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Editor :
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Prayer

to Lord Shri Dakshinamurty Shiva

(Stanzawise translation in English)

राहुग्रस्त दिवाकरेन्दु सदृशो मायासमाच्छादनात्
सन्मात्र करणोपसंहरणतो योऽभूत्सुषुहाः पुमान् ।
प्रागस्वाप्समिति प्रबोधसमये यः प्रत्यभिज्ञायते
तस्मै श्रीगुरुमूर्तये नम इदं श्रीदक्षिणामूर्तये ॥६॥

Like the sun & moon appearing pale when overwhelmed by Rahu & Ketu, the soul appears lustreless when covered by Maya. Though it is the all-pervading Existence, it appears non-existent, being surrounded by the over powering presence of the senses. A man who wakes up from a deep slumber, says that he was fast asleep. In a similar manner, a man who attains Realisation, says he was under the delusive influence of Maya. I offer my salutations to Shri Dakshinamurty Shiva, who appears in the form of my Guru & awakens the soul to reach Realisation.

बाल्यादिष्वपि जाग्रदादिषु तथा सर्वास्ववस्थास्वपि
व्यावृत्तास्वनुवर्तमानमहमित्यन्तः स्फुरन्तं सदा ।
स्वात्मानं प्रकटीकरोति भजतां यो मुद्रया भद्रया
तस्मै श्रीगुरुमूर्तये नम इदं श्रीदक्षिणामूर्तये ॥७॥

Though the states in a man's life viz. childhood, youth & old age or wakefulness, dream & sound sleep are different from each other, it is the soul that exists in all of them as a single manifestation. I offer my salutations to Shri Dakshinamurty Shiva, who, in form of my Guru, bestows the experience of

the knowledge of that soul, through his benevolent nature.

विश्वं पश्यति कार्यकारणतया स्वस्वामिसंबन्धतः

शिष्याचार्यतया तथैव पितृपुत्राद्यात्मना भेदतः ।

स्वप्ने जाग्रति वा य एष पुरुषो मायापरिभ्रामितस्

तस्मै श्रीगुरुमूर्तये नम इदं श्रीदक्षिणामूर्तये ॥८॥

My salutations to Lord Dakshinamurty Shiva, in the form of my Guru, whose creation of Maya, influences the soul to see the Lord and the world as separate, bound by the relation of cause and effect, or master and servant, or Guru and his disciple or Father & Son.

भूरम्भांस्यनलोऽनिलोऽम्बर महर्नाथो हिमांशुः पुमा

नित्याभाति चराचरात्मकमिदं यस्यैव मूर्तष्टकम् ।

नान्य त्किंचन विद्यते विमृशतां यस्मात्परस्माद्विभोस्

तस्मै श्रीगुरुमूर्तये नम इदं श्रीदक्षिणामूर्तये ॥९॥

The whole animate and inanimate world appears to consist of the earth, water, fire, air, space, sun, moon and The Supreme Being. But with the dawn of true perception, everything exists in Him (Parabrahma) only. I offer my salutation to Him, The Lord Dakshinamurty Shiva, in form of my Guru (because of whom this supreme experience of knowledge is attained).

सर्वात्मत्वमितिरफुटीकृतमिदं यस्मादमुष्मिंस्तवे

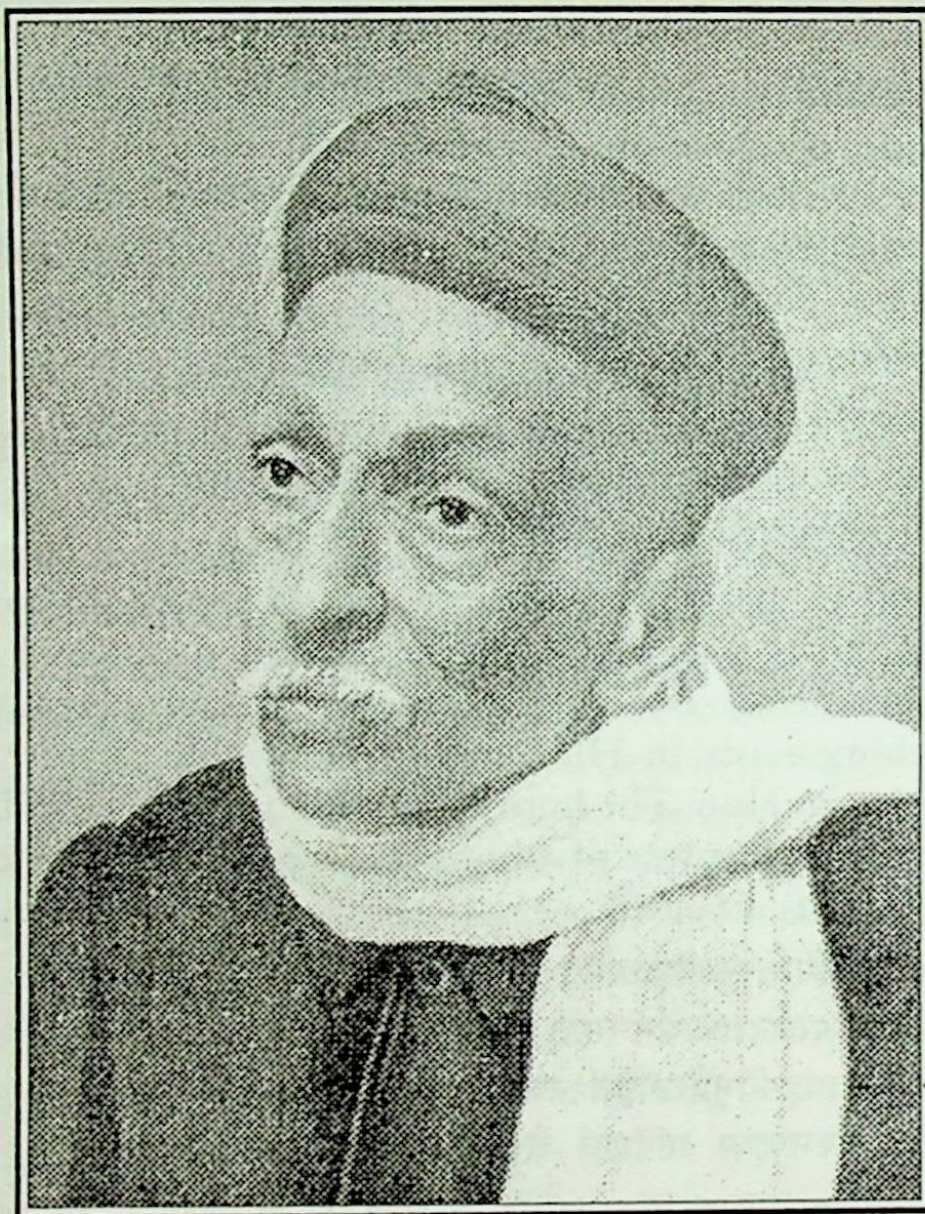
तेनास्य श्रवणात्तथार्थमननात् ध्यानाच्च संकीर्तनात् ।

सर्वात्मत्वमहाविभूतिसहितं स्यादीश्वरत्वं ततः

सिध्येत्तपरमष्टधा परिणतं चैश्वर्यमव्याहतम् ॥१०॥

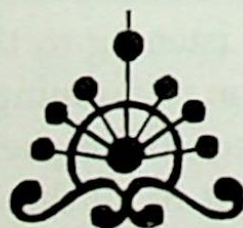
The doctrine "Nothing exists except the Supreme Being, The Parabrahma" is expounded in the prayer to Lord Dakshnamurty Shiva. Listening to the prayer, discourse on the same or meditation on its meaning bestows the experience of oneness of all existence, the highest of magnificent glory, Godhood and attainment of all the eight yogic powers. □ □

SHRI GURUDEV DR. R. D. RANADE



Birth :
Jamkhandi
3-7-1886

Nirvana :
Nimbal
6-6-1957



Thus Spake Gurudev.....

"Greater reality than the reality of the world of dream; greater reality of the world of dream belongs to the world of life; greater reality than the reality of the world of life belongs to the world of Self, or God, or the Absolute, which are all ultimately identical with one another. Every system of philosophy must need take account of some sort of appearance. From the days of Parmenides, Plato and Plotinus to the days of Berkeley, Hegel and Bradley, there has been the same cry. There is an extraordinary 'moral' meaning in the doctrine of Appearance (Maya) which critics of that doctrine systematically ignore"

- Gurudev on 'Maya'

- (in Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy)

□ □

A sparrow on a barge in mid-ocean, when the tempest is raging high and the night is falling, and when there is no other place to go, addresses the ship thus : Thou art my sole resort, O my Barge. Even so the devotee regards God as his only Barge, on whom he is to rely and in whom he is to rest. There is no other place to go to. Where could the sparrow go in the midst of the ocean ? Wherever she casts her eye, she finds only high seas and mountainous billows. Similarly, in the tempestuous sea of life, the only resort for us is God !

- Pathway to God in Hindi Literature P.127

□ □

Religion & Ritualism

Religion has four main constituents viz. doctrines, philosophy, mythology & rituals. The Hindu religion originally called the "Sanatan Dharma" or the "Vedic Dharma or Culture" is not dogmatic on doctrines. Even faith in God is not compulsory for a follower of religion. It is left to the truth experienced by a man in his inner being. Next comes the philosophy which is the most important part of religion. It lays down the basic universal laws according to which the individual should mould his nature, behaviour & way of life such that the whole society is able to support itself through self-rule of ethics and remain live & vibrant. The crimes will be minimum, guilts confessed and litigations tending to few in number. The basic universal laws not only provide for prosperity of the society but also lay down the foundation for spiritual progress of the individual from birth to birth.

The Vedas, Upanishads & Bhagwadgeeta laydown these principles. The Sanatan Dharma was built on the firm foundation of two main principles viz. सत्यं वद । धर्मं चर ॥ i.e. speak the truth and act dutifully and ईशावास्य इदं सर्वम् । तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथाः । मा गृधः कस्यस्वित्धनम् ॥ i.e. All the wealth in this world belongs to God (We don't bring anything when we are born, nor take anything with us when we depart). Live within whatever is allocated to you by Him. Do not covet what belongs to others. Stated in simple language, it means, one should imbibe the virtues of Honesty, Integrity, Ethics & Brotherhood towards all which not only ensures a healthy society but lays the foundation for the progress of the spirit

towards Godhood.

Mythology is the ancient history of the society described through the lives & careers of kings, kingdoms & sages interblended with allegories and anecdotes to educate and enthuse zeal amongst the masses to strive towards a healthy society and spiritual progress as per the philosophy of the religion.

The rituals give detailed description of how to worship God in various ways through yajnas, abhishekas, chanting of mantras, devotional songs and offerings to please the deity, more often than not for worldly success. Devotion to God is a quality of mind and can rise only through concentration. The common man's mind is filled with many disorderly thoughts out of his family life and worldly dealings which do not proceed along a linear dimension but almost always on a zigzag path, which makes it difficult to dispel the unwanted thoughts & concentrate the mind. Rituals provide an aid in this direction to enable one to concentrate & meditate. Paramacharya of Kanchi-kama koti peetham was once asked what is Upasana and he replied "Dhyanameva Upanasanam", i.e. meditation itself is Upasana. Even idol-worship is considered as an aid to reach higher mental states by Yogies like Swami Vivekanand & others. Swami Satyanand had written to one of his disciples not to place any idol, photograph, flowers or burning incense in the room, when he meditates, such that he develops confidence to reach higher states of mind on his own, without any external aid.

The rituals have eventual pitfalls. Rituals provide a way to reach God through sublimating the normal behaviour of senses viz. Seeing, hearing, smelling, touch & taste through the worship of the deity or Guru. We touch the feet, apply sandalwood paste, burn incense, offer flowers, sweets & partake the prasadam. This is expected to sublimate the desires

of the senses, erase the ego, attain the basic virtues and thus cleansing the mind, surrender it to God, for spiritual progress.

If we study the history of the society for the last two or three thousand years, the aim of ritualistic worship has not been fulfilled. Society & religion are on path to degeneration continuously, resulting in today's picture of greed, desire and egoistic disregard though there is an upsurge for temple worships, bhajans & satsangs organised as social functions. If one is asked how many individuals are affected by greed, desire & egoistic disregard the likely answer is ninety percent to some extent or more.

Why is it so ? Because we have forgotten that the main principles & tenets of religion need to be imbibed in our nature & behaviour in the form of truth, honesty, integrity, ethics & brotherhood. That is the true practice of religion & not the mere routine worships followed mechanically as part of the worldly routine which cannot erase greed & desire from the society. Swami Vivekanand had said "religion is for realisation". The essential virtues need to be imbibed or realised before we can even think of God Realisation. Ramkrishna Paramhansa said "Have Bhakti within, give up all cunning and deceit. Those who are engaged in business or work in office or trade, should also stick to Truth. Truth is the tapasya in this age of Kali... Unless one always speaks the truth, one cannot find God, who is the soul of Truth".

Samarth Rāmadās Swami installed idols of Hanuman for worship along with asking youth to build strong bodies by taking exercise in the gymnasium. He himself had a strong body. His disciple Kalyan Swami could take on four wrestlers at a time. That is the practice of religion. Mere worship of Hanuman & partaking prasadam will not give strength to the body. The maxim is शिवं भूत्वा शिवं यजेत् । i.e. Worship Shiva through practice of renunciation. Sant Dnyaneshwar rendered

the Bhagwadgeeta in Sanskrit language into local Marathi language (with profuse illustrations) for the benefit of the common man, such that they can read it and practise the tenets given therein in their way of life. Later Saint Namadeo says that the readers should attain experience of at least one stanza from Dnyaneshwari in their way of life, emphasizing thereby that the stanzas are meant for practice in life & not for mere reading in a casual mechanical manner. Paramacharya of Kanchi Kamakoti peetham, as a routine, gave instruction daily about the items of delicacies to be prepared for the Mahanaiveddam offerings to the deity before starting the worship of deity & meditation. But he never used to partake it as prasadam. It used to be distributed to others while he will take his usual simple food. Partaking the prasadam, he considered, will involve him in sensual pleasures of the tongue, which will be against true Bhakti.

