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Prahlāda—forgiving his tormentors

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



KALYANA-KALPATARU

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Subhāṣitam

चलं चित्तं चलं वित्तं चले जीवितयौवने ।

चलाचलमिदं सर्वं कीर्तिर्यस्य स जीवति ॥

The mind is fickle, wealth is transient and so is life as well as youth; in short, all in the world is transitory, but he only lives for ever who has earned everlasting fame through his meritorious deeds.

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The Way to Cultivate Love of God

—*Brahmalina Sri Jayadayal Goyandka*

It has been said by the virtuous men that one's inner senses stand sanctified through listening to the glory of God, through reading or listening to the description of his attributes and through repetition of the Divine name and then alone love of God can attain perfection. Through reflecting on Him, through narrating with a selfless motive His praises and attributes and through realizing His attributes and glory, love of God can be developed. Once the love ties have been strengthened the very hearing of anything about the lover causes thrilling sensations and the shedding of tears and such signs of ecstatic love become apparent. Even a person of inconsiderable importance coming from one's beloved person becomes endearing to one's heart. When by listening to the love talk and the description of the good traits of a common man with whom we are in love, causes so much happiness to speak nothing of God who is the Supreme lover. The sort of love that was born in the heart of cow-maids by listening to Uddhavaj, can be achieved even now. The greater the want of love, the greater the delay. God is omnipresent, He is hidden from view so long as we lack in faith.

If remembrance is not adequately done, it can reasonably be supposed that the love of God is also wanting. After knowing the world, the body etc., as unstable and transient, there can be no delay (in the meeting). Time alone should be considered invaluable. If this is done, nothing remains to be done. The best thing would be to make a total self-surrender to Him for the sake of cultivating disinterested

and undivided love for one's dearest Lord. One should regard oneself blessed if one's life and body are dedicated to this end. It is well nigh impossible that a person having association with saintly persons, should not be inspired with the devotion to God, redemption can undoubtedly be sought through the association. However, things may be different if one has been deprived of the opportunity of meeting virtuous men. Time must be found out for the purpose. Sooner or later everyone of us will have to retire from the world forever. Whosoever finds time the earlier having attained freedom from bondage is blessed with happiness.



When you manifest changelessness, you become a king among souls. Changeless within, even though body and mind are constantly changing, you become one with the changeless infinite.

Ó Sri Paramahansa Yogananda

î God has form; again, He is formless. How many aspects He has! We cannot comprehend Him. Why should we say that God is formless only.î

Ó Sri Ramakrishna

Recall Your Reality

—*Nityalilalina Sri Hanumanprasad Poddar*

Remember : so long as you find delight in the pleasures of sense and so long as there exists in your mind a craving for their enjoyment, the practice of adoration that you may indulge in at times will have for its object such pleasures alone, rather than God. As regards God, your mind will look upon Him only as a means to the attainment of luxuries. And if you fail to secure luxuries of your liking, you will give up the practice of adoration and take recourse to some other means.

Remember : they who are devoted to the Lord and view all blessings in Him, do everything for the sake of the Lord. Even if they pursue pleasures of the sense conformable to the teachings of the scriptures, they do it for the sake of the Lord alone. Such pleasures as are not agreeable to the Lord or appear the least harmful to His adoration and remembrance, they forthwith renounce— even as one would give up food mixed with poison— however charming, delightful, sweet and agreeable it may be.

Remember : a man given to the pursuit of sensual pleasures seeks God for the sake of such pleasures. The gratification of senses occupies the foremost place in his mind, God being relegated to a secondary place. A devotee, on the other hand, pursues luxuries too for the pleasure of the Lord. To him it is God alone that matters; luxuries are of any use to him only when they are serviceable to the Lord.

Remember : the human body has not been vouchsafed

to you for dwelling on, accumulating and pursuing the objects of senses. For the pursuit of sensual pleasures there exist innumerable bodies other than the human body. The latter has been vouchsafed only for contemplating on the Lord, for imbibing the ideas about God and for rendering service to the Lord. The humanity of a man lies in taking his life to the Godward path. On the other hand, he who is exclusively devoted to the pursuit of sensual pleasures is a mere beast in a human semblance.

Remember : when adoration of God is the primary and exclusive duty of a human being, practise it with a fully concentrated mind. For, if you fail to do it, all that you accomplish or achieve is entirely fruitless. Perform all your worldly duties only for show just like a man playing his allotted part in a drama. Never get attached to them in the least nor should you look upon any object or living being of the world as your own. As regards adoration of God, practise it with the utmost attachment and withdrawing all your sense of possession from everything else, direct it exclusively towards the Lord. Be firmly convinced that the Lord alone is your own. The ties of love that you have forged with the objects and living beings of the world, are derived from your relation with God.

Remember : relationship with God alone is a true and abiding relationship. You have emerged from God, exist in God and shall continue to live in God. You are His eternal fraction. Your relationship with Him has never ceased nor can it cease. In a spell of infatuation, you have forgotten your eternal and true relationship with God. It is therefore, that leaving God, you are running after the transient and sorrow-yielding pleasures of sense and recognize the fulfilment of your life in accumulating and enjoying the objects of senses. That is why you remain

ever deprived of real happiness and continue to pass from one suffering to another and migrate from one body to another. That is why you remain incessantly rotating in the whirligig of births and deaths. Recall your true character. Recollect your eternal and true relationship with God. Giving up the thought of sensual pleasures, contemplate exclusively and incessantly on the Lord. You will realize God; attaining true and uninterrupted supreme bliss, you will turn an embodiment of bliss and your life will turn out to be a truly human life and get fulfilled. The globe will be blessed by your birth, by your very existence and the universe will be hallowed thereby.



To remember bad experiences and dwell upon them, is an abuse of God's gift to us of memory. Banish forever the abuse of memory. Memory was given to you to remember the highest good, God.

Know that jewel among men to be a devotee of Lord Viṣṇu who on perceiving gold belonging to another, even in a lonely place actually looks upon it through his intellect as no more valuable than a blade of grass and has mind exclusively set on the Lord.

—*Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (III. 7. 22)

Our Real Self

—*Brahmalina Swami Ramsukhdas*

Our real self is only an eternal existence. There is no difference of I, You, this and that in that existence. I, You, this and that are of the category of nature and the real self transcends nature. These are four in number and the existence is always alone and one. All these four are relative and the entity or real self is absolute. All these four are enlightened and the existence is enlightener. All these four are super structures and the existence is the original foundation. All these four come in the purview of our knowledge and the existential reality is the knower of all the four.

There is change and complete absence of all these four and there is never a change in the reality (existence) and therefore there is never the slightest absence of this reality. Therefore, the change in all the four, their coming and going, their presence and absence, their production and their destruction, is experienced by us but the change in the real self or its coming or its going, presence or absence, production or destruction, is never felt by one of us at any moment.

I, you, this and that, all these four are untrue, insentient and sorrowful, but the divine reality, is truth, consciousness and bliss solidified. All are eternally established in this sentient existence. While performing worldly physical behaviour, the reality remains the same. In that reality there cannot be even the slightest modification or commotion or disquietude or perturbation. In that existence there is neither

egoism nor mineness. That reality is only knowledge personified, there is no knower of this knowledge, there the knowledge or *Jñāna* exists but there is not its knower. So long there is knower, till then there is unipresence or individuality. After the end of unipresence or individuality, only the immutable, egoless and universal reality remains, which is naturally attained to every individual.

In that reality, there are no states of awakening, dream, sound sleep, swoon (faint) and trance (*Samādhi*). All these five states are perishable and changeable and the reality is eternal. The stages are illumined while the reality is the illuminator.

All these five states are separate from each other, they change, they have a beginning and an end, but the self is totally free from such changes. Just as in the dream, the things seen (really non-existing) do not exist, in the same way the knower of those objects viz., the dreamer's ego is also false. In dream state the awakening state is suppressed, it does not extinguish but in the awakening state, the dream state comes to a complete end. Therefore, along with the dream state, its ego also comes to an end. In the same way during the awakened stage, the ego which is perceived by an individual, that also at the time of death, comes to an end, but due to identification of the self with the body, on getting a new body, again the ego is awakened. Although in awakening and dream states etc., ego is always different from one another but because of their reality (existence) being one, the ego also appears as one.

The *Turīya* state (fourth stage) is also there, which is said to be the state beyond sound sleep but in reality the *Turīya* state is not any state, but on the basis of relativity of the three states, it is called the fourth state. It is called

the state of liberation on the relativity basis of the bondage state. It is also called as the state of extreme bliss (Beatitude of God) (*Nirvāṇapada*).

पद निरवाण लखे कोई विरला,
तीन लोक में काल समाना, चौथे लोकमें नाम निसाण, लखे कोई विरला

î The stage of extreme bliss (salvation) is achieved by a rare individual, the death is dominating and pervading in all the three worlds. The name symbol is present in the fourth world which is visualised by the same very rare individual.î

Turīya state or salvation state or the state of Beatitude of God is not any state but this is our own real self or existence.



Selfishness is the devil incarnate in every man. Every bit of self bit by bit, is devil. Take off self by one side and God enters the other.

—*Swami Vivekananda*

Who lives in this world eagerly looking toward to Your grace, nay, simply enjoying the fruit of his own actions in a detached manner and bowing to you with the heart, speech and body, is entitled to final beatitude is in for trace.

ó *Śrīmad Bhāgavata*

Discipline of Indriyas

—Swami Sivananda

The practice of *Dama* (self-restraint) and *Pratyāhāra* (abstraction of the *Indriyas* from the objects) are of very great help in the control of *Indriyas*. Fasting, *Sāttvika* diet, eschewing of salt, sugar, chillies, tamarind, onions, garlic, meat, etc., control the tongue. Celibacy checks the genitals. *Mauna* will control the organ of speech.

When you walk in the streets, do not look here and there like a monkey. Look at your toes and walk straight. Practise *Trāṭaka* when you are at home. Always fix the eyes at one point. This will also control the eyes. Do not visit talkies, dancing parties or any place where there is vulgar music or frolic. Sleep on a coarse mat. Give up soft beds. Do not use flowers and scents. Watch every *Indriya* very carefully and put a check then and there. He who has disciplined his *Indriyas*, has a strong will and peace of mind. He can concentrate thoroughly. He has immense inner strength. He will have success in life and also in the path of spirituality. No higher *Sādhanā* is possible without the discipline of *Indriyas*.

You will find in the *Kāthopaniṣad* that the self-existent Brahmā created the senses with the outgoing tendencies and so man beholds the external universe and not the internal Self; but some wise people with strong determination, who are desirous of immortality, attain the *Pratyagātma* by turning the eyes inwards. By turning the eyes inwards, the mind begins to do introspection. Soon *Antarmukha Vṛtti* develops.

You will find in the *Gītā*.

When a man withdraws his senses from their objects on every side, as a tortoise does its limbs, then is his wisdom firmly set.

