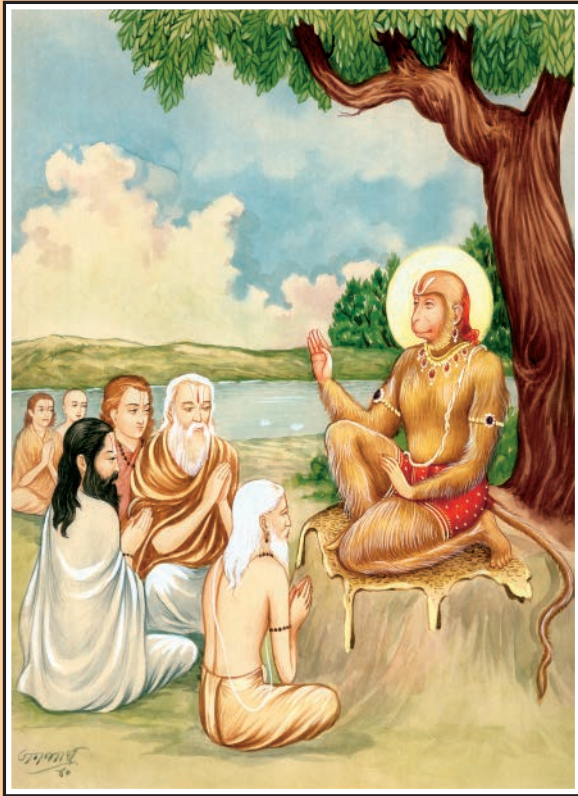


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Price: ₹ 6

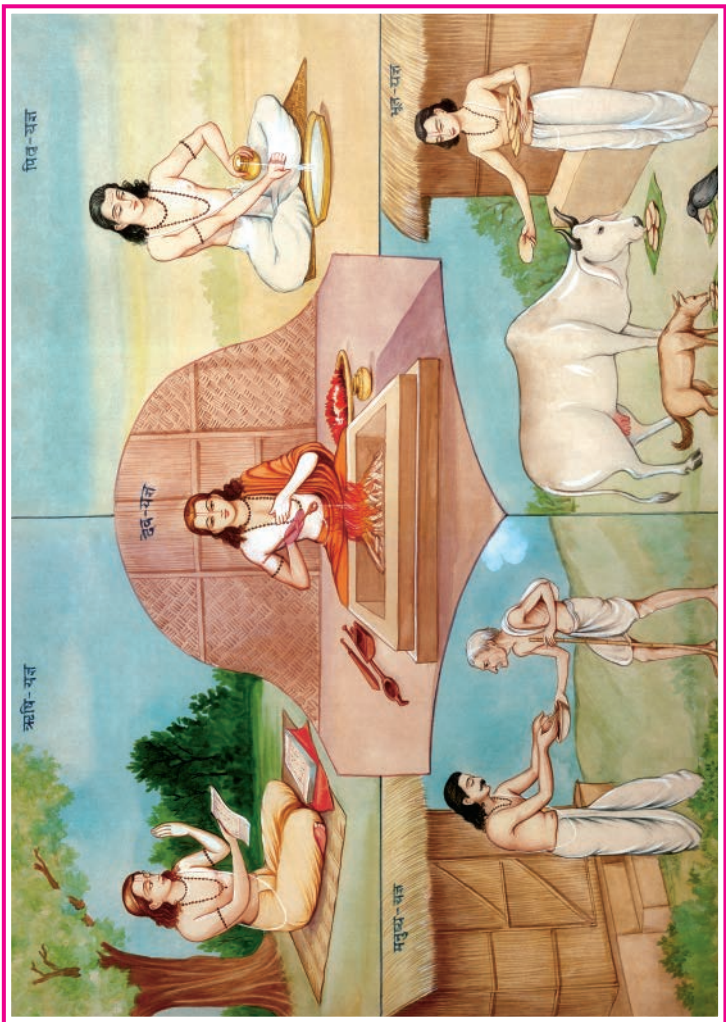


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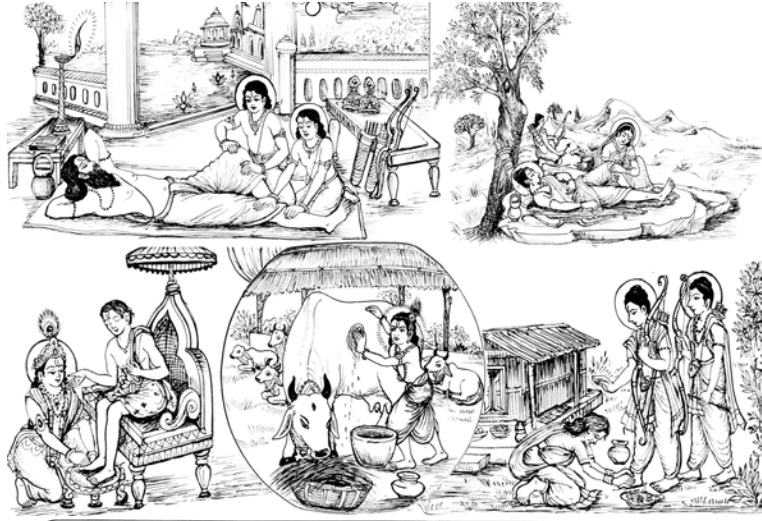
Vol. 63
No. 12

Gita Press, Gorakhpur

September
2018



ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



KALYANA-KALPATARU

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

Vol. 63

September 2018

No. 12

Subhāṣitam

सा भार्या या प्रियं ब्रूते स पुत्रो यत्र निर्वृतिः ।
तन्मित्रं यत्र विश्वासः स देशो यत्र जीव्यते ॥

She is the real wife who speaks sweetly, he is the true son with whom father feels at ease, he is a real friend who can be trusted and that is the true abode where we can make our living.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Pañca Mahā Yajña
2. Parama Guru Māruti (Cover)

Subscription

Inland—

Annual ₹ 140

Abroad—

Annual ₹ 1800

Air Mail US \$ 30

Bank collection charges US \$ 6 Extra

websites: 1. www.kalyana-kalpataru.org 2. www.gitapress.org

e-mail: booksales@gitapress.org

Editor—**Keshoram Aggarwal**

Co-Editor—**Dr. Prem P. Lakkar**

Printed and Published by **Jagdish Prasad Jalan** for Gobind Bhawan Karyalaya

Gita Press, Gorakhpur (India)

Right Activity is Essential

—*Brahmalina Sri Jayadayal Goyandka*

Respect for Elders—

Our ancient scriptures show that the cultivation of obedience to, and the worship and service of parents and other elders, are also principal aspects of Hindu culture. The *Śrutis*, *Smṛtis*, *Gītā*, *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Itihāsas*, *Purāṇas* and the other sacred books, all go to confirm this in unmeasured terms. The study of these references brings horripilation to the body and delights the heart. Śrī Rāma, Śrī Lakṣmaṇa, Śrī Bharata and Śrī Śatrughna, etc., are considered our ideal, so far as this aspect of Hindu culture is concerned. The sentiments they gave expression to in regard to this, are exceptionally high and noble and provide inspiration to all.

The *Adhyātma-Rāmāyaṇa* says that Śrī Rāmacandra, when going to the forest, spoke to mother Kaikeyī as follows—

पित्रर्थे जीवितं दास्ये पिबेयं विषमुल्बणम्॥

सीतां त्यक्ष्येऽथ कौसल्यां राज्यं चापि त्यजाम्यहम्।

(II. 3. 59-60)

“For the sake of my father, I can lay down my life, can quaff the strongest poison and can renounce *Sītā*, *Kausalyā* and even the Kingdom.”

Similarly, the sentiment of worship expressed by Bharata was also typical of him. The *Rāmāyaṇa* of Vālmikī describes that on his way to Chitrakuta, Bharata and his attendants were entertained with great respect by sage Bharadwāja who by his supernatural power created all things, palace, throne, tents and other articles of luxury

necessary for a royal reception, but Bharata felt no attraction for them. Mentally regarding his own Deity as being placed on the throne, he offered worship to Him and bowed before Him—

तत्र राजासनं दिव्यं व्यजनं छत्रमेव च ।
 भरतो मन्त्रिभिः सार्धमभ्यवर्तत राजवत् ॥
 आसनं पूजयामास रामायाभिप्रणम्य च ।
 वालव्यजनमादाय न्यषीदत्सचिवासने ॥

(II. 91. 38-39)

“Bharata observed there a fine throne, near which were placed the regal marks of *Cāmara* and Umbrella and mentally regarding Śrī Rāma as seated on it, went round the throne followed by his ministers. Thinking, again, that Śrī Rāma was placed on the throne, he made obeisance to the latter and worshipped the throne as well. And thereafter, taking the *Cāmara* in hand, he occupied a seat intended for a minister.”

In the end, also, when he heard from Śrī Hanumānjī the happy report of Śrī Rāma’s imminent return to Ayodhya, overwhelmed with joy and placing Śrī Rāma’s wooden sandals on his head, he at once came out to meet the Lord. Describing this incident, sage Vālmīki writes—

आर्यपादौ गृहीत्वा तु शिरसा धर्मकोविदः ।
 पाण्डुरं छत्रमादाय शुक्लमाल्योपशोभितम् ॥

प्राञ्जलिर्भरतो भूत्वा प्रहृष्टो राघवोन्मुखः ।
 यथार्थेनार्घ्यपाद्याद्यैस्ततो राममपूजयत् ॥

ततो विमानाग्रगतं भरतो भ्रातरं तदा ।
 ववन्दे प्रणतो रामं मेरुस्थमिव भास्करम् ॥

(VI. 127. 17-18, 36, 38)

“Placing on his head, the wooden sandals of his elder brother, Śrī Rāmacandra, the righteous Bharata took with him a white umbrella, adorned with garlands of white flowers, and a white *Cāmara*, studded with gold, and worthy of kings. Then, with intense delight in his eyes, he looked up to Śrī Rāmacandra and stood facing the latter, joining both his palms in adoration. Even from a distance, he offered worship to Śrī Rāma, through *Arghya*, *Pādya*, etc., and bowed before the latter with humility (In the meantime, the aerial car, under Śrī Rāma’s instruction, descended to the earth and the Lord invited Bharata into it). Entering that huge aerial car, Bharata, in the course of obeisance, fell prostrate at the feet of Śrī Rāmacandra, looking like the veritable sun placed on the Mount Meru.”

The *Adhyātma-Rāmāyaṇa* records that when Śrī Bharatajī and the mothers reached Chitrakuta, Śrī Rāmacandra bowed before His elders—

रामः स्वमातरं वीक्ष्य द्रुतमुत्थाय पादयोः ।
 ववन्दे साश्रु सा पुत्रमालिङ्ग्यातीव दुःखिता ॥
 इतराश्च तथा नत्वा जननी रघुनन्दनः ।
 ततः समागतं दृष्ट्वा वशिष्ठं मुनिपुङ्गवम् ॥
 साष्टाङ्गं प्रणिपत्याह धन्योऽस्मीति पुनः पुनः ।

(II. 9. 9-11)

“Observing his mother, Śrī Rāma at once got up from His seat and bowed before her and the latter full of tears in her eyes pressed the son to her bosom. Thereafter the Lord of Raghus offered similar obeisances to His other mothers. Then, seeing the great sage Vasiṣṭha coming towards Him, Śrī Rāma, fell prostrate on the ground and began to repeat the words, ‘I am blessed, indeed, I am blessed!’”

