

Vol. 45 October - December 2009 No. 1  
ISSN/0971-927 X

# PATHWAY TO GOD

**A Quarterly Journal of Spiritual Life devoted to Religion,  
Philosophy, Mysticism & Science of Yoga**



**ACADEMY OF COMAPRATIVE PHILOSOPHY & RELIGION, BELGAUM.**

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Vol. : 45, No. 1, OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2009

PRICE : Rs. 30/-

(ISSN/0971-927x)

Annual Subscription : India (Bharat) Rs. 100/-.

For 5 Years : Rs. 470/- For 10 Years : Rs.950/- Foreign : Annual U.S.S 10/- (by Airmail)

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Articles on related topics solicited. They should be typed on one side of paper with double spacing. Text CDs with hard copy are accepted.  
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Published By :

Academy of Comparative Philosophy & Religion  
Hindwadi, Belgaum -590 011. Phone : (0831) 2467231.  
www.acprbgm.org. e-mail : info acprbgm.org.

Printed At : Swastik P. Press, Huns Talkies Road, Belgaum -590 001.  
Phone : (0831) 2421029, 2480912 Mobile : 9844294713

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## Reader's Column

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We are restarting Reader's Column with an extract from Shri Nani Palkhiwala's views on *Pathway To God* dated 12-02-1997.

"I have been regularly receiving *Pathway To God* and have been reading it over the years. It is an interesting journal on our Indian culture and heritage."

\*\*\*

The article "Scientific base of Spirituality in Saint Dnyaneshwar's writings" was interesting and inspiring to science loving younger generation.

Even change in front page printing is more pleasing and attractive."  
(28-08-09) - B. V. Joshi, B-7. *Brahma Chaitanya*, Bijapur Road, Solapur.

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"No doubt the articles in *Pathway to God* are very thought-provoking and spiritually charged. But I wish they were brief.

The colourful and life-emanating cover page design provided a much needed change."

(14-09-09) - M. V. Kulkarni, B. E., M.I.E., Govt Registered Valuer & Chartered Engineer, Belgaum.

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"The articles compiled invigorate the knowledge about our culture and heritage. The editorial bridges the gap between the contemporary issues and the supramental knowledge thereby providing an impetus to rise above the mundane aspects of life"

(21-09-09) - Dr. Raghvendra M. Kulkarni, M. Tech., Ph.D., U. K.

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"Dr. K. B. Dabade's 'The Divine Glimpses of Gurudev' was informative revealing his suffering in personal life and his forevisions'.

(21-09-09) - Dr. C. V. Venugopal, M.A., Ph.D., Dharwad.





## Hymn to Lord Krishna

ನರಜನ್ಮ ಬಂದಾಗ, ನಾಲಿಗೆ ಇರುವಾಗ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ಎನಬಾರದೆ  
ಕೃಷ್ಣನ ನೆನದರೆ ಕಷ್ಟ ಒಂದಿಷ್ಟಿಲ್ಲ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ಎನಬಾರದೆ ||೫||

ಮಲಿಗೆದ್ದು ಮೈಮುದು ಏಳುವಾಗಲೊಮ್ಮೆ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ಎನಬಾರದೆ  
ನಿತ್ಯ ಸುಳಿದಾಡುತ್ತ ಮನೆಯೊಳಗಾದೊಮ್ಮೆ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ಎನಬಾರದೆ ||1||

ಮೇಲೆ ತಪ್ಪಿ ಮಾತನಾಡುವಾಗಲೊಮ್ಮೆ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ಎನಬಾರದೆ  
ಹಲವು ಕೆಲಸಗಳಿ ಒಂದು ಕೆಲಸವೆಂದು ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ಎನಬಾರದೆ ||2||

ಗಂಧವ ಪೂಸ ತಾಂಬೂಲ ಮೆಲುವಾಗ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ಎನಬಾರದೆ  
ಒಳ್ಳೆ ವೈಭವ ಪಡೆದು ಅನುರಾಗದಿಂದಿರುವಾಗ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ಎನಬಾರದೆ ||3||

ಪರಿಹಾಸ್ಯದ ಮಾತನಾಡುವಾಗಲೊಮ್ಮೆ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ಎನಬಾರದೆ  
ಪರಿಪರಿ ಕೆಲಸಗಳಿ ಒಂದು ಕೆಲಸವೆಂದು ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ಎನಬಾರದೆ ||4||

ಕಂವನ ಬಿಗಿದಪ್ಪಿ ಮುದ್ದಾಡುತ್ತಲೊಮ್ಮೆ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ಎನಬಾರದೆ  
ತನ್ನ ಮಂದಗಮನೆಯ ಕೂಡ ಸರಸವಾಡುತ್ತಲೊಮ್ಮೆ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ಎನಬಾರದೆ ||5||