The sages & kings built up the Hindu society according to the philosophy of Sanatan Dharma through the aeons of Krta, Treta & Dwāpār. All was going on well. People were truthful & dutiful, till the guidance of great sages like Vyas, Shuka, and others of later period was available. Afterwards, the institution of sages disappeared and religious leadership got passed on to men of small stature. The basic tenets & aims of religious philosophy got off the track and mere ritualism was overemphasized. A number of misconceptions and misinterpretations followed. So much so, that even the great yogi & advocate of Sanatan Dharma Adi Shankaracharya, himself became a victim of the same. When his mother died, nobody came forward to help him, because he was a Sanyasin. He had to cut the dead body into pieces to enable him to carry the same to the funeral pyre for cremation. Later history is replete with examples of warped thinking and misinterpretation of religious texts, setting aside the main

tenets of truth, honesty, integrity, ethics & brotherhood with all, while true practice of religion demands imbibing them in our nature & behaviour. This has put the religion & society on the fast track to degeneration. We were unable to stand up to invasions of even small armies & slipped into centuries of slavery. Gurudeo Ranade used to enquire about the character of a person before giving Mantra-japa. He also used to enquire about the character of the student who would like to join for M.A. with philosophy under him.

It cannot be denied that the ritualistic worships, religious social functions like learned discourses saptahas and mahaprasads have a populous mass appeal and have been a major factor for survival of the Hindu religion for thousands of years, but these are not enough to build a strong & vibrant society on the bedrock of truth, honesty, integrity, ethics and brotherhood, as envisaged by our saints & sages. Such a society is self-ruled by ethics and dutifulness of the citizens. The need of lawyers & law-courts gets minimised. One of my friends, who works as a civil engineer in another country, gave a lecture in the Institution of Engineers (India) on engineering practice in that country. An engineer from the audience asked the question "How do you ascertain that the work is done as per specifications laid down?" The answer was that it is not necessary. As a rare case, if any doubt arises, the engineering council is informed and they visit & have a check whether there is any truth in the complaint. If so, the professional license of the engineer/contractor is immediately cancelled for life and any rectification needed is ordered at their cost. No lawyers or court of law are involved. That is, the society is self-ruled by ethics and this is possible only when the bedrock of truth, honesty, integrity & brotherhood is sound.

In India, the bedrock itself is sinking in the mire of craze for wealth (by any means) at the cost of the country & the

nation. No wonder that the population of criminals is increasing as they are sure of escaping the clutches of law and even winning elections to participate in the governance of the country. Increasing the number of judges will not solve the problem. Rule of ethics need to be enforced either through religion or stern governance coupled with compulsory military service at pregraduate level to mould the character.

Centuries of mere superficial ritualistic religion has engendered a lackadaisical & lithargic attitude in the social psyche regarding value-based social development leading to natural social prosperity. Value-based education is known more or less by its absence, as a number educational institutions are themselves run on practices far from fair. Education has likewise become a mere ritualistic pattern to teach the talents & skills of earning money sans the character, discipline & ethics.

Today's man in society has more or less the only aim to make money for himself & his family. There are no social or religious institutions in sight who understand the real plight of the society and are capable to retrieve the situation to value based system.

However in this sea of darkness, there is an island of enlightenment. Swami Satya Sai Baba, started an hospital at Puttaparthi equipped to international standards with about 10,000 sq. metres of bldg. with free service to the poor. There are paid highly qualified doctors as well as those who volunteer to give free service on regular basis. Same is the case of medical assistants & attendants. The Chief Medical Officer was called to Geneva Medical Conference to give to a talk on how this could be achieved. He started educational institutions with a deemed university to take care of the development of body, mind & spirit alongwith the usual academics, with highest importance to character moulding and discipline swami also

got executed drinking water supply projects to perennially dry areas of Rayalseema. These are examples of what real practice of religion, real devotion to God & detached dedication can do.

According to the latest world report, the percentage of honesty is highest viz. 85% in the Scandinavian countries; 70 to 75% in most western countries; 65 to 70% in far eastern countries of China & Japan; while it is 25 to 30% almost the lowest in India. No wonder, we do not occupy a respectful place in the comity of nations, but are known as underdeveloped third world country, even after fifty years of independence. Our country is beset with a number problems, but they defy any solution for want of ethics, honesty, integrity & brotherhood. Individuals, educationists, professionals, religious & social leaders need to think about this severe crisis in society.

The mind has to rise above the populous routine of mere ritualism and practice what is true religion by imbibing the basic virtues in our nature & behaviour. On the spiritual plane, an individual has essentially to acquire the value-based qualities of the mind before he can even think of spiritual progress. Our scriptures are explicit on this point. Maharshi Pantanjali mentions Yama & Niyama i.e. moral & mental disciplines as the first two steps in his eight fold method to reach realisation of God through meditation & Samadhi.

The philosophy and true practice of religion need to be emphasized & preached, rising above the routine mechanical ritualism, in order to build up a value-based society with spiritual progress of the individual, to prove ourselves worthy of the great ancient Indian civilization built up by the sages & saints over centuries of their experiential knowledge gained by attaining the supramental state reaching Godhood.

□ □

Guru Pornima

Oh ! Gurudeo,
On this propitious day of Guru Pornima,
My head bends down in all humility,
To reach thy lotus feet, for thy grace.

Being blessed with a Divine sight by the grace,
I see the horizon lit with the rising Sun of knowledge,
Dispelling the thick darkness of ignorance,
That held back the humanity, from the vision of Almighty.

Our blessed Earth, being illumined by the Eternal Light,
Of the Sun of knowledge and the luminous light of the
full Moon,
The Almighty suddenly becomes visible under the
Eternal light,
To the blissful joys of the entire humanity.

Oh ! How exciting it is to see,
That the Mystic Vision of the Almighty,
Could transform this world into the Realm of Reality,
Bestowing Eternal Bliss, Peace and prosperity !

– K. K. Adkar

Flat No.4, S.No.27/2/2A, Saraswati Apts.
Hingane Khurd. Pune - 411 051.

□ □

'Sankarācārya's Ātmabodha

(Sanskrit script followed by English translation)

(Continued from last issue)

The next verse No.11 relates what additional superimpositions are made on the Self, owing to various other upadhis in the microcosm.

(11)

नानोपाधि-वशादेव जाति-नामाश्रमादयः
आत्मन्योरापितास्तोये रस-वर्णादि-भेदवत् ॥११॥

Due to different upādhis, (various) tastes, colours, etc. are superimposed on water. In the same way, owing to various upadhis, (various) castes, names,²³ āśrama, etc. are^{23,4} superimposed on Atman (11).

Expl. : By nature, the water is devoid of taste, colour, etc. But when it comes in contact with things like white clay, red clay, salt, sugar, etc., the colour of that clay and the taste of salt, etc. are superimposed on water. But really these various colours and tastes have no place in the pure water.

Similar is the case with the Self. The Self in itself is basically without any qualities, sizes, etc. (See Stanza No.34). Still when he comes in contact with or in the range of bodies, senses, etc., then alongwith those limiting factors, the Self appears to be born in four species namely jāraja (born from womb), aṇḍaja (born from egg), svedaja (born from sweat) and udbhijja (born out of the earth). Now suppose the body is

born in human species. Then the four varṇas namely Brahmin, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śudra are imposed on the Self with the bodies as its upādhis. Then some name like Rāma is given to him. Four stages of life (āśrama) are prescribed for persons belonging to the first three Varṇas. Here, the birth, name, varṇa and āśrama are superimposed on the Self due to his limiting things. e.g. A living person is born from the womb of his mother; he is named Rama; he is in the stage of life namely a householder. Thus on the Self who is distinct from everything are superimposed birth, varna, name, etc. But these^{23A} super-impositions are false, as the Self has no birth, no name, etc.



In case of the Self there is the upādhi of threefold bodies (See under Verse No.9 above). Now, the next verse No.12 explains how the gross body limiting the Self is produced and what its use is.

(12)

पंचीकृत-महाभूत-संभवं कर्म-संचितम् ।
शरीरं सुख-दुःखानां भोगायतनमुच्यते ॥१२॥

The (gross) body which originates from the (five) gross elements produced by the Fivefold Combination and which is taken up (Lit. gathered) due to (previous) actions is said to be the place / location for the enjoyment of pain and pleasure (12).

Expl. : Empirical / mundane life is without a beginning. In it, the Self comes to have the upādhi of a gross body. Along with gross bodies living beings are born in various species. (See Verse No.11 above). There they perform various actions. They have to enjoy, in accordance with the doctrine of actions, the fruits of those actions namely pain and pleasure. Enjoyment of pain and pleasure as per good or bad actions is

possible with the help of the gross body. Hence the gross body is here said to be the location of enjoyments. Now this cycle of action through body and enjoyment with the body goes on till the being is released from the cycle of births and rebirths.

This gross body is formed by a peculiar mixture of the five gross / great elements namely Ākāśa, Air, Fire, Water and Earth. These five great elements spring from five subtle elements called with the same names namely Ākāśa, etc., through Fivefold Combination. The peculiar process due to which the five gross elements arise from five subtle elements is called Pañchikaraṇa, the Fivefold Combination. The great / gross elements formed by pañchikaraṇa are called Pañcikṛta (produced from Pañchikaraṇa) elements. From these pañcikṛta elements arise the gross bodies.

The process of Fivefold Combination is thus stated in Ātamānatmaviveka of Śaṅkarācārya :

द्विधा विधाय चैकैकं चतुर्धा प्रथमं पुनः ।
स्व-स्वेतर-द्वितीयां शैर्योजनात् पंच पंच ते ॥

This can be explained thus :-

(A) First take a subtle element as a Unit 1. Then divide every subtle element into two equal parts, thus :-

Space (Akasa) - 1 = 1/2 S + 1/2 S; Air - 1 = 1/2 A + 1/2 A;
Fire - 1 = 1/2 F + 1/2 F; Water - 1 = 1/2 W + 1/2 W;
Earth - 1 = 1/2 E + 1/2 E.

(B) Then the first half part (= 1/2) of every subtle element is to be divided into four equal parts :-

1/2 Space = 1/8 S + 1/8 S + 1/8 S + 1/8 S
1/2 Air = 1/8 A + 1/8 A + 1/8 A + 1/8 A
1/2 Fire = 1/8 W + 1/8 F + 1/8 F + 1/8 F
1/2 Water = 1/8 F + 1/8 W + 1/8 W + 1/8 W
1/2 Earth = 1/8 E + 1/8 E + 1/8 E = 1/8 E

- (C) The above-mentioned (A) and (B) show that every subtle element is now divided into 1/2 part and four 1/8 parts.
- (D) Now, 1/2 part of every subtle element is to be joined with 1/8 part of the remaining four subtle elements. Then their summation makes up one unit of one gross -- pañcikṛta -- element, thus :-

$$1/2 \text{ Space} + 1/8 \text{ Air} + 1/8 \text{ Fire} + 1/8 \text{ Water} + 1/8 \text{ Earth} \\ = \text{Pañcikṛta Space} - 1$$

$$1/2 \text{ Air} + 1/8 \text{ Space} + 1/8 \text{ Fire} + 1/8 \text{ Water} + 1/8 \text{ Earth} \\ = \text{Pañcikṛta Air} - 1$$

$$1/2 \text{ Fire} + 1/8 \text{ Space} + 1/8 \text{ Air} + 1/8 \text{ Water} + 1/8 \text{ Earth} \\ = \text{Pañcikṛta Fire} - 1$$

$$1/2 \text{ Water} + 1/8 \text{ Space} + 1/8 \text{ Air} + 1/8 \text{ Fire} + 1/8 \text{ Earth} \\ = \text{Pañcikṛta Water} - 1$$

$$1/2 \text{ Earth} + 1/8 \text{ Space} + 1/8 \text{ Air} + 1/8 \text{ Fire} + 1/8 \text{ Water} \\ = \text{Pañcikṛta Earth} - 1$$

From the above it is clear that in every gross element formed by Fivefold Combination, there are parts of other four elements. Now the name is given to it, in view of the more parts of the subtle element. e.g. in the first combination above, parts of Space are more than the parts of each other element, Hence it is named gross Space (Ākāśa). Similarly, names are given to other gross elements.

As the gross body arises from the five gross elements formed by the Fivefold Combination, it is here said to be born from pañcikṛta elements (pañcikṛta - mahā-bhūta-sambhūta).



The gross body is the location for the enjoyment of pain and pleasure. Now the next Verse No. 13 tells that the subtle body is the means for this enjoyment.

(13)

पंच-प्राण-मनो-बुद्धि-दर्शेंद्रिय-समन्वितम् ।

अपंचीकृत-भूतोत्थं सूक्ष्मांगं भोग-साधनम् ॥१३॥

The subtle body which springs from the subtle (i.e. apañcīkṛta) elements and which is formed by five vital breaths, mind, intellect and ten sense-organs is the means for the enjoyment (of pain and pleasure) (13).

Expl. : The subtle elements namely Space (Ākāśa). Air, Fire, Water and Earth arise from that Ātman in whose case there is the upādhi of Nescience possessing the power of projection, with the quality Tamas as the prominent one (See under Verse No.8). These subtle elements in their state where the Fivefold Combination has not taken place are called apañcīkṛta elements.