When in response to his prayer, Śrī Rāma gave Bharata

the pair of wooden sandals to sustain him during the long separation of fourteen years, Bharata felt delighted with the gift and bowed before the Lord, again and again—

गृहीत्वा पादुके दिव्ये भरतो रत्नभूषिते ।
रामं पुनः परिक्रम्य प्रणनाम पुनः पुनः ॥

(*Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa*. II. 9. 51)

“Taking in his hand the pair of sandals studded with precious stones, Śrī Bharata went round Śrī Rāmacandra, and offered Him obeisances, again and again.”

Thus, the ideals of obedience to elders and salutation and service to them are found upheld and depicted in the *Rāmāyaṇa* at various places. When on the conclusion of the period of exile, Śrī Rāma returned to Ayodhya, then all the people offered salutations to their respective elders. Śrī Tulasīdāsajī says—

धाइ धरे गुर चरन सरोरुह । अनुज सहित अति पुलक तनोरुह ॥
* * *

सकल द्विजन्ह मिलि नायउ माथा । धर्म धुरंधर रघुकुलनाथा ॥
गहे भरत पुनि प्रभु पद पंकज । नमत जिन्हहि सुर मुनि संकर अज ॥
* * *

सीता चरन भरत सिरु नावा । अनुज समेत परम सुख पावा ॥

(VII. 4. 2-3, 5.1)

“The Lord ran to clasp the *Guru's* lotus feet, both He and His younger brother, with every hair on their body erect. Then the champion of the faith, the King of the Raghu-race, made obeisance to all the *Brāhmaṇas*. Next Bharata embraced the Lord's lotus feet, ever worshipped by Śaṅkara, Brahmā and all the gods and sages. Finally, Bharata bowed his head at Sītā's feet, both he and his younger brother, with an intensity of delight.”

And describing how after the coronation all the brothers served Śrī Rāma with utmost devotion, Goswāmījī says—

सेवहिं सानुकूल सब भाई । राम चरन रति अति अधिकाई ॥
 प्रभु मुख कमल बिलोकत रहहीं । कबहुँ कृपाल हमहि कछु कहहीं ॥
 हरन सकल श्रम प्रभु श्रम पाई । गए जहाँ सीतल अवँराई ॥
 भरत दीन्ह निज बसन डसाई । बैठे प्रभु सेवहिं सब भाई ॥

(VII. 24.1 10, 49.5)

“All the brothers waited diligently on Him and served Him. Their devotion to Śrī Rāma was most conspicuous and intense. They never ceased to watch His lotus face on the chance that He might be pleased to speak to them. The Lord, the remover of all weariness, was Himself weary and repaired to a cool mango grove, where Bharata spread his own raiment on the ground, and there the Lord took His seat, with all the brothers in attendance.”

In the *Dwāpara* age, the conduct of the *Pāṇḍavas* so far as respect to and salutation of elders are concerned, was quite exceptional and ideal. Men like *Dharmavyādha* and the mute *Cāṇḍāla* also attained the supreme state only through services rendered by them to their respective parents. The *Vaiśya* hermit's son 'Śravaṇa' attained such incomparable fame through his devoted services to his parents that his name is even today given as title to a worthy son who shows marked devotion to his parents.

The scriptures contain definite instructions about the offering of obeisances to parents and other elders, including even the elder brother and his wife. Nowadays the custom is seen partially observed in some parts of the country, and that also to a very limited extent. We should realize the gain derived from this practice. When the very sight of persons saluting each other delights even an observer of such salutations, then what is the wonder that the recipient of salutation should be pleased with it. Through salutations offered to elders man's longevity, learning, fame

and strength are increased; he earns a good name in this world, obtains honour, and the public looks upon him with respect. Therefore, even from the practical point of view, the practice is quite beneficial.

And the practice involves neither labour, nor expenditure, and not even any particular length of time is required for it, but the result is glorious. The family in which, all men and women salute their elders, can never be affected by quarrel and strife, for the respect shown during salutation removes the basis of old strifes and the very possibility of new quarrels. Even now the custom is prevalent among us Hindus that when there is a quarrel between two persons, the elders of society intervene and compose their differences by giving them noble instructions and finally, asking the junior member to salute his elders, teach all how to increase their mutual love and affection. Therefore, it is essentially necessary that customs like offering salutation to elders, which are integral parts of Hindu culture, should be retained and strengthened. I humbly beseech all brothers and sisters that they should make it a point to introduce in their families the healthy custom of bowing before elders at least once in the course of a day.

The habit of saluting the elders is to a certain extent prevalent among the Hindus even today. Almost every Hindu bows down his head before one who is worthy of his reverence and is superior to him in learning and before *Brāhmaṇas*, *Samnyāsīs* and other spiritually great souls. This is Hindu culture.



Path of Love

—*Nityalilalina Sri Hanumanprasad Poddar*

The mind of the devotee in the path of Love does not even conceive the existence of any other object, how, then, will it seek the shelter of any other person or thing? He looks upon the entire creation, both animate and inanimate, as the external body of his Beloved Lord, he sees nothing else besides him. Of a devoted wife Goswāmī Tulasīdāsa says in his *Rāmacaritamānasa*—

“To the mind of a devoted wife of the foremost rank, no male other than her Lord exists even in dream.”*

The great Mohammedan saint-poet ‘Rahīma (Abdur-Rahīma Khān-i-Khānā) says:—

“The lovely form of the Beloved has settled in these eyes, there is no room left therein for any other beauty; A traveller, says Rahīma, will himself go away disappointed when he finds the inn packed to the full.”†

The famous Hindi poet *Deva* has beautifully portrayed in the following immortal lines the mind of the *Gopīs*, which was so steeped in the Love of Śrī Kṛṣṇa that the whole of this objective world appeared to them dyed in the colour of their Beloved Lord—

“A fathomless ocean of ink welled up all of a sudden. And submerged all the three worlds at a sweep like words in black ink written on a piece of black paper; who is to discern and decipher them, especially when the mind has got deranged? Darkness has enveloped the eyes like

* उत्तम के अस बस मन माहीं । सपनेहुँ आन पुरुष जग नाहीं ॥

† प्रीतम छबि नैनन बसी, पर छबि कहाँ समाय ।

भरी सराय ‘रहीम’ लखि, आपु पथिक फिरि जाय ॥

the dark night of new moon; A drop of water of the Jambū river* has lost its identity in the waves of the Yamunā.

O friend, my mind has gone thoroughly out of control, Having assumed the colour of Śyāma (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) of swarthy form, it has merged in the colour of Śyāmā (and therefore, cannot be distinguished from Him).†

If anyone comes and speaks to him about anyone else, he does not feel inclined to give ear to him or such words do not enter his ears at all. If he is ever compelled to lend ear to such talk, the mind does not turn towards it. Before the marriage of Goddess Pārvatī, when the seven Ṛṣis pointing out the many defects of Lord Śiva, persuaded Her to withdraw Her heart from the latter and offer it to *Bhagavān* Viṣṇu, who, they said, was the repository of all noble virtues, this very embodiment of the Love of Śiva (Pārvatī) gave the following memorable reply in the immortal words of Goswāmī Tulasīdāsa—

“It is my persistent vow for crores of births that I shall either wed Śiva or remain a virgin. Granted that Mahādeva is the repository of all vices and Viṣṇu the repository of all virtues; but one who has his heart fixed on anyone, will be satisfied with him and him alone.”‡

(*Rāmacaritamānasa*)

The *Gopīs* also similarly said to Uddhava:—

* A celestial river whose waters are said to be of bluish colour.

‡ औचक अगाध सिंधु स्याहीको उमड़ि आयो ।
तामें तीनों लोक बूड़ि गए एक संगमें ॥
कारे-कारे आखर लिखे जु कारे कागद सु ।
न्यारे करि बाँचै कौन, जाँचै चितभंगमें ॥
आँखिनमें तिमिर अमावसकी रैन जिमि ।
जंबूनद-बुंद जमुना-जल-तरंगमें ॥
यों ही मन मेरो मेरे कामको न रह्यो माई ।
स्यामरँग है करि समानो स्याम रंगमें ॥

‡ जन्म कोटि लागि रगर हमारी । बरउँ संभु न त रहउँ कुआरी ॥

* * *

महादेव अवगुन भवन बिष्णु सकल गुन धाम ।
जेहि कर मनु रम जाहि सन तेहि तेही सन काम ॥

“O Uddhava, the heart is guided by its own choice. Leaving sweet fruits like grapes and dates, the insect bred in poison will feed on poisonous plants. The *Cakora* bird (the Greek partridge) will throw away camphor if the same is offered to it and will be satisfied with embers. The bee which pierces through the hardest wood will die rather than pierce the soft petal of the lotus. The moth hugs the flame, knowing it to be its greatest friend. He alone, says Sūradāsa, proves attractive to one who has engrossed his mind!”*

Even so, the devotee in the path of Love knows no one else than his Beloved Lord whom he regards as his all-in-all. He makes Him his sole refuge and taking shelter under Him just as the fish takes to the water, does everything for his sake. Says Goswāmī Tulasīdāsa:—

“He is my only support, my only strength, my only hope and the only object of my faith; the eyes of Tulasīdāsa are rivetted on Rāma, and Rāma alone just as the eyes of the *Cātaka* bird are fixed on the cloud.”†

Like the *Cātaka*, who is solely devoted to the cloud, he has his heart fixed on God alone; it is on Him that he wholly and solely depends; nay, it is for Him and Him alone that he lives. All his activities including his recreation and rest, his movements, his dealings with others and even his beneficent acts, are meant for Him. Exclusive Love for God being the sole motive of all these activities, they are naturally propitious to all.



* ऊधौ! मन माने की बात।

दाख छोहारा छाड़ि अमृतफल बिषकीरा बिष खात ॥

जो चकोरको दै कपूर कोउ, तजि अंगार अघात ॥

मधुप करत घर कोरे काठमें, बँधत कमलके पात ॥

ज्यों पतंग हित जानि आपनो, दीपकसों लपटात ॥

‘सूरदास’ जाको मन जासों ताको सोइ सुहात ॥

† एक भरोसो एक बल एक आस विस्वास।

एक राम घनश्याम हित चातक तुलसीदास ॥

How to Remove the Fickleness of Mind?

—*Brahmalina Swami Ramsukhdas*

There is a common complaint these days that our mind does not concentrate and it is fickle. So, to steady the mind and remove its fickleness, an excellent remedy is suggested.

Just study carefully what goes into your mind. It, especially, recollects past incidents, which may include matters of our youth or those of even a few seconds before. Yet all these belong to the past. Things heard, seen, read about or thought of in times gone by, come to the mind and are recollected. Similarly, some matters of the future may crop up in the mind e.g., “I have to do this thing, I have to go there to meet someone or to do such and such business.” In this way, matters of the past and of the future come to mind as memories. To remove such thinking there are many means and remedies. The best of these is that whatever comes to mind, treat it as of the past and not belonging to the present, be indifferent to it, viz., be careful about it that it has no present link. This is not a matter of learning but realize it.