ನೀಗದಾಲೋಚನೆ, ಕೋಗೋಪದ್ರಗಳೊಮ್ಮೆ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ಎನಬಾರದೆ  
ಒಳ್ಳೆ ಚೆಂದುಳ್ಳ ಹಾಸಿಗೆ ಮೇಲೆ ಕುಳಿತೊಮ್ಮೆ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ಎನಬಾರದೆ ||6||

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ದುರಿತರಾಸ್ತ್ರಯನು ತೋರೆದು ಬಿಸುಟಲು ಒಮ್ಮೆ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ಎನಬಾರದೆ  
ನಿತ್ಯ ಗರುಡವಾಹನ ನಮ್ಮ ಪುರಂದರ ವಿತಲನ್ನೆ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ಎನಬಾರದೆ ||7||

- ಶ್ರೀ ಪುರಂದರದಾಸರು

When born as human, granted a tongue, canst thou  
not evoke Krishna  
By remembering Krishna no difficulty affects thee,  
canst thou not evoke Krishna...

While waking up, twisting thy limbs, canst thou not once  
evoke Krishna  
Loitering ever in the house canst thou not once evoke  
Krishna..... 1

While talking thoughtlessly canst thou not evoke Krishna  
As one among many tasks canst thou not evoke  
Krishna..... 2

While applying sandal paste, chewing beetle leaves  
canst thou not once evoke Krishna  
Enjoying all prosperity, livingly lovingly canst thou not  
once evoke Krishna..... 3

While talking jocundly canst thou not once evoke Krishna  
Doing several tasks canst thou not once evoke  
Krishna..... 4

While hugging and cuddling thy infant canst thou not  
once evoke Krishna  
Sporting with thy darling canst thou not once evoke  
Krishna..... 5

---

Entrapped in solutionless thoughts, ailing with illness  
canst thou not once evoke Krishna  
Reclining on a royal bed canst thou not once evoke  
Krishna..... 6

Like to discarding others' possessions canst thou not  
evoke Krishna  
Canst thou not ever evoke our Eagle-borne Viththala  
Himself as Krishna ..... 7

-Translated by :  
Madhu



*'Pathway to God'*, is the name of a series. The material collected so far is sufficient to bring out five volumes in the series... After all this, God willing, by making use of all this material the fifth book - *Pathway to God in World's Philosophy and Religion* - will be prepared. All the earlier books would supply material for the construction of this volume. This series will show how One Religion can reign in the whole world, under the name of Universal Religion."

- *Gurudev Ranade in 1921.*



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## *Musings of the Editor...*

Dear Spiritual Aspirants,

**W**e are back with a silver platter of diverse spiritual dishes for the aspiring souls. You'll be pleased to go through our renewed Book Review column and the first review is by the senior follower and trustee of Gurudev, Shri. P. D. Dharwarkar who has analyzed lucidly *Hearing the Divine in India and America* by Harold D. Gower and David J. Goa.

\* \* \*

There is a grain of truth in the statement 'God is simple, all else is complex', but the Pathway to God has been experienced as complex as it calls for rigorous physical, mental, spiritual discipline, utmost *Bhakti* and consistency and regularity.

Having been torn in the treadmill of the fast pacing time everywhere, at home, in the office, on the road, old and young always grumble about the paucity of time. No time to read, no time to visit friends and relations, no time to play....above all, one coolly brushes aside rituals/the Almighty, prayers/meditation. A little introspection will prove this otherwise. The stark reality is we have no mind and 'no time' is a lame excuse for our callousness, mindlessness.

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But making time available or managing our time for ourselves is an art in itself. First of course one must have the open-mindedness and willing to accept it.

The consciousness of time is as old as civilization itself. There are a number of references in the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* wherein kings and princes were guided by the great sages on the importance and proper utilization of time. Koutilya, the renowned economist advised king Chandragupta on the division of time into 24 hours and their proper utilization. *'Time is a system of those sequential relations that any event has to any other as past, present or future..'* Its a precious resource. Everyone has 1,440 minutes a day. All, rich or poor, king or beggar, child or adult start with the same 24 hours, neither more nor less. In a sense each day is a 'time - bank from which you draw your assets in minutes and hours'. The supply is limited, your use of them isn't. Fred Decker describes, *'Suppose you had a bank that credited your account each morning with \$ 86000 and every evening cancelled whatever amount you failed to use that day. Call that bank time and call the dollars seconds- and every night makes irrecoverable whatever part you fail to invest to good purpose. The bank has 365 days a year, allows no overdrafts and carries no ongoing balance. Each day it opens a new account for you; each night it burns the day's records. There's no drawing against tommorrow.'* This statement contains an important message for us all : time has no value before it is used or after it has been wasted. Each one spends, fritters or squanders his time the way he chooses. It's non-transferable. Further, time is irrever-

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sible; time past can never be time present or time future. Time is irreplaceable too. There is no substitute for time. Time alone is the Master Worker. Hence our ancient Sages aptly called time as *Kalaroopi Parmatma*. You always seem to need half an hour more. Time on hand makes work expand. As time is forever a fixed resource for a day, it needs to be saved and used properly.