From these five subtle (apañcīkṛta) elements originate ten sense-organs, five vital breaths, the mind and the intellect. The ten sense-organs are five sense-organs and five motor organs. Eye, ear, nose, tongue and skin are the five organs of knowledge. Hands, feet, speech, anus and organ of creation are the five motor organs. Prāṇa, apāna, vyāna, Udāna and Samāna are the five vital breaths. These fifteen factors plus the mind and the intellect make the 17 factors which go to form the subtle body.

It is quite clear that these seventeen constituents of the subtle body are necessary to experience the enjoyments of pain and pleasure. Hence the subtle body is said to be the means for enjoyment.



The cause of the gross and subtle bodies is called the Causal (Kāraṇa) body (śarīra). Now these three bodies form the upādhi of Ātman who is different from them. This is stated in the following Verse No.14.

(14)

अनाद्यविद्यानिर्वाच्या कारणोपाधिरुच्यते ।

उपाधि-त्रितयादन्य मात्मानमवधारयेत् ॥१४॥

Nescience^{22B} is beginningless and is indescribable. It is called the Causal (Kāraṇa) upādhi (i.e. body) (of Ātman). One should make a decision that Ātman is different from the group of these three upādhis (of the three bodies) (14).

Expl. : The concept of Nescience (Avidyā) has been postulated by Sankaracarya in order to give an explanation of the visible world. This Nescience - Avidyā / Ajñāna - is without a beginning, because nobody can tell since when this Nescience is there. This Nescience is moreover indescribable in the sense that it cannot be described either as "existent" (sat) or as "non-existent" (asat). Sat is that which exists in three times - past, present and future. In this sense, Nescience is not sat; for it gets removed or destroyed by the knowledge of Brahman or Self, as it is opposed to knowledge. Only Brahman / Self is existent. Nescience is not existent like the Self. Now, non-existent (asat) is that which never comes in the range of cognition. e.g. son of a barren woman, horns of a hare, etc. Like them nescience is not non-existent; for there is awareness of nescience in the form "I am ignorant", etc. And that cannot be called non-existent which is cognised. Further, nothing comes out of what is non-existent. But the world proceeds from the Nescience. (See under Verse No.8). Hence nescience is not non-existent. Moreover, Nescience cannot be said to be both existent and non-existent, as Nescience is contrary to both of them. Besides, the mutually contradictory attributes namely existent and non-existent cannot coexist at one and the same time in one Nescience only. Hence Nescience is said to be not describable with the words existent and non-existent (sat-asat-anirvacaniya). Nescience is of the form of Singularity

(vyāṣṭi) and Totality (samaṣṭi). Nescience-totality being the cause of everything is called the Causal Body (akḥilakāraṇatvāt kāraṇa-śarīram - Vedānta-sāra). Nescience-singularity being the cause of egoism, etc. is called the Causal Body (ahaṅkāradīkāraṇatvāt kāraṇa-śarīram -- Vedānta-sāra). Now as this Nescience is the cause as well as the upādhi of Ātman, it is here called "kāraṇopādhi". Nescience itself is the Causal Body. Thus in the case of an individual, Nescience is the Upādhi in the form of a causal body, alongwith the upādhis of gross and subtle bodies.

Thus, in case of an individual, there are three upādhis namely gross body, subtle body, and the causal body. These three upādhis are here called the triad of upādhis (upādhi-tritaya).

Ātman is different from these three upādhis. Just as Ākāśa is distinct from its upādhis like a jar, a house, etc. or just as a crystal is distinct from its upādhi of a jasmine flower, so also Ātman is quite different from its upādhis of the three bodies.

In view of this, one is to decide that the Self is absolutely distinct from the three bodies.



(15)

पंच-कोशादि-योगेन तत्तन्मय इव स्थितः ।

शुद्धात्मा नील-वस्त्रादि-योगेन स्फटिको यथा ॥१५॥

Just as a crystal of clear nature, when it comes in contact (yoga) with a blue garment, etc. appears blue etc, so also the pure Self due to its contact with five sheaths appears like that respective sheath (15).

Expl. : In Stanza No.14 above, it was pointed out that the three bodies -- gross, subtle and causal -- become the upādhis of the Self who is distinct from them. Now this very

triad of upādhis i.e. the three bodies is the same as the five sheaths. The five sheaths are enumerated thus : (1) Annamaya Kośa (2) Prāṇamaya Kośa (3) Manomaya Kośa (4) Vijnānamaya Kośa, and (5) Ānandamaya Kośa. Now the gross body²⁴ is called the Annamaya sheath, because it is a modification²⁵ of food. The subtle body consists of the triad of prāṇamaya, Monomaya and Vijnānamaya²⁶ sheaths. And the causal body i.e. the Nescience itself is called Ānandamaya²⁷ sheath. Thus the three bodies which are the upādhis of the Self are the same as the five sheaths.

The sheaths are so-called because they cover the pure Self, as a pillow-cover²⁸ covers the pillow. Due to the common quality of concealing, the sheaths are called Kośas.

Now the Self is completely different from²⁹ these five sheaths. But what happens is this :- Due to Nescience, an individual thinks that one of the sheaths is the Self. e.g. One says "I am tall". Really the body is tall; but the body is taken to be the Self; and hence one says, "I am tall". Here the annamaya sheath is taken to be the Self. In a similar manner, when we say, "I am hungry", "I am happy", etc. the various sheaths like Prāṇamaya, Manomaya, etc. are taken to be the same as the Self. Here a question may arise : why is there this identification of a sheath with the Self ? The reply is given in the example of a crystal. A crystal by its very nature is white, clear. But when it is in contact with a blue garment, etc., the blue cloth, etc. becomes the upādhi of that crystal. And due to that upādhi the crystal appears to be blue, etc. In a similar manner, due to the upādhis of the sheaths, one begins to wrongly suppose that the annamaya kośa (= gross body) is the Self, the manomaya kośa (= the mind) is the Self, and so on. Thus the Self, though it is pure like a crystal, appears to be one of the sheaths, on account of the upādhis of those sheaths.



The Self is concealed by the five sheaths. Hence it appears as if it is one of them. But one has to know that it is different from the sheaths, through discrimination. This is pointed out with an illustration in the following 16th verse.

(16)

वपुस्तुषादिभिः कौशैर्युक्तं युक्त्यवघाततः ।

आत्मान मांतरं शुद्धं विविच्यात् तंडुलं यथा ॥१६॥

Pure Self and Rice-seeds are respectively associated with (i.e. covered by) sheaths like the body and husk. Just as pure i.e. white rice-seeds are taken out by means of pounding³⁰ (avaghāta), so also pure Self is to be skilfully separated (i.e. to be understood as a separate one) by means of reasoning (16).

Expl. : The clean white rice is covered by husk. Hence the rice that is inside the husk is not separately and clearly known. But when, by means of pounding, the husk is removed, the clean white rice is manifest and is known as distinct from the husk.

Similar is the case with the Self. The inner Self is enveloped by five sheaths. Hence the inner pure Self is not clearly cognised. Yet one has to understand, with the help of the statement of Vedas, the instructions given by the preceptor, and thinking (manana), etc., that the Self is quite distinct from the five sheaths. One must further know :- Pure Self is not defiled by the cover of five sheaths; it remains pure as it basically is. Just as the nature of the sky is not affected by the clouds, so also the pure nature of Self is not affected by five sheaths.



The next 17th verse points out how there is awareness of the all-pervading Self through its reflection in intellect.

(17)

सदा सर्वगतोऽप्यात्मा न सर्वत्रावभासते ।
बुद्धावेवावभासेत स्वच्छेषु प्रतिबिंबवत् ॥१७॥

Just as there is a reflection of some object in clear things (like water, a mirror, etc.) so also the Self, though it is always all-pervasive, is not perceived everywhere but it appears as a reflection in the intellect alone (17).

Expl. : The Self is all-pervading. He always exists in all times, at all places. But (at the beginning of the march on the spiritual path) the awareness of the Self is not possible at places outside of one's own body. The point is :- An individual has to first cognise / realise the Self in his own body. Inside the body there is the intellect. Near that intellect is the inner Self. Intellect with the prominence of the quality Sattva is clear; so the reflection³¹ of the Self falls in that intellect. This reflection of the Self in the intellect³¹ is called cidābhāsa. This cidābhāsa is said to be the individual soul (jīva). The inner Self exists in all bodies as a mere witness / seer. There is awareness of this Self, whenever one is aware of "I". The individual soul has to realise this Inner Self with whom he is identical.



The Inner Self exists as the witness in the upādhi of the body. This is pointed out in the next verse No.18.

(18)

देहेन्द्रिय-मनो-बुद्धि-प्रकृतिभ्यो विलक्षणम् ।
तद्-वृत्ति-साक्षिणं विद्यादात्मानं राजवत् सदा ॥१८॥

The Self is quite different from the body, the senses, mind, intellect and prakṛti. One should know that like a king the Self is the witness of actions (vṛtti) of those various things (18).

Expl. : The Self exists everywhere (See Verse No. 17).

He is the basis (adhiṣṭhāna) of all things -- sentient and non-sentient. Yet he is different from all those things and their actions. Thus the Self is distinct from body, senses, mind, intellect and prakṛti. Here the word Prakṛti stands for the non-sentient Nescience which is the cause of everything. Though the Self is the underlying principle, yet he is different from all of them.

A question may arise here : Body, etc. are all non-sentient things, but they are seen to be doing something. e.g. The body walks; senses perceive their objects; the mind thinks; and so on. Now does the Self participate in their actions ? The reply is in the negative. For this, is given the example of a king. Many things take place in his kingdom, under his rule. But that does not mean that the king does all those things. The king himself is not performing all those actions. The king himself is merely their witness / seer. The same is the case with the Self. Body; senses, etc. function on the basis (adhiṣṭhāna) of the sentient Self (See Verse No.20). But the Inner Self has no part in those actions. The Self is mere spectator or seer of all those functions or actions. This must be clearly understood by the spiritual aspirant. It is essential to know that the Self is inactive, that he does nothing and that he is a mere witness. Suppose a man is suffering from paralysis but is able to see only; he will be the witness of the actions performed by the members of his household. The Self is like him.



The next verse No.19 explains how or why the ignorant people think that the Self is active in worldly dealings.

(19)

व्यापृतेष्विन्द्रियेष्व्वात्मा व्यापारीवाविवेकिनाम् ।
दृश्यतेऽब्रह्मेषु धावत्सु धावन्निव यथा शशी ॥१९॥

People having no discrimination think that the moon is as if running when (actually) the clouds are running. In a similar manner, the ignorant / non-discriminative men think that the Self is as if performing actions while (actually) the senses are engaged in their own functions (19).

Expl. : Suppose it is night-time. The moon has arisen in the sky. At that time clouds appeared in the sky. The clouds due to force of wind started to move / run. Now at that time a man on the earth was looking at the clouds and the moon. Now, if the man were non-discriminating, he will think that the clouds are steady, while the moon is running. He does not understand that the moon is (relatively) steady while the clouds are running. On the contrary, a man of discrimination knows that the moon is not running but the clouds only are running here and there.

Similar is the case with the Inner Self. Senses in the body get engaged in their own functions. Here the word 'sense' (indriya) is indicative of body, mind and intellect. In empirical dealings, the body, organs of knowledge and action, the mind and the intellect go on performing their own actions. A non-discriminating person thinks that the Self is performing all those actions. Hence he says : "I am running. I am seeing a flower. I am thinking of my family. I have come to this decision". (Here he wrongly understands the "I" to be the Self). But a thoughtful person has a different opinion. He knows that the Self is different from body, senses, mind, intellect and Nescience. He further knows that the Self is inactive and hence he does nothing. He is aware that body, senses, etc. are functioning, while the Self is merely seeing. The Self is a mere spectator or witness of all those actions (See Verse No.18). In other words, the attributes and actions of the upādhis like body, senses, etc. do not stick to or reach the Self. The Self is aloof from them. The Self is a mere witness.

References :

23. There is a variant reading "जाति-वर्णादयः" in place of "जाति-नामाश्रमादयः"
- 23-A. See Śaṅkarācārya's Adhyasa-bhāṣya on Brahmasūtra.
- 23-B. This very Nescience is called the Causal Body (Kāraṇa śarīra).
24. स्थूलशरीरं अन्नमय-कोशः । शंकराचार्यकृत आत्मानात्मविवेक.
25. स्थूल-शरीरं अन्नविकारत्वात् एव हेतोः अन्नमय-कोशः । (सदानंदकृत वेदांतसार)
26. सूक्ष्म-शरीरं विज्ञानमयादि-कोशत्रयम् । (वेदांतसार).
27. कारणशरीरं.....आनंदमय-कोशः । (वेदांतसार)
28. कोशवद् आच्छादकत्वात् । (वेदांतसार)
29. आत्मा नाम स्थूल-सूक्ष्म-कारण-शरीर-त्रय-विलक्षणः पंचकोश व्यतिरिक्तः अवस्था-त्रय-साक्षी सच्चिदानंदस्वरूपः । (आत्मानात्मविवेक)
30. There is a reading "युक्त्यवधानतः" in place of "युक्त्यवघाततः". The word 'avadhāna' means one-pointedness or concentration of the mind. So the reading will give the meaning : Concentration is required, if the rice is to be secured in an unbroken form. i.e. the work of pounding is to be done carefully and attentively, so that unbroken seeds of rice will be obtained.
31. The inner Self is present in every body. How could there be cidābhāsa in intellect, if Inner Self were not near it? (विनात्मानं तथा बुद्धौ चिदाभासो भवेत् कथम् । शंकराचार्यकृत अद्वैतानुभूति, ५४) Cidābhāsa i.e. the reflection of Self in the intellect is the individual soul who is the agent of actions and the enjoyer of the fruits of actions (जीवोधी-स्थ-चिदाभासो भवेद् भोक्ताहि कर्मकृत् ॥ शंकराचार्यकृत वाक्यसुधा).