The objects of senses fall away from the embodied soul when it ceases to feed on them, but the taste for them, lingers. Even the taste falls away when the Supreme is seen.

Though a man may ever strive, O Arjuna and be ever so wise, his senses will rebel and carry off his mind by force.

When his mind runs after the roving senses, it carries off with it the understanding, as a gale carries away a ship upon the waters. (Gītā II. 58, 60, 67)

One should be careful of reaction. If the aspirant is not careful, if his *Vairāgya* wanes and if he is not regular in his *Sādhanā*, reaction sets in and the senses become more turbulent. Control becomes very difficult. The aspirant falls down hopelessly.

Vairāgya and *Tyāga* help in the practice of *Pratyāhāra*. If one succeeds in *Pratyāhāra*, concentration comes by itself. Generally, people jump to the practice of concentration without practising *Pratyāhāra* in the beginning. That is the reason why they fail in concentration. *Pratyāhāra* is very important. The *Indriyas* are practically starved to death by the practice of *Pratyāhāra*. They become emaciated and thin. Even if they come in close contact with the sensual objects, they cannot be excited. They are like serpents whose teeth have been extracted. They cannot do any harm. Sufficient practice for a long time is necessary. One should be very patient. Discrimination gives a helpful hand in the practice of *Pratyāhāra*.

That man who is established in *Pratyāhāra* can do concentration in any place, in any congested city. The

moment he sits for meditation, his senses are withdrawn. He will not be disturbed by external sounds. *Pratyāhāra* is a trying discipline. One should have immense patience. *Pratyāhāra* develops will-power and mental strength.

In *Vedānta*, there is the practice of *Dama*. This corresponds to *Pratyāhāra*. *Dama* means restraint of *Indriyas*. Whatever a *Rājayogī* does in the practice of *Pratyāhāra*, a *Vedāntī* also does in the beginning. By the practice of *Dama*, he gets *Samādhāna* (one-pointedness of mind).

Raja Janaka tested Yujakadeva whether he had good practice of *Pratyāhāra*. He gave him a cup of milk, full to the very brim, in his hand and asked him to go round his palace three times without spilling even a drop. He arranged for music and dance parties on the way just to distract the attention of Yujakadeva. But Yujakadeva succeeded as he was well established in *Pratyāhāra*.

Practise *Mauna*, physical *Brahmacarya*, *Ahiṃsā*, etc., and you will be gradually established in *Pratyāhāra*.



I love you God. You are my own, no love can match the love of God. This is the whole purpose of life; find God. Be in love with God.

Soul and Consciousness

—*Basanta Kumar Chattopadhyaya*

According to the materialist, the soul does not exist and consciousness is an attribute of the body. But if consciousness had been an attribute of the body, as the form is an attribute of the body, then consciousness would have remained so long as the body remained, just as the form of the body remains so long as the body remains. But when a man dies, the body remains but consciousness does not remain. This shows that consciousness is not an attribute of the body as the form is an attribute of the body. It may be argued that just as a piece of iron may sometimes be hot and sometimes cold, so also the body may be sometimes conscious and sometimes unconscious. But this argument is not sound. When hot iron is cool it may again be heated. But when a man dies his body can never be made conscious again. Hence consciousness is not an attribute of the body as heat is an attribute of (hot) iron. Again when a piece of hot iron becomes cool, it may remain in that state for a very long time. But when consciousness departs from a body, the body rapidly disintegrates. It is thus clear that consciousness preserves the body and prevents its disintegration. Hence instead of saying that the body is the cause and the consciousness is the effect, it would be more correct to say that the consciousness is the cause and the body is the effect. The *Upaniṣads* say that the soul, according to its good or bad acts in the previous birth, gets a good or bad body in the present birth.

रमणीयचरणा अभ्याशो ह यत्ते रमणीयां योनिमापद्येरन् ब्राह्मणयोनिं वा
क्षत्रिययोनिं वा वैश्ययोनिं वाथ य इह कपूयचरणाः अभ्याशो ह यत्ते कपूयां
योनिमापद्येरन् श्वयोनिं वा शूकरयोनिं वा चाण्डालयोनिं वा।

(*Chāndogya Upaniṣad* V. 10. 7)

Those whose conduct was good, get a good body like the body of a *Brāhmaṇa* or a *Kṣatriya* or a *Vaiśya*. Those whose conduct was evil, get a bad body like the body of a dog or a swine or a *Cāṇḍāla*.¹

It may be considered, How outrageous to mention the *Cāṇḍāla* in the same category with a dog or a swine!¹ But those who have realized the soul have known that the same soul exists in men as well as in all other living beings. As the *Bhagavadgītā* says²

विद्याविनयसम्पन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।
शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः ॥

(V. 18)

The wise men consider the learned and modest *Brāhmaṇa*, the cow, the elephant, the dog and the *Cāṇḍāla* as equal.¹

He considers them all equal because the souls in all of them are equal² the souls being parts of the same Brahma who is Truth, knowledge and Joy. The difference between different men and between a man and a beast, is only in their bodies. Compared with the souls which are everlasting the bodies are ephemeral and hence negligible. The wise men who can perceive the souls neglect the bodies and find all creatures to be equal.

To return to our point³ is consciousness an attribute of the body? There is another argument from which it will appear that consciousness is not an attribute of the body. An attribute of an object cannot act on that object. Power of burning is an attribute of the fire. But this power of burning cannot act on the fire. It can burn other objects but cannot burn fire. To take another instance. The power of a motor car cannot move the motor car. The wheels of a motor car push the earth, the earth pushes the wheels and the car moves. That is why on loose sand or slippery

ground a car cannot move no matter however powerful the engine of the car may be. Loose sand and slippery ground cannot push the wheels. So the car cannot move. If consciousness had been an attribute of the body, consciousness could not have perceived the body. But consciousness does perceive the body. Hence consciousness cannot be an attribute of the body. In fact consciousness is an attribute of the soul. Hence consciousness cannot perceive the soul, but can perceive the body.

An attribute of an object cannot exist apart from the object. The form of a body cannot be conceived to remain apart from the body. But it can readily be conceived that the consciousness which remains now in one body can remain in future in a different body. Whether the doctrine of transmigration of the soul is correct or not is a separate question. But it will be readily be admitted that it can be conceived that the particular soul which now remains in one body can remain after death in a separate body.

Modern science teaches us that the human body goes on changing and in a few years the entire body is changed. There is not a single particle in the body of a boy which remain in him when he grows old. But the old man feels that he is the same person as the boy. If consciousness had been an attribute of the body, since the bodies of a boy and an old man are different, the consciousness would also have changed and there would not have been the feeling "I am the same person." Since consciousness is an attribute of the soul and because the soul does not change with the body the feeling of identity is justified.

Let us suppose there is great advance in science and art and it is possible to construct an exact duplicate of the human body with the same stuff as flesh and blood, bones and sinews. If mind and consciousness were mere attributes

of the body, the mind and consciousness of the duplicate would be exactly the same as of the original. The recollections of events of the past life would then be the same for the duplicate and the original. In other words if the original thinks he lived at such a place in his boyhood, met such persons in his youth, the duplicate would also think in the same way. But that could never happen because the duplicate did not really have those experiences in the past. The theory that mind and consciousness are mere attributes of the body thus leads to absurd conclusions. The theory is therefore wrong. In other words mind and consciousness cannot be attributes of the body but are independent of the body.

Between the object and its attributes the object is the principal and the attributes are subsidiary. If mind and soul had been attributes of the body, then the body would be principal while the mind and soul would have been subsidiary. But in fact we find that the body is subordinate to the mind and the soul the body moves about accordingly to the desire of the mind and the soul. Hence the mind and the soul cannot be attributes of the body.



The worst habit of man is that he thinks of himself as a mortal body; that thought being uppermost in his mind, keeps him away from God more than anything else.

Harināma-Kīrtana

(Continued from July, Page 20)

The mind is full of pride, jealousy and other evil passions. So long as these impurities are not removed, one cannot enter the Divine path. But they are removed by constant repetition of God's Name. For performing rituals the help of other persons is necessary. There are restrictions regarding time, place and the way of doing things. But in order to chant the Divine Name, only the tongue is necessary. No other aids are needed. There are no restrictions to be observed relating to time or place. One can take to it at all times and everywhere. People of all casts and creeds, high and low, rich and poor, men and women alike, can chant the Name under all conditions. People are mad after some thing or the other like wealth, women, fame and power in the world. Let me be mad after Thee, O Lord! May my tongue be ever engaged in the repetition of Thy holy Name, although people may jeer at me as mad or condemn me as a sinner. I am wallowing in the mire of this miserable mundane life. Pray, quickly grant me devotion so that I may forget the world and remain absorbed in Thee. Why dost Thou delay in blessing me, O Hari Nārāyaṇa!

Great *Yogīs* ever meditate on Thee with one-pointed mind and enjoy the bliss of *Samādhi*. They are known as the Paramahāsas who are able to discriminate between the real and the unreal and drink the nectar of Bliss in this world like swans which are able to suck only the milk out of a vessel with water and milk mixed together. Now I too aspire to attain liberation and like them, enjoy eternal

bliss by realizing the supreme Brahma. But I lack the necessary qualifications to attain this realization. My mind is not pure or sharp enough to see and experience *Brahma* or God, the one all-pervading Reality behind everything in this universe as revealed in the *Bhagavadgītā*, *Rudragītā*, *Brahmagītā* and other holy scriptures. I do not have the keen and subtle intelligence necessary for studying these books on *Vedānta* and for the right understanding of the *Mahāvākyas* of the *Upaniṣads* such as *Tat-tvamasi* by which, one may have such realization. But there is nothing impossible for one who is a recipient of Thy Grace, O Lord! With Thy blessings I can successfully scale all spiritual heights. So, O Hari Nārāyaṇa, out of Thy infinite compassion have mercy on me and bestow Thy Grace so that I may reach my spiritual goal in this life itself and enjoy eternal Bliss.

A fallen Brahman called Ajāmila got frightened by the sight of the terrible, fierce-looking messengers of Death when they came to tie him with ropes in his last moments. He then uttered Thy holy name ñNārāyaṇaî by which his pet child was called, when, lo! Thy gentle, loving, sweet-looking servants suddenly appeared and rescued him out of the hands of Deathís messengers. So powerful is Thy holy Name to save souls! Similarly, O Hari Nārāyaṇa! may I also chant Thy divine Name in my last moments and let me be taken to Thy abode by Thy divine messengers!