Perhaps never before people felt managing their time so essential and urgent as now. Due to tremendous strides in science, technology, IT revolution, means of entertainment, pursuit of knowledge, vast and varied social, political, economic, cultural activities and on top of all these cut-throat competitions, the reservoir of time at each one's disposal remaining the same, it is becoming a Herculean task to devote time to each or several of the above activities. Hence the need to manage our time, if not control it by reins.

**How can we do it ?**

On an average, setting aside 8 hours for rest, 8 hours for work each one is left with 8 hours. But we can't call these eight hours as our own. Our daily chores, family, friends, relatives, visitors, social commitments, watching television, reading newspapers/magazines/novels all these claim their share. Thus we are hardly left with any-time out of 8 hours as 'exclusively mine'. However a judicious handling of time will provide you the time. Note that time rushes past us constantly. We must look for and collect and even hoard it minute by minute. For-

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get big hour-saving ideas. Concentrate instead on twenty to thirty minute time-savers. Or even ten minute time-saving devices, take care of minutes, hour will take care of itself. You can learn to manage your time by looking at the clock; it passes the time by keeping its hands busy. Whether in the office, factory, home, industry or laboratory remember always, nay, make it your second nature to-

1. Eliminate unnecessary, slave-of-habit things;
2. Stop doing what you must the hard way;
3. Teach yourself to do two or three tasks at a time without making a mess of them;
4. Fix up priorities;
5. Plan properly. Every moment spent in planning helps to save three or four in execution;
6. Do not procrastinate; it is the thief of time;
7. Remember tomorrow is two days late for yesterday's task;
8. Be punctual and disciplined in keeping your schedules/appointments and doing things;
9. Answer letters/smses/e-mails briefly, no one wants to read a novel in a letter;
10. Do away with garrulous people, politely;
11. When interrupted, try to return to work on hand immediately;
12. Delegate work as much as you can, including your kids;
13. Turn travelling into a usable time;
14. Set aside a fixed time each day to improve yourself, your opportunities, your life.
15. Reserve some fixed time everyday for prayer, meditation, spiritual reading, physical exercises for your total health.

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But a word of caution, in your eagerness to manage time don't be stressful, tense, irritable or sick for that will ruin the very purpose of your time management. An old English prayer is worth quoting here :

*Time for Everything -*

Take Time to Think; it's the source of Power,  
Take Time to Work; it's the price of Success,  
Take Time to read; it's the foundation of Wisdom,  
Take Time to Play; it's the secret of perpetual Youth,  
Take Time to be Friendly; it's a road to Happiness,  
Take Time to Serve; it's too short a time to be Selfish,  
Take Time to Dream; it's hitching your wagon to a Star,  
Take Time to Love; it's the privilege of the Gods,  
Take Time to Laugh; it's the music of the Soul,  
Take Time to Pray; it's connecting your soul to the  
Divine.

Do spare time to read the articles in the present number !



*Prof. Dr. Madhumati M. Kulkarni*

*Editor-in-Chief.*

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# RAMAGITA

(Part II)

(Continued from last issue)

-Dr. K. V. Apte

In the last stanza No. 62, Rama eulogises whatever he spoke to Laksmana.

(62)

विज्ञानमेतदखिलं श्रुतिसारमेकं

वेदान्त-वेद्य-चरणेन मयैव गीतम् ।

यः श्रद्धया परिपठेद् गुरु-भक्ति-युक्तो

मद्रूपमेति यदि मद्बचनेषु भक्तिः ॥६२॥

I myself whose feet (i.e. nature) is fit to be known from the Vedanta i.e. Upanishads have told (you) this special knowledge which is one (without a second) and which is the complete essence of (instructions of) Srutis/Vedas. Now if a person who is having devotion to his spiritual teacher and faith in my words reads with devotion (This instruction of mine), then he will come to possess My form or nature (62).

Explanation :- The knowledge stated in Ramgita is here said to be the 'essence of Sruti'. In verse No. 59 it is said to

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be "secret knowledge which is sum and substance of all 'Sruties'. It has been already pointed out in the introductory portion of this article how Ramgita is based on the Sruti.

The nature of the reality/God is fit to be known by Upanishads which are called Vedanta because they form the concluding portions of Vedas.

To gain the form / nature (rupa) is one of the concepts of salvation (mukti).

It is to be noted that devotion to the spiritual preceptor and faith in the God are very important in spiritual life.