(To be Continued.....)

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When we were born we cried, but the world rejoiced.

- Kabir

Childhood passes away in play. Thoughts of love engage youth and the mind goes after the maidens. The old man is worried about the fate of his children and his wife. His whole life is spent in some kind of anxiety or the other. At no stage does a man turn his mind to God.

- Shankaracharya

॥ ओ३म् ॥

The Glory of the Vedas

The meaning of the word 'Vedas' is the infinite and eternal knowledge given by Omniscient and Omnipotent Lord of the universe at the commencement of the human creation, for the harmonious development and guidance of mankind. God revealed the knowledge into the minds of the four R̥isis (Seers) Agni, Vāyu, Aditya and Angira who composed the Rig-Veda, Yajur-Veda, Sama-Veda and Atharva-Veda respectively, inwardly understanding the purport of the Vedas. Therefore Vedas are called *Shruti* (श्रुति) and *Apaurusheya* (अपौरुषेय). God does not stand in need of paper, pen or ink nor does He stand in need of uttering words with physical mouth like human beings. It was enough for Him to inwardly prompt knowledge.

Infinite indeed are the Vedas. (अनन्ता वै वेदाः) The four Vedas which were like four handful of *Gems* picked out by the Creator of the universe from the huge mountain heap of Divine knowledge, were given to humanity. We find in the Vedas, our individual, domestic, social, national and international duties to be performed. The Vedas are perennial and applicable to all people, at all places and at all times. Vedic knowledge is flaw less, stain less and spot less. The Divine knowledge is irrevocable, infallible and indestructible.

If the Creator of the cosmos is : one, His Divine Religion must also be one. When there were neither Christians, nor Muslims, nor Jews in the beginning of the *Cosmos*, the Vedic Religion graciously gave percepts to the whole race of mankind and therefore the Vedas are the immortal heritage

of Man-kind.

The Vedas proclaim that all men and women on earth are brothers and sisters having one God as their father. None superior, none inferior to other. All enjoy equal privileges and position. How fine it was when Swami Vivekananda took the Vedic message to the World-Parliament of Religion held at Chicago on 11th September, 1893, started his lecture with the words "Sisters and brothers of America", drew his audience like a magnet that touched both of their mind and heart. Fame was not the only fruit Swamiji reaped, he was branded as the cyclonic Hindu monk of India.

The Vedas proclaim that God created the sun, the moon, the earth and other heavenly bodies as He did in the previous Kalpa and He would dissolve it at the close of the Kalpa, just as day follows night and night follows the day. So also there is creation after every dissolution and dissolution after every creation.

(1) Rig-Veda mainly deals with Superknowledge (विज्ञान) having 10,589 Hymns; (2) Yajur - Veda deals with Karma - Kanda (कर्मकाण्ड) having 1975 Hymns; (3) Sama-Veda deals with worship (उपासना) having 1875 Hymns and (4) Atharva - Veda deals with Empirical Knowledge (ज्ञानकाण्ड) having 5977 Hymns. All the four Vedas together have 20416 Hymns (Verses) and they have been protected by preventing any change in the vedic Hymns or making any addition or alteration in them. The faithfulness with which Text of the Vedas have been preserved, is unique in the literature's history.

Most of the philosophies of India are saturated with Vedic thoughts. The six systems of Philosophy (Sāṅkhya, Mīmāṃsā, Vaiśeṣika Nyāya, Yoga, and Vedānta) claim to be based on the Vedas. Further, the School of thoughts (Advaita, Vishista-Advaita, Dvaita etc.) have been founded

on the strength of the Vedas. It is interesting to note that both, the proponents and opponents not only base their philosophies in the firm foundation of the Vedas, but also built their systems brick - by - brick, layer - by - layer, mainly with the citations from the Vedas. Such is the *powerful influence of the Vedas*. Similarly all the major 18 Puranas of *Bhagvan Vyas* proclaim their absolute allegiances to the Vedas. And all Sutras : Graha Sutra (गृह सूत्र), Dharma Sutra (धर्म सूत्र) and Kalpa Sutra (कल्प सूत्र) also faithfully reproduce the meaning of the Vedas. Any Indian *Scripture* however great, minus Vedas, is philosophical cipher. This shows how Indians not only thought but also felt in the Vedic terms.

Not only India but also the whole world *sing the songs of the Vedas*. The learned Sanskrit scholar *Max Muller* in his book, "Sacred books of the East" said in 1868, "If I were to look over the whole world to find out a country most richly endowed with all the wealth, power and beauty that nature can bestow in some part of a very paradise on earth, I would look at India. There is no book in the world that is so thrilling, soul stirring and inspiring as Upanishadas".

Arnold Toynbee - the world famous historian said "It is already becoming clear that a chapter which had a Western beginning, will have to an Indian ending. At this supremely dangerous moment in human history (*Nuclear Age*) the only way of salvation for mankind is the *Indian way*."

Dara Shikoh - son of Emperor Shahajahan and the elder brother of Aurangzeb, in his Persian translation of the Upanishads said "After gradual research, I have come to the conclusion that long before all heavenly books, *God* had revealed to the Hindus, through the Risis of yore of whom Brahma was the chief, His four book of knowledge - Rig - Veda, Yajur - Veda, Sama - Veda and Atharva - Veda."

Vedas influence spirit of patriotism and nationalism. Vedic knowledge is far more nutritious than bread and is infinitely sweeter than nectar. Vedas proclaim that there is truth deeper and higher than the light of human understanding, which comes by revelation and inspiration.

Vedic Teaching : The Yajur-veda proclaims. "Oh, holy fire (Yajna) make your way upwards towards the Heaven. Kindle in all brilliance. You are the satisfying power of all our cherished desires. You assist us in all our noble accomplishment. You alone fill our homes with all the desired goods and food. You alone fill our tanks, rivers and lakes with water, which in return bring verdure to our woods and gardens. With all this fulfilment will accrue to us vide Yajna which causes the raining clouds and the blowing of fragrant breeze through our forest and gardens". (Yajur-Veda 15.54)

AND

The Yajur - Veda Mantra proclaims "*Oh Supreme Lord, let there be born in our country, Intellectuals* possessing spiritual splendour; *Military Men* brave and skilled in warfare and destroyers of the enemies; *Cows* giving abundant milk; *Oxen* carriers of heavy loads; *Horses* of high speed; *Women* skilled in domestic affairs; *Statesmen* highly cultured and having abilities to shine in the *Assemblies*; *Rainbearing Clouds* at command; *Trees* bearing fruits; may we ever safeguard our wealth and acquisition; and the last not the least, may we ever *Vigilant* in our country and come forward for its *Protection*". (Yajur-Veda 22.22)

World's First Democracy : The concept of democratic set up of Government based on elections, originated in India. Rig-veda says "The Republic elects you as a king. King-ship may fall away by your bad conduct". Similarly Atharva-Veda states "Let all be of one purpose and mind under a common leadership in a spirit of fellowship."

Many scholars and scientists of Europe and America have ascribed modern scientific re-search to Vedas and tested on the touchstone of modern sciences and received inspirations from Holy Vedas. Physicians, Ayurvedists and Anatomists have got several precious prescriptions for cronic diseases from the Vedas. Vedas also consist of Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Philosophy, Politics, Biology, Pharmcology, Economics, Ethics, Astronomy, Theology and visuals of thousand things.

Vedas also teach lofty lessons of services, sympathy, purity, piety, honesty, integrity, valour, compassion, kindness etc. Vedas help us to rediscover our past, reorient our present and remodel our future. The Vedas are the grannary of good and glorious ideas and Vedas can hold cultural crises and global destruction in abeyance.

Vedas and Vedic culture prevailed throughout the world five thousand years ago when enlightenment, peace and prosperity was the order of the day in India and India was at the zenith of its glory.

Vedas are harbinger of international peace.

Rig-Veda Hymn states "Let noble thoughts come to us from all sides" (आनो भद्राः कृतवो यन्तु विश्वतः). (Rig-Veda 1.89.1)

Vedas will be a Light House in the Ocean of Knowledge where Human Mind can Anchor at safe Point during the turmoil and tempest.

Let us worship at the altar of the Vedas who is the mighty Mother all cultures in all its beauty, gravity and solemnity.

- S. R. Shetti, B.A. (Hons.)

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Bhagwadgeeta & its exposition by Sant Dnyaneshwar

Chapter III कर्म योग

Significance of Work With Detachment

(Sanskrit script followed by English translation)

अर्जुन उवाच -

ज्यायसी चेत्कर्मणस्ते मता बुद्धिर्जनार्दन ।
तत्किं कर्मणि घोरे मां नियोजसि केशव ॥१॥
व्यामिश्रेणे व वाक्येन बुद्धिं मोहया सीव मे ।
तदेकं वद निश्चित्य येन श्रेयोऽहमाप्नुयाम् ॥२॥

Arjuna said -

Oh Janardan, Oh Keshav, if you value the path of discriminative intellect more than the path of action, then why do you urge me to involve myself in this brutal act of battles ?

Your perplexing words have confused my intellect. Tell me definitely which one path I should adopt in order to attain the highest good for myself.

Sant Dnyaneshwar explains -

Arjuna says, Oh Janardan, I have been listening attentively to your words. In the matter of Self, the innermost Soul, the actor and the action do not remain separate, in your decisive view. Then why are you urging me to involve myself in this violent battle ? How is it that you have no hesitation in telling me to choose this savage act of battles ? In a way, you yourself are valuing, action more than the discriminative intellect (contrary to what you told earlier)

Oh Keshav, if you yourself talk in contradictory terms this way, then what we, whose intellect is not yet free from ignorant doubt, should do ? It will appear as the end of the road for our intellect. We will be overpowered by delusion & will be far away from realisation of the Self. If the doctor himself adds poison along with medicines, how the patient will be cured ? Your advice is like making the monkey drink liquor or directing the blind towards the wrong path. Our intellect is under the influence of ignorance due to Maya which we are unable to uncover. The confusion created by your contradictory advice further deepens the ignorance. Certain stability which my mind had reached as an effect of your earlier advice has now got converted into a confused state. I am unable to understand whether you want to test the discriminative capacity of my intellect or you are propounding the Reality of Brahman in some unknown mystical way ? Oh Krishna, take me to be a person of dull intellect & adjust your talk in a definitive manner such that your advice will be within the understanding capacity of my intellect. If the doctor wants a patient to be cured, the medicine should be acceptable to him. Likewise, please tell me your advice in such a manner with meaningful fundamental truths that my mind can readily accept it in behavior and action.

I consider myself fortunate that the ocean of knowledge and compassion in your form, Oh Keshava, is available to me & I am eager to receive the advice for my highest good, which can be adopted for activity in this world and the higher goals of the other world.

श्रीभगवान् उवाच -

लोकेऽस्मिन् द्विविधा निष्ठा पुरा प्रोक्ता मयाऽनघ ।
ज्ञानयोगेन सांख्यानां कर्मयोगेन योगिनाम् ॥३॥

Lord Shrikrishna said -

Oh innocent one, I have professed two ways of life for the

spiritual seekers in this world in olden times. One is that of knowledge & contemplation for those who want to follow the path of understanding and other is that of work for those who want to follow the path of activity in this world.

Sant Dnyaneshwar explains -

Expressing astonishment at what Arjuna had said, Lord Shri Krishna tells him that the conclusion told by Him before, are only the essence of the major postulations. While explaining the duty as work dedicated to Him, He merely stressed the importance of knowledge but that has confused you. Remember, that it is I who have taught both the pathways viz. that of knowledge and that of work. Both have emanated from me traditionally since times immemorial. The type of seekers who are introvert and try to understand the difference between material & spiritual aspects, contemplate & realise Brahman & become one with it. This is the path of Dnyana Yoga. The other type who are extrovert & activity-oriented, ultimately reach knowledge through the practice of detached work and get liberated. To eat ready cooked food or to prepare the cooked food from the raw one & then eat it, the result is the same. Likewise the Dnyana Yoga & Karma Yoga appear separate paths but ultimately remove reach the same result. The eastward flowing & westward flowing rivers appear different on the land, but when they reach the ocean, both reach the same final goal. A bird reaches the fruit on a high tree in a single flight, but men cannot reach the same fruit at the same speed, they will climb branch to branch till they reach the height of the fruit. The Dnyanyogi reaches the fruit of liberation like the bird while the activity-oriented worldly people take a longer route like the ant, follow the course of duties assigned in the society, learn the art of detachment in work and ultimately attain knowledge and get liberated as a Karma-yogi.

न कर्मणामनारंभान्नेष्कर्म्यं पुरुषोऽश्नुते ।
न च संन्यसनादेव सिद्धिं समधिगच्छति ॥४॥

By merely abstaining from work, one cannot attain liberation from action, nor by mere renunciation (without knowledge) one can attain perfection.

Sant Dnyaneshwar explains -

An extrovert, who is activity-oriented by nature, cannot just abstain from work and attain knowledge & liberation from work. Nor by merely renouncing the world without getting to the state of knowledge, can he attain realisation. If the river is flowing full, one has to take a boat to cross it. If one wants to eat food, he has first to prepare it or get prepared food from somewhere. Till one becomes desireless, effort is unavoidable. Once desireless state is attained, effort stops and man becomes capable for further progress. Just by a flick of wish, one cannot start work nor stop the same.