Past is no more and so the incidents relating to past are also no more. Past incidents are of two kinds; one is that we ourselves enjoyed pleasures and the other, we as such, saw, heard, read about and then gave them up. The mind-structure (*Manorājya*) has two divisions; the mild and the sharp. Pleasures, which are remembered without self-indulgence, are called ‘mild’ and those that are personally enjoyed by the individual and recollected, are called ‘Sharp.’ Pleasures enjoyed with relish and attachment to

them are likely to be remembered for long and do not get forgotten easily. Madhusūdanācārya in his book '*Bhakti-Rasāyana*', says—

कामक्रोधभयस्त्रेहहर्षशोकदयाऽऽदयः ।

तापकाश्चित्तजतुनस्तच्छान्तौ कठिनं तु तत् ॥

(I. 5)

“Passion, anger, fear, affection, joy, sorrow, compassion etc., are feelings, which leave a more lasting impression on the mind, when it is melted in the same way as lac on getting heated softens and a colour is mixed well in it, while on abatement of heat it hardens.”

Lac is hard, but contact with heat makes it soft and it melts. Wax softens by a little heat also. If one sprinkles colour over it when it is hard, the same would slightly stick and could be scrapped off by nail. However, should we place some wax in a metal cup and heat it over fire and then add some colour, the colour would get mixed with the wax. It is also seen when the wax cools. Similarly, when the enjoyed pleasures and occurrences, which melted our hearts and we got greatly absorbed in these, are like colour in the melted wax and we are often reminded of these incidents. Whatever pleasure we relished in the past, is not at present, but it quickly becomes apparent, today exactly as before, even though many years have passed. We should strongly hold that this is something of the past which has no connection with the present. So we have nothing to do with it. This is an excellent method to remove such memories. Therefore, we must feel and experience that the happening does not belong to the present without doubt and definitely. These things or actions or company etc., are of the past and they don't exist now. We want to eliminate memories of such happenings from our mind, but it is not easy to wipe these out, because when we try

to wipe them out, it means that we accept their existence at present. Thus, making efforts to wipe them out, means to intensify them. In truth, the past is no more in existence and if it does not exist, then why to worry about it? Similarly when the mind has no existence, why to worry about fickleness of mind? It is surprising, that something non-existing should cause us pain and something absent should cause us fear.

Passion, anger, fear, love, joy, sorrow and compassion—these seven sensations influence our mind (and melt it); mainly because of attraction or distraction. If one has a keen desire to enjoy pleasure, the keener is the desire, the more the mind melts and the more the pleasure is recollected and the incident is increasingly recollected. Sharp anger affects the mind (melts it) more and its memory is not obliterated soon. For some reason, if one is overwhelmed with fear, then that feeling gets stuck fast in the mind and is not removed easily. And so if there is love for somebody, that feeling also melts the mind. So meeting a friend gives much joy and the mind is melted. If somebody dies, that causes much grief, which settles in the mind. If there is less grief, the impact is milder. If one feels compassionate with somebody, that feeling also settles down in the mind. But all these situations do not relate to the present—that is absolutely true.

If a dog has a wound in the body, it licks it with the tongue, as there is something in the saliva that heals the wound. But if a monkey has a wound on its body, it repeatedly scratches the wound, which prevents healing. Similarly there are two different kinds of actions—licking and scratching. Licking means to forget the incident as it is not present. Scratching means to recollect the incident of the past and to make effort to wipe it out. If somebody's

son dies and the person is reminded of his son's death, he mourns the demise of the son, that he did not deserve death. Others who visit him also remind him. The womanfolk would lament the passing away of one who played on their lap and stuck to them actively. They would say that he was so handsome and so playful! All such words would reopen his wounds and increase his grief for long. And so remembrance of passion, anger, fear etc., would be tantamount to deepening of a wound with extended remembrance. If we were to clean the wound away, however much the depth (force) of the passion, anger, grief or delusion or pleasure be, this was definitely of the past and not of the present : 'नासतो विद्यते भावः' (*Gītā* II. 16); "That which is not, cannot be existent." For those people for whom we had affection, attraction and friendship, who died or separated from us, who stayed somewhere and we stayed elsewhere presently, neither those persons, exist nor the same place nor time nor condition nor situation exists the same. For that reason, we should firmly recognise their absence or deficiency and believing so, we should ignore them and at the same time, neither hate them or be attached to them but be indifferent to them.



He who seeks God with a longing heart can see Him, talk to Him as I am talking to you. Believe my words when I say that God can be seen. But Ah! To whom am I saying these words? Who will believe me ?

—*Sri Ramakrishna*

God Becomes a Slave of Bhaktas

—Swami Sivananda

Nirguṇa Brahma has assumed the form of *Saguṇa* and *Sākāra Brahma* for the sake of pious meditation of *Bhaktas*.

God tries His devotees in various ways in the beginning. He puts them to severe trials and tests. Eventually He becomes a slave of the *Bhaktas*. Lord Kṛṣṇa says, “I am not in My control. I am under the complete control of My *Bhaktas*. They have taken entire possession of My heart. How can I leave them when they have renounced everything for My sake only?”

God is full of mercy, love and compassion. He has been described as the ‘ocean of mercy.’ His mercy flows like the streams of the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā. He is depicted as having sold Himself, so to say, to His devotees. He willingly suffers endless pain in the eyes of the world in order to alleviate the sufferings of His devotees. He bears the scar left on His chest by the kick of Bhṛgu as an ornament. He wears the skull of His devotees as garland round His neck. He ran with His *Cakra* to kill the *Asura* who was in the form of a crocodile, when He heard the cry from Gajendra, the Lord of the elephants and gave him salvation (*Gajendra Moskṣa*).

He posed as Inspector of Schools and signed in the register when Rūpa Kālajī of Ayodhya was very busy in his worship of Lord Rāma and forgot all about his inspection work.

Lord Rāma took the form of a sepoy and did sentinel

duty when his sepoy *Bhakta* in the Punjab left his duty and attended a *Saṅkīrtana* party.

Lord Rāma carried the palanquin of His devotee, late-reputed songster, *Bhakta Tyāgarāja* of Trivadi in Tanjavure district (Tamil Nadu). He also carried water for his devotee's ablution.

You are all aware that, while the dying Jaṭāyu was in the lap of Śrī Rāma, Lord Rāma caressed the bird which was mortally wounded in its heroic efforts to rescue Sītā from the clutches of the demon-king Rāvaṇa of Lanka. He wiped its body with the tresses of His hair. Mark here, the unique, tender care and the affection of Śrī Rāma towards His devotee.

When the boy Nāmadeva placed a dish of food before the deity of Pandharpur, Viṭhobā (Lord Kṛṣṇa) had to assume a human form immediately to eat it.

Lord Kṛṣṇa became the skilled charioteer of Arjuna in the battlefield. He hastened from Dwaraka and ran barefoot when He heard the pathetic cry of Draupadī to supplement her cloth.

When Mīrā was about to drown herself in the river, Śrī Kṛṣṇa stood before her and put her in His lap. Śrī Kṛṣṇa guided the blind Vilvamaṅga to Brindavan by holding the stick in His hand. When His barber *Bhakta* was sick, He took upon His shoulders the duty of shampooing the Raja; he massaged the feet of the Raja during all the days of absence of the barber. He conducted the marriage ceremony of Narasī Bhagata's daughter. He brought ghee for the Śrāddha of Narasī's father and patiently bore the rebukes of Narasī's wife.

Lord Kṛṣṇa acted the part of a menial in carrying money to a Nawab to pay the debts of His *Bhakta*, Dāmājī. He dug a well for His devotee in Pandharpur. Mark here. What

kind of work the Lord Himself has done. Work is worship. Work is *Pūjā* of *Nārāyaṇa*.

How merciful is the Lord! My hairs stand on ends when I think of His merciful nature. I become silent and dumb. O Prema! I really pity those *Nirīśvara-Vādīs*, agnostics, *Cārvāks* and their dear friends the nihilists, atheists, materialists, socialists, Bolshevists, etc. May God bestow on them good understanding and bliss!

There was a *Vaiṣṇava* saint by name *Nāmmālvāra* near Tirunelvely in Tamil Nadu. He was very reputed. He used to enter into *Samādhi* under a tamarind tree. Madhura Kavi was an aspirant. He saw a prominent light in the sky consecutively for three days. He was not able to understand this phenomenon on the first day. As it continued for three days, he began to think that God wanted to help him mysteriously. He directed his steps towards the course of the light towards the south from Madurāī to Tirunelvely. The light took him to *Nāmmālvāra* underneath the tamarind tree where he was in *Samādhi* at that time. Madhura Kavi broke his *Samādhi* by striking two pieces of stones. *Nāmmālvāra* blessed Madhura Kavi. Mark here how the Lord had helped his *Bhakta* Madhura Kavi.

When *Ekanātha*, the celebrated Maharashtra saint was in a depressed mood, he heard an *Ākāśavāṇī* in the sky asking him to proceed to *Swāmī Janārdana*. He followed the dictates of God, became a disciple of *Swāmī Janārdana* and had *Darśana* of Lord *Kṛṣṇa*. This was another method by which, the Lord had helped his devotee.

Saint *Tukārāma* of Dehu was instructed or rather initiated into the mysteries of the *Mantra* “*Rāma Kṛṣṇa Hari*” by Lord *Kṛṣṇa* in his dream.

Watch the mysterious ways of the Lord. Feel His presence everywhere in the blue sky, in the green verdure,

in the rays of the sun, in the cry of that yonder body, in the sound of the nightingale, in the melodious *Praṇava Dhvani* of the Gaṅgā. Become merged in Him by constant meditation of His beautiful form.



Gnosis (the path of knowledge) is difficult to attain and beset with numerous obstacles. The path is rugged and there is no solid ground for the mind to rest on scarcely one attains it after a hard struggle; yet, lacking in *Bhakti*, the man fails to win my love.

—*Rāmāyaṇa*

It is your desires that enslave you and make you think, 'I want this' or 'I want that'. Do not act on what your enemy, the ego, dictates, seek rather to do the will of the Heavenly father, your sole friend.

—*Sri Paramahansa Yogananda*

Is he not like an animal, who in spite of the study of the holy scriptures, does not live up to it in a practical way? An ass may be carrying a load of sandalwood on his back but he remains ignorant of its practical utility.

—(A *Sanskrit Quotation*)

Vision of God in All

—Keshoram Aggarwal

In Pandharpur there was a fair of *Kārtika* pilgrimage. Several saints had come, observing the fast of *Ekādaśī*. Even without water all were restless to partake of food on *Dwādaśī* day. Someone was kneading flour, someone was preparing bread and someone was offering food to God after preparing the meals.

In the meanwhile a black dog arrived. It seemed that it had also kept fast on *Ekādaśī* just like Sadhus. Not getting anything to eat the previous day, that hungry dog tried to touch the flour with mouth or touched the baked bread of other or tried to eat from the tray of the food. Every Sadhu cried foul at it, some beat it or some tried to make it run away. Someone remorseful that it had touched our food so it is polluted and no longer it is eatable. Other Sadhu said that it is a black dog and I have read in the religious scriptures it does not pollute the food so we can partake of it.