None, O Lord, can fathom Thy inscrutable and mysterious workings. The Pāñḍya King Indradyumna was deeply devoted to Thee. But you had him cursed by sage Agastya. As a result of the curse, the King was born as an elephant in his next birth. And when he was freely roaming about in the forests with his elephant queens and companions, he was caught unawares in a river by a powerful crocodile

who in his previous birth was a Gandharva but who too by a curse became a crocodile. After a long struggle between the two the elephant and crocodile both were subsequently liberated by Thy divine touch. King Khaṅṅa ga was given *Mokṣa* by Thee in the brief space of a *Muhūrta* (an hour or so). Wonderful is the power of Thy *Līlā*. Thy Grace is bestowed on people without any cause. There is no law governing Thy Grace. So deign to pour Thy Grace on me, O Hari Nārāyaṇa and grant me immediate liberation out of pure compassion.

In your *Avatāra* as >r Kāṅṅa the proud warrior Jarāsandha fought with Thee and was routed seventeen times. Pretending weakness and defeat You escaped from the battle through fight on the eighteenth occasion. Nevertheless, You used the fiery weapon known as Āgneyāstra to dry up the ocean itself in your *Avatāra* as Rāma, when, in spite of Your prayers, the sea-god did not co-operate with You and allowed the sea to obstruct Your march to Lanka with the monkey hosts to fight with Rāvāṅṅa! Who can measure your power? Mysterious is Thy *Līlā*, O Hari Nārāyaṅṅa! I simply bow to Thee!

Again, when S tā was taken away by the wicked Rāvāṅṅa, You wept over the loss like an ordinary householder and spoke to Your brother Lakṅṅamaṅṅa about Your pangs of separation from Your beloved. But in Your incarnation as Kāṅṅa, You made the simple-minded *Gopīs* of Brindaban, who had given their hearts to You, undergo the agony of separation from You. As Kāṅṅa, You played O Lord, in the *Mahābhārata* war, the part of a Charioteer for Arjuna, son of Indra. But as Rāma, You killed Vāl , who too was Indra's son, by shooting him with an arrow, hiding from behind a tree. Who can comprehend Thy ways, O Lord! Although Thou art all-pervading in the world, Thou art

perceived only by a few as Thy presence is hidden as cinders are covered up by ashes. Even among the few who have knowledge of Thy all-pervading nature, those who truly benefit by that knowledge are rare. How can I, an ordinary, ignorant man, know fully Thy glory and greatness? Have mercy on me, O Hari Nārāyaṇa and grant me Thy vision out of pure Grace.

O Lord! Thy power and presence fill the whole universe. Thou dwellest in all beings. All beings in the world have Thee as their source. They depend on Thee for their existence. Thou art the substratum of everything in the universe. Thou alone existest by Thyself, ever free. Thou art the *Antaryāmi* who dwells in everything like a string that passes through all the beads of various colours in a rosary. Thou art hidden behind everything in the universe, as fire is hidden in all pieces of wood.

Thou art incomprehensible, O Lord! The sages describe Thee as Thy infinite glory impresses them from time to time. No one can describe Thee as Thou art. The sages worship Thee through *Nāda-Brahma* or the sound of the Word of God. Thou dwelleth in the hearts of *Yogīs* in the form of pure *Ānanda* or bliss. Thou art also in the forms of all the sacred scriptures like the *Gītā*. I bow to Thee! O blissful Lord Hari Nārāyaṇa!

The sense of duality, with all its attendant miseries, springs from delusion. One thinks that one is different from God because of the ignorance born of delusion. This is the root of all worldly sorrows and sufferings. If this *Moha* is removed, one realizes one's unity with *Brahma* and enjoys eternal bliss and freedom. I pray to Thee, O Lord, to free me from this delusion and grant me true knowledge and realization of my oneness with Thee.

Just as by the proper tuning of the different strings in

a musical instrument and playing on it, melodious music is produced, so also, on realizing the supreme, in a flash, all the different names and forms unite and merge in the *Pranava*, the *Ekākṣara Ó Om Ó* which represents the ultimate Truth. I bow to that supreme God-head who is all-pervading, extremely subtle and indivisible like ether.

O Lord, remove all the obstacles in my path of God-realization. Purify my heart by purging it of the eightfold defects Ó lust, wrath, greed, desire, pride, jealousy, hatred and ego-sense. Let my mind become pure and fit for the practice of *Yoga*, by which I may raise the *KufĀlin*, piercing the *Ṣaṭcakras* or six centres, to the *Śāhasrāra* and realize the bliss of Supreme *Brahma*.

The light of the sun and fire, that illumines the objects of the external world, is seen by the physical eye. But to discern different objects, the mind also must work along with the senses. If the mind is preoccupied with something else, an object which is even very close to the eye cannot be known. Thus the mind is the internal eye which enables the outer eye to perceive things. Now, for the mind too to function, it must derive its power from the *Ātmā* or Self. The mind cannot see without the light of the *Ātmā* activating it. Hence the *Śrutis* say: ìThe *Ātmā* is the Eye of the eye.î

Thus the light of the Self alone is the light of all lights, the ultimate source of all knowledge. I am that self-effulgent light of the *Ātmā*. There is no end to my happiness. When this knowledge is fixed steadily within oneself, where is the need to seek other forms of happiness? What other *Ānanda* or Bliss can be superior to this, which is infinite and eternal? I bow to Thee! O Hari Nārāyaṇa, whose being is this *Ānanda*. Pray, confer on me this supreme awareness that I am *Brahma*, the Light of all lights.

Godís grace is the source of *Jñāna*. It is by the grace

of *Īśwara*, the supreme Lord of the universe, that knowledge dawns in our heart. He looks after our *Yogakṣema*, He preserves whatever has been attained by us and gives us what remains to be acquired. By the will of *Īśwara* in the form of *Guru*, may the gods in heaven and earth bless me so that I may describe the glories of *Hari-Nāma*.

It is rare to get birth as a human being and rarer to be endowed with a mind turned to God. He who does not aspire for liberation even after gaining human birth is called by the sages as *Patita*, a fallen one. Therefore, O Hari Nārāyaṇa, bless me that I may remember Thy holy name till death. It is said in the scriptures that one's future is determined in accordance with one's last thought at the time of one's death. The example given is the life of Jaṭā Bharata, who was born as a deer because, at the time of his death, he thought of the pet deer to which he was so much attached in his *Āśrama*.

>r is the power of Lord Viṣṇu. She is the *Prakṛti*, who in the form of the triple *Guṇas*, causes all activities in the world. >r is also the power of wealth and prosperity. There is no movement of the senses without the play of the *Triguṇas*. But the *Prakṛti* and our attachment to it continues only till the dawn of *Jñāna*, which leads to *Mukti*. When the work of *Prakṛti* continues after the dawn of *Jñāna*, the *Jñānī* is not bound by it. He remains detached a pure witness of the play. A liberated soul acts without any sense of difference between activity and inactivity. I bow to Thee! O Hari Nārāyaṇa, who art the indisputable Master of *Karma* and *Jñāna*.

Bubbles appear on the surface of the ocean and dissolve in it. Similarly, *Jīvas* undergo births and deaths, assuming and discarding bodies. *Mokṣa* is the state of eternal freedom from births and deaths. It is attained by the grace of God

on the cessation of all good, bad and mixed *Karma*. To obtain His grace, devotion is indispensable. Therefore, O Hari Nārāyaṇa! may my devotion to Thee grow more and more intense so that I may win Thy Grace by worshipping Thee.

Ó Rendered by Balaji



Those who are neither intensely attached to the worldly things nor intensely dispassionate but at the same time experience a sense of joy in thinking of God, the path of *Bhakti* is prescribed.

—Śrīmad Bhāgavata

How can be mind become pure unless the heart melts in love, hairs stand on end all over the body and eyes get flooded with tears of joy, of what use are austerities and learning if *Bhakti* be lacking?

—Nārāyaṇīyam

Nectarean Bliss of Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava

श्रीकृष्णके प्रेमोद्गार—श्रीराधाके प्रति

हे वृषभानुराज-नन्दिनि! हे अतुल प्रेम-रस-सुधा-निधान!
गाय चराता वन-वन भटकूँ, क्या समझूँ मैं प्रेम-विधान॥
ग्वाल-बालकोंके संग डोलूँ, खेलूँ सदा गँवारू खेल।
प्रेम-सुधा-सरिता तुमसे मुझ तप्त धूलका कैसा मेल?
तुम स्वामिनि अनुरागिणि! जब देती हो प्रेमभरे दर्शन।
तब अति सुख पाता मैं, मुझपर बढ़ता अमित तुम्हारा ऋण॥
कैसे ऋणका शोध करूँ मैं, नित्य प्रेम-धनका कंगाल।
तुम्हीं दया कर प्रेमदान दे मुझको करती रहो निहाल॥

Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Love-utterance to Śrī Rādhā

O delight of Prince Vaṅgabhānu, O matchless fount of the nectarean sweetness of Love, roaming about as I do from wood to wood pasturing cows, what can I know of the code of Love? Moving in the company of cowherd boys I always play rustic games. What affinity can I, who am no better than hot sand, have with you, a stream of nectarean Love? When, O queen bubbling over with Love, you vouchsafe to me your blessed loving sight, I derive excessive joy and my obligation to you grows beyond measure. How shall I be able to repay my debt, eternally destitute as I am of the wealth of Love? I look up to you alone to continue to bless me with gifts of Love out of (sheer) compassion.

Be Your Own Saviour

—Swami Chidananda

Radiant Immortal *Ātman!* Blessed and beloved children of the Lord! The *Gītā* contains the quintessence of our scriptures and spiritual lores. If you know the *Gītā* thoroughly and if you have studied it with a deeper perception, then there is no need of studying any other scripture, because the practical spiritual wisdom of all the scriptures is put into the *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*. Scholars are in a habit of saying that every *Śloka* is all important. Not a single *Śloka* is there which is not of a specific purpose. And some scholars have studied and made research in such a way that you cannot alter any one verse. If a certain word is used with a certain specific purpose, why has it been used and not another word? Because in Sanskrit sometimes the same meaning can be brought out by half a dozen different words. If you ask why another substitute or another alternative was not used in place of this word, they say there is a specific reason.

Today I wish to draw your attention to a very categorical injunction of the great world-teacher: *Uddharet ātmanatmanam.* In one context Lord Kṛṣṇa says to Arjuna, *“O Arjuna, this Self should be saved by the Self alone. You have to save yourself. You are your own saviour.”* You know our very orthodox Christian brothers, specially German Catholics; they have this as one of their cardinal doctrines that there is only one saviour that through Jesus Christ only, one can be saved, never through anyone else.