न हि कश्चित्क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।
कार्यतेह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः ॥५॥

No one can remain actionless even for a moment as all beings are helpless before the impulses created by the Nature for some or other way of action.

Sant Dnyaneshwar explains -

All the worldly beings are under the influence of Maya i.e. ignorance and act according to the three gunas i.e. modes of life viz. Sattva, Rajas & Tamas i.e. goodness, desire and inertness. The natural impulses of the senses make one act some way or other. The senses cannot be quietened by a mere wish. So, saying that one wants to stop work and become actionless has no meaning. If we sit in a bus, car or train and as long as one is not the driver, we have to move alongwith the vehicle. Just as dry leaves go up in the sky when a whirl

wind blows and come down, when the wind stops, Likewise, all beings are in action helplessly under the influence of Maya.

कर्मन्द्रियाणि संयम्य य आस्ते मनसा स्मरन् ।
इन्द्रियार्थान्विमूढात्मा मिथ्याचारः स उच्यते ॥६॥
यस्त्विन्द्रियाणि मनसा नियम्यारभतेऽर्जुन ।
कर्मन्द्रियैः कर्मयोगमसक्तः स विशिष्यते ॥७॥

A person who restrains his organs of action but his mind continues to dwell on objects of enjoyment of senses is under the influence of delusion and is called a hypocrite.

But a person who controls the senses by power of his mind, Oh Arjuna, and engages the organs of action with detachment, on the path of work, is considered superior.

Sant Dnyaneshwar explains -

Persons who outwardly restrain the organs of action by giving up his duties cannot transcend the law of action, because their mind still dwells on the desires of the senses and encumbent actions resulting from them. Undoubtedly, such persons are under the spell of desires & passions. Now I will tell you the qualities of a really desireless person. Listen attentively.

He has undisturbed tranquility of mind & thoughts concentrated on The Supreme Self, but his outward behaviour is like any other ordinary man. He never orders his senses to act nor is he afraid of passions and desires. Whenever he is duty-bound to act, he never abstains from action. When the organs of action are engaged in work, he does not withdraw them, nor is he overpowered by their impulsiveness. Neither is he trapped by desires nor is his mind lured by attractions. Like lotus leaves, which remain in water day & night, but do not get wet, he participates in worldly activities like any other man, but remains unattached. We see the reflection of the sun

in water, but it does get wet. Likewise, this man looks normal and ordinary on the outside and his spiritual attainments cannot be definitely gauged. That man who has the above qualities, know him as desireless, as a Yogi and as a liberated one. Oh Arjuna, he is the Yogi and deserves praise from the whole world. Therefore, I tell you, Oh Arjuna, to become like him. Rein in your mind and attain inner tranquility. Then allow your organs of action to do their work.

नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं कर्म ज्यायोह्यकर्मणः ।

शरीर यात्राऽपि च ते न प्रसिद्धयेदकर्मणः ॥८॥

यज्ञार्थात्कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्मबन्धनः ।

तदर्थं कर्म कौन्तेय मुक्तसङ्गः समाचर ॥९॥

Do your allotted work, because action is better than inaction. Inaction will not even enable you to maintain your physical life.

This world is in bondage to work, except the work done as & for sacrifice to God. Therefore, O son of Kunti, carry out your work as a sacrifice and be free from all attachment.

Sant Dnyaneshwar explains -

One cannot exist without action in this world. The way of the Nature is such that one cannot remain inactive. Then the question is why not do the work that has come dutifully to one's lot? Oh Arjuna, know that this action, in the form of work that comes to one's lot, if done with detachment, liberates one's self from the bondage of the world.

To do one's duty that has come to one's lot is itself a form of continuous sacrifice. No sin gets attached in this action. When one forsakes one's natural duties and is lured by other actions, then he is ensnared in the bondage of births & rebirths & there is no salvation. Therefore do your work while offering the same to God as sacrifice and remain unattached.

सहयज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरोवाच प्रजापतिः ।
अनेन प्रसविष्यध्वमेष वोऽस्त्विष्टकामधुक् ॥१०॥
देवान् भावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः ।
परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ ॥११॥

In ancient immemorial times, Prajapati the lord of creation, created men along with sacrifices and said that with this you will be able to bring forth all that you require to be happy and fulfil your aspirations.

Gods who are pleased by the sacrifices, will do things that will bring you pleasure & thus fostering each other's pleasure, you shall attain the highest good.

Sant Dnyaneshwar explains -

When Brahma, the Prajapati created the world, he also laid down the ways of life for all beings. But the universal laws were beyond the understanding of men & they prayed Brahma to clarify how they should carry on in this world. Brahma replied that he has already laid down duties to suit the nature of each person & by following them all their aspirations will be fulfilled. You need not follow so many allurements that are in this world and create different types of worships, wishful prayers and long religious travels which your bodies will be unable to bear. The professions & activities that I have laid down to suit each person's inherent nature be followed and you will live happily. Do your duties with detachment, which will be a continuous sacrifice to please the Gods and get you the fulfilment of all your aspirations.

Doing your duties to suit your inherent nature will please the Gods and they will help you to fulfil your aspirations and get you things that will bring you happiness. They will also give you protection such that your happiness continues to grow. This way, the Gods & yourself, both will love each other and once this happens all your desires & ambitions will

be crowned with success. Whatever you utter, will be the speech of truth & success. Whenever you wish for a thing, the God of success will say "thine will be done". Just as the entrance to the domain of spring welcomes the entrant with plants & trees bent down with flowers & fruit, likewise a train of successes will welcome your domain of activities.

इष्टान्भोगान्हि वो देवा दास्यन्ते यज्ञभाविताः ।
तैर्दत्तानप्रदायैभ्यो यो भुङ्क्ते स्तेन एवसः ॥१२॥
यज्ञशिष्टाशिनः सन्तो मुच्यन्ते सर्वं किल्बिषः ।
भुंजते ते त्वघं पापा ये पचन्त्यात्मकारणात् ॥१३॥
अन्नात्भवति भूतानि पर्जन्यादन्नसंभवः ।
यज्ञाद्भवति पर्जन्यो यज्ञः कर्मसमुद्भवः ॥१४॥
कर्म ब्रह्मोद्भवं विद्धि ब्रह्माक्षर समुद्भवम् ।
तस्मात् सर्वगतं ब्रह्म नित्यं यज्ञे प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥१५॥

Pleased by the sacrifice, the Gods will offer you the enjoyments you desire. He who enjoys gifts thus given by Gods without offering them in return is undoubtedly a thief.

The good people who eat what remains after the sacrifice are released from all sins but those evil people who prepare food only for their own sake, verily eat sin.

Creatures come into being from food; Rain begets the food; from sacrifice, arises the rain and sacrifice is the product of work.

Know that Brahma is the origin of Karma and Brahma springs from the imperishable Supreme Being. Therefore Brahma which encompasses all in this world, forever centres around the sacrifice.

Sant Dnyaneshwar explains -

Thus, Gods themselves will come to you, offering all the enjoyments you desire, if you carry out all the actions enjoined on you dutifully. You will be filled with magnificent, sumptuous pleasures and will not lack any sort of happiness.

However, he who will not worship the God in return with the wealth given by them, but on the other hand, forgets them, lured by mean pleasures, allows his behaviour to fall from sanctity, with ego inflated with surfeit of wealth and disregard for others, is verily considered as a thief stealing the wealth of Gods. All sorts of misfortunes will befall on him & the splendour of wealth will vanish as a dream. When dutiful actions disappear from one's behaviour, one should understand that the source of happiness has dried up. So saying, Brahma ordains that those who give up dutiful actions, lose their independence; Time will punish them as thieves and confiscate all their wealth. All sorts of misfortunes will close in on him and will not leave him, even if he weeps in pain. Therefore, Brahma further tells that do not go after the lure of senses and make your condition like a fish taken out of water, ensuring certain death.

Those who carry out the actions allotted to them dutifully with detachment and spend their wealth in a manner worthy of goodness, worship the Gods, their Guru, The fire and their fore fathers, will forever live in happiness. No sin or misfortune will come near them. Oh Arjuna, this is what is told by the Lord, Shrikrishna. Men should not allow their behaviour to stray away from Truth & dutifulness. Those who go after only sensual pleasures are surely on the path of sin. All our wealth should be considered as the material offering to the sacrifice, and to be returned to God through our behaviour on the path of Goodness. Only fools prepare their favourite tasty delicacies for the themselves alone. That food which makes a successful sacrifice and pleases God, should not be considered as ordinary food, but should be considered as a manifestation of Brahma, to sustain the life of the whole world.

From food, the creatures come into being; food is produced by rain; rain is caused by sacrifice; sacrifice comes out of action and the source of action is Vedas which is a form of Brahma, created by the Supreme Being. 'Therefore all this world is in bondage to Brahma. Therefore, Oh Arjuna, understand that action is the form in which reside the Vedas as manifestation of the Brahma.

एवं प्रवर्तितं चक्रं नानुवर्तयतीह यः ।
अघायुरिन्द्रियारामो मोघं पार्थ स जीवति ॥१६॥

Oh Partha, he who does not follow this cycle of the world activity set in motion by me, is evil in nature, sensual in his delight and leads his life in vain.

Sant Dnyaneshwar explains -

Oh Arjuna, I have told you in short the background of the sacrifice in the form dutiful detached action. That egoistic man who does not follow this most worthy pattern of behaviour in his life, described as sacrifice resulting in interchange of deeds between men and Gods, is an evil man given to sensual pleasures leading a wasteful life. He is nothing but a burden to the earth. Just as the untimely clouds in the sky are of no use, all the actions of such a man not only in this but also other births, bear no fruit. Therefore, Oh Pandava, no one should give up the action in the form of duties allotted to him, but should strive to the carry them out in the most excellent manner possible. When we are born in this body, all the fruits of the previous births come along with it. Therefore it is wise to follow the cycle of worldly activity in our deeds which are a result of the give-and-take performance of mutual love between Gods & men. Those who do not do so, can only be termed as men devoid of wisdom.

यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्यादात्मतृप्तश्च मानवः ।
आत्मन्येव च संतुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते ॥१७॥

नैव तस्य कृतेनार्थो नाकृतेनेह कश्चन ।
न चास्य सर्वभूतेषु कश्चिदर्थव्यपाश्रयः ॥१८॥
तस्मादसक्तः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर ।
असक्तो ह्याचरन्कर्म परमाप्नोति पूरुषः ॥१९॥

On the other hand, that man whose delight is in the Self, who finds contentment in the Self, whose satisfaction is in Self alone, for him there exists no work that needs to be done.

He has no interest in gaining anything from his actions done in this world, nor from those not done by him. He does not need to depend on any of the beings for any purpose.

Therefore, always perform the work that falls to your lot with detachment. By actions thus performed, man attains the highest goal.

Sant Dnyaneshwar explains -

That man who is absorbed in his Self, does not get bonded by any action, he performs because of his existence in the body. Because of his satisfaction with direct knowledge of Self, his actions come to an end & gets liberated from the bondage of actions.

Because of the bliss of contentment through knowing the Self, all the means to attain the same are no more required and he is relieved of any sort of dependence on others.

Therefore, Oh Arjuna, all the actions that are needed to be done to fulfill the duties that come to your lot, be performed with detachment. Those who follow this, attain liberation from all bondage and reach the highest goal of Realisation.

(To be continued....)

- P. D. Dharwarkar

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Eternity Compressed in Time :
**My Reminiscences of
Shri Gurudeva**

(Continued from last issue)

We have so far seen Shri Gurudeva dealing with the liberative, cosmical and beatificatory as also the moral and intoxicative effects of God-realisation according to the saints of Karnataka. Shri Gurudeva remarks that the experiences pertaining to these effects are "serene and sober" inasmuch as they refer to a pendal with variegated colours, moonlight, pearls, ambrosial juice and internal warfare. On the whole these experiences are joyful, and they fill the mystic with beatification. Shri Gurudeva now comes to the theopolitan effect of God-vision. For this purpose he takes up the poem 'ide anubhava maṅṭapavu', 'this is the Assembly Hall of the Saints' authored by Beratūrapati (or Ṣaḍakṣari). Referring to the lack of clarity regarding the name of the author of this poem, Shri Gurudeva says in a foot-note that in the last two lines Beratūreṣa is described as being "kāya rahita, chāya rahita, māya rahita." Now these very epithets are applied to Prabhudeva by Cāmarasa in his 'Prabhuliṅgalīle'. Thus the exact name of the author is not clear. In any case the fact of the matter is that the poem is very much different from the songs considered so far in that it narrates experiences which contain an element of terror. These experiences refer to the submarine fire, the peals of thunder, the sight-stunning

dazzling flashes of lightning, the over-flowing of the sea, the melting of mountains, and the peak of gold being engulfed by the Void. All these terror-striking phenomena are associated with the deluge or the final extinction of the universe by conflagration. Shri Gurudeva points out that this element of terror hides in it the element of fascination and beatitude. We are reminded here of Rudolf Otto's description of the object of spiritual experience as being *Mysterium Tremendum* in his classic 'Idea of the Holy'.

The poem gives a superb account of the spiritual assembly of saints. This august assembly harbours only those saints who are endowed with intense devotion and have reached the heights of mystical experience. In the context of this glorious Assembly Hall of Saints, Shri Gurudeva recalls how the great ambition of all humanity has been the establishment of the Ideal Society. Great prophets have foretold about the establishment of the Kingdom of God upon earth, when God would deliver mankind and bestow upon them the eternal peace. The Old Testament, the New Testament, the 'Civitas Dei' of St. Augustine, as well as all other religious books of the world have visualised some ideal perfect society as the eventual consummation of the cosmic process. Jesus brought the glad tidings that the reign of heaven and God was at hand." In the Divine Kingdom every individual would become a member of the household of God on whom spiritual blessings would be conferred. One had to cultivate the 'virtue of humility' or 'spiritual poverty' for entering into the Kingdom of God. In St. Augustine's City of God all citizens would live according to the will and Law of God, and receive His Spirit and His Grace as their reward.