Thus, insulted all round the dog reached to Nāmadevajī and ran away with his baked bread. Seeing this Nāmadevajī ran after it with the cup of ghee in his hands and exhorted, ‘O darling! don’t take dry bread, it will cause stomachache. There is ghee. I besmear the bread with this ghee then partake of it.’ Nāmadevajī made it to eat breads besmeared with ghee. All the Sadhus laughed at the doing of Nāmadevajī and said that Nāmadeva has gone mad. But Nāmadeva did not pay any attention to this.

After filling the belly the dog in human voice said to Nāmadeva, “Really it is you only who look all beings with

an equal eye. All the assembled Sadhus here have not been able to get rid of unequal vision—but you have assimilated my maxim of equal vision in your heart. Saying this God in the guise of a dog disappeared. All the present Sadhus praised his luck and felt repentance for not feeding the God even after getting an opportunity to do so.



The story of Śrī Rāma takes away the fear of birth and death and rids one of sorrow. It stabilises one's dispassion, discernment and *Bhakti* and is a splendid boat to take one across the river of infatuation.

—*Rāmāyaṇa*

The path of *Bhakti* is sweet from the very beginning and quick in leading a devotee to God. May I, O Lord! Have more and more of *Bhakti*.

—*Nārāyaṇīyam*

Bhakti to Śrī Kṛṣṇa puts an end to all troubles and evils besetting persons belonging to all the four *Āśramas* (stages in life)

—*Śrīmad Bhāgavata*

The Perfect Man

—*Hemant Kumar Nilkanth*

It is not an easy thing to appraise a perfect man at his true value. Most persons have strange notions about him. Our view as to how he should behave is pre-formed by reading books or by imagination or by ideas current in society.

To many of us a perfect man should reduce his necessities to the barest minimum. He must have intense sympathy for the poor. He must not concern himself with his own individual salvation but must feel and work for humanity. With such firmly-fixed preconceived standards of judgment we approach saints and fail to understand them.

Some others think that he should speak as little as possible; and must have a calm, serene appearance, etc. If, instead, he is found laughing with hilarity, busily engaged in some “mundane” work and interested in “worldly matters,” then, alas, however great he may be, he is not a real sage. At the most he is a powerful man endowed with great ability and intelligence and many ordinary virtues, but still a man moving on a “lower plane”—a man moved not by his inner self, but by vital and mental forces.

But there is no such visible label on the head of a perfect man to make it easy for us to single him out from others. The popular story of a Jewel being given different values by the vegetable-seller, by the cloth merchant and by the jeweller, is applicable here in the matter of the appreciation of a perfect man. In fact, nothing extraordinarily

great in any sphere can be properly adjudged, except by those who have specialized in the matter. Einstein's theory, they say, is even now thoroughly understood by persons who could be counted on one's fingers. In the same way, the perfect man is recognized as such only by those who have an eye to see and a heart to appreciate him.

What, therefore, follows is certainly not the last word on the subject. It is quite likely to have glaring defects. But an humble attempt is here made to show what a perfect man is. What has been gathered here, is partly by contact with high souls, partly by reading with the one object of getting into the heart of the matter and partly by cogitation, which refused to be dazzled by personalities, however eminent and by determined firmness, not to be blown away by wind-currents and cross-currents of powerful ideas. As long as one is possessed by dogmatic views as to what a perfect man should be, it is impossible for him to find out the jewel which often lies hidden. A relentless and unbiased search for Truth is necessary for the discovery of a perfect man.

This is so because one must not forget the central all-important fact that a perfect man is one who is perfect not in any visible, gross sphere, but in the subtle, invisible sphere of the mind or spirit.

This is all the more so because a perfect man is often almost impenetrable. It is easier to see through the wiles of a villain than through the actions of a saint, inspired as they always are by motives beyond our imagination. We measure them with the foot-rule of our little minds. But though the saint has a human body, that is only a very small part of him; but great and grand is he in his unique experiences. His mind or spirit is as vast as space itself. The actions that spring from it, though commonplace in

appearance are really extraordinary.

For instance, he seems to be absolutely unconcerned with things that sorely trouble the “worldly-minded.” Even the invasion of a ruthless enemy, the scourge of an epidemic or the ravages of a famine may leave him untouched. It indicates—apparently—that he is heartless.

But really it is not so. He remains unmoved because he sees what others cannot. He knows that things follow their appointed destiny and so he believes in allowing things to take their own course. Then, again, his mere subtle sympathy, though not even expressed, is far more effective than the rush and bustle of the total work of others.

His attitude is like that of a river that finds its own course. He lets himself alone and similarly, he lets others evolve according to their nature. Thus, he renders the best service, though outwardly, he seems to be absolutely inactive.

To him none is intrinsically superior to another. He forgets his own self and ignores all distinction. As there is nothing, which he yearns for, he has not to struggle and consequently he has no achievement. His soul being all-expansive, he identifies himself with everything without distinction and thus, loses his individuality. The sage, therefore, has no name. He is satisfied with everything and every circumstance or place. So he is always happy. To him changes are but the waves of the Ocean—Eternity. He rides on them. He alone is the fittest to rule a state, because he has no need.

He knows that things spontaneously produce themselves in him. He has no preferences or aversions for different opinions; nay, he has no opinions at all. So he does not disturb any phenomenon and does not oppose different opinions—but just transcends them. He rests in the evolution of nature.

He remains immersed in Being and so is Absolute Knowledge. He does not construct anything and so does not destroy. He lives in direct experience. He simply receives impressions but does not retain them. He neither prejudices nor postjudges experience. He anticipates nothing. The past slips away from him as imperceptibly as time. There is no present also for him. He glides with the flow of Time and so he is Time. Outwardly he has no conscious observations of the world, inwardly no conscious feeling. He enjoys everything and adapts himself everywhere. Life and death have no charms or terrors for him. His mind is vacant; he receives impressions not in the mind but in the spirit. He is a mere living automaton. Sometimes he uses peaceful methods, sometimes violent, according to the need and condition of the time. He considers the inevitable as the appointment of Destiny and is always at ease. Apparently he is useless to others, but everything is useful to itself by his mere existence. So the perfect man lets everything have its own achievement. There is nothing that seems harmful to him.

He is beyond praise and blame. "Now like a dragon, now like a snake," he changes with Time and has no insistence. He is now high, now low. He is quite at ease with events. He treats events as events and is not treated as an event by them. He is Excellence himself. He lets alone the changes of Time and is not disturbed by them because he senses the Time-Spirit. When he senses, he does not seek reasons. He sees unity in discord. He has got no "I" and therefore, no interest and so no struggle. He does not allow the operations of Destiny to affect him. He has virtue but looks as if he has none. He is Man but does not appear like one. He makes no plan and so needs no knowledge. He has no deficiency in character and so needs

no morality. He has no human affection. He does not seek for heroic accomplishment; so he has no cause to regret failure or be elated with success. He receives with delight anything that comes to him and leaves without consciousness anything that he may have forgotten. He is pure experience and therefore, true knowledge. He unifies nature and man and equalizes all things in spirit. To him there is no mutual opposition in all things because he lives in experience. He himself is conquest over all, in all and between all. So he is empty and everything. He is unconscious and is everywhere. He thus, mysteriously unifies his own self with its other. He is the totality of qualities, of existences, of the urge of creations, of Matter and Mind, of Time and Space. He is the totality of the spontaneity of nature.

Since things produce themselves spontaneously, he does nothing in a sense. But being the totality of the spontaneity of nature, he does everything in another sense. So he produces by not producing. To him everything is in destruction and so in construction. He has no will of his own separated from all-pervading Blissful existence, Therefore, he is tranquil in activity.

He does no wrong. He forgets everything in experience. He weeps, he laughs, he cracks jokes, he speaks, he talks, he murmurs and grumbles and does such activities spontaneously in sympathy. Thus, he helps the process of evolution in others. He makes excursion in pure simplicity. He identifies himself with non-distinction. He follows the nature of things and has no personal bias. His influence reaches all things by itself and so the things come into their own. At times he appears rigid, at times full of vivacity and activity at times still, at times indifferent. Thus, he is the totality of moods and transcends them. So he is active in tranquility. In fact he is activity, he is tranquility; he

is the balance of tranquility and activity.

He is not busy with work. He is master of nothing and master of everything. He identifies himself with the Infinite. His mind is like a mirror and so he is able to deal successfully with things but is not affected by them. He senses the wisdom of Time and necessity of circumstances and in that way he allows the world to take care of itself.

Apparently he has no feelings but he is the fountain-spring of feelings, the very source of feelings. The intensity of his feelings is so tremendous that it seems at standstill, just as the top seems still in its tremendous velocity. His love is so all-embracing and extensive and his nerves are so sensitive and subtle that his love reacts to the slightest ripple anywhere in the world.

He imitates none as imitation does not satisfy the need of the moment. He is an independent unit which can be compared with none but himself. Spontaneous is his skill in managing things without feeling busy and in carrying a heavy burden without feeling the load. Generally he desires nothing, but if ever he desires anything that thing is certain to be concretized in reality.

He knows the equality of things and though there is apparent difference, he sees oneness in reality. He is an incomprehensible mystic.



You cannot summon God by a little cry, it must be unceasing and not quelled by toys of money, fame and human love. When your desire is only for Him, He will come.

—*Sri Paramahansa Yogananda*

Śrī Rādhā's Love-Utterance to Śrī Kṛṣṇa

सुन्दर श्याम कमल-दल-लोचन, दुखमोचन ब्रजराजकिशोर ।

देखूँ तुम्हें निरन्तर हिय-मन्दिरमें हे मेरे चितचोर! ॥

लोक-मान-कुल-मर्यादाके शैल सभी कर चकनाचूर ।

रक्खूँ तुम्हें समीप सदा मैं, करूँ न पलक तनिक भर दूर ॥

पर मैं अति गँवार ग्वालनि, गुणरहित, कलंकी सदा कुरूप ।

तुम नागर गुण-आगर अतिशय, कुलभूषण सौन्दर्य-स्वरूप ॥

मैं रस-ज्ञान-रहित, रसवर्जित, तुम रसनिपुण, रसिक-सिरताज ।

इतनेपर भी दयासिन्धु! तुम मेरे उरमें रहे विराज ॥

O Youthful darling of the Lord of Vraja, dark-brown of complexion and charming to look at, with eyes resembling the petals of a lotus, O reliever of distress, let me behold you incessantly in the temple of my heart, O captivator of my mind! Shattering all the mountain-like barriers of worldly decorum, honour, family prestige and morality, let me ever have you by my side and never send you away even to a short distance for the twinkling of an eye. I am, however, an exceedingly rustic cowherdess, devoid of excellences, bearing the stigma of infamy and ugly of appearance at all times; while you are, on the other hand, urbane in manners, a mine of virtues, a shining jewel of your race and beauty personified. While I am lacking in the aesthetic sense and devoid of good taste, you are a master of good taste and the very crest-jewel of men of good taste. All the same, O ocean of compassion, you remain ensconced in my bosom.

The Trinity of three Inseparable Companions

—*Li Hong Chong*

Chunar is an ancient town near Benares. It boasts of a fortress, which they say has existed for millions of years. It may or may not be so, but no one can deny its antiquity.

After the Mutiny, it came into the possession of the British and became the favourite residence of military and civil pensioners.