*Notes :*

*(Notes numbered 1,2,3 etc. refer to the introductory portion of this article. Later on the notes are given as 1.1, 1.2 etc. wherein the first figure refers to the number of stanza in Ramagita and the second number refers to the notes under that stanza).*

1. Ramagita is a part of Adhyatma Ramayana where date is not definitely fixed. However it is quite certain that its date is after 1000 A.D. by which time the school of Monism of Sankaracarya was well-established.

2. अविरोधितया कर्म ना विद्यां विनिवर्तयेत् । आत्मबोध-३

3. विद्याविद्यां निहत्येव तेजस्तिमिरसंघवत् । आत्मबोध-३

4. For Adhyasa. see Sankaracarya's introductory bhasya on Brahmasutra.

5. The example of rope-snake is usual in Monism.

6. ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्या । ब्रह्मज्ञानावली माला, 20

7. Pancikarana is a peculiar doctrine in Monism mentioned in वेदान्तसार, अत्मानात्मविवेक etc.,

8. जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः । ब्रह्मज्ञानावली माला 20

9. तत्त्वमस्यादि - वाक्येषु लक्षणा भागलक्षणा ।

सोऽयमित्यादि - वाक्यस्थ - पदयारिवनापरा ॥ वाक्यवृत्ति, ४८

10. *Three bodies are mentioned in works on Monism*

11. पंचीकृत - महाभूत - संभवं कर्म-संचितम् ।

शरीरं सुखदुःखानां भोगायतनमुच्यते ॥

पंच-प्राण-मनो-बुद्धि-दर्शेन्द्रिय-समन्वितम् ।

अपंचीकृत-भूतोत्थं सूक्ष्मांगं भोग-साधनम् ॥

अनाद्यविद्यानिर्वाच्या कारणोपाधिरूच्यते ॥ आत्मबोध, १२-१४

12. उपाधि-त्रितयादन्यमात्मानमवधारयेत् । आत्मबोध, १४

13. पंच-कोशादि-योगेन तत्तन्मय इव स्थितः ।

शुद्धात्मा नील-वस्त्रादि-योगेन स्फटिको यथा । आत्मबोध, १५

14. *See the introductory Sankara-bhasya on the Brahma-sutra.*

15. जीवोधी-स्थ-चिदाभासो भवेद् भोक्ता हि कर्मकृत् । वाक्यसुधा, ३६

16. *Further, Sruti as means of knowledge (pramana) is twice referred to (St. 19, 57). and the sentence Neti ( नेति ) is cited as प्रमाण (St. 34)*

\* \* \*

7.1. चित्तस्य शुद्धये कर्म - विवेकचडामणि, ११

7.2. आचार्यवान् पुरुषो वेद । (छांदोग्य उपनिषद्, ६.१४.२);

तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत् समित्पाणिः श्रोत्रियं

ब्रह्मनिष्ठम् । (मुंडक उपनिषद् १-२.१३)

9.1. अविरोधितया कर्म नाविद्यां विनिवर्तयेत् ।

विद्याविद्यां निहत्येव तेजस्तिमिरसंघवत् ॥ आत्मबोध, ३

11.1. ज्ञानादेव नु कैवल्यम् ।

11.2. कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि । जिजीविषेच्छतं समाः । ईश उपनिषद्, २

12.1. अकरणे प्रत्यवायः ।

13.1 *Karaka is a subordinate factor in action*

13.2. *See :- उभाभ्यामेव पक्षाभ्यां यथाखे पक्षिणां गतिः ।*

तथैव ज्ञान-कर्मभ्यां प्राप्यते ब्रह्मशाश्वतम् ॥

14.1. *And two contradictory things like light and darkness cannot go together.*



14.2 The sense of egoism on the body is due to super-imposition of the Self on the body. For details see under Stanza No. 41.

15.1.cf. ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्, कुरुते तथा । भगवद्गीता ४.३७

16.1. विचाराज्जायते ज्ञानम् ।

17.1 The नेति sentence runs thus :- सएष नेति नेति आत्मा  
अगृह्यः न गृह्यते अशीर्यः न हि शीर्यते असंगो नहि सज्जते ...  
(बृहदारण्यक उपनिषद् ४, ५.१५)

17.2. cf. निषिध्य निखिलोपाधीन् नेति नेतीति वाक्यतः ।

विद्यादैक्यं महा वाक्यैर्जीवात्म - परमात्मनोः ॥ आत्मबोध, ३०

21.1. न कर्मणा न प्रजया धनेन त्यागे नैके अमृतत्वमानशः ।

(तैत्तिरीय आरण्यक, १०-१०)

21.2. एतावदरे खल्वमृतत्वम् । बृहदारण्यक उपनिषद् ४-५.१५

(This बृहदारण्यक उपनिषद् belongs to वाजसनेयि branch)

24.1. निगमाचार्य-वाक्येषु भक्तिः श्रद्धेति विश्रुता । अपरोक्षानुभूति, ८

Faith is very essential in obtaining knowledge. cf.