So, does this contradict that saying when He says that

you have to save yourself by yourself? It does not contradict. We also know that only the grace of God can liberate a person. They use the word Jesus and we use the word grace of God. Ultimately it is the same. The whole of Rāmaṇuja's philosophy is built upon this doctrine of *Prapatti*. *Prapatti* means the absolute surrender to the Divine by which alone one can be saved. Unless there is an absolute surrender, you cannot be saved. Yet, unless the individual himself makes the necessary efforts to accept his sins and determines to turn away from sins, repent for what he has done before and then appeal to Jesus and accept him as his personal saviour, "Come please, I accept you as my personal saviour, come and save me from sins" — unless he does it — even Jesus does not save him. So repent for your sins. Then He will call "Come unto Me. Through Me alone you can reach the Father." The first step has to be on the side of the individual. "I shall repent for the sins I have committed. I shall sin no more. You alone can save me. I accept you as my personal saviour." — this Jesus will not do for him; this is something which the individual has to do. When we accept that the Divine Law, the grace, is the only factor that can save us, yet to qualify for that saving one must accept the Lord as his only Saviour. All these steps: repentance, turning away from the old type of living, wanting to be saved and then accepting the Lord as the Saviour — these are the steps which one has to take for oneself.

Lord Kaṭṭha says that through *Abhyāsa* one can overcome all conditioning. One must, therefore, persist in doing the right type of exertion. *Abhyāsa* means continuous perseverance, persistent effort, without giving up, without accepting defeat. "I may succeed; I can succeed; I will succeed." — like this, go on making persistent effort. If that is done,

there is nothing that cannot be achieved. There is a very interesting saying in Hindi in Northern India *îKarata Karata abhyāsate jaḍamati hota sujānaî*; by constantly making effort even a dull person becomes wise. So man becomes divine if he persists in his effort without giving up. This is the very essence of *Abhyāsa*. And so the Lord says that one should practise this *Abhyāsa*. The results will come automatically by themselves. *Gurudeva* used to say, *îGuru can show you the way. Guru can inspire you. Guru can try to give you a little bit of enthusiasm and courage. But you will have to keep your feet yourself on every rung of the spiritual ladder. Guru cannot do Sādhanā for you. Sādhanā is Sādhaka's business.î*

This spiritual life, attainment of supreme Bliss, is a matter of sincere persistent effort, persevering effort. The lower self with its delusion, with its ignorance, with its darkness, attachments and bondage should be lifted up, to the awakened intellect, the *Buddhi*, i.e., the higher Self. Later on the spiritual consciousness itself becomes the great power that lifts you up. But until that spiritual consciousness is awakened it is the discriminating intellect, intellect that has become inspired by idealism, that is the great factor. Always this intellect should be allowed to predominate, that should be allowed to prevail. And this awakened intellect should be allowed to guide us and it should be inspired by *Svādhyāya*, going to saints, listening to their inspired instructions and advice. In this way, the intellect becomes more and more strengthened in its great desire to become ideal. And so through *Svādhyāya*, through *Satsaṅga*, through *Śravaṇa*, through inspiring talks, one must draw inspiration and strength. And such an intellect becomes the friend of the *Sādhaka*. It becomes the purified intellect. We call it *Śuddha Buddhi*, *Vivekātma Buddhi*, the *Buddhi*

that is now qualified by discrimination, spiritual discrimination. And this purified *Buddhi* becomes the uplifting factor within our own *Antahkaraṇa*. The lower mind, which is running after sense-objects and the delusion should be lifted up by the higher mind, that is the *Buddhi*, which has been purified by discrimination and higher spiritual qualities. Thus, you have to be your own saviour. This is the clear instruction of Lord Kāṣṭha.

Be up and doing, be full of self-confidence, be serene; ìWith the help of God I can achieve anything.î But self-confidence should not take the form of pride or arrogance. ìI can achieve anything but with the help of God.î That robust self-confidence only made Lord Hanumān to cross the ocean. But he did not arrogate this success to himself. He said, ìWith the power of *Rāma Nāma* what can I not do?î So his self-confidence as spiritual confidence was based upon absolute faith and trust in the Divine Name. So one should have this sort of self-confidence, not egoism. So with boldness, self-confidence and absolute trust in the Divine Power, one should exert in the right direction. Also the Lord says, ìThe uncontrolled self of the seeker is his own greatest enemy and the controlled self becomes his own greatest friend.î If you have to raise yourself by your own Self you must have self-control, you must be a *Sāmyamī*, you must have control over your senses, you must conquer impure desires. Then you will be able to uplift yourself by your own self.

Our Kingdom is not of this World

Men think that this world is the only reality. But there is something beyond this world and the reason man goes on being dissatisfied is that his kingdom is not of this world. Everything here is temporary and subject to change, governed by the illusion of time. When one becomes united with the Divine, there is no past, present or future. God alone is eternal.

Instead of talking about God, instead of reading about Him, now is the time to feel Him. The world will not know peace until man has learned to feel peace in God.

Man has to change himself before he can change the world. Unless and until we as individuals learn to live together as God's children, beholding the one creative Beam of light behind all forms, there will be division, war and misery. We must find God within and then with humility share with others His peace, love and harmony. As we strive in this way to serve as God's instruments, we should pray, "Lord! Thou art the Doer. Thy will be done." Humbly seeking the will of God does not imply idleness or lack of initiative and action: God helps him who helps himself. It means rather to surrender to God, that He may use you as His instrument to do good on earth according to His divine will.

Set aside time every day for meditation—deep, joyous communion with God. Out of the twenty-four hours in each day give one hour to the Divine Beloved. Wise is that man who takes to heart this advice. "Life is sweet and death a dream; joy is sweet and sorrow a dream, when Thy song flows through me." Thou art Wisdom. Thou art Bliss. Thou art Love. And That, dear ones, is your reality.

Ó Only Love



St. Lāhirī Mahāśaya

—*Shreedhar Singh 'Dayalpurī*

Lāhir Mahāśaya was born at Ghurni village in Bengal near Krishna Nagar in the Nadia district. His father's name was Gauramohana Lāhir and mother's name was Muktkashi. His full name was yāmācaraḥa Lāhiri. *Tantra Sādhaka* called him Lāhiri Mahāśaya. He was four years old. He was spiritual. He took part in meditation from his childhood. His village was under water by dint of flood. Therefore, his family members began to live in Varanasi. He was born in Bengal but he spent his life in Uttar Pradesh. In his student life he took part in playing. He had studied Sanskrit, Bengali, French and English. He was married to Kashimuni in 1846 who bore two sons and two daughters. In 1851 he was appointed in the Engineering Department of army on the post of an accountant at Danapur and retired in 1886. In the meantime his father passed away. He bought a building at Garureshwar. He used to give *Guru Mantra* of *ĕKriyāyogaī* to his disciples. He passed away on 26 September 1895.

It was spring of 1861. yāmācaraḥa Lāhir was working in army department on the post of an accountant at Danapur. All of a sudden he was informed that he was transferred to Ranikhet, where an office of army was established. According to the order of government, Lāhir reached Ranikhet and joined his post. He was attracted seeing lonely place. He used to go for walk on the mountain after finishing the office works in the evening. One-day he was walking on the mountain heard a voice Ó

ìLāhir ! come to me.î He was surprised. He went ahead. He saw a young ascetic who was smiling near cave. He said to him, ìI was calling you come and sit in the cave.î

When they entered into the cave, the young ascetic asked, ìLāhir !î are you knowing these articles?î

>yāmācarafa replied him in the negative and wanted to go from there. He said, ìI have some works in the office. I have to go.î The young ascetic smiled and told, ìThe office has been called for you, you are not for the office. I had sent telegram to your higher officer to call you.î The young ascetic said to him, ìYou should know these articles. He put his hand on his head,î >yāmācarafa memorised all articles by the grace of the young ascetic. He spoke, you are my *Gurudeva Bābājī*. You are mine. I have spent several last birth with you. This is my blanket and other articles. I knew all things by your grace. The young ascetic said to him, ìI had been waiting for you from thirty years. You died. I was always searching you. You were my disciple. *Guru* cannot forget his disciples. So I was watching your articles of meditation. It is necessary to purify you.î I give you something to drink. Drink it. He drank and bathed in the river of mountain. Lāhir was lying in the river according to the order of *Guru*. >yāmācarafa had forgotten himself. A person came to Lāhir and told him, ìLet us go. *Guru* is waiting for you.î They went to the forest. He walked and saw light. Lāhir asked his companion, ìIs it rising sun?î The companion said, ìIt is mid night. It is desire of your *Guru*.î

They reached near ascetic. The ascetic asked Lāhir , ìDo you want gold building?î Lāhir replied, ìNow I do not want gold building.î

According to the order of *Guru* >yāmācarafa meditated a week on the blanket. The young ascetic told, ìI give

you *īKriyāyoga*.¹ You have to preach among the people. You have to preach *ēKriyāyoga* among the people. Lāhir did not want to leave his *Guru*. But the young ascetic said, *īI am always with you. Wherever you call me, I shall appear.*¹

Ten days passed, *ṽyāmācarafa* reached office. People understood *ṽyāmācarafa* has forgot his way in the forest of Ranikhet. *ṽyāmācarafa* reached office of Ranikhet. He found a letter and read it *ó* *īYou had been transferred by mistake. You have to go Danapur soon to work in the office.*¹

Lāhir returned back to Danapur. In the way he stayed at Moradabad in a Bengali family. He was talking among the people about *Bābājī*, but Moitra Mahācāya did not believe in him. The present people demand certificate. Lāhir called the young ascetic. The room was lighted. The people were on the door. The young ascetic told, *īLāhir ! Have you called me for play? Spiritual truth is for spiritual person only. He prepared Halavā and all ate. The young ascetic disappeared soon.*

ī *ṽr* *ṽyāmācarafa* Lāhir *ís* book published in 1941. The second book *īYogānanda kī Ātmakathā*¹ is published in 1946. We can know the whole history of the life of Lāhir *j* to read the above mentioned books.



So everything that you do, do for God. As long as you live, spread truth and love *ó* be like little children, unafraid, simple and kind. Never mind how others behave.

—*Journey to Self-realization*

Read and Digest

Service of human being is service to God.

* * *

Rejoice in God's Bliss and serve others.

* * *

To win God is the ultimate victory.

* * *

The only way to attain salvation is to have complete loyalty to God. This dream of life will be taken away from you one day, the only thing that is real is the love of God. Nothing else, all are false dreams. Get away from them.

* * *

God is the most lovable being.

* * *

Ignorance means not using the power God gave you.

* * *

You are not flesh and blood. You are the light in this body. Immortality is caged in this little form.

* * *

This short season of life will be gone before you realize it. Reap the harvest of divine happiness that nothing can take away.

Gleanings from a Saint's Teachings

Never consider another to be the cause of your suffering. Suffering is always the result of one's own doings or faults.

Every event in one's life has a lesson to teach. The thoughtful imbibe the lesson and forget the incident. The thoughtless forget the lesson but keep cogitating about the event.

Pravṛtti is like the river whose flow takes one to the ocean of the world. *Nivṛtti* takes one to the source of the river and raises one above the ocean and the world of appearances. *Pravṛtti* is not only in action but also in thought and in enjoyment of states of consciousness.

As the wood, on being consumed by fire, merges in the fire, so does the servant merge in service, the devotee in the Lord, the lover in the Beloved, becoming one with the goal.