A few years ago three European pensioners came to live there. They were called Mr. Life, Mr. Light, Mr. Love. They lived in the same bungalow and were fast friends. They ate, slept and roamed together. They used to visit the hill in the south of the town beyond the East Indian Railway station. And as far as the memory of the native gentry is concerned, they were never seen apart from each other. They had a liking for Hinduism; but no Hindu ventured to convert them.

To the three Englishmen the denial of conversion was a sore pain; and heartfelt as it was, they left the town residence and built a solitary cottage on the top of a hillock and were now and then seen there in their morning and evening ramblings.

Once a *Yogī* met them and it is said that he taught them something of his mystic science. It converted them into marvellous beings. They were happy like birds and used to help and direct the stray step of the sojourners, in their diversions. This they regarded as their duty.

Years came and went. Though they did not become

Hindus, yet the idea of conversion did not leave them alone. As fortune would have it, a Hindu priest, hearing the fame of these foreigners, came to pay a visit to them. They were still inseparable companions. The Hindu priest entered into conversation with them, as if they knew nothing of religion.

Mr. Life said, "The Hindus will not teach us anything at all. I simply know how to live and do not fear death."

Mr. Light reflected, "I know something of Hinduism, but I am not conscious of knowing anything at all."

Mr. Love exclaimed, "I possess the faculty of love and pity and lead those to the right path who are led astray in the zigzag tracks of these hills."

The Hindu priest felt amazed at their simplicity and thought them as ignorant simpletons. Nevertheless, out of pity, he taught them Sanskrit *Mantras* and admonished them to repeat and recite them every morning and evening.

The *Mantras* were in Sanskrit, of which, the English were quite ignorant. The priest left on pilgrimage to a famous temple, which is situated somewhere on the lofty hills, at a distance of some twelve miles or more. He ascended the hill and in the meanwhile the Englishmen forgot the Sanskrit *Mantras* entirely. They could not master the lesson. In their anxiety all the three rose high into the air and overtook the priest, saying "Sorry, we forgot the incantations you taught us. Please instruct us again."

The priest saw them descending from above and was thunderstruck. He said, "You are better than thousands of us. You require no teaching; for we are theoretical, whereas you have unknowingly reduced our theories into practice."

Life, Light, Love find their equivalent expressions in the Sanskrit words *Sat*, *Cit* and *Ānanda*. *Sat* is Beingness, *Cit* is Knowingness and *Ānanda* is Blissfulness.

Veritably existence, wisdom and happiness imply Life,

Light and Love. They live together; where there is Life, there and even then you find Light and Love associating with it. Similarly where there is Light, there you would see that it is accompanied with Life and Love. In the same way, where there is Love, you would observe that even there its constant comrades are Light and Life.

None of these exist apart and none can separate one from the other. Try to do so, if you can and your attempt will prove a failure. Three in one and one in three. This is the Hindu Trinity.

They live in harmony always and harmony is the salt of existence. It is spirituality and spirituality is nothing short of harmony, peace, goodwill and unity. It is truth and truth requires practice and no theorization.



As worldly goods are obtained through actions, so is God not obtainable through actions at all; because God-realization is not the fruit or result of any action. Every act is an evolute of ego; God-realization is after the extinction of ego.

—*Swami Ramsukhdas*

Bliss is Within

—Swami Chidananda

The great world-teacher Lord Kṛṣṇa assumed the role of the awakener of humanity, a teacher of all mankind for all times. Assuming that role, He gave His immortal *Jñāna Upadeśa* through that great scripture, the *Bhagavadgītā* and in giving that immortal teaching, referred to you as “अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥” (II. 20)—unborn, eternal, permanent, ancient, beyond time, immortal, imperishable and indestructible—therefore, untouched, unaffected even when this body is embodied or when the body perishes. Thou art That. It is, therefore, unaffected by the changing conditions of the body. Birth, old age, disease, decay and death only affect the outer structure. This body does not constitute your real identity; it is only an *Upādhi*, just as one wears a shirt, a coat, an overcoat. Even so in their vision they saw in you an immortal spark of the divine and they said that you are part of an universal essence, an eternal cosmic reality, that is beginningless and endless, that is eternal and permanent and the realisation of this true identity, realisation of your immortality, your essential divinity—that may be held to be your divine destiny.

While you pass through this process of physically existing through time in this earth plane, you have a great mission to fulfil and to that attainment you must strive. The mission you have to fulfil is the attainment of Self-realisation, experience of your eternal, immortal, divine nature. By attaining it, the individual becomes for ever liberated from all the limitations, the imperfections that qualify this temporary earthly existence, a body-bound state

of existence, limited to time, space and subject to various imperfections and infirmities inevitable to a material body and the changes in the psychological self that are governed by the pairs of opposites. This entire earth is a play of opposites and your mind, intellect and emotions are also subject to this swinging between these pairs of opposites. But you are the absolute reality, beyond phenomena, beyond birth and death. Entering into a state of direct perception and experience of your eternal imperishable divine identity, you become liberated forever from all these limitations and imperfections. In that state of freedom, liberated from birth and death, sorrow, pain and suffering, you enter into a state of absolute bliss. Your entire being is filled with supreme, eternal satisfaction. That is the result of attaining God-experience or Self-realisation. It fills you with Supreme Bliss.

The sages proclaimed in the *Upaniṣads* the supreme goal of all humanity, all mankind. It was not something given to any particular section of humanity. Out of the abundance of their boundless love for all humanity with whom they had become identified, they called out to all mankind to strive for this attainment which they had attained and become blessed. They said this is the way to Supreme Bliss and Blessedness—May all beings in this universe attain happiness.

All should be free from sorrow, pain and suffering. That was the reason they gave this supreme value, spiritual value, for in attaining it lay the one sure unfailing guarantee of permanent happiness, supreme bliss. We believe that happiness comes from possessing things, obtaining things and keeping and enjoying things which are the sources of pleasure. They are pleasant to possess, they are desirable and obtaining them, they can attain happiness—this is the

general idea in the minds of human beings. Therefore, all people wish to attain wealth which is a symbol of success and power. Right from birth until the moment the last breath leaves your body and you depart, human life is filled with ever so many discomforts, inconveniences, miseries, old age and disease. Therefore, the quest seems to be a wild-goose-chase, an impossible ideal.

But contrary was the experience of the great discoverers, the great spiritual pioneers, explorers of the great land, who made the inner realm of the spirit their area of research and discovery. They discovered that the human individual is heir to infinite bliss. You have come here ultimately for the attainment of the indescribable, infinite bliss which goes beyond all the pleasures of the world put together. Even if you put all the pleasures of the entire world together in one great heap, they say that the ultimate bliss that each individual soul is destined to attain, even one little fraction of that bliss far outweighs the total pleasure that this world is capable of giving. In one *Upaniṣad* it is strongly emphasised how even one fraction of that Brahmic Bliss is far greater than all the pleasures of this entire universe put together. Those who have attained it say that it is indescribable and wondrous and you are born for that.

□□

The success of human life is in attaining unconditional divine love. That love can be attained when one develops oneness with God.

—*Editor*

A Beneficent Girl

In England John Middleton's wife had died. So in the family he and his daughter named May Middleton were left. He was a poor man. He earned his livelihood by working as a labour. His daughter helped him in his work. She herself did all household work.

May Middleton went to London on every Sunday and bought all the articles necessary for a week. One day when she was returning from London, she saw that a man, wearing dirty clothes, was lying by the road and was moaning. It seemed as if he were ill. May got down from her carriage. She gave the sick old man a lift and carried him home.

Though John Middleton was poor yet he was kind-hearted. He praised his daughter for her beneficence. Both, the father and the daughter, began to serve that old sick man. That old man was of an angry and peevish nature. He instead of expressing thankfulness to May, scolded and rebuked her. But May, without minding his rebukes, served him very happily. By and by, the old man recovered from illness.

One day the old man came holding a small box in his hand and said to May, "Daughter! I have recovered from illness because you served me and helped me. Now I'll go home. Take this box."

The old man opened the box. It contained valuable ornaments. May was very much surprised because she thought that the old man was very poor. But having seen those ornaments she was not swayed by greed. She said,

“Gentleman! My father and I have discharged our duty. It was our duty to serve a sick and suffering man. I’ll not take your ornaments.”

That old man silently went away from there that day. But before the old man died, he made a will that after his death, all his property would be handed over to May. He had no issue. May could know this fact after sometime that the old man had suddenly made her rich.



The Lord has a most tender disposition. Anyone who takes refuge in the Lord, can realize Him, no matter if he is the worst sinner. The very thought of the Lord rids one of all sins.

—*Jayadayal Goyandka*

God talked to me. It was not merely vision. Yes, He talked to me under the banyan tree. I saw Him coming from the Ganges. Then we laughed so much! By way of playing with me. He cracked my fingers. Then he talked. Yes, He talked to me.

—*Sri Ramakrishna*

Read and Digest

Anytime we are wrong, let us admit it. Let us not always think we have to be right. This is not being honest with ourselves.

* * *

The world can never give the satisfaction that God will give. And no human love will ever bestow the infinite joy that is found in God's love.

* * *

There will be always disappointment, disillusionments and heartaches in life because the nature of soul is perfectous while everything on earth is gross and limited.

* * *

Stand for principles but without enmity.

* * *

We should respond to unkindness and hatred with goodness and love.

* * *

Spiritual progress lies in doing what is right.

* * *

Desirelessness is the Vital force of the spiritual progress.

* * *

High thinking and simple living is the best formula for a happy life.

* * *

We must learn to stand calm, unshaken, undismayed, no matter what comes in life. He should not permit anything to ruffle him.

How to Solve a Problem

—*Swami Jyotirmayananda*

Human life abounds with problems. Problems march in a ceaseless procession from one's childhood right through old age—problems with health, problems with human relationships, problems with desires and their fulfilment, problems with knowledge and power and manifold other problems based on man's relationship with the world.

At times, one finds a solution only to discover that the past problem has simply assumed a different garb and has arisen again. Some problems are suppressed, some are replaced with others and some are refracted into the manifold complexities of life.

It is difficult to find a profound solution to any problem in human life without having an insight into the nature of the soul and the ultimate destination of its movement through this transient world-process. If one were to know the art of solving his problems deeply and profoundly, his life would be a perennial stream of peace and bliss.

Psychological Insight into Problems—

When you face a problem, your mind becomes agitated. If your mind is serene and balanced, you will not find the existence of a real problem. Just as imaginary ghosts dwell in darkness, so problems dwell in the confused state of the human mind.

If your mind becomes overpowered by *Rajas* and *Tamas* (the qualities of externalization and inertia), you will be constantly involved in an unceasing train of

problems. But when your mind turns to *Sattva* (the principle of purity and harmony), you will find a way out of all your problems. With the predominance of *Sattva*, you discover the intuitive insight before which, every problem dwindles into thin air.

If you keep your mind deprived of the gentle rays of pure reason and the shower of devotion, you are bound to grow thorny bushes of entangling problems in your life.

The Philosophy of Problems—

Just as hurricane winds create a fictitious “eye” around which, they whirl, so the whirling mind creates a fictitious centre called a “problem.” The more the mind continues to whirl, the greater is the intensity of the problem.

Problems do not exist in reality. The mind, overpowered by ignorance, conceives problems and continues to battle against them. There are no problems when you are in deep sleep. When you awake, you become identified with your mind. It is this identification, which is the basis of all problems.