श्रद्धावान् लभते ज्ञानम् । भगवद्गीता ४-३९

24.2. तत्त्वमस्यादि-वाक्योत्थं मज्जीव-परमात्मनोः ।

तादात्म्यविषयं ज्ञानं तदिदं मुक्ति साधनम् ॥ वाक्यवृत्ति, ६

24.3. तत्त्वमसि (Thou art that) is a sentence from छंदोग्य उपनिषद् ऐतदात्त्यमिदं  
सर्वं तत् सत्यं स आत्मा । तत्त्वमसि श्रेतकेतो । ६.८.७

25.1. हेतुः पदार्थावबोधो हि वाक्यार्थावगतेरिह । वाक्यवृत्ति, १०

25.2. तत्त्वंपदार्थो निर्णीतौ वाक्यार्थश्चित्यते बुद्धेः ।

तादात्म्यमत्र वाक्यार्थस्तयोरेव पदार्थ योः ॥ वाक्यवृत्ति, ३७

25.3. For details see under verse No. 28.

26.1. When there is inconsistency in the expressed sense in a sentence, a search for consistent meaning has to be undertaken.

26.2. लक्षणा ह्युणगंतव्या ततो वाक्यार्थ सिद्धये ।

वाक्यार्थानुपपत्त्यैव लक्षणाध्युप गम्यते ॥

- सर्व वेदांत सिद्धांत सारसंग्रह, ७३३



.....

*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 called gross space. Similar is the case with other elements like Air. etc.*

28-29.11. cf. पंचीकृत-महाभूत-संभवं कर्म - संचितम् ।

शरीरं सुखदुःखाना भोगायतनमुच्यते ॥ आत्मबोध, १२

28-29.12. पंचप्राण-मनो-बुद्धि-दर्शेन्द्रिय-समन्वितम् ।

अपंचीकृत-भूतोत्थं-सूक्ष्मांगं भोगसाधनम् ॥ आत्मबोध, १३

30.1. अखिलकारणत्वात् कारणशरीरम्: । वेदांतसार

30.2. अहंकारादि-कारणत्वात् कारणशरीरम् । वेदांतसारं

30.3. अनाद्यविद्यानिर्वाच्या कारणोपाधिरूच्यते ।

उपाधित्रितयादन्यमात्मानमवधारयेत् ॥ आत्मबोध, १४

31.1. स्थूलशरीरं अन्नादि-विकारत्वात् एव हेतोः अन्नमयकोशः वेदांतसार,

31.2. सूक्ष्म शरीरं विज्ञानमयादि-कोशत्रयम् । वेदांतसार

31.3. कारणशरीरं ... आनंदमय कोशः । वेदांतसार

31.4. कोशवद्आच्छादकत्वात् । वेदांतसार

31.5. आत्मानाम स्थूल-सूक्ष्म-कारण-शरीर-त्रय-विलक्षणः

पंचकोश-व्यतिरिक्तः । आत्मानात्मविवेक

31.6. पंचकोशादि-योगेन तत्रन्मय इव स्थितः ।

शुद्धात्मा नील-वस्त्रादि-योगेन स्फटिको यथा ॥ आत्मबोध, १५

31.7. विचाराज्जायते ज्ञानम् ।

32.1. Here the word *mr̥sa* can be taken in the following senses : (1) false. The three statements occur in empirical life which is false. (2) not connected. These states have no connection with the Self. (3) not affecting. These states in no way affect the nature of the Self.

33.1. चिच्छायावेशतो बुद्धौभानं धीस्तुद्विधास्थिता ।

एकादंकृतिरन्या स्यादंतःकरण-रूपिणी ॥ वाक्यसुधा, ६

34.1. स एषनेति नेत्यात्मा अगृह्यः नहि गृह्येत । अत आदेशो नेति नेति ।

- (बृहदारण्यक उपनिषद् ४-५.१५)

34.2. निषिध्य निखिलोपाधीन् नेति नेतीनि वाक्यतः ।

विद्यादैक्यं महावाक्यैर्जीवात्म-परमात्मनोः ॥ आत्मबोध, ३०

37.1. अध्यासो नाम अतस्मिन् तद्बुद्धिः । शंकराचार्यकृत अध्यास भाष्यम्

38.1. cf. मुळी ब्रह्म निराकार । तेथे स्फूर्तिरूप अहंकार ॥ दासबोध, ४-१.१  
स्वस्वरूपाते विसरून । दृढ ते स्फुरे मी पण । तोचि अहंकार जाण ॥  
(एकनाथी भागवत, २.३.३७५),

ब्रह्म उद्भवत्वे परिपूर्ण । ते स्वरूपी स्फुरे जे मी पण । ते मायेचे  
मूळस्थान ॥ एकनाथी भागवत, २-४५१.५२