All that the *Sādhaka* can do or has to do consists in purifying his nature. *Yoga*, *Jñāna* and love shall fill the *Sādhaka's* consciousness the moment he has purified himself; for they are his real nature. They are only crowded out by our play in the world of senses.

We are but actors on the stage. Acting the part allotted is not the true life of man. Acting is only a game we play. One has only to step out of the stage, to realize his true nature.

So long as a single fault or desire subsists in our heart, that is tantamount to a myriad faults and desires; for a desire is a seed giving birth to many desires.

Renunciation and service of fellow-beings are two sides of the same coin. The thought aspect of service is renunciation; the active phase of renunciation is service.

As the pure water of a river, on being limited in a pit, gives rise to various germs and diseases, so does love, when confined into a body or a thing turn into *Moha* and gives rise to various evils.

A remorseful sinner is dearer to God than a *Yogī* proud of his *Yoga*.

Work for public weal makes for a beautiful world. *Nivṛtti* from all *Pravṛtti* resolves the world. *Nivṛtti* from *Nivṛtti* leads to realization of the Divinity of man.

A *Pravṛtti*-born desire, however sublime, is *Karma*; desirelessness is renunciation and to become His wholesale is surrender.

If you put the whole of yourself into your work, you will experience *Nivṛtti* after each *Pravṛtti*. Men ordinarily think of *Nivṛtti* while in *Pravṛtti* and of *Pravṛtti* in moments of *Nivṛtti*: hence they seldom experience true *Nivṛtti*.

Right action is better than wrong action; better than right action is the sense of non-doership. To surrender our actions, feelings and knowledge is the way to realize God. We cannot realize Him by surrendering only one of the three.

Tyāga and death amount to the same thing. Death of the body, however, causes fresh birth; whereas *Tyāga* unites one with God.

Tapas is the ending of all *Pravṛtti* which can be a source of harm to others. Service is the awakening of love for fellow-beings. Not to regard anything as ours is renunciation. To become entirely His is kinship with the Divine.

What is to be renounced? The *Sādhaka* has to renounce all those things which are perpetually renouncing him. Voluntary renunciation of these will not cause their remembrance through attachment. On the other hand, when they renounce us, our attachment to them causes remembrance of the same and prevents remembrance of Truth. Everything objective, including the body, is constantly renouncing us. Therefore, to realize that nothing outer or objective is ours or our true self and to detach ourselves from and rise above these is renunciation of untruth; and renunciation of untruth is the veritable lever of realization of Truth. The *Sādhaka* has to maintain the same relationship with the world as with his body; and the same with Truth as with his Self.

Just as in the dream-world the world of the wakeful state is left behind and the dream-world is left behind in the world of the wakeful state, so both these worlds are left behind in Self-realization; and the self can live without the world as in the dream-world one can live without the world of the wakeful state and vice versa.

Remembrance of one is dis-remembrance of another. Our remembrance of God is incomplete unless it makes us turn our back on all else. The reason why many of us obtain poor results from reciting Godís name etc., is that our *Japa* etc. is not wholehearted. Complete action merges in *Bhāva* and, complete *Bhāva* in *Jñāna*.

Just as a piece of cloth is cleansed by eradication of the non-cloth elements polluting the cloth, so the heart is purified by eradication of the outer elements infesting it.

Suffering borne willingly and cheerfully, without resentment, is transformed into *Tapas*. Suffering as such exhausts the result of evil actions; whereas *Tapas* cuts at the root of evil actions themselves.

As food and water is the food of the body, so is

Satsaṅga the food of the soul. *Satsaṅga* is the best aid to the awakening of *Viveka*, which in fact distinguishes man from the animal. *Satsaṅga* can be had through the fellowship of saints and devotees of spiritual literature and above all, of the all-pervading Divine through control of speech and outgoing thought, true inner solitude.

The following hints will be found useful by a spiritual apprentice Ó

1. Unswerving faith in oneís *Iṣṭa*;
2. Devotion to oneís *Swadharmā*;
3. Fidelity to such *Viveka* as is unveiled to one;
4. Good will for all;
5. Control of the senses;
6. Avoidance of aimless thoughts or brooding;
7. Not to repeat oneís past errors;
8. Making good use of time; and
9. *Tyāga* (renunciation).



The enlightened soul cannot remain hidden in the worldly garb. The flame of spirituality shines out in spite of coverings.

Ó *Swami Rama Tirtha*

Merge Your will in Divine Will

—*Swami Jyotirmayananda*

When an individual becomes the channel of Divine Will, he can accomplish things that are beyond human imaginations. Compared to this kind of will, which is potentially hidden in everyone, human will for little things is petty and oftentimes disgusting.

In the beginning, when you start to develop willpower, you have to discipline yourself to do little things successfully. You learn to will, and then to pursue what you have willed with sustained effort. Gradually, as you become more disciplined, you discover growing will within yourself and you are able to exercise your willpower in more complicated tasks.

It is similar to studying mathematics. Mathematical concepts are graded according to the level of education. When you study elementary mathematics, one set of concepts apply. But when you get to advanced mathematics, all the concepts that seemed so ironclad in the beginning are discarded and you see them in a different light.

Much in the same manner, the willpower you cultivate on the beginning level is only power in a relative sense. At the advanced level, your will becomes Divine will and your personality becomes just a channel of the Divine will operating through it. Human personality becomes just an instrument in the Divine hand.

To reach that goal, however, you must have a clear idea that what your ego wills, no matter how wonderful it may appear, is based on ignorance. By pursuing the ego's desires, you keep yourself involved in the wheel of birth and death.

On the other hand, when your goal is to transcend ego and to discover the Divine will within, then you reach the real source of joy—the bliss that lies within. And that should be your project.

In order to develop that type of will, your mind must experience day by day a sense of joyousness based upon surrender to God. Nothing goes wrong in the Divine plan. Knowing this, your mind should be permeated with joy and cheerfulness.

Another great quality one should develop is fearlessness. Do not be afraid, no matter what happens even in the worst of situations. There is the Divine power within you. God is there to sustain your personality. Not only should you practice fearlessness, but you should also radiate fearlessness.

Praying to God will develop purity of heart and lead you to your goal. *îTanme manaḥ śiva saṅkalpamastuî*—*ô* *î*May my mind be endowed with auspicious will.*î* This is a Vedic prayer that implies: *î*This mind that does amazing things, may it be endowed with auspicious *Saṅkalpa*—*ô* auspicious will. May it not waste its energy over petty things.*î*

Let your mind turn to these prayers as soon as you wake up in the morning. *îSarveṣaṁ swastir bhavatu sarveṣaṁ śāntir bhavatu, sarveṣaṁ pūrṇam bhavatu, sarveṣaṁ maṅgalam bhavatu.*—*î* They mean: *î*May there be auspiciousness or goodness for all; may there be peace for all; may there be happiness for all; may no one suffer!*î*

If you are treading the path of Self-realization, you will discover amazing power of will operating through your personality—the power that will destroy all your obstacles, that will sublimate the negative forces into positive ones and will enable you to do immense good to humanity.

Remembering God does not Add to His Greatness

If I repeat the Name, I live; if I forget I die;
It is difficult to repeat the true Name.
If man hunger after the true Name,
His pain shall depart when he satisfieth himself with it.
Then how could I forget it, O my mother!
If all men joined and tried to describe Him,
That would not add to or detract from His greatness;
He continueth to give us our
daily bread which never faileth;
His praise is that there neither is,
Nor was nor shall be anyone like unto Him.
As great as Thou art Thyself,
O God! So great are Thy gifts.
They who forget their spouse are evil persons.
Nānaka, without His Name they are naught.



Kedāranātha Dhāma

—Chaman Lal Gadoo

Kedāranātha Dhāma or Kedāreṅwara Jyotirli gam is the eighth Jyotirli gam of the Dwādaśa Jyotirli gamas of Lord Śhiva. Kedāranātha is a Hindu temple dedicated to Lord Śhiva on the Garhwal Himalayan range at an altitude of 3,583m (11,755ft), near the Mandākin River in Uttarakhand. Lord Śhiva is worshipped as Kedāranātha, the ěLord of Kedāra Khaṅṅa the historical name of the region. This ancient and magnificent temple is located in the Rudra Himalaya range, also called the Sumeru Parvata or Paṅca Parvata. The latter name is given to it because it has five peaks; Rudra Himalaya, Viṅṅfupura, Brahmapura, Udgarikānta and Swargārohif. It was on the last of these peaks that the four Pāṅṅeva brothers died, survived by only Yudhiṅṅhira and his faithful dog. Due to extreme weather conditions, the temple is open only between the *Akṣaya Trṅṅyā*, end of April, to *Kārtika Pūrṅṅimā*, the autumn full moon, usually November. During the winters, the *Vigrahas* (deities) from Kedāranātha temple are brought to Ukh math and worshipped there for six months.

Kedāranātha is one of the 275 *Pādal Petra Sthalams*, expounded in Tevaram. The temple is one of the four major centres in Cāra Dhāma pilgrimage of Northern Himalayas. There are five ěŚaiva Tīrthasī in Himalayas. First one is Paṅṅupatinātha (Nepal), second Jageṅṅwara (Kumaun), and third Kedāranātha (Garhwal), fourth Baijanātha (Himachal) and fifth Amaranātha (Kashmir).

According to Hindu Epic, during the *Mahābhārata*

war, the *Pāṇḍavas* killed their relatives; to absolve themselves of this sin, the *Pāṇḍavas* undertook a pilgrimage. But Lord Viṅkara was away in Kailash in the Himalayas. On learning this, the *Pāṇḍavas* left Kashi. They reached the Himalayas via Haridwar. They saw Lord Viṅkara from a distance. But Lord Viṅkara hid from them. Then Dharmarāja said: 'Oh Lord! You have hidden yourself from our sight because we have sinned. But, we will seek you out somehow. Only after your *Darśana*, our sins will be washed away. This place, where you have hidden yourself will be known as Guptakāś and become a famous shrine.' From Guptakāś (Rudraprayāga), the *Pāṇḍavas* went ahead till they reached Gaurikūṭa in the Himalayan valleys. They wandered there in search of Lord Viṅkara. While searching for Lord Viṅkara, the *Pāṇḍavas* spotted a bull in a herd which was unique to look at. When the bull was closely followed by the *Pāṇḍavas*, he tried to escape. He went down into the earth, shedding the hump at Kedāranātha and other parts of the body at four other places; arms at Tunganātha, face at Rudranātha, belly at Madmahēkara and the locks of hair with head at Kalpēkara. All these five places have now famous Viṅkara shrines and are known as Pañcakedāra.