Led by ignorance, you impose values upon the objects of the world. You think of them again and again. Constant thinking of an object from an egoistic point of view creates internal attachment. Attachment becomes the source of manifold desires. Desires intensify ego and in turn, are fed by egoistic vision. When desires multiply, the light of reason becomes veiled by a dust cloud of mental agitation. There arise anger and delusion, which obstruct the penetrating vision of reason. In the absence of the light of reason, human personality is constantly chased by the ghosts of problems.

The Self is free from all problems. It casts its reflection in the mental process and assumes the role of an individual soul. Overpowered by ignorance, the soul becomes identified

with the mental-vital-physical personality and loses insight into its essential nature—the Self. All problems depend upon the dominance of the unenlightened ego and the inner veil of ignorance. Ignorance, therefore, is the seed of all problems and egoism is the sprout from that seed.

Instead of being frightened by a problem, try to look into its very “eyes” Develop a poised mind. You will first discover an effective solution to the problem and then find the problem did not ever exist.

When your range of vision is limited, you see certain developments without any awareness of their meaning in the perspective of a wider range of vision. What seems to be negative in a narrow range of one’s vision, is found to be positive from a wider perspective.

If you understand the divine purpose behind the apparent adversities in your life, you will not recoil from them with a mind biased with a concept of some problem. You will seek guidance from your pure, inner reason and will be able to overcome your problems effectively.

Methods of Overcoming a Problem—

Promote spiritual understanding in your life by taking recourse to good association, study of scriptures and selfless service of humanity. Grow out of the narrow confines of your mind. Breathe the fresh air of universal life. The worms of problems that grow in the dampness of your heart, will not survive when the light of wisdom begins to illumine your internal life.

When baffled by a negative situation, do not maintain an agitated mind. Pray, surrender and relax. Wait and watch. Perform your duties to the best of your capacity and understanding. You will discover a mysterious hand guiding you through the encircling gloom of baffling problems.

Practise meditation every day. The distracted state of mind is the source of all problems. When you practise concentration and meditation, you begin to educate the subconscious and unconscious depths of your mind. Instead of being confused by a problem, you allow your unconscious to work out a solution for you. You find that while a tense life brings more complexity to a problem, a relaxed life solves it as if it were a bursting bubble of illusion.

Discover your essential nature by listening to the scriptures, reflecting upon the spiritual nature of the Self and meditating upon the Non-dual *Brahma*. How can any problem exist in the Self that is infinite bliss, infinite knowledge and infinite power? You are that Divine Self!

Destroy the veil of ignorance by the light of knowledge. You will be free from the problem of individuality. You will be free from grief and sorrow forever.

May God bless you!



When a human being becomes God's own. His 'I' gets transformed into His love, His faith and His relationship.

—*Swami Sharanananda*

If you have a pure mind, you are very close to God, you are with God. God then reveals Himself to you.

—*Sri Ramakrishna*

Indra and Virocana

The *Devas* and *Asuras* (demons) selected respectively Indra and Virocana as their representatives and sent them to the abode of Brahmā, the Creator, to acquire from Him the Knowledge of the *Ātmā*. Although natural enemies of each other, the two rival representatives forgot their mutual jealousy and antagonism for the time being and observed uninterrupted *Brahmacarya* for thirty-two years. They were then accosted thus, by *Prajāpati* (Brahmā):—

“What is the errand which has brought you both and made you stay here for such a length of time?”

They replied—“Lord, the *Ātmā* (soul) is sinless, ageless, deathless and griefless; it does not hunger or thirst; it is Truth in essence and form. It alone is worthy of being known and realized. One who has known and realized the *Ātmā*, has acquired all the regions and their pleasures. The *Devas* and *Asuras* have heard these words emanating from your lips. Therefore, we have come as their representatives to get the Knowledge of the *Ātmā* from you.”

Prajāpati said, “The *Puruṣa* (Being) within the eyes, who is observed as the seer by people possessing internal eyes, is the *Ātmā*, which is immortal and fearless, which is *Brahma* itself.”

Owing to the grossness of their intellect both Indra and Virocana understood this teaching only in its literal sense. They thought the image of man reflected on the retina of the eyes is the *Ātmā*. In order to make sure whether they have understood the teachings aright, they queried Prajāpati thus—“Lord, of the two images—the image of man reflected in water and that reflected in a mirror—which is

Brahmā indicated by you? Are these two images one and the same?” Prajāpati replied—“Yes, yes, He can be observed in both. He is in every object.”

Then Prajāpati, addressing them both, said—“Go to that pool of water and see whether you can recognize the *Ātmā*. If you cannot do so, ask me again and I shall explain to you.” They both went to the pool and observed their reflection in water. Prajāpati enquired—“What do you observe there?” They replied—“Lord, we see the whole *Ātmā* from the nails in its toes to the end of the tuft of hair on its head.” Hearing about the nails and the tuft of hair, Brahmā again said, “Now you go and perfectly wash your bodies and adorning them with beautiful clothes and ornaments, go to the pool again and see.” Like nails and hairs, the body itself is something different from the *Ātmā*. To make them realize this, Prajāpati gave them the above instruction; but they could not understand its implication. They bathed their bodies and decking them with clothes and ornaments, came to the pool and began to observe their respective images. Prajāpati enquired, “What do you see?” They replied, “Lord, just as we have put on beautiful clothes and ornaments, this our *Ātmā*, too, has put on similar clothes and ornaments.”

Prajāpati thought that owing to the impurities in their hearts those people were unable to realize the true character of the *Ātmā*, and it might be that continued meditation on the teachings would help them to remove the obstacles in the path of their realization. Therefore, He said, “Yes, this is *Ātmā*, the immortal and fearless, this is *Brahma* itself.”

Indra and virocana were gratified when they heard this from Prajāpati and they both started for their respective abodes. Seeing them depart like this without having acquired the true knowledge, Prajāpati reflected within

Himself—“These poor souls are going away without the knowledge and realization of the *Ātmā*. Among *Devas* and *Asuras* whoever will follow this doctrine (of the body, which is the prototype of the reflection seen in water, being *Brahma*) is sure to be defeated in the end.”

II

Virocana thought he had attained the true light of Knowledge and going to the *Asuras*, he calmly began to preach the doctrine of the body, which is the basis of the reflection, being the soul. He said, “Prajāpati has taught the body itself to be the *Ātmā*, therefore, the body alone should be properly nursed and worshipped. There is no work of greater merit in this world than the worship and service of the body, through which, alone man can attain happiness both in this world and the next.”

Those who refuse to perform charities, *Yajñas* (sacrifices) and other meritorious deeds owing to their adherence to the doctrine of the soul being identical with the body, are called *Asuras* even today. This theory of the identity of soul and body originated with the *Asuras*. People following this doctrine, treat the body itself as the soul and spend their time in adorning it with beautiful clothes and ornaments. They waste their lives in worshipping and serving the body. And even when death overtakes the body they decorate it with costly garments and ornaments and imagine they make their places in heaven secure by that means.

III

Indra, who possessed the divine qualities, was troubled by the following thoughts before he entered the portals of heaven: “Prajāpati said the *Ātmā* was fearless, but the reflection of the body is subject to many fears. When the body is decorated, the reflection appears decorated; when the nails and hairs of the body are removed, the reflection

appears with nails and hairs removed. On the same principle, if the body is blind, the reflection will appear blind; if the body is diseased, the reflection will appear diseased; if it is maimed and deformed, the reflection will also appear maimed and deformed. If the body falls, the reflection will also fall. Therefore, I do not see how the reflection can be the *Ātmā* itself.”

Worried by these thoughts, Indra returned from the gates of heaven and approached Prajāpati with his doubts. He said, “Lord, when the body falls, the reflection, too, is bound to fall. Therefore, I do not see how the reflection of the body can be the seat of bliss.”

Prajāpati replied—“O Indra, what you say is undoubtedly true. The reflection of the body cannot be the *Ātmā* (soul), I shall explain this later to you. Therefore, I advise you to stay here for another thirty-two years and observe the vow of *Brahmacarya*.”

When this was done and Indra once more approached Prajāpati for the Knowledge, the latter said, “He who is worshipped in the state of dream, the enjoyer in the state of dream, is the *Ātmā*, the fearless and immortal. He is Brahma.” But this also did not satisfy the quest of Indra for the *Ātmā*. He argued in his mind that the enjoyer in the state of dream no doubt remained unaffected even if the body got blind, diseased, deformed or even perished; but he appeared collapsing, sorrowing in distress and running away when there was any cause of fear and was found also to weep; therefore he could not be the seat of bliss.

When Indra placed this doubt before the creator, he was advised to observe the vow of *Brahmacarya* for another thirty-two years and on the completion of this vow he was given the third instruction about the *Ātmā* to the

following effect: “*Ātmā* is that state of existence in which when the *Jīva* goes to sleep, all the functions of the senses having ceased, it becomes totally pure and complete and there is no experience of dream. That is the state, which is fearless and immortal. That is *Brahma*.”

But when he was about to enter heaven satisfied with the above answer of Prajāpati, the doubt again arose in Indra’s mind that in the state of deep sleep the *Ātmā* did not possess the sense of ‘I’ as it did during the waking state or in the state of dream, nor did it retain any knowledge of the objective world and also leaves that state for good and therefore, he did not feel that it was the real state of bliss.

Indra, therefore, returned to the Creator again and placed his doubt before him. This time he was advised to practise *Brahmacarya* for another five years for the removal of the residue of impurities in his heart. Thus, after observing *Brahmacarya* for one hundred and one years he was recognized as having become eligible to understand and realize the truth about the *Ātmā*. Then the truth was conveyed to him in the following words:—

“ O Indra, this body is made of earth. It constantly lives within the Jaws of death and yet it is the home of the formless, immortal soul. When through ignorance this formless soul identifies itself with the body, it becomes subject to pleasure and pain. So long as this identification with the body persists there is no escape from the experience of pleasure and pain. When, however, the identification ceases, feelings of pleasure and pain cannot affect the formless soul. He who knows himself to be the seer within this body is the *Ātmā*, the eyes are only instruments which it uses for deriving knowledge of colour. He who knows himself to be the smeller within this body

is the *Ātmā*, which uses the sense of smell for knowledge of odour. He who knows himself to be the speaker within this body is the *Ātmā* and the sense of speech is his instrument; he who knows himself to be the hearer, is also the *Ātmā* and the ears are his instruments; one who knows himself to be the soul is the *Ātmā*, the mind constitutes his divine eye. The liberated soul who has realized the *Ātmā* sees the objects of enjoyment through the superphysical mental eyes and attains bliss. This is the truth about the *Ātmā*.”

Thereafter true knowledge dawned on Indra and he got absorbed in the ecstasy of that knowledge. Returning to heaven, he taught this truth about the *Ātmā* to the *Devas*, who began to worship the soul and through the merit of that worship acquired all the regions and their enjoyments. One who properly knowing this *Ātmā* realizes it, acquires all the regions and attains perfect bliss.



All the accusations and sins of the man are cast away, who has thoroughly known the Brahman. Such a man is fully established in eternal Bliss and Highest Self.

If knowledge is not put to practice in daily life, it is ignorance.