39.1. रागेच्छा-सुख-दुःखादि बुद्धौसत्यां प्रवर्तते ।

सुषुप्तौ नास्ति तन्नाशे ॥ आत्मबोध, २२

39.2. *The Upanishads state that in sleep the individual self is unknowingly joined with the Self and hence he gets happiness from the Self who is the nature of bliss :-*

सता सोम्य तदा संपन्नो भवति स्वमपीतो भवति ।

छांदोग्य उपनिषद्, ६.८.१

40.1. जीवोधीस्थचिदाभासो भवेद्भोक्ता हि कर्मकृत्, वाक्यसुधा, ३६

41.1. *For details, see Sankaracarya's introductory bhasya to Brahmasutra.*

42.1. श्रुत्याचार्य-प्रसादेन दृढबोधो यदा भवेत् ।

निरस्ताशेष संसार-निदान-पुरुषस्यदा ॥ वाक्यवृत्ति, ५०

45.1 cf. एवं निरंतराभ्यस्ता ब्रह्मैवास्मीतिवासना ।

हरत्यविद्यां विक्षेपान्, रोगानिव रसायनम् ॥ आत्मबोध-३७

46.1. cf. विविक्तदेश आसीनो विरागो विजितेन्द्रियः ।

भावये देकमात्मानं निर्मलाकाशवत् सदा ॥ आत्मबोध, ३८

47.1. cf. आत्मन्येवाखिलं दृश्यं प्रविलाप्य धिया सुधीः ।

भावये देकमात्मानं निर्मलाकाशवत् सदा ॥

रूपवर्णादिकं सर्वं विहाय परमार्थवित् ।

परिपूर्ण-चिदानंद -स्वरूपेणा व तिष्ठते ॥ आत्मबोध, ३९-४०

48.1. ओमित्येतदक्षरं इदं सर्वं तस्योष व्याख्यानां भूतं भवद् भविष्यद् ।

इति सर्वं ओंकार एव । मांडूक्य उपनिषद्

48.2. In Sanskrit the word "kara" is suffixed to the letters in the alphabet.

e.g. अ becomes अकार, उ becomes उकार and म् becomes मकार.

50-51.1. जीवन्मुक्तस्तु तद्विद्वान् पूर्वोपाधिगुणां स्त्यजेत् ।

स सच्चिदादि धर्मत्वं भेजे भ्रमर कीटकवत् ॥ आत्मबोध, ४९

52.1. चिदानन्दैकरूपत्वाद् दीप्यते स्वयमेव हि । आत्मबोध

53.1. तीर्त्वा मोहार्णवं हत्वा राग-द्वेषादि-राक्षसान् ।

योगी शांतिं समायुक्तो ह्यात्मारामो विराजते ॥ आत्मबोध, ५०

54.1. प्रारब्ध-कर्म-योगेन जीवन्मुक्तो यदाभवेत् ।

किञ्चित् कालमनारन्धकर्मबंधस्य संक्षये ॥ वाक्यवृत्ति, ५२

55.1. cf. जन्म दुःख जरा दुःख जाया दुःख पुनः पुनः ।

संसारसागरेदुःखं तस्माद् जागृहि जागृहि ॥ शंकराचार्य

56.1. उपाधि-विलयाद् विष्णौ निर्विशेषं विशेषन्मुनिः ।

जले जलं वियदव्योमि तेजस्तेजस्ति वा यथा । आत्मबोध, ५३

56.2. आत्मनि एव आत्मानं पश्यतिसूर्यं आत्मानं पश्यति ।

- बृहदारण्यक उपनिषद्, ६.४.२३

58.1. सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म । ऐतदात्म्यमिदं सर्वम् ।

58.2. यावत् सर्वेषु भूतेषुमद्भावो नोपजायते ।

तावदेवमुपासितं वाङ्मनः कामवृत्तिभिः ॥ भागवत, ११.२५.१७

62.1. cf. वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यो

वेदानाकृद वेदविदेव चाहम् । भगवद् गीता १५.१५

62.2. cf. यस्य देवे पराभक्तिर्यता दैव तथा गुरौ । तस्यैते कथिता ह्यर्भाः प्रकाशंते

महात्मानः ॥- श्वेताश्वेतर उपनिषद् ६.२३

(Concluded)

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# SHRI BABA's

## ANTHROPOMORPHIC MYSTICAL EXPERIENCES

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-Dr. K. B. Dabade

Spiritual literature is replete with instances of anthropomorphic [anthropo (Gk) -man, morph (Gk) -