Inside the temple there is an irregular, three-faced *Liṅga*, representing the hump of Lord Viṅkara when he took the form of a bull. It is about 3m (9ft) long, 1m (3ft) wide and 1.3m (4ft) high. Pilgrims are allowed to touch the *Liṅga*, perform worship, *Abhiśeka* (bathe) and massage the *Liṅga* with ghee. In the temple is a Lakṣmī Nārāyaṇa deity, which was installed by Ādi Viṅkara. The temple faces South, which is a unique feature, as most temples face East.

At the entrance of *Garbha Grha* in the temple, is a statue of Nand facing Lord Viṅkara. Just before the *Garbha*

Gr̥ha an idol of Kedāra Gaur the consort of Lord Śiva is seen facing West while the *Jyotirlingam* of Lord Śiva is facing East. In the *Maṣṭapa* there are images of the *Pāṇḍavas* and their wife Draupad , Lord Kāṣṭha and Kuntī , the mother of *Pāṇḍavas*. Outside the temple in the open sky there is a majestic Nandi facing Śiva. There is small temple for Bhairava to the South of the main temple and at the Northeast corner there is a small temple of Śaṅkara Mahādeva. A path to the right of the temple, leads to the Bhairava temple, the guardian deity over the temple. Bhairava is the furious form of Lord Śiva. The *Samādhi* of Ādi Śaṅkara karācārya is seen behind the main temple, on the banks of the River Mandākinī . There is a small temple with Śaṅkara karācārya's Mūrti and a Śiva Lingam near the *Samādhi*. There is a marble staff behind the temple that commemorates the emblem of Ādi Śaṅkara karācārya. It is believed that Ādi Śaṅkara karācārya passed away in Kedāranātha. Just behind the Kedāranātha Temple is the Mahāpanth Trail (Gate of Heaven). It is said that from this place there is a path that goes North up to *Swargarohinī* (path to heaven). It is also said that the five *Pāṇḍavas* took this path after performing a huge *Yajña* (sacrifice).

According to the *Garhwāla Vikāsa Nigama*, the temple was built by Ādi Śaṅkara karācārya in the eighth century and so existed when the Little Ice Age of 1300-1900 AD came. The temple is 85 feet high, 187 feet in length and 80 wide. Its walls are 12 feet thick and built from extremely strong stones and stands on a six-foot high platform. In addition to the Kedāranātha Temple there are several other holy places nearby. Scientists point out that the period between 1300-1900 AD is known as little Ice Age when a large portion of the earth was covered by the snow. It is believed that during the period *Kedāranātha* temple and

neighbouring were covered by snow and became a part of glaciers. Although there is no documentary evidence regarding the age of Kedāranātha temple and by whom it was constructed, but there are several myths about its construction.

Kedāranātha was the worst affected area during the 2013 flash floods in North India. The temple complex, surrounding areas and Kedāranātha town suffered extensive damage, but the temple structure did not suffer any damage, apart from few cracks on one side of the four walls which was caused by the flowing debris from the higher mountains. A large rock among the debris acted as a barrier, protecting the temple from the flood. The surrounding premises and other buildings in market area were heavily damaged. The temple structure has been standing erect and facing nature's fury for the past 10 centuries and it is expected that the structure has the endurance to remain intact in the future as well.



The greatest Bane of human life is that being a human he feels the necessity of anybody or anything.

—Swami Sharanananda

ēTo realize God is the goal of life.í The goal is not money, not power, not scholarship. It is nothing but God.

ó Sri Ramakrishna

Significance of Sundarakāṇḍa

(Continued from July page 59)

Ó S. Subbarama Iyer

The *Vānaras* occupied a middle place between the Aryans and the *Rākṣasas*, both geographically and culturally. They practised sexual promiscuity like the *Rākṣasas*, which was anathema to the Aryans; but they did so only among themselves. They did not care to carry away by stealth or force women of other races as the *Rākṣasas* did. Vāl appropriated Sugr vaís wife after outlawing his brother on some pretext. To the accusation made by Vāl that Rāma Killed him without a cause, the latter replied that he did so by way of punishment for keeping his brother Sugr vaís wife. This was a crime, said Rāma, punishable with death according to the Aryan code, which under the suzerainty of Bharata Ó the Emperor of Ayodhya Ó he had come to establish among aliens. Further, though S tā was carried away by Rāvafa in the territory known as *Danḍaka* over which the *Vānara* king exercised jurisdiction, he did nothing to prevent the crime or help Rāma to recover his wife. It is true that Vāl told Rāma later that he would have helped the latter to recover his wife if he had asked for it; but Rāma knew better. Tainted as Vāl was with the same crime of keeping another manís wife, it would be incongruous for Rāma to seek the aid of Vāl to recover his wife from the clutches of the *Rākṣasa*. Sugr va, on the other hand, knew where the shoe pinched and would be, as he proved, a better help to Rāma than his naughty and voluptuous brothers. Even Sugr va forgot to redeem his pledge, soon after his coronation under the influence of

wine and woman, but Rāma pulled him up in time to a realization of his responsibility to keep the plighted word. Hanumān a great *Vānara* hero who suggested that he would carry her on his back to Kiṣkindhā commended Sītā when she said that she would not touch any person other than her lawfully wedded husband. Hanumān's reply was as follows (*Sundarakāṇḍa*, Canto 38, verses 4-5) ॐ

द्वितीयं कारणं यच्च ब्रवीषि विनयान्विते ।
 रामादन्यस्य नाहामि संस्पर्शमिति जानकि ॥
 एतत्ते देवि सदृशं पत्न्यास्तस्य महात्मनः ।
 का ह्यन्या त्वामृते देवि ब्रूयाद्वचनमीदृशम् ॥

That you would not touch anyone other than Rāma is a statement befitting the wife of that Mahātmā! Which woman other than you, O Jānak, will express herself to this effect.

In many other respects too the three civilizations differed from one another. Though the Aryans had their cities too say as centres of Government or of learning or of pilgrimage etc., they preferred country life and the best among them retired to forests with a view to cultivating the spiritual values of life.

The *Rākṣasas* preferred to live in cities as they afforded facilities for accumulation of wealth and leading magnificent material lives of luxurious self-enjoyment and sensual pleasure. The *Vānaras* naturally preferred to live in forests which they made their abode but did not use that environment to cultivate spiritual enlightenment. The city of *Kiṣkindhā* perched in the midst of forests was only a rendezvous for the rank and file of the *Vānaras* and the centre of Government of the *Vānara* kingdom. The Aryans placed spiritual excellence as their goal; the *Rākṣasas* hankered after accumulation of material possessions and sensual

enjoyment. The Vānaras did neither. But they cultivated an attitude of *Bhakti* or devotion to the object of their adoration in a disciplined manner. Hanumān, Jāmbavān, Sugr va, A gada and a host of Vānaras high and low, who took part in the search for S tā and the subsequent fight against the *Rākṣasas*, provide most splendid examples of duty and devotion to the cause of a Master of their choice who espoused the Aryan way of life against the one held by the *Rākṣasas*. In the weapons of warfare used too the three differed. The Aryans preferred to use Mantraic weapons (i.e. controlled and discharged by the use of *Mantras*). Rāma, for example, wielded the *Stambhaka Astra*, which killed in a few hours 14,000 soldiers who attacked him in the *Danḍaka* forest. He was initiated into it by the sage V <wāmītra. The weapon, when discharged, made the opponents motionless. The *Rākṣasas* specialized in the use of physical (Yantraic) weapons, though some of them like Indrajit knew how to use some types of Mantraic weapons like *Brahmāstra*. When the use of this by Indrajit against Hanumān was foiled when his *Rākṣasa* troops tied the victim with ropes, the former bewailed that the *Rākṣasas* knew nothing of the efficacy of *Mantraic* weapons. The *Vānaras* used natural weapons such as trees, rocks etc., which they wielded with great force on their enemies. The alliance between the *Naras* (represented by Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa) and the *Vānaras* was an event of great significance in the history of civilization. It resulted in the salvage of human virtues of truth, compassion and consideration for others, which were threatened to be destroyed by the *Rākṣasas* and in the triumph of spiritual as opposed to the materialistic outlook on life.

Reference may be made to the spiritual significance of *Sundarakāṇḍa*. The Hindu conception of life as revealed

in the *Vedas*, as taught in the *Purāṇas* and as illustrated in the *Itihāsas* (Epics) is briefly this: The phenomenal world as we see it as well as the numerous worlds beyond our ken are the resultant of the action of two forces, viz, *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*, which emanate from the same source, the Supreme Being (*Mahāpuruṣa*). The interrelation between *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* is thus succinctly brought out in the following verses of the *Bhagavadgītā* (Chapter XIII. Verses, 19-22)

प्रकृतिं पुरुषं चैव विद्ध्यनादी उभावपि ।
 विकारांश्च गुणांश्चैव विद्धि प्रकृतिसम्भवान् ॥
 कार्यकरणकर्तृत्वे हेतुः प्रकृतिरुच्यते ।
 पुरुषः सुखदुःखानां भोक्तृत्वे हेतुरुच्यते ॥
 पुरुषः प्रकृतिस्थो हि भुङ्क्ते प्रकृतिजान्गुणान् ।
 कारणं गुणसङ्गोऽस्य सदसद्योनिजन्मसु ॥
 उपद्रष्टानुमन्ता च भर्ता भोक्ता महेश्वरः ।
 परमात्मेति चाप्युक्तो देहेऽस्मिन्पुरुषः परः ॥

Know that *Prakṛti* Nature and *Puruṣa* Spirit are without beginning and know also that all forms and dispositions spring from *Prakṛti*. *Prakṛti* is said to be the cause of the formation of the body and its organs and *Puruṣa* is said to be the cause of the experience of pleasure and pain. For *Puruṣa* seated in *Prakṛti* experiences the dispositions of Nature. And it is attachment to these dispositions that is the cause of its birth in good and evil wombs. The spirit (*Jivātmā*) enclosed in the body is said to be the one who witnesses and approves, who supports and enjoys and who is the sovereign Lord and the highest spirit. 1

Again we read as follows in the same chapter (XIII. verses 32-33)

यथा सर्वगतं सौक्ष्म्यादाकाशं नोपलिप्यते ।
 सर्वत्रावस्थितो देहे तथाऽऽत्मा नोपलिप्यते ॥

यथा प्रकाशयत्येकः कृत्स्नं लोकमिमं रविः ।
क्षेत्रं क्षेत्री तथा कृत्स्नं प्रकाशयति भारत ॥

Just as ether that pervades all things is too subtle to be stained, even so the soul *Ātmā* that is present everywhere suffers no stain in the body. As the one sun illumines the whole world, so does the soul, O Bhārata, illumine all the bodies.