—Swami Rama Tirtha

Song of Mīrā

*Mere to giradhara gopāla
Dūsarā na koī, sakala loka joī
Bhāī choryā bandhu choryā choryā sagā soī
Sādhu saṅga baithi baithi loka lāja khoī
Bhagata dekhi rāji bhāī, jagata dekhi roī
Asavana jala sīmca-sīmca prema beli boī
Dadhi matha ghr̥ta kārhi liyo, ḍara diyo choī
Rāṅā viṣa ko pyālo bhejiyo, pīya magana hoī
Aba to bāta phaila gaī, janai saba koī
Mīrā prabhu lagana lagī, honī ho so hoī.*

I know only Kṛṣṇa no other,
I have nothing to do with relations or cousins,
Or even my brother.
People chide me for moving among saints let them:
I grieve for those who remain tied to the world.
I love those who have devotion.
I have reared love's creeper with my tears.
I have abandoned the world and live for love only
As one churning curd to get precious ghee.
The Rāṅā sent me poison
I drank it cheerfully,
Now the news goes round bruited in every yard,
Let it; I am bound in love to my Lord.
That's all that's real for me
Let what will be, be.

Man dedicated to Truth and God

—R. Narayana Iyer

These are examples of some great men of ancient days who challenged death boldly by their unflinching devotion to Truth. Swadharma, faith in God and dispassion.

(1) King Hariścandra sacrificed his kingdom, wealth, family and everything for the cause of truth. When Viśwāmitra begged on his knees and assured him that he would get back his kingdom and everything if he would utter a single lie, he refused to part with his precious wealth, i.e., truth.

(2) King Parīkṣit drank the nectar of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's story from the lips of Śuka and when the time of death approached concentrated his mind on the Lotus Feet of the Lord. He did not know that the snake bit him. He was completely absorbed in meditation.

(3) Bhīṣma fought bravely for duty's sake, placed his body and prowess at the disposal of Duryodhana but his mind, calm and serene, was dedicated to the Friend of the *Pāṇḍavas*.

(4) Abhimanyu, encircled and overpowered by his enemies, never thought of surrender but gave up his life as a true warrior and ascended the solar regions.

(5) King Śibi was faced with a conflict of duties. He was bound as a *Kṣatriya* to give protection to the dove and at the same time he could not interfere with what Nature had assigned to the hawk as its food. He solved the problem by giving his own flesh to the hawk.

(6) Satyavān and Sāvitrī tied together by spiritual bonds

of love could not be separated. When Yama took Satyavān to his abode, she too followed the god of Death. Yama tried his best to stop her but could not. In the end he yielded to her wishes and her husband was restored to her.

The aforesaid examples are enough to prove that there existed in ancient times in our Āryāvarta men who had defied death with a strong faith in the superiority of *Dharma* over the transient pleasures of the world. They ascended the higher regions of heaven to enjoy everlasting Bliss.

But real conquest of death can be brought about only by God-realization by means of exclusive devotion to God (एकान्त भक्ति) or by Knowledge (ज्ञान) of one's self by elimination of the unreal.

तमेवं विद्वान् अतिमृत्युमेति ।



One must have child like faith—and the intense yearning that a child feels to see its mother. That yearning is like the red sky in the east at dawn. After such a sky the sun must rise. Immediately after that yearning one sees God.

If you do whatever you have to do in a spirit of dedication, it is God's worship; nothing separate need be done.

—S. Radhakrishnan

Concentrate first on God

—*Sri Paramahansa Yogananda*

One's first concentration should be on union with God. Everyday as you go through various earthly situations, mentally practise your oneness with God. If a pain comes along to disturb that consciousness you should reason, "Well, if I were asleep I wouldn't feel this pain; why should I be aware of it now? All experiences are fleeting dreams." Practise overcoming all trials in this manner.

The first state of concentration is to be able to see in your mind's eye anything that you wish. For example, I can keep looking at this room and concentrating upon it until, when I close my eyes, I can still see the room exactly as it is. This is the first step in deep concentration, but most people haven't the patience to practise it. I had the patience.

As you continue to practise visualization, you will find that your thoughts become materialized. The cosmic law will so arrange it that whatsoever you are thinking of, will be produced in actuality, if you command it to be so.

Suppose I am thinking of an apple and the apple appears in my hand. That would be a demonstration of the highest power of concentration. The great ones can materialize anything right before your eyes, as did Bābājī when he materialized a palace at the time of Lāhirī Mahāśaya's initiation in the Himalayas. That was an expression of the power of concentration in its highest form. Nothing worthwhile may be gained without effort and without concentration.

Don't be sensitive about the body and material concerns,

nor let anyone hurt you. Keep your consciousness aloof. Give goodwill to all, but develop a state of consciousness wherein nobody can ruffle you. Try to make others happy every day. Share your wisdom with others. Do not permit yourself to lose interest in life. Learn everything about one thing and something about everything. Realize that the more you seek, the more you will find, the realms of thought are infinite. The moment you think you have attained everything, you have circumscribed yourself. Search on and on, continuously and in the valley of your humbleness will gather the ocean of God's wisdom.

The greatest thing you can do to cultivate true wisdom, is to practise the consciousness of the world as a dream. If failure comes, say, "It is a dream." Then shut off the thought of failure from your mind. In the midst of negative conditions, practise "opposition" by thinking and acting in a positive, constructive way. Practise *Titikṣā*, which means not to give in to unpleasant experiences, but to resist them without becoming upset mentally. When sickness comes, follow hygienic laws of living, without permitting your mind to be disturbed. Be unruffled in everything you do. If you try hard to cultivate the dream-opposite of whatever trials you may be going through, you will be able to change a nightmarish situation into a beautiful experience. This freedom of mind will come when you realize that solids, liquids and all other forms of matter are expressions of God's thought.

The best way to find true freedom is to meditate deeply. You can learn how to meditate by studying the truths in the Self-realization Fellowship (*Yogoda Satsaṅga Society*) Lessons. No one else can convey to you the taste of sugar; you have to taste it yourself.

Yesterday I was sitting in my room, looking back over

my life and I realized that everything in the outer world that had promised great happiness had deceived me; but one thing has never deceived me—my inner peace. Indescribable billows of happiness surge over my soul. As I passed through various experiences over the years, that unchanging inner peace has been proof to me of the existence of God.

I was just thinking this when suddenly I saw a great Light. Everything else vanished. There was feeling—that was all. My hand was not a hand, but a feeling. When I touched my hands together there was no flesh there, only feeling. Then I understood that I had become thoughts; everything around me, the light and the room and the weight of the body—all were nothing but thoughts.

It was a delightful experience. Gone were the sorrow and sadness I had felt for things past and in their place a great sense of freedom.

That consciousness of God-peace is never-ending. It is the only real state of happiness. Everything else will fail you. Nothing else can make you happy because only the joy of His presence is real.

It is not necessary to go through every kind of human experience in order to attain this ultimate wisdom. You should be able to learn by studying the lives of others. Why become helplessly involved in an endless panorama of events in order to discover that nothing in this world can ever make you happy?

One may learn the truth in two ways: by undergoing many good and bad experiences or by cultivating wisdom. Choose, which you prefer, Kṛṣṇa said: “The attainment of wisdom immediately bestows supreme peace.” Jesus said: “Seek ye first the kingdom of God.” If you are seeking something else first, you will surely be disillusioned. Each

man rationalizes, “Well, others have been deceived, but I won’t be.” Nevertheless, he will be deceived. The only experience that is real, the only experience that brings happiness, is awareness of the presence of God.



If there are pious men, even though they may only sit quietly, all will be inspired to draw good lessons from their saintliness.

—*Swami Rama Tirtha*

In *Gītā*, chapter III verse 20, ‘कर्मणैव हि संसिद्धिमास्थिता’ proves that *Karmayoga* is an independent discipline for salvation. The kings such as Janaka etc., also attained perfection by performing action, because they ruled over their empire in order to serve others and to comfort them rather than for their selfish end.

—*Swami Ramsukhdas*

Verily it is not possible for an embodied being to abandon actions entirely but he who relinquishes the rewards of actions is verily called a man of renunciation.

—*Gītā* (XVIII. 11)

A Labour-boy's Honesty

One day a rich man called a labour-boy to clean down cobwebs. He began to clean down webs in a room which was well decorated. He was enjoying himself by seeing the decoration-pieces in the room. In the room he was all alone, so he began to see those pieces by picking them up. At that time he saw a very beautiful watch, set with jewels and diamonds. He picked up this watch and gazed at it. He was enticed by its beauty. He said to himself, "How fine it would have been, if he had got such a watch!" The sinful thought of stealing the watch came to his mind but, the next moment, he cried out. "Oh! What a sinful thought had come to my mind! If I am caught red handed while stealing, what a sad plight I'll have to face! The Government will punish me and imprison me. In the prison I shall have to break stones and indulge in such other drudgery. Once I lose honesty, no one will believe me and allow me to enter his house. Even if I am not caught red handed, I can't escape God's observation. My mother always says that we don't behold God but He always beholds us. We can't conceal any action from Him. He can see us even in the dark and even knows what comes to the mind."

Having said so, the boy's face fell, his body perspired and he began to tremble. Having put the watch at its original place, he uttered loudly, "Greed is a deadly sin. Greed induces a man to commit theft. Oh! What had I to do with the watch of the rich people? Greed instigated me to commit this crime but gracious God saved me from doing so, because I remembered what my mother had advised me. Now, I'll never be greedy. In fact it is far better to remain poor, by

following the righteous path, than to become rich by committing a theft. A thief can never sleep soundly and comfortably, howsoever rich he may be. Oh! It is the result of the thought of committing a theft that I am so much grieved. Had I committed the theft, it would have caused much more suffering to me.” Having uttered so, he was again engaged in the work calmly.

The mistress was observing his activities and was listening to what he was saying. Suddenly she came to the boy and asked him, “O boy! Why have you not taken the watch?” Having heard her words, the boy was wonderstruck. He sat on the ground in a pitiable and helpless condition and began to tremble. He could utter no words and his eyes filled with tears.

Having seen the pitiable condition of the boy, the mistress took pity on him and she said to him in a sweet voice, “Dear son, don’t be terrified. I have listened to what you said. In spite of being poor, you are so gentle, honest and you also fear God and righteousness. So I am very much pleased with you. Your mother is blessed that she has given you such a good advice. God is very much gracious to you that He saved you from getting entangled in the snare of greed. Son! Beware of greed. I am going to make arrangement for your board and books etc. Start going to school from tomorrow. May God bless you!” Having said so, the mistress embraced him and wiped his tears. Then she gave him some money as a reward for his honesty.

Having heard the mistress’s sympathetic words, the boy’s heart leapt up with joy. He expressed his gratitude to her. He started going to school and as a result of his hard work and truth, he became a talented scholar and a well reputed person.

Truth Prevails

—Swami Akhandananda Saraswati

The first point is that there is no scope here for the term “*Vādī*”; neither “*Satyavādī*” (one who believes in the path of truth) nor “*Mithyāvādī*” (one who believes in the path of lies). And then, when “*Vādī*” (accuser) and “*Prativādī*” (respondent) are involved, it is usually the cleverer lawyer who emerges victorious, because he establishes even the false as being true. Hence, intelligence is often misused. It all becomes an intellectual game. When a case is lost, it is considered the defeat of the lawyer. Neither is the judge blamed, nor is justice questioned. It is said that the lawyer’s arguments were not good enough. In my opinion, everything in this world is “*Anirvacanīya*” (that which cannot be expressed). From one point of view, everything is right and real; from another angle, wrong and unreal.