Sri Amburao

Maharaj (Baba) (1856 Jigjinni - 1933 Bijapur) alias Baba such as his *Paramguru* (the Saint of Nimbargi / Sri Nimbargi Maharaj) (1789- 1885), *Sadguru* (the Saint of Umadi/ Sri Bhausahab Maharaj) (1843-1914), *Atmaswarupa* on the one hand and gods, goddesses, nymphs, sages etc. on the other. To begin with, I narrate Baba's divine vision in which his Paramguru has appeared. One day at the temple of Sri Bheemaraya in Devar Nimbargi, the Saint of Umadi in the course of his discourse on *Das-Bodha* told that the Saint of Nimbargi brought the Divine-Name from Heaven and he had got the authority to impart it to others. But Baba asked his

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*Sadguru*, Maharaj, you just told me how Sri Nimbargi Maharaj got the authority to initiate others. Please let me know who gave you the authority to impart it to others". As it was then time for meditation, the Saint of Umadi, without giving any reply, retired to his room and Baba also went on the terrace of the temple for meditation.

In the course of meditation, Baba had a vision of his *Paramguru* and heard the following words : "Oh, you, Baba, why have you let loose your tongue ? You have no business to question the authority of Bhauraya (the Saint of Umadi). I have given him the authority to initiate. Shut up! Simply mind your meditation".

Baba shuddered to see the vision of the wrathful figure of his *Paramguru* and to hear his threatening words. Overwhelmed with intense repentance, Baba went to see his *Sadguru*, lay prostrate at his feet, stood trembling before him and with tears in his eyes implored his *Sadguru* to forgive him. *Sadguru* said, "Don't worry; I hope you are convinced now." Baba prostrated again at *Sadguru's* feet. From that day onwards, Baba stopped asking such questions and totally surrendered to his *Sadguru* and regarded him as a living embodiment of God Himself. Since then, the word of *Sadguru* was a law to Baba ( *Vide* for details Sangoram, Deshpande 1978 :2007-08, Kulkarni 1966/67 : 33-35).

Here is the description of Baba's divine visions in which his *Sadguru* had appeared and granted him permission to initiate spiritual aspirants.

After the demise of the Saint of Umadi in 1914, Baba was not prepared to initiate spiritual aspirants even though his spiritual master granted him permission to do so, as he had then the supersensuous experience of audition of the Divine-Name. Baba wanted to get a fresh mandate from his *Sadguru* in Spiritual Form. This desire was also fulfilled soon, when *Sadguru* appeared in his vision (*Drishtant*) and told him that permission was given to him to continue his mission of initiation and spread the gospel of God-devotion. But Baba was not satisfied merely with this sort of single permission.



*Sri Bhausahab  
Maharaj,  
Saint of Umadi*

He wanted a fresh assurance from his *Sadguru*. The Saint of Umadi appeared again in his vision (*Drishtant*) and told him, 'Rest assured! Your words are my words. Begin initiation'. On account of this unequivocal assurance from his *Sadguru*, Baba began to initiate spiritual aspirants, since *Datta Jayanti Saptah* in 1915. Nevertheless, Baba always felt and told his disciples that Nama granted by him was the one received by him from Sri Bhausahab Maharaj. Hence Sri Bhausahab Maharaj himself was their *Sadguru* and not he (*Vide* Sangoram, Deshpande 1978 : 109-10, Kulkarni 1966-67 : 110-B).

Here are the incidents in which Baba had the vision of his *Sadguru* at his own *Muth* in Inchgeri.

Without intimating Baba, one day Bheemaraya (Baba's



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sister's grandson) took away *Tabala* pair (tambourine) from the *Muth* to another place for a *Bhajan* Programme. Next day night at the time of *Pothi-Vachan* (reading), Baba asked Bheemaraya, 'Where is the *Tabala* pair?' Bheemaraya said, 'I took it to another *Muth* in order to play there at the time of *Bhajan*'. 'Why have you taken the *Tabala* pair belonging to this place?' Baba put the simple question to Bheemaraya. Bheemaraya rather bluntly said, 'I carried the *Tabala* pair to play them at the place of the *Samadhi*.' As usual Baba observed, 'The photo of Maharaj (the Saint of Umadi) was taken when he was alive. The *Samadhi* has been built only after his demise. Therefore, is the *Samadhi* superior to the photo?' Bheemaraya pointed out in a lighter vein, 'Where the *Samadhi* is, there is Maharaj'. On hearing this Baba's reddish eyes became still more reddish and he spoke nothing for a while but then he said suddenly stretching his hand and showing with utmost confidence to those devotees who gathered there, 'See here! Maharaj is standing here' (*Vide* for details, Kulkarni 1966/67 : 185-86).

Here is a soul-stirring account of Baba's *Atma-swarupa* (one's own form in divine vision).