It is this conception of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* that is illustrated in *Rāmāyaṇa* in general and *Sundarakāṇḍa* in particular. S tā represented in her person the quintessence of *Prakṛti* in its noblest form all that is beautiful and beneficial and the spirit enclosed in her body is the *Jīvātmā*. *Prakṛti*, it may be noted, is likened to a female in Hindu mythology. Rāma may be said to represent the *Paramātmā* or universal Soul. S tā says on more than one occasions that her relation to Rāma is that of the rays to the sun, Hanumān too made the same observation when he saw S tā for the first time in *Aśoka Vana* that she was to Rāma what the rays are to the sun. This relation between the *jīvātmā* and *Pāramātmā* (S tā and Rāma) is brought out in the *Gītā* verse quoted above, which states that as the one sun illuminates the whole universe, so does the universal soul (*Paramātmā*) illumine all the bodies.

S tā the *Jīvātmā* got entangled in the clutches of *Rākṣasas* (sensual) forces. Though encased in a (*Sāttvika*) (beneficent) body and being in close union with the *Paramātmā* (Rāma), S tā (the *Jīvātmā*) had the misfortune to wish for a will-o-the-wisp in the form of a cleverly camouflaged golden deer in the forest. Her constant companion, Rāma, was sent away to capture the deer and the protector who was left behind (Lakṣmaṇa) had to leave owing to the scolding administered by her. The *Bhagavadgītā* points out that Desire (*Kāma*) and Anger (*Krodha*) born

of *Rajoguna* are the worst foes of mankind. S tā illustrates this statement in her person. When God, her constant companion, was thus removed, the tempter in the shape of *Rāvafa* (a medley of sensuousness and selfishness) stepped in and took possession of S tā's body. That is the lot of all who lose the presence or proximity of God, the protector of the soul, which is constantly subject to the temptations of the senses. In S tā's case, however, her spirit was strong and the mind unyielding, nurtured as they were in *Sattvism* (or beneficence) so that she was able to scorn the approaches of the tempter. But the mind and body alike of S tā underwent the ordeal of hell-fire in Lanka (the city of the senses) fanned by the *Rājasika* and *Tāmasika* forces in the form of *Rāvafa*, who wooed her and the *Rākṣasī* guards who kept watch over her in *Aśoka Vana*. Finally, after a period of intense suffering, succour came to S tā in the form of Hanumān the personification of *Buddhi* (intelligence) who established contact once again between S tā (the *Jīvātmā*) and Rāma (the *Paramātmā*) and acted as a medium to make the one pass on to the arms of the other in close union. It may be noted that the search for S tā was initiated by Rāma and it was through His grace that it was crowned with success as Hanumān himself, the head of the search party, admitted to the gathering *Vānaras* on his return from Lanka.

In crossing over to Lanka (the city of the senses) in search of S tā (*Jīvātmā*) from the proximity of his Master (*Paramātmā*), Hanumān (*Buddhi*) was subjected to three obstacles presented by the three *Guṇas*, viz., *Sattva* (represented by the Maināka Mountain), *Rajas* (represented by Surasā the mother of *Nāgas*) and *Tamas* (represented by Si hikā, the demon). He overcame all the three and reached his destination in record time, bent as he was upon

the search for S tā (*Jīvātmā*) said to be impounded and surrounded by *Raksasic* forces in the city of the senses (Lanka). At the entrance to the city, he was debarred by La ke<war (the force symbolizing *Prārabdha*), who was laid low with a blow of his fist (force). After entering the city, Hanumān made a thorough search for S tā in the likely places such as the *Antahpura* (where sensuality is concentrated for the benefit of its patron); but S tā was not found therein, being of a nature bent upon remembrance and realization of God. Though Hanumān saw with his own eyes in the *Antahpura* the play of sensualism at the worst— beautiful women sleeping by the side of their husband in all sorts of postures after dancing and drinking bouts— he reflected that he was not in the least moved by carnal attractions and moralized correctly that in such situations it is the mind that matters. His words are worth remembering: said he (*Sundarakāṇḍa*, Canto XI, verses 41-42):

कामं दृष्ट्वा मया सर्वा विश्वस्ता रावणस्त्रियः ।
 न हि मे मनसः किञ्चिद् वैकृत्यमुपपद्यते ॥
 मनो हि हेतुस्सर्वेषामिन्द्रियाणां प्रवर्तने ।
 शुभाशुभास्ववस्थासु तच्च मे सुव्यवस्थितम् ॥

I saw with my eyes all the faithful wives of Rāvaṇa, but there is absolutely no change (or commotion) in my mind. All the senses are made to work by the mind either for good or evil. Mine is still (i.e., unattached) as before.

After a good deal of disappointment and dejection caused by failure to locate S tā, Hanumān pulled himself up in the following memorable words (*Sundarakāṇḍa*, Chapter XII, verses 10-11):

अनिर्वेदः श्रियो मूलमनिर्वेदः परं सुखम् ।
 अनिर्वेदो हि सततं सर्वार्थेषु प्रवर्तकः ।
 करोति सफलं जन्तोः कर्म यच्च करोति सः ॥
 तस्मादनिर्वेदकृतं यत्नं चेष्टेऽहमुत्तमम् ।

Non-depression in failure is the root of prosperity; non-depression affords the greatest pleasure; non-depression accomplishes everything and it makes the efforts of all fruitful. Try and try again to achieve success and never get disheartened or despondent when failure overtakes you. This is a maxim which is applicable to spiritual pursuits as to any other. In spite of repeated early failures, Hanumān did discover S tā in the end in *Aśoka Vana*, which literally means a spot which is peaceful and free from sorrows except those induced by the presence of the *Rākṣasīs*.

After exchange of views on the forms and features of the *Paramātmā* as personified in Rāma, tokens of recognition were exchanged between the two (Rāma and S tā), Hanumān acting as a channel of communication for the same. The messenger assures Rāma on his return that S tā continued to remain pure and devoted to her Lord. He then recommends to Rāma the building of a bridge to cross to Lanka, the city of sense-enjoyment and contact S tā. Rāma accepts the advice of his devotee, comes down with all the benevolent (*Vānara*) forces, gives battle and destroys the malevolent (*Rākṣasa*) forces holding S tā in their grip. Thus, S tā (*Jīvātmā*) is saved through the grace and strength of Rāma (the *Paramātmā*) and reunited with her Lord.

In this drama of intense spiritual interest S tā's success was due to her single-minded devotion to her Lord which counted no grief, no suffering, no despair of any consequence for attaining reunion with her Lord, from whom she was separated by the cruel hand of destiny. In speaking about S tā, *Sundarākāṇḍa* again and again emphasizes that she continued to remember and reflect on Rāma (and his virtues) with all her heart (सर्वात्मना राममनुस्मरन्ती). This is the royal road to success in spiritual endeavour. Such is also the advice tendered by ṛ Kāṣya to his disciple Arjuna

on the battlefield of Kurukshetra. Says the Lord in *Gītā*, Chapter XII. Verse 8:ó

मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धिं निवेशय।

निवसिष्यसि मय्येव अत ऊर्ध्वं न संशयः॥

îFix the mind on Me alone, let Thy thoughts rest in Me. And in Me alone wilt Thou live hereafter, of this there is no doubt.î

May the spirit of S tā and the grace of Rāma and the devotion of Hanumān to the eternal coupleó S tā and Rāmaó permeate every fibre of our being and lead our *Ātmā* to the lotus feet of the Lord.

□□

One who does not crave even for immortality can attain Godó Love.

Even God is hungry for human love. He has bestowed upon us. This human life only for this very purpose.

This life is short, the vanities of the world are transient, but they alone live who live for others, the rest are more dead than alive.

—Swami Vivekananda

No Effort is Ever Wasted

—R. Krishnaswami Aiyar

We take much pains to acquire worldly knowledge and to secure bodily comforts. Similarly we must take pains to acquire knowledge about other worlds through a searching study of our *Śāstras*, about the means of reaching such worlds and also about the means of realizing the bliss of the Self and to put such means into practice. In this world the king punishes those who act against the laws of the state. The king rewards those who are helpful to him. Does the king award the fruits of deeds of spiritual merit or does he punish those who commit sins? The king can take notice only of the good and bad deeds in so far as they affect the state or the society and mete out rewards or punishments for them. The king does not take notice of acts which generate spiritual merit (*Puṇya*) or Demerit (*Pāpa*) which fructify only in other worlds. Nor can the king possibly attend to them. It is necessary to postulate the existence of God at least to give the fruits of such acts. What reward can a king give to one who performs the *Jyotiṣṭoma* sacrifice? God alone can give it. If the fame of having performed a sacrifice is itself the reward, what use is such a fame if he happens to die soon after the performance of the sacrifice and cannot therefore enjoy it? A man borrows heavily and runs away to Pondicherry. As that place is subject to another Government, the officers of this state can do nothing there. It is not possible for the king to punish such a man who has secreted all his monies and has cheated his creditors. If we are to take his having had

to leave his home itself as punishment for his fraud, what shall we say of such persons as take with them to Pondicherry their wives and children also and live quite a happy life there? How can this be a punishment for them? Do they not really deserve to be punished for their misdeeds? At least for this, that is, for awarding pain and pleasure to those who commit bad and good deeds, to whatever place they may go, we must accept the existence of God as the Rewarder and Punisher for the entire universe.

Further, do we get an employment at the very place where we had our education? Ordinarily, the place of education is one and the place of employment is another. Does the thief get his punishment at the scene of the theft? He steals in a house and undergoes his sentence in a prison. Similarly the place where *Dharma* and *Adharma* are done is one. The place where their fruits are experienced, Heaven or Hell, is elsewhere. Sometimes a thief is caught red-handed and is immediately beaten. Similarly there are some acute sins and there are some high and noble deeds which bear fruit even here. But ordinarily the result is experienced only in other worlds. Again, it may happen that a man by his deeds deserves a kind of misery experienceable by a dog. It cannot be experienced in this birth. Similarly it may happen that another man by his deeds deserves a kind of happiness which can be had by *Gandharvas* and the like. He cannot possibly enjoy it now in this birth. It therefore, stands to reason that we must accept as true these three, namely Ó God, other worlds and rebirth. We give the name of *Nāstika* to the person who denies the existence of all these three. We include among *Āstikas* even those who believe in any one of these three. We will behave properly if we know that there is a God who well knows

the deeds good and bad that we do and is capable of appropriately rewarding or punishing us for them. If, instead of assuming that the good and bad deeds will not come with us after Death, we believe that we must experience their fruits either in other worlds or in other births, even then our behaviour will be proper. If a person is afraid of going to a prison, he will not steal. Just as we fear the king believing that he will punish us if we commit any crime, we must fear God believing that He will certainly commit us to the prison, i.e., Hell if we act against *Dharma*.



Never get angry, never try to get even with anyone. And don't find fault with others; correct yourself. The whole world may mistreat you, but why should you mistreat yourself by wrong behaviour.

Ó Journey to Self-realization

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

Ó Sri Paramahansa Yogananda

The Boy, Devoted to His Mother

There was a small boy who always obeyed his mother. He liked to serve his mother and to provide comfort to her. He bore the little pain, which he had to suffer in serving his mother, happily.