Similarly, philosophers have in their own way theorised about the Ideal State. Plato's ideal Republic could be realised only if philosophers were kings or kings were philosophers.

Immanuel Kant thought of an ideal moral world, the Kingdom of Ends, in which every rational member can legislate for another simply because all rational wills originate the same laws. Thus the claims of egoism and altruism would be harmonised in Kant's Moral Kingdom in which all individuals are regarded as ends in themselves. Shri Gurudeva comments that "the conception of the Kingdom of God, though a sublime one, remains only an ideal, a 'schwarmerai' (a dream)."

The well-known twentieth century British political philosopher T.H. Green based his doctrine of the State on a sublime metaphysics according to which the spiritual principle enshrined in the human consciousness makes it strive for the common ideal of the social good. Shri Gurudeva regards Green's doctrine of the state as "one of the noteworthy contributions to political philosophy."

After giving brief accounts of the concepts of the ideal and perfect society as visualised by prophets, mystics and philosophers, Shri Gurudeva presents a description of the Anubhava Mañṭapa or the Assembly Hall of spiritual experience at Kalyāna in the district of Gulbarga established by King Bijjala in the 12th century. Anubhava Mañṭapa was "a sanctuary in which gathered aspirants and devotees for filling the heavens with the praise and glory of the Name of God. At the portals of this spiritual Assembly every earnest seeker after Divinity brought in all humility his own spiritual experience and occupied the place in the Assembly to which his spiritual experience entitled him". King Bijjala founded this unique Assembly Hall with the chief aim of democratising religion and freeing it from ritualism, and visionary theoreticism. It was open to all earnest devotees of God irrespective of caste, creed and sex. "It was governed by the dictum that "one's own appointed work, done in the spirit of dedication (kāyakave kailās) leads to heaven." Devotees at the Anubhava

Maṅṭapa were bound together by mutual love and pursuit after a common spiritual goal. Indeed it was a spiritual brotherhood in which every member considered himself (out of spiritual humility) as being inferior to his brother. Shri Gurudeva points out that even Basaveśvara, "one of the brightest luminaries of the spiritual firmament of Virāśaiva saints, regarded himself as "a servant of the servant", of the devotees of Śiva. The Anubhava Maṅṭapa, resembling the Court of King Janaka, was an Assembly Hall in which learned devotees carried on highly philosophical discussions on the theory and practice of God-realisation.

Coming to the salient points contained in the present poem, Shri Gurudeva first discusses whether the Anubhava Maṅṭapa, apart from being a historical fact, may be regarded as being inside the body itself. The Anubhava Maṅṭapa may be regarded as something mystical, as experienced within his body by the saint. Shri Gurudeva says that the first few lines of the poem indicate the internal nature of the Anubhava Maṅṭapa. He further points out that the poem "Śṛigiriya suksetra kiṇḍu", 'to the Holy place 'Śṛigiri' by Gurusiddha also speaks of the human body as the veritable Śṛisaila itself : 'Śṛigiriya śariradoḷuntu', 'Śṛigiri is inside the body'. Apart from this, the poet himself asks, 'where will you find the Anubhava Maṅṭapa except in the very body ?' Shri Gurudeva reserves his highest praise for the terms in which the poet characterises this Anubhava Maṅṭapa. The description is "unsurpassable in the history of Kannada religious literature." This divine Assembly Hall "alone is the way of liberation through the unmani state", says the poet. "This divine home is the Omkāra offered to the iṣṭa-liṅga which sits on the palm of the hand, and occasions reverberations through ṣaṣṭhalas. Verily it is to be identified with the supreme knowledge of Brahman."

Shri Gurudeva then tells us that there are references in

poem which indicate the historical nature of the Anubhava Maṅṭapa. We find in it a vivid description of the Anubhava Maṅṭapa at Kalyāṇa. It was "a spiritual Assembly where saints and sages of great reputation were invited, where Paramātmāna was the supreme topic of discussion, where the mirrors of their hearts had been spiritually decorated, where the holy feet of the Jaṅgamas were worshipped with ceremony, where musical instruments such as karaḍi, kaustula, rudraṅṅā, jhāṅgati, tāla, maddali were being sounded, and where the empyrean was reverberating with a multitude of sounds."

On a festive day, disciples of Basaveśvara from different parts of the country gathered at the Anubhava Maṅṭapa and merged themselves in meditation. At this time Prabhudeva, the most illustrious of the Jaṅgamas appeared in the Assembly Hall shining with bhasma, and a rosary of rudrākṣas. On seeing the redoubtable Prabhudeva, the disciples and attendants of Basaveśvara began to lisp the name of God in great joy like children, and the whole Assembly was filled with rapture.

The devotees had spiritual experiences among which one pertained to "submarine fire or fire of the lower regions." Lord Siva became pleased with the intense devotion of the saints and their disciples. Here again in the Anubhava Maṅṭapa the sea overflowed, the mountain melted, six sṭhalas became replete with lightning flashes, a great sound of thunder arose, and the submarine light began to glow incessantly.

It is in this very Anubhava Maṅṭapa with its throne studded all round with jewels, that colours began to flash, and the whole scene wore a golden appearance; its gold peak was then devoured by the void, and when Channabasaveśvara saw his Self within himself, he was himself devoured by the great Light.

Continuing the description of the experiences further, Shri Gurudeva says, "Finally those who had entered the Void (bayalu) became identified with the Void, and grasped firmly the Lord of Nirbayalu. They were blessed with grace and victory by Providence, because they followed the path of right." God always sides with his devotees, because of their overflowing devotion and complete self-surrender to Him.

Concluding Shri Gurudeva remarks, "It is no wonder if final victory and infinite auspiciousness, which are the very nature of God, belong as well to the devotees who have made a conflagration of themselves in the burning fire of God-love." Depicting the life-mission of saints in general and his own in particular, the noble Saint of Nimbali backed by the most illustrious Saints of Nimbargi, Umadi and Inchgiri, as being the two-fold saga of the realisation of God and the service of humanity, tells us solemnly, "These God-realiser constitute a blessed community, and on account of their intense love for the afflicted mankind, they live only for its benefaction and betterment, proclaiming from pole to pole, like a rumbling cloud, the eternal Gospel of God from everlasting to everlasting." (Pathway to God in Kannada Literature, pp. 311-14.).

(To be continued...)

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*Everyday, men see creatures depart to Yama's
abode and yet those who remain, seek to live for ever.*

This verily is the greatest wonder.

- Yudhisthira

Ācārya Dīpaṅkar Śrijñāna

The Great Buddhist Missionary from India to Tibet

Ācārya Dīpaṅkar Śrijñāna's name stands foremost among the Indians who had worked selflessly to bring Tibet and India closer together culturally. In Tibet his fame is only next to that of the Buddha and Padmasambhava. Undoubtedly, of all the Indian scholars who went to Tibet from India, the greatest were Ācārya Śāntarakṣita and his disciple, Ācārya Kamalaśīla. Ācārya Dīpaṅkara, too, was a great scholar and he stands higher than the other two in making available priceless Sanskrit works in Tibetan. It is interesting to note that with a few exceptions, all Indian names are known to Tibetans in translated forms. Thus Dīpaṅkara Śrijñāna is known in Tibet as Dpal-mar-med-mda Ye-Śes and Śāntarakṣita as Shi-va-Chho. The Tibetans also call Ācārya Dīpaṅkara Jo-Vo-rJe Pai Dan Atiśa (Svāmi Śrī Atiśayā) or merely Atiśa.

Ācārya Dīpaṅkara's father was king Kalyāṇa Śrī, and his mother Śrī Prabhāvatī. He was born in the 'water-man-horse' year (i.e., the year of Manmath. Vikram era 1039. 982 A.D.) in Saḥor in eastern India. Not far from the Kalyana Sri palace where Dipankara was born, was the Vikrama-vihāra, which was also called the Vikramaśilā Vihāra. There has been useless controversy as to whether Dipankara was born in Bengal or in Bihar. Authoritative Tibetan sources leave us in no doubt that he was born in Bhagalpur.

The parents of Dipankara were intimately connected with the Vikramasila Vihara which was widely known

throughout the Buddhist world in those days. According to tradition, at his birth, his parents went to this vihara for worship and took him with them in a procession of 500 chariots. The King had three sons - Padmagarbha, Candragarbha and Srigarbha. The second, Candragarbha, became famous as Dīpaṅkara Śrījñāna when he took the Order.

As was customary for the children of the nobility at that time, the astrologers predicted many wonderful things about Candragarbha when he was born. He was an intelligent child and was sent to school at the age of three. By the age of eleven, he had mastered the three R's and had become a grammarian. However, since Prince Candragarbha was not the eldest son of the king, he was not destined for the throne.

In those days higher education was provided only at the viharas. Fortunately, the world-famous Vikramasila Mahavihara was not far from his father's capital, but Nalanda was still held in great esteem. The prince while roaming one day went by chance to a nearby jungle. There he met Ācārya Jitāri who lived in a cottage.

Jitāri was renowned as a grammarian and erudite scholar. "Who are you?" he asked the prince. "I am the son of the master of the land", replied Candragarbha.

Jitāri thought that this answer showed pride. "We neither have any master nor any slave. If you are the ruler of the land, then go away", he answered.

This was the age of the eighty-four Siddhas, and Tilopā and Nāropā were still alive. Although Jitāri was not counted among these eighty-four, the prince knew that, notwithstanding his great scholarship, he had forsaken the world. Very humbly he told him that he wanted to renounce the world.

At this, Jitari advised him to go to Nālanda, as he thought that if the prince was ordained too close to his father's capital, it would be difficult for him to overcome pride.

No one, however, was allowed to become a Buddhist monk without the consent of his parents. Candragarbha did not find it easy to persuade his father and mother to share his desire. Finally, when he was permitted to go to Nalanda with a few attendants, the King of Nalanda expressed surprise. "How is it that you have come here, although you have the mahavihara of Vikramasila in your neighbourhood?" he asked.

The prince spoke to him of the greatness of the Nalanda. At this, the King relented and recommended him for residence at the Nalanda Vihara. Accordingly, the prince reported himself to the head of the vihara, Bhikṣu Bodhibhadra. As one could be initiated as a bhikṣu only at the age of twenty, the prince had perforce to wait for nearly nine years. Meanwhile, however, Ācārya Bodhibhadra initiated him into the life of a śramana (novice), made him wear saffron-coloured clothes and called him Dīpaṅkara Śrijñāna. In Buddhist lore, Dīpaṅkara is a highly revered name, because it was the name of a Buddha who came long before Śākyamuni, the historical Buddha. Srijnana was added to his name as he was expected to become a scholar.

Maitrī Gupta, the guru of Bodhibhadra, was living then. He had abandoned the path of scholarship and taken to the ways of the Siddhas. Consequently, he was called Maitrīpā Advayavajra or Avadhūtipāda. Bodhibhadra once took his young disciple to Avadhūtipāda who lived at Rājagrha, and prevailed upon him to accept Dīpaṅkara as a disciple. The guru agreed and the twelve year old Dīpaṅkara stayed with him until he was eighteen. In this period, he made a thorough study of the scriptures.

As the cult of the mantras and the Siddhas was dominant in those days, he had of necessity to study these subjects. And who could be a better guru for these than Nāropā (Nāḍapāda or Narottamapāda)? Naropa was a Siddha, but he was also a great scholar. The Nalanda and Vikramasila mahaviharas were great centres of learning, and prospective pupils had to pass many difficult examinations before they were allowed to enter these universities. At every gate of Vikramasila there used to live an erudite scholar. Naropa was in charge of the northern gate. From Rajagrha, Dīpaṅkara went to him, and remained with him for eleven years. Besides Dīpaṅkara, Naropa had many other disciples, such as Prajñārakṣita, Kanakaśri and Māṇakaśri, all of whom distinguished themselves as great scholars in later years. Pupils came even from foreign lands to study at the feet of Naropa. This is evident from the fact that the most famous Siddha of Tibet (the great poet Milā Repā's guru, Marpā) was also a disciple of Naropa.

Dīpaṅkara completed his studies at Vikramasila, but his thirst for knowledge was not quenched. The chief bhikṣu of Vajrasana Mahavihara at Bodh Gaya was renowned for his learning. He was known as Vajrasanipada (Dorje danpa), although this was not his real name. Dīpaṅkara went to the Mati Vihara in Vajrasana and became the disciple of Mahavinayadhara Silarakṣita, the great Vinayapitaka scholar. He studied the Vinaya-pitaka with him for two years. Thus, by the time he reached the age of 31, Dīpaṅkara Śrijñāna had already become a master of the three Pitakas and the Tantras, and an all-round scholar.