“*Satyame’va Jayate*” means: there is only one Truth and it is that which prevails. A great many good things came your way and went away. A great many bad things also came and went. You remained, unchanged. You saw a pot, saw two pots, saw a thousand pots and saw the absence of any pot, but you remained unchanged. Here, there, this and that, you saw everything. You are the *Satya*, the Truth, which prevails throughout the past, present and future, and that which is “*Anṛta*” (transient and illusionary) will die and disappear. “*Anṛta*” means false, illusionary. It was there yesterday and has disappeared today or it is there today but will not remain tomorrow. Even if it continues until tomorrow, it will disappear the day after! Which

means that which, is the Truth, the ultimate Reality—will prevail and all else will end. Dreams arise and vanish, life remains.

Therefore, the ultimate Reality—*Satya*—never perishes, never changes. It cannot be disproved. That, which changes is not *Satya*. He whom you can divorce is not really your husband or wife. The truth is actually:

Ye'na rope'nay an niścitam tanna vyabhicarati.

One's True Form, once determined, can never be separated from one. The world we see is superimposed upon reality, it is illusionary. In every lifetime we have different sons, different spouses. In this lifetime, too, they change. Houses change, jewels change, husbands and wives are changed, even our own hair changes from black to white. None of these are the ultimate Reality, *Satya*. You say, the wealth was mine, but I lost the case. Well, Truth ought to have prevailed, but it did not. Falsehood prevailed here. Now you will say that in day-to-day life, it seems as though Truth does not prevail, falsehood is the winner, isn't it? However, have you ever thought deeply about whether that, which you consider yours, is actually yours? Did it really belong to your Father and Grandfather? If that were true, then your diamond would have called out to wake you and save it from the thief who tried to steal it while you slept. Your house would have pleaded, "Master don't sell me, stay with me." Your land would have objected to being handed over to someone else.

The truth of the matter as far as worldly interaction is concerned is, that which you considered to be the Truth (or Reality), was never the true reality in the ultimate sense; not by justice, nor by ethics, nor by fact. Neither is it true today, nor will it be the truth tomorrow. It is all an illusionary knowledge, to think, "this is mine," about

anything. Moreover, illusionary truth never prevails, whether it pertains to the diamond or to yourself. Leave alone everything else, even your body is not yours and nor will it last forever, however hard you try. Then, who will remain? Who will prevail? The *Ātmā*, which is pure and free and pure knowledge—that which is the *Paramātmā*, the actual Brahma—will remain, That will prevail. It is That, which is the true owner of this *Māyā* (illusionary world) and Nature, which will win ultimately.

The *Upaniṣad* says, “*Satyam̐ jñānamantaṁ brahma.*” *Satya* means—not your money, wealth or relation—the *Upaniṣad* does not consider these *Satya* (real). The *Śrutis* (verses depicting direct experience of the ultimate Truth) are not interested in translating or repeating worldly interaction. The *Śrutis* explain only the things, which you cannot grasp through any other method. They contain the revelation of the unknown. They dispel our ignorance. They are not there to describe the objects of the sense organs like the eyes and nose, ears, mind or intellect. So, the meaning of the *Śrutis* is, “*Satya*” meaning “*Brahma*” and “*Jayate*”—meaning “will prevail.” No illusion or shadow will be able to reach it.

The transient in this world, is “I” and “mine” and will never endure. It will depart one day. You leave your body behind or it leaves you. If you love it, then “*Priyam tvāṁ rodasyati,*” it will keep you tied to the world of inanimate objects and bring repeated grief. Whoever loves it, will have to weep. Therefore, we should consider it transient, understand that it is illusionary and love only the *Satya*, *Paramātmā*.

Divine Grace

—*Vishnuprasad V. Baxi*

1. “Beggars cannot be choosers” is the law of the world. Beggars can be choosers is the law of God. ‘Ask and Ye shall receive’ says the Lord. ‘Ask and you shall remain the same for the asking’ says the world. The world hates its beggars. God loves His beggars. The world seeks protection from its beggars; God protects them. The world uses them as its foot-stool: God keeps them on His throne. Do not be a beggar before the world. It has nothing to give. Be a beggar before God. He has everything to give. The world does not part with its possessions. God gives all, He asks his devotees to choose a boon and whatever he chooses he receives. In the world of God beggars are always choosers and receive in abundance. For, he who is a beggar before God, rejects the world. ‘The world rejects him and whatever the world rejects, God accepts. Beggary for Divine Grace is strength; beggary for worldly possessions is weakness.

2. A foolish beggar moved about the world crying for alms. But he kept his beggar’s bowl upside down. The world mocked him for he did not know how to hold his bowl. He quarrelled with the world for its ingratitude and made himself the more miserable. Then someone put him right. He kept his bowl straight and he found it full. He had no quarrel with the world.

Man acts oftentimes like this foolish beggar. He asks God for His Grace; he prays for wealth and happiness; he undertakes penances for securing his happiness and quarrels with God when his cries are not answered. But he does

not realize that the bowl of his heart has not turned Godwards to receive His bounty, which is his for the asking. The bowl of the heart is turned earthwards and in ignorance he wants it to be filled. Till self-knowledge puts him right and his heart is open to receive God's gifts, his prayers are not answered. 'God is not mocked' says the Lord, Do not try to deceive God and His world by asking for things when you do not know how to receive them. Turn your heart and mind Godwards. He is the Giver of Life and everlasting Bliss. Know how to receive and you will not then quarrel with the world or with God.

3. A coloured garment gets soiled as quickly as a white one. But while the former absorbs dirt the latter exposes it at once. The wearer of a coloured garment deludes himself into believing that the garment is not soiled and does not require to be cleansed. The wearer of a white garment realizes this in no time and is given the opportunity to remove the dirt and to avoid moving in filthy surroundings. Do not let your mind put on the garments coloured with the heavy shades of this material world. The faster the colour the lesser the chances of its fading out. Robe the mind in white garments of Love, Devotion, Charity, Understanding, etc. You will know when the garment of the mind is soiled and your knowledge will enable you to keep it clean and to avoid unclean surroundings. Clothe the mind and the heart with the white mantle of God and not the coloured robes of the world. The one is grand in its simplicity; the other is vulgar in its variety. Dress your mind properly. A well dressed body clings to the earth; a well dressed mind clings to God. Dress the mind in white for, whiteness is purity and purity is Divinity.

4. A bat loves to move in darkness. It is blinded by light. Its restless nature does not allow it to lie flat and

rest. It wants something to hang on and when it hangs, it clings to its support head downwards. Take it out into the light. It will lose its restlessness and lie flat.

The mind of man is like a bat. Restlessness is its nature. It loves to move in the darkness of ignorance and avoids the light of knowledge. It clings to material possessions head downwards towards the earth. Take it out into the light of knowledge and its restlessness ceases. It lies flat in peace. It cannot see the light first and will be blinded by its splendour. But gradually it will get used to light and will ask for more light? He who wants the light of Divine Grace, let him bring his mind out of darkness of ignorance. For, Light is Life: perpetual darkness is death. Live by the light alone and avoid darkness.

5. He who swims with the current of the water never reaches the shore and perishes in the attempt. He who swims across the current reaches the shore and saves himself because he knows the art of swimming. The river of life flows between the shores of God. If you want to cross it and reach the Divine Shore, do not swim with the current. You will perish. Cut across the current of the world and you reach the shore. An adept swimmer swims on the surface of the water. He floats for hours on end without moving his limbs and therefore, does not exhaust himself. He does not care for the course of the current or its force for he knows his strength and is confident to reach the shore whenever it pleases him. And whenever he reaches the shore, glory and joy are his. One must know how to float on the surface of life's current. He can then reach the goal. Do not exhaust yourself in the attempt to swim with the current of the world. You cannot avoid its deep dark waters. Learn to float on its surface and cultivate faith in your power to reach the shore and the still waters

with their unfathomable depths can do you no harm. Keep your eyes on the shores of Divinity and God will protect you. Eternal joy and Glory will be yours when you have crossed the current of life.

6. 'Truth is the speech of inward purity' says the writer. Be true and the world will not deceive you. Deception is a vice of the soul. Shun it. Truth is not externalization but internalization. Dwell within. As Browning says—

Truth is within ourselves,
It takes no rise from outward things whate'er you may
believe;

There is an inmost centre in us all
Where Truth abides in fullness.'

Look to this inward centre. Draw the truth from within and happiness will be yours. God is Truth. Truth leads to self-knowledge and self-knowledge to self-reverence. Learn to reverence yourself and you will learn to be true. Truth will burn the dross of the world and make the lamp of faith burn brighter. All your actions will become pure and you will proceed from strength to strength once you learn to be true. Truth is the way of Life that leads one to the gate of Heaven. It fits him for a closer union with God. Be true.



It is the character, the nature of the parents, their purity of conduct and character, that decides the nature and the moral fibre of the child that is born to them.

The Left Hand does not Know What the Right Hand is doing

The angels of the heaven asked the Lord one day, O Lord! “Is there anything in the world harder than the rocks?”

God replied, “Yes, Iron is harder than the rocks as it breaks the rocks.”

The angels again asked, “Is there any other thing stronger and harder than Iron?”

The Lord replied, “Yes, fire is much harder as it melts down the Iron.”

The angels further asked, “Is there anything harder than fire?”

The Lord replied, “Water is more harder as it extinguishes the fire.”

The angels kept questioning, “Is there anything that overcome water?”

“Wind changes the streams of water in the form of waves and scatters even the cloud which are the origin of the water.”

“O Lord, is there any more powerful than the above things?”

“Yes, the kind heart that gives alms in secret, not letting the left hand know what the right hand is doing.

This kind heart is more powerful than even the wind. It is the most powerful and the greatest.

Simplicity and Divinity

If you possess divine virtues such as mercy, sympathy, love, devotion and forbearance, you will be respected and really honoured. This will give everlasting beauty even though one is clad in rags.

Wear simple clothing. Have sublime thinking. Remember those saints who lead a simple life and those living today who are very simple. Simplicity will cause piety. It will infuse divine thoughts. You will be free from worry and unnecessary thoughts. You can devote more time to divine contemplation and spiritual pursuits.

A *Sāttvika* man or woman is really beautiful. He or she does not require any artificial decoration. Millions of people are attracted unconsciously towards them, even when they are in very simple dress.

—Swami Sivananda

Supreme Exhortation

भजध्वं गोविन्दं नमत हरिमेकं सुरवरं
 गमिष्यध्वं लोकानतिविमलभोगानतितराम्।
 शृणुध्वं हे लोका वदत हरिनामैकमतुलं
 यदीच्छावीचीनां सुखतरणमिष्टानि लभत ॥

(*Padma-Purāṇa, Swargakhaṇḍa LXII. 26*)

Take refuge solely in Govinda, the Protector of cows; make obeisance to Śrī Hari, the chief among gods. Thereby you shall attain regions with enjoyments exceedingly pure. Hear you, O men! and utter the peerless name of Śrī Hari alone, if you seek to tide over with ease the waves of desire, and gain the objects which are dear to your heart.

Date of publication 1. 9. 2018

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