” It’s different if we’re in *Satsaṅga* like

this and if it helps you all. But don't feel the need to talk of your experiences to other people. The greatest way we can influence them is by spiritualizing our life, our deeds, our thoughts.

To come back to the question: Is it possible that the busy life of a Westerner is compatible with meditation? It is completely possible. It is perfectly logical. It is what God intended of man when He created us. We are to perform all our duties in this world with enthusiasm, with great joy, with deep attention to whatever we are doing, but always with the thought, "I am doing it for You, my God."

That kind of enthusiasm must be in all of us on the spiritual path. There is nothing worse than the individual who is just half-hearted about his spiritual life. That is a tragedy to me. And it's just as much a tragedy to see the person who goes through life, as Master used to say, as if he had no life in him at all; you shake his hand and it's like clasping a dead fish.

Do your work in this world, but follow the ideal of the *Karmayogī*: "I diligently perform all my duties, my Lord, but not for myself. I don't care whether You put me here or down here (Mātājī gestures, to illustrate). What I care about is that You are with me wherever You put me. I shall work dutifully, with no thought of pleasing anyone but You; with no thought of any credit for myself, with no thought of praise from anyone. My Lord, if I can please You, that is everything to me." It would be ideal if mankind learned how to apply this principle. Then we would find a world filled with peace and contentment and happiness. That is what has to come in this civilization if we are ever to have peace.

System of Transliteration

Vowels

अ	आ	इ	ई	उ
a	ā	i	ī	u
ऊ	ऋ	ॠ	ए	ऐ
ū	ṛ	ṛī	e	ai
ओ	औ	Anusvāra	Visarga	Avagraha
o	au	m̐ (◌)	ḥ (◌)	(◌)
		Anunāsika (◌)		

Consonants

क	ख	ग	घ	ङ
ka	kha	ga	gha	ṅa
च	छ	ज	झ	ञ
ca	cha	ja	jha	ña
ट	ठ	ड	ढ	ण
ṭa	ṭha	ḍa	ḍha	ṇa
त	थ	द	ध	न
ta	tha	da	dha	na
प	फ	ब	भ	म
pa	pha	ba	bha	ma
य	र	ल	व	श
ya	ra	la	va/wa	śa
ष	स	ह	क्ष	त्र
ṣa	sa	ha	kṣa	tra
		ज्ञ		
		jña		

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