At that time Acarya Dharmapala of Suvarna-dvipa (modern Sumatra) was famous for his scholarship throughout the Buddhist world. Indians in that age did not suffer from the complex of having a monopoly of great learning. In fact, one of the eighty-four Siddhas, Ratnākaraśānti, who had

earned the title of Kalikāla-sarvajña, omniscient of the Kali Age, was a disciple of Ācārya Dharmapala. Jñānaśri Mitra, the great exponent of dialectics, and Ratnakirti had also sat at the feet of Ācārya Dharmapala. Dīpaṅkara had met these scholars at Vikramasila and had probably learnt a good deal from the disciples of Ācārya Dharmapala. His *Wanderlust*, however, was not satisfied. From Bodh Gaya he went to the seacoast, perhaps to Tāmralipti, the present Tamruk in the Midnapur district of West Bengal. In the Tibetan biographies of Dīpaṅkara Srijñana, there is no other mention of his travels, but it is certain that he must have visited Sarnath (Ṛṣipatan), Śrāvasti, Kuṣinārā and other holy places before he set sail for Sumatra. Vijayapala (960–1040 A.D.) was the king of Magadha in those days. This was the time when Mahmud Ghaznavi (997–1030 A.D.) invaded India and plundered Kanauj, Mathura, Banaras and Kalanjar. In his last invasion in 1023 A.D., Somnath was laid waste. Dīpaṅkara had started on his voyage only ten years earlier.

Dīpaṅkara travelled for fourteen months and during this period he might have visited Burma and Malaya also. No vestige of the Buddhist religion is left in Sumatra now except for the ruins of some old viharas, but when Dīpaṅkara went there, it was famous for Buddhist learning. It was usual for foreign monks on their way to India to stay in Sumatra for some time to acquire proficiency in Sanskrit. This is known from the accounts left by Chinese pilgrims four centuries earlier.

At first, Dīpaṅkara lived quietly by himself and many monks came to see him. Then he went to Ācārya Dharmapala and remained with him for twelve years, studying the books he already knew. Of these, the *Abhisamayāṅkārā* by Asanga and the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* by Śāntideva are still extant. Dīpaṅkara was also initiated in the mysteries of the Tantras

and other scriptures. In those days it was customary for a scholar to stay with a great master for a long period to study the great works methodically, even in our own age scholars sometimes spend something like twelve years to read only eight to ten pages of the *Tatvacintamani* by Gangesh Upadhyaya.

At the age of forty-four, Dipankara Srijnana left Sumatra and returned to Vikramasila. By virtue of his extraordinary learning and ability, he became the chief among the 51 scholars and the leader of 108 temples in the vihara. Siddha Bhutakotipada Santipada and Avadhutipada were all responsible for what he became eventually. Avadhutipada was the disciple of Siddha Damrupa and was the grand disciple of the great Siddha Poet, Kanhapa. Jalandharapa, the guru of Kanhapa, was one of the most important among the eighty-four Siddhas. Dipankara was thus not only a great scholar, but also well versed in the mysteries of the Siddha cult.

At that time Nalanda, Uddantapuri (Bihar Sharif), Vajrasana and Vikramasila were the four greatest viharas of India. Of these, Vikramasila was the most important and had an interesting origin. The great king Dharmapala of the Pala dynasty, while on a visit to these parts, was greatly attracted by the sight of a beautiful hillock on the banks of the Ganga and decided to found a vihara at the place. The vihara, which thus came to be built at the end of 8th century A.D., grew into a great seat of learning two and a half centuries later. The number of students who came from foreign parts to study here was greater than at Nalanda. Among the teachers who taught at Vikramasila were 108 scholars, eight famous savants, and the great scholar Ratnakarasanti who was the head of the vihara. Santibhadra. Maitripa (Avadhutipa), Dombipa Sthavirabhadra, Smrtyakara-Siddha (a Kashmiri) and Dipankara Srijnana were among the eight great pandits.

There was a beautiful temple of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara at the centre of the vihara, besides the fifty-three big and small temples in the compound. Among the gods and goddesses worshipped in these temples, there were some beautiful Tantric icons. The other three viharas also belonged to the kingdom of the Palas, who had special ties with Vikramasila. The eighty-four Siddhas lived during the Pala regime (765–1200 A.D.) and most of them were connected with Vikramasila in one way or another. According to Tibetan writers, the Tantrics of Vikramasila had put the Turks to flight many times by magic spells, but history has a different story to tell.

In the middle of the 9th century A.D., the Tibetan Prince, Ni-Ma-Gon, moved to the west and founded a new kingdom. At his death it was divided into three, and a part given to one of his sons, Lde-Chug-gon. This king showed so much zeal for Buddhism that Cakrasena, another son, became a Buddhist monk and assumed the name Jnanaprabha.

It must be remembered that Buddhism came to Tibet at a time when India was entering the age of Tantrism. In fact by Jnanaprabha's time, Tantrism had devoured all the religions of India. In spite of this, Jnanaprabha himself was not attracted to Tantrism. On the contrary, he wrote a book against it. The Tantrics of Tibet believe that the royal ascetic went to hell for writing this book.

Jnanaprabha was the eldest son of the king of Guge (Shen-shung) and had become bhiksu. He had read the scriptures, was a rationalist, and had inherited from his forefathers a great faith in Buddhism.

He realized, however, that the task of combating the evils of Tantrism was so stupendous that his single-handed efforts would not suffice. He therefore selected 21 intelligent

Tibetan youths, educated them for ten years in the country, and then sent them to Kashmir for higher studies. None of these, however, could stand the rigours of Kashmir's climate, and all of them died except Ratnabhadrā (Rin-Chhen-Zang-Po) and Suprajna (Legs-Pahi-Shes-Rab).

Ratnabhadrā is considered to be the greatest translator in Tibet. When he returned at the end of his studies, Devaguru Jnanaprabha was naturally delighted, but the work of reform for which he had striven so hard was too large an undertaking for an individual. He came to the conclusion that since the students from Tibet found it very difficult to stand the climate of India, it would be better if some scholar were to come from India and work in Tibet.

Students from western Tibet used to come to the Indian mahaviharas for study. Jnanaprabha came to learn from them that there was a great scholar called Dipankara Srijnana in the Vikramasila mahavihara. Accordingly, he sent a party, properly equipped for the long journey, to Vikramasila to invite Dipankara to Tibet. The mission failed, however, for the party could not prevail upon the master to undertake a journey to Tibet.

Jnanaprabha was not one to be daunted by failure. He decided to send another party, but funds were lacking, so he went to the Gartog Province to collect gold. This probably refers to a place named Gartog, which was situated to the north of the Manasarovar lake and had a gold mine. It is recorded that the king of Gartog put him under arrest and held him up for a big ransom. When the news of Jnanaprabha's arrest reached his son, Bodhiprabha (Byang Chub Od), he thought that he had collected enough money to effect his release. The amount, however, proved inadequate, but before he could go back to obtain more money, he went to see his father in prison. "My son," said Jnanaprabha, "you know I

am grown old. Even if I do not die immediately, I am likely to do so within the next ten years. So, if you squander money on me, we shall not be able to send for a scholar from India. How splendid it would be if I were to die for the sake of the great cause and you could send all the gold to India to fetch the scholar ! Moreover, it is not certain that the king will release me even after he has received the stipulated amount of gold. So, my son, instead of worrying about me, you had better send an emissary to Atisa. I am sure he will agree to come to the country of the Bhots (Tibet), especially when he hears about my present plight, for he will take pity on us. If for some reason he cannot come, then you should send for some other scholar who has worked under him." Thus Devaguru put his hand on his son and blessed him as he took leave of him for the last time.

At that time, it was customary to call all royal monks Devaguru (Lha Bla-ma). Devaguru Bodhiprabha began to look for people who would act as emissaries for the mission entrusted to him by his father. The Upasaka Gun-Than-Pa had been to India and lived there for two years. Devaguru secured his services for this work. Gun Than persuaded Bhiksu Chul-Khrims'-Gyal-Va (Silajaya or Jayasila), an inhabitant of Nag Choho, and some other people to accompany him. In all, some ten people reached Vikramasila by way of Nepal. The beloved disciple of Dipankara Srijnana wrote in the Gurugunadharmakara, the biography of his teacher, that when these ten men reached the banks of the Ganga, the sun had already set. The boatman whose boat was already full said that he would come back to take them across the river. But as it was getting late, the Tibetan travellers began to have doubts about his return. They suspected foul play, so they concealed the gold in the sand and were preparing to spend the night there when the boatman returned.

The travellers said, "We thought you would not return." "How could I leave you on the banks of the river and thus break the royal law?" the boatman replied.

By the time the boatman took them across the river, the gates had closed; so he advised the travellers to spend the night in the inn outside the western gate. "When the gate opens in the morning, you may go in", he added.

Just above the gate, there lived a bhiksu called Tson Seri (Vikramasingh), who heard the travellers talking in his mother tongue. Naturally, his curiosity was aroused and he enquired about the newcomers. Vikramasingh came from Gya, the last Ladakh village on the way to Kulu, which is no longer inhabited.

When Vikramasingh was told about the object of their visit, he advised them not to say outright that they had come to take Atisa to Tibet. He told them to say that they had come to study, otherwise they could not hope to succeed in their mission. He also promised to take them to Atisa at a suitable time.

A few days after their arrival, a congregation of scholars met at Vikramasila. Vikramasingh took his compatriots there and they were able to see the scholars, especially Ratnakirti, Tathagataraksita, Sumatikirti, Vairocanaraksita and Kanakasri, who worked under Atisa. They also saw for themselves the high esteem in which Atisa was held.

After a few days, Vikramasingh took his countrymen to meet the master. They saluted Atisa, placed the gold before him, and told him the tragic story of the death of the royal ascetic, Jnanaprabha, in prison.

Dipankara was much moved and he said, "There is no doubt that Jnanaprabha was a Bodhisattva, the Buddha to be, because he had sacrificed himself for the Dharma. I will fulfil

his desire, but you must realize that the heavy responsibility for 108 temples rests on my shoulders. I have, moreover, many other duties to attend to. It will take me eighteen months to be relieved of these duties. Then only shall I be able to go to Tibet. In the mean time you must keep this gold."

The Tibetan travellers showed the utmost satisfaction at these words of Atisa and settled down there, ostensibly to study. Atisa also began to make preparations for his departure. At this time (1030 A.D.) he was 57-58 years old, but his age did not stand in the way of his resolution. At the opportune moment, Dipankara informed Ratnakarasanti, the Chief Abbot of the mahavihara, about his intentions. Ratnakara was reluctant to let him go and said to Gun Than Pa and his friends, "My Tibetan friends, you say that you have come here to study, but have you not really come to take Atisa away? At present Atisa is the eye of India. Are you not aware that the Turks are knocking at the western gates of the country? If Atisa were to leave at this juncture, then the sun of the Dharma preached by the Lord will set."

Ten years earlier, in 1029 A.D., Mahmud had passed away, but the Punjab was still under Ghazni domination. Buddhism had almost disappeared from Central Asia with the impact of Islam. Mahmud's son, Masud (1030-1040 A.D.), was all the time poised to invade Kanauj. In the course of the bloody wars in Central Asia, hundreds of Buddhist viharas had been ruined. Thousands of bhiksus had come to India as refugees and found shelter in the viharas of India. Thousands of homeless men and women wandered all over the country.

At last, the Chief of the mahavihara allowed Atisa to go to Tibet. Atisa sent for the gold, a quarter of which he gave to the pandits, a quarter for worship in Vajrasana at Bodh Gaya, a quarter to Ratnakarasantipada and the rest to the king for various religious works. Then he sent some of the Tibetans

with his own men to Nepal, and with the interpreter, Vikrama of Gaya, and some other men, altogether twelve people, Atisa set out for Bodh Gaya. Before leaving India, he felt the need to see once more the place where Siddhartha Gautama had become the Buddha.

Atisa visited Vajrasana and many other holy places. Then along with the scholars, Ksitigarbha and 19 others, he reached a small vihara on the frontier of India. Domton-pa writes, "at the time the master left India, Buddhism was, as it were, at its lowest ebb." Near the frontier, Atisa found three helpless puppies. He took pity on them, took them in his lap and fondled them. It is said that even today the race of those puppies is to be found in Dan (Tibet).

Having crossed the border, Atisa and his party entered Nepal and arrived at the capital in due course. At this time, King Jayakamadeva of the Thakuri Dynasty was probably the ruler of the country. He showed them the utmost respect and asked them to stay in Nepal. Atisa could not refuse his request and lived there for one year. During this period he initiated one of the princes of the royal blood into the Order.

It is from Nepal that the master wrote a letter to King Nayapala (1040-55 A.D.) of the Pala dynasty. The letter is available in its Tibetan translation in the Tanjur Collection. Similar letters written by the Buddhist masters from India are preserved in their Tibetan translations.

Leaving Nepal behind, the master and his party reached the Thun vihara, but meanwhile Vikramasingh, the interpreter, had fallen ill. He did not recover in spite of all the medical care bestowed on him. Atisa was greatly distressed and lost all hope of ever reaching Tibet. "With the interpreter dead, it is useless for me to go to Tibet", he said.

However, there were other interpreters, such as Jayasila,

who consoled him. As he entered the kingdom of Guge, the men sent by the royal ascetic Bodhiprabha were already there to welcome him. Everywhere arrangements were made to make the stay of the master and his retinue comfortable. The people vied with one another in doing honour to him. Before reaching Tho-lin, the capital of Mnah Ris in the Manasarovar region, in the year 'water-man-horse' (Citra-bhanu, 1042 A.D.), the king came to receive him reverentially and took him to the Tho-lin vihara. This vihara had been built by the late king Jñanaprabha. The master stayed in this vihara for nine months and preached the Dharma. Here he translated many books and wrote his famous work, the Bodhipatha-pradipa. The Tibetan translation of this book is still extant. Atisa lived in the Manasarovar province for three years. Then he went to Puran (Spu Rans) to the east of Manasarovar in the year 'tree-man-monkey' (1044 A.D.). It was here that his very dear and devoted disciple, Dom-Ton-Pa, met his preceptor. He followed him everywhere like a shadow until the day he died in 1054 A.D. He wrote a biography of his guru, which is called the Gurugunadharmakara.