Once his mother fell ill. The boy was engaged in serving his mother in every possible way. One night the mother called the boy and said, "Dear son, I am feeling thirsty. Bring me some water."

The boy hurriedly took a glass of water and approached his mother. But the mother had fallen asleep. The boy did not think it proper to disturb her sleep. So he remained standing by her bed with a glass of water. He was waiting for the time, when his mother should wake from sleep. But he remained standing there throughout the night because his mother was sleeping soundly and she did not wake up till next morning.

Next morning when she woke up, she saw that her son was standing silently with a glass of water in his hand, by her bed. The mother's eyes filled with tears of love and she said, "Dear son! Why did you remain standing here throughout the night?"

The son said, "Dear mother! You remained awake for me hundreds of nights. If I remained awake for you only for a single night, what does it matter?"

The Blessing of Love

—*Rajendra Behari Lal*

Literature abounds in great examples of love. The *Rāmāyana* depicts ideal love between husband and wife, father and son, between brothers; between master and servant, between a king and his subjects. Love is the foundation of all family life and true friendship. It is obvious that the structure of social life is largely based on love. Not so obvious, perhaps, is the great part that love plays in many other spheres of human life.

Love distinguishes man and the higher animals from the lower forms of creation. The springs of all order and progress, culture and civilization lie hidden in this emotion of love. It inspires man to deeds of heroism and self-sacrifice. It is the cement which holds the edifice of society. In its lower forms of courtesy, good manners and tact, it lubricates human contacts and promotes collective effort; in its highest form it rises to the heights of godliness.

In the realm of religion and philosophy, one of the greatest truths is that whatever exists is one, though wise men perceive it differently. To realize the oneness of all that exists, the aspirant has to extend his field of consciousness so that it may gradually embrace the entire universe. He must realize his kinship with nature, with his surroundings and his fellowmen. He must learn to see God everywhere and in everything. In other words, he must practise love towards all by thought, word and deed. Love is the essence of every true religion.

An ancient Indian *Rṣi* has enjoined that: ॐ

With everything, whether it is above or below, remote or near, visible or invisible, Thou shalt preserve a relation of unlimited love, without any animosity and without a desire to kill. To live in such a consciousness while standing or walking, sitting or lying down till you are asleep, is *Brahma Vihāra* or in other words, is living, moving and having your joy in the spirit of *Brahma*.¹

An English poet has expressed the same sentiment as follows²

He prayeth well who loveth well
 Both man and bird and beast.
 He prayeth best who loveth best
 All things both great and small;
 For the dear God who loveth us,
 He made and loveth all.

Are you in search of happiness? Who is not? Then the best and perhaps the only way to true and lasting happiness is to give happiness to others; and this is only possible if you love the people with whom you live and work. Love, however, should not be treated as a mere empty sentiment, but should be translated into action, into words and deeds of kindness. Are you prone to frowns and grumbling, nagging and fault-finding, bossing over people, contradicting them and trying to make them do things in your own way? If so, replace frowns with smiles and fits of temper with words of kindness, encouragement and praise. Employ a soft, kindly tone; for a harsh, sharp or frictional tone of speaking may hurt as much as the words used. Learn to see goodness, usefulness and beauty in others; love them as yourself. Put yourself in their position and try to feel about things as they do. This will give you a new vision whereby the faults and follies of men will be seen by you in a truer light. There are many

little acts of courtesy and kindness which will help to lighten other peoples' burdens and illumine the gloom of their lives with a little cheer and happiness. Do not reserve your smiles, kind words and deeds, colour and charm for special occasions or for strangers only, but distribute them freely to your friends, to your family, to the poor and sorrowful, to the joyous and prosperous, to your employees and employers and to everyone you meet.

Love is twice blest; it blesses him that loves and him that is loved. Love is a fountain of joy and there is no happiness like that of being loved by others. The key to happiness is to love others and to be loved by them. Love will bring sunshine and hope even in those lives which are darkened by poverty, sorrow or suffering. 'Thou shalt gain by giving away,' says the *Upaniṣad*, so even if you have not much of material wealth to give away, give lavishly kind thoughts, sweet smiles, words of appreciation, sympathy and encouragement. Scatter flowers of love as you go along the road of life and abiding happiness cannot fail to be yours.

Psychologists say that interest is the biggest aid to the higher mental functions like concentration, memory and imagination. It is also the best way of mobilizing the vast hidden resources of the subconscious mind. But what is interest? Nothing but love of a topic or branch of study. If you love mathematics, if you take a keen interest in it, your mind will concentrate naturally and without much effort on mathematical problems. The concentration, created and sustained by love, will mean that all the powers of your mind will be brought to bear, in a unified form, upon the subject of study and will illumine it as nothing else could and will bring to light details and aspects of it which would have otherwise remained unnoticed. Intensive love

of a subject is the secret not only of memory but also of originality. Psychology has not yet been able to discover all the conditions which are necessary and sufficient for the creation of new ideas, but this much is definitely known that deep interest in a problem stimulates originality, for it enables a man to keep the problem revolving in his head whereby it is soon driven into his subconscious mind, where it lies dormant for some time, until one day, perhaps all of a sudden, a new idea, the much wanted solution, emerges into the working mind like a flash. Therefore, to the student or brain worker, who is desirous of mastering his studies or solving his problems, the advice is; love your studies, problems or tasks intensely, take deep interest in them, give them plenty of thought, Love, in the form commonly known as interest, is undoubtedly one of the secrets of mental efficiency.

Are you aspiring for success and advancement in your vocation? If so, you must love your job, you must love the place where you work, you must love your fellow workers and also those placed above and below you in the organization. Instead of always complaining against your station, concentrate your thoughts on its good points and look upon it as an optimist. If your work is hard and troublesome, then too you must like it, for love will not only take the drudgery out of it and transform it into a joy, but will also pave the way to your getting a more congenial job; for when you love your work, you are likely to do it better and therefore, likely to get promoted sooner than if you did not take an interest in your work. Difficulties should be looked upon as opportunities, for they toughen your fibre and draw out your hidden reserves of power; therefore, the more difficult your job, the more magnificent the opportunity for developing your manhood or womanhood.

Perhaps your function is to enforce discipline in an organization and get work out of large numbers of people. If so, the best way, again, is through love, for as an old poet has sung, "It is better far to rule by love than fear." Loyalty and discipline based on love will increase your powers and output manifold. On the contrary, unpleasant relations with fellow workers, friction in your organization, will wear down the human machine faster than actual hard work. Tact, which avoids giving pain to others, merely keeps the machinery well oiled, but love is the electricity which can actually drive the machinery for you. There is no force so potent as love for generating enthusiasm and harnessing the energies of men. Popularity, essential for both happiness and success, is well worth striving for.

The principle of love is of universal application. Among inanimate objects, it manifests itself as gravitation and it is not without significance that the force of gravitation is not one of repulsion but of attraction, whereby it makes for order in the universe and even the fast moving heavenly bodies keep to their regular paths.

Poets have sung of love at first sight. But both psychology and the experience of everyday life tell us of another kind of love which does not spring up at first sight, but develops in course of time, with difficulty and effort. While some objects naturally arouse our love, there are many others, for which our love has to be cultivated assiduously. In fact, most of the objects worthy of our love belong to the latter category and it is just as well to know that things, which are uninteresting and unattractive by themselves can be made pleasant and charming if we keep pegging away at them for some time. It may be stated as a law of efficiency that as knowledge or skill increases, so does our love for the subject or work. Therefore, since

effort promotes efficiency, it also thereby increases our love for the object of pursuit. In life acquired love is no less valuable than spontaneous love.

Another important thing worth remembering about love is that to be of any practical use, it must be focussed on a few selected objects. It cannot be that you will love everything in general and nothing in particular. If your love is to bear fruit, it should be concentrated on a few wisely chosen objects, whose pursuit will develop your faculties, give you pleasure and at the same time benefit mankind. You may make the circle of your love as wide as you like, but at its centre there must be a few objects on which all the depth and intensity of your love will be gathered, whether they be the acquisition of knowledge or skill, pursuit of the fine arts or science, service of your country or deeds of philanthropy.

In short, from the moment a man wakes up in the morning until he goes to bed at night, the supreme secret of happiness, success and godliness is to love unceasingly—love the dawn that ushers in another day, love the family, the old parents and little children, not excluded, love the work, love the fellow workers, love the neighbours and friends, love the fresh air and love the sweet rest of the evening. There can be no higher religion than to love as manifestations of God the human beings who come in contact with you, the work you are required to do and the environment in which you are placed. There can be no higher duty than to love your countrymen—if not all humanity—and serve them with every ounce of your energy. Let us build a better and happier world by infusing more of love in our homes and schools, offices and factories and in every sphere of our work.

A Devotee's Benediction

मुक्तिर्हि नाम परमः पुरुषार्थ एकस्तामन्तरायमवयन्ति यदन्तरज्ञाः ।
किं भूयसा भवतुसैव सुधामयूखलेखाशिखाभरणभक्तिरभङ्गुरा वः ॥
राकेन्दोरपि सुन्दराणि हृदयग्राहीणि बालाङ्गना-
मुग्धालापकथामृतादपि परं हारीणि हारादपि ।
अप्युत्तालशिखालबालवचसः सम्पूर्णकर्णामृत-
स्यन्दीनि त्रिजगद्गुरोःस्तुतिकथासूक्तानिपुष्पान्तु वः ॥

(The *Stutikusumāñjali* III. 44, 58)

Indeed *Mukti* (freedom from birth and death) has been proclaimed to be the one supreme object of human pursuit. But men knowing the greatness of Devotion account such *Mukti* a hindrance; it is needless to say more. May you be blessed with that Devotion to Him whose crown is adorned with the crescent.

Lovelier than the full-moon, more alluring to the heart than the nectar of the sweet talk of young girls, more captivating than a necklace, dripping more ear-filling nectar than the lispings of one's child of dancing locks,—may the charming words glorifying the Father of the three worlds nourish you.

The Glory of Speech

मृषा गिरस्ता ह्यसतीरसत्कथा
 न कथ्यते यद् भगवानधोक्षजः ।
 तदेव सत्यं तदु हैव मङ्गलं
 तदेव पुण्यं भगवद्गुणोदयम् ॥
 तदेव रम्यं रुचिरं नवं नवं
 तदेव शश्वन्मनसो महोत्सवम् ।
 तदेव शोकार्णवशोषणं नृणां
 यदुत्तमश्लोकयशोऽनुगीयते ॥

(*Bhāgavata* XII. 12. 48-49)

The speech that betakes not itself to extolling the attributes of God, treat it as profane, false and worthless. On the other hand, the words that narrate His attributes and glory are real, propitious, virtuous, sweet and pleasant; they bring fresher and newer flavour and unceasing delight to the mind and dry up the very ocean of man's sorrow.

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