From far and near, people came to listen to the great scholar who was always on the move and was honoured everywhere. His knowledge of the Tibetan language was elementary. In fact, the story goes that he did not know the difference between the words for 'pebble' and 'stone slab'. Truly speaking, Atisa had little time to spare for the Tibetan language. Besides travelling, he had to write books and translate or review many important Sanskrit books. His insufficient knowledge of the language of the country, however, was no obstacle to Atisa, for he always had a competent interpreter with him. The great master Ratnabhadra, who had been sent by Jnanaprabha to Kashmir, had returned as a great scholar of Sanskrit. He was at first not in a mood to receive the Indian

scholar properly. Gradually, however, he was so greatly impressed by his scholarship and his kind behaviour that he became one of his staunchest devotees and assisted him in translating many important books.

During the latter part of his long stay of thirteen years in Tibet, Atisa spent three years in mNaḥ Ris, four years in middle Tibet and six years in Ne Thaṅ. He went to the Sam-ye vihara in central Tibet in the year 'fire-man-boar' (1047 A.D.). This was the first vihara founded by the Indian master Santaraksita in Tibet during the regime of Emperor Khri-Sron-Ide-btsan (755-80 A.D.) and it was here that Tibetans were initiated for the first time as bhiksus. Many Sanskrit books were also translated here. The library at this vihara was so rich that the master was surprised to find certain books that were not to be found in the viharas of India. Unfortunately, this vihara was later reduced to ashes, although it was rebuilt in the first half of the 13th century by the interpreter, Vajrasri (Dorje Dpal). Dipankara is remembered in all the places he visited even to this day.

He stayed in Yer-Va in the year 'iron-man-tiger' (1050 A.D.). This place lies to the north-east of Lhasa, a day's journey from Lhasa. It is here, in 1051 A.D., that he wrote his commentary on the Kalacakra. Half a day's journey to the south of Lhasa, there is a place called Ne Than, the last place where Atisa lived. Here, in the year 'tree-man-horse' (1054 A.D.), on the 18th day of the 8th lunar month, this great savant passed away at the age of seventy-three.

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BOOK REVIEW

Ayurveda and the Mind : by Dr. David Frawley,
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Dr. David Frawley is the director of the American Institute of vedic studies in San Fe, New Mexico. He has to his credit many works relating to Astrology, Ayurveda, Yoga, Tantra and Vedanta. He is popularly known as vamadeva Shastri.

Ayurveda does not look upon the human beings as a limited set of biochemical processes. It does not regard the mind as merely a function of the brain. It does not look upon the individual as a product of social circumstances, though all these factors can be important. Ayurveda views the human soul as pure consciousness, linked with but not limited to the mind-body complex, which is its instrument of manifestation.

Yoga is a science of spiritual development aiming at self-realization, the discovery of our true nature beyond time and space. This process is aided by a mind and body free from disease. Yoga as a medical therapy is traditionally part of Ayurveda, which deals with the treatment of both physical and mental diseases. Ayurveda uses yogic methods like yoga postures and breathing exercises, to treat physical diseases. Ayurvedic treatment methods for the mind include yogic practices for spiritual growth, like mantra and meditation.

According to Ayurveda, physical diseases occur mainly owing to external factors like wrong diet. Mental diseases arise mainly from internal factors like wrong use of senses and the

accumulation of negative emotions. Physical disease disturbs the emotions and weakens the senses, which may give rise to Psychological disturbances. Psychological imbalances have physical consequences. They lead to dietary indiscretions, strain the heart and nerves, and weaken the physical body.

Our very way of life breeds unhappiness. We have an active and turbulent culture in which there is little peace or contentment. We have disturbed the organic roots of life, which are good food, water and air, and a happy family life. We live in an artificial world dominated by an urban landscape and mass media. We run from one stimulation to another, rarely observing the process of our lives, that is really leading nowhere. Our medicine is more a quick fix to keep us going in our wrong lifestyles and seldom address the behavioral root of our problems.

Ayurveda teaches harmony with Nature, simplicity and contentment as keys to well-being. It shows us how to live in a state of balance in which fulfilment is a matter of being, not of becoming. It connects us with the well-springs of creativity and happiness within our own consciousness, so that we can permanently overcome our Psychological problems, which is to return to oneness with both the universe and the Divine within. This requires changing how we perceive, think and live.

A higher level of healing is to eliminate diseases before they manifest, for which invasive methods like drugs or surgery are seldom necessary. To reach this stage we must consider the effects of our lifestyle, environment, work and Psychological condition. We must cut off the wrong factors in our daily lives that make us vulnerable to disease.

There is always some disease attacking us, particularly in changes of season, or in the aging process. Health is a matter

of continual adjustment, like sailing a ship upon the sea. It cannot be permanently achieved and then forgotten, but is an ongoing concern. Ayurveda aims at more than merely creating health, avoiding disease and helping us live longer.

To be healthy is important but health is not an end in itself. We must consider what we are using our energy for and why. The quality of our awareness is the real fruit of all that we do. It is our ultimate expression, the essence of who we really are. All our human problems arise from lack of true awareness, which is not merely a lack in the universe. The entire universe is part of our own greater being.

Nature itself is the Divine mother in manifestation, and the universe is her play of consciousness. She provides not only for material growth and expansion that moves outward, but also supports our spiritual growth and development, which occurs within. Nature possesses a qualitative energy through which we can expand into wisdom. Nature functions through conscious forces, which can be enlightening and healing.

We must depersonalize our problems, and look to understand the entire human condition and the pain of others. Leaving behind our personal problems. We must take up the problems of humanity, opening, up to the suffering of others as our own. We must learn that life creates suffering in order to help us grow spiritually. This is a stage of service and charity.

Though we have minds use them constantly, we do not know what our mind really is. We are so caught up in the mind's activities that we do not take the time to discover what the mind itself really is. The problem is that to know the mind we must first know ourselves. We must understand who we really are.

The mind has its qualities and, like fire, can be used for both good and bad. It can provide great happiness or wreak

tremendous havoc in the world, as history has shown again and again. All Psychological problems are nothing more than a wrong use of the mind, which arises from ignorance of how the mind works. Learning the right use of mind not only solves our psychological problems, but directs us to our higher potential of self-realization.

Though we have always had a mind, most of us have never taken the time to observe it. Let us look at our minds. For this we must step back internally and take the role of the observer. Imagine that your thoughts are a stream, and you are sitting on the bank watching them flow by. Learn to see the contents of the mind flowing by, without judgement or interference. Just as we can see and use our hands, so awareness can perceive and use the mind. But this requires a very high state of attention. It requires detachment from the mind, which means detachment from the mind's activities and interests.

Our ever-shifting mental panorama of thoughts, emotions and sensations reveals the constantly changing or mobile nature of the mind. The mind is extremely volatile and impossible to prevent from moving. This is because the mind is not only a shifting point in space, but is also a changing point in time. Without motion the mind does not function. The mind, therefore, is impossible to still, though there is a stillness beyond the mind.

The inner self is content in its self-worth and finds peace in its own identity. It does not need to seek anything in the external world, which appears like a shadow before it. In its pure form, divested of attachment to the mind, it becomes the universal self that transcends any individual identity, and is beyond all manifestation. This is the unification of the individual with the universal self in which there is liberation and immortality.

Unconditioned consciousness is our true self beyond all movements of the mind. The entire movement of spiritual growth consists of shifting from conditioned to unconditioned consciousness. Conditioned consciousness is the storehouse of all memories and attachments, from which psychological problems arise. This conditioning of the mind distorts our perception and disturbs our emotion. Ayurvedic psychology works to calm the conditioned mind, removing its negative patterns that lead to disease and sorrow.

Samadhi is a state of absorption in which our consciousness becomes entirely concentrated in a single object or experience and we forget all other things. Yogic practice aims at developing absorption in cosmic consciousness. Through it consciousness is put to rest in the higher sense, providing lasting peace and liberation.

Intelligence is the flame of truth that illumines our lives; how we cultivate it determines the light by which we live and grow. If we use our intelligence properly, we respect our bodies and the world around us and use things wisely and appropriately. We develop a way of life that allows us to live better and longer, not merely for our own sake but for the good of others. We strive to control our thoughts and emotions. Hence we must strive to develop our intelligence.

Each of us possesses an inherent ethical sense, which we call 'conscience' - a feeling that certain things are right and others are wrong. Our conscience causes us not to wish harm to any creature, and to feel the pain of others as our own. Conscience is a major part of intelligence, which establishes how we value and treat other people. The more intelligent we are, the stronger a conscience we have, and the less we seek to interfere with others or impose our will upon them.

We are not usually conscious of the soul within us. Nevertheless it creates and sustains all that we do. The soul exists everywhere in Nature, giving life and sustaining form in all things. The soul is latent in the elemental kingdom. It sleeps in the plants, dreams in animals, wakes in human beings, and becomes fully conscious of itself in self-realised sages.

Ayurvedic psychology emphasizes right association to ensure psychological well-being. We should always be careful to keep ourselves in the right company. We should associate with those individuals who elevate us, who must be most careful about who we associate with on an intimate level.

To nourish the mind, we must have beauty and harmony in our home environment. We must have a place of peace and happiness. To bring this about, it may be necessary to create a sacred or healing place in the house. Generally a room should be set aside for spiritual activity. An altar can be set up with pictures of deities or gurus and sacred objects like statues. Incense, flowers, fragrances, bells or music can be used. Some prayer or meditation should be done daily at this place.

Sound has a tremendous power to condition our mind. Whether as words or music, no other sensory potential has such a capacity to effect us. Mantra is not only a sensory tool for healing the mind by using the power of sound and linking it with meaning and feeling, but it also affects the very nature of the mind. Mantra means that which saves the mind. Mantra is the main and most direct tool for healing the mind, from its deepest layers up to its surface actions. Mantras are specially energized sounds or words. They may be simple single sounds like Om, or special prayers intoned or sung in various ways. Mantras are repeated in a regular manner to empower them and to turn them into tools of psychological transformation. Mantra provides a vehicle to carry us forward in meditation and in concentration of the mind.

Mantras can be repeated not only during meditation but also during any time of the day when the mind is unoccupied. It is good to repeat mantras before sleep to promote right sleep and dreams, and after waking up in the morning to promote wholesome activity during the day. Extended periods of mantra repetition can be done like a mental fast. Repeating a mantra for an extended period gives a mantra bath for the mind and clears it of any negative thoughts and impressions. Mantras reach our deeper consciousness only when they go on automatically in the mind, including in the state of sleep. Mantra should follow our every breath and movement.

Devotion is the basic attitude of the soul, our spontaneous love of the Divine Father and Mother of the universe. Devotion is the foundation for self-knowledge. The practice of devotion is the nectar that can cure all ills. God as the Supreme Being is not limited to any particular form. He is both personal and impersonal. The way to contact him is through meditation with an open mind and heart. Attuning ourselves to His will lifts us to the summit of the natural world from which we can easily access transcendent awareness.

Devotion and compassion are the two sides of the same higher feeling capacity, which is the right usage of emotion. We should feel compassion for all creatures, particularly for those who are less fortunate than we are. It is not merely trying to help others but recognizing that the sufferings and joys of others are also our own. Compassion is the recognition of the Divine presence in all beings.

The best way to develop devotion is to choose a particular form of God to worship. Devotion works easiest if it begins with the use of a form. After all, it is attachment to form that is the basis of our mind's functioning. The main thing is to have a specific form of the Divine that we worship on a regular basis.

Prayers are supplications to the Deity for help or guidance. We should learn to communicate with God who, after all, is our own inner self. God never refuses any sincere request. The Deity also possesses a name or mantra. The name is the important factor in devotional worship. We should resort to repeating the Divine Name whenever our minds become agitated or upset. If we make the Divine Name our constant companion, nothing can really disturb us in life. We should call on the Divine without ulterior motives.

Devotion is the very sap that vitalises the mind. If we are not devoted to anything, the mind will be dry, empty and self-destructive. Even if we are wise or intelligent, devotion is essential. To use a metaphor, the mind is like a wick, knowledge is the flame, but devotion is the oil that feeds the wick. without devotion, knowledge, even spiritual knowledge, will simply burn up the mind.

Peace must be brought to the core of the mind. This requires emptying the mind of its contents, its deep-seated habits, tendencies and attachments, surrendering fear, anger and desire on all levels. However the mind is naturally calm and pure. We need only allow the mind to return to its natural state, which is to keep it free from disturbing external influences. This makes us healthy and happy.

- Dr. B. R. Modak

"Rukmini Niwas", 38, Ranade Colony,
Hindwadi, Belgaum-590 011.

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*One should conquer anger by cool headedness
evil by good, miserlyness by charity & falsehood
by Truth.*

- Mahabharat

The Academy of Comparative Philosophy & Religion

QUARTERLY REPORT

For the Period Ending 30-9-2000

I. Srimat Swami Purushottamanandaji Maharaj of Ramkrishna Mission Ashram, Belgaum delivered a lecture on 'Dhyanayoga' from Srimadbhagavatgita on 23rd, 24th, 25th and 27th of September 2000 by giving number of practical examples. The lecture was well attended and appreciated by one and all.

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As a child grows, people rejoice, but they do not know that it is approaching death. Everyday after birth, it is nearing death and yet in joy these people raise auspicious flags.

- Jnaneshwar

Death indeed is like a lion's den, to which all steps point, but from which none returns.

- Jnaneshwar

The Prophet is not honoured in his own time and country.

- Jesus Christ

The spiritual life goes underground from time to time..... for what purpose we do not know.

- Gurudeo Ranade

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