Baba and his spiritual brother Madappa used to sit for meditation together. Madappa began to have the full vision of his own form but Baba began to have his vision only from feet to neck. As the spiritual progress of the two was not uniform in spite of putting the same spiritual efforts, Baba took the matter to his *Sadguru*. The Saint of Umadi observed that Madappa had attained the full vision of his own form because of his previous spiri-

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tual merit (*Kattida Butti* in Kannada) and as the nature of Baba was stubborn (*Monda* in Kannada) he was having the *Swarupa* darshana only up to his neck from the feet.<sup>1</sup> In the course of time, Baba not only developed *Poorna Atma Swarupa*<sup>2</sup>, i.e., full vision of his own form (Kulkarni 1995 : 421) but also had the experience of touch and conversation with the Atman (Vide Sangoram, Deshpande 1978 :112).

Before describing Baba's vision of Lord Krishna and other gods and goddesses, sages, nymhs etc., it is necessary to refer in a nutshell to the stages through which he has passed in his spiritual career.

One day, after performing night *Bhajan*, Baba told Laxman Bhadji - an ardent follower of Nimbargi *Sampradaya*, "In the beginning, one 'sees' shinning round figure (*Gola*). In course of time the *Gola* splits and from there emerges *Atmaswarupa*. Afterwards, *Nirakara* (without attributes) *rupa* (figure) is 'seen'. Later God takes the form of an infant and then of the cradle and finally the infant form sleeps in the cradle" ( *Vide* for details : Kulkarni 1966/67 : 176-177).

The explanation throws light on the experience of Krishna's birth in Baba's vision. On one occasion, some followers of Nimbargi *Sampradaya* expressed their desire to celebrate *Krishnashtami* at night, most probably along with Baba. But Baba told them, 'Krishna's birth has already taken place in front of me. You may celerate *Krishnashtami* yourselves". ( *Vide* Kulkarni 1984 :53-54, Kulkarni 1966/67:182).

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Baba also heard the enchanting sweet music of the Divine-Flute - probably played by Shree Gopalkrishna - in his vision. At that time, he asked one of his disciples to sing the following song composed by Namadeva, a great Saint of Maharashtra, over and over again : *Nako Vajvoo Shreehari Murali*- pray, Shree Hari, stop playing on the flute (Sangoram, Deshpande 1978:110-11).

Like Kanakadasa - a great Karnataka mystic, Baba was blessed with the vision of *Vaikuntha* and therefore, Baba regarded himself as a *Vaikunthavasi* - resident or inhabitant of *Vaikuntha*. Note the description of *Vaikuntha* as visualised by Kanakadasa.

'*Vaikuntha*', Kanakadasa says, "was wonderfully beautiful on account of beautiful gardens, great overflowing lakes and imposing majestic palaces with golden turrets. I saw the refulgent main door of the palace and inside it the beams of diamonds studded in jewels of different kinds and the houses of the best gods and last of all "God *Rangashai*' who is the destroyer of the wicked. I saw in the palace of God, the nymphs<sup>3</sup> *Rambha* and *Urvasi*, divine bards *Tumbara* and *Narada* , and the main gods. I saw the form of *Vishnu* who uses the serpent as his bed and *Siva* who uses it as his ornament round the neck. I also saw a large assembly of devotees". This delightful vision of *Vaikuntha* threw Baba into ecstasy and in the blissful superconscious state, we are told, he was actually dancing ecstatically. (Sangoram, Deshpande 1978 :111. Vide for details Ranade 1960 :249-50, Kulkarni 1966 /67:89-90).

Baba performed *Sandhya* very meticulously. The

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following incident related to this indicates the appearance of deities like *Indra* in his visions while performing *Sandhya*.

Baba once camped at Sri Anikhindi's house in Jamkhandi during summer in 1929 and one day evening he started performing *Sandhya* in a peculiar way. On seeing it, devotees who had gathered there began to laugh. Baba asked them, "Why are you laughing?". The devotees answered, 'By seeing your peculiar way of performing *Sandhya*'. Baba told them that there was no point in mere chanting mantras and saluting the deities like *Indra* without seeing them. One must first see the deity and then salute Him." ( *Vide* for details Kulkarni 1966/67:180, Tulpule 1955:92, Kulkarni 1984:1).

God appeared before Baba during World War I (1914-1918).

Once the topic of the discussion between Baba and Gurudeo R.D. Ranade - the spiritual brother of Baba - was regarding the World War I. Baba observed, "Ramaraya (Gurudeo), in the war that was fought several people must have died". Gurudeo asked Baba, "Baba! You do not read newspaper. Besides, no newspaper is delivered at Inchageri *Muth*. Then, how did you come to know that many people died in the *Mahayuddha*?" Baba related his vision like this : "During one period He used to strike at one side many people used to die, and at the other side in the second many people used to die" ( *Vide* for details Kulkarni 1966/67:236:237).

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Finally, it may be mentioned that at the time of meditation during night Baba said that on one occasion he saw figures of saints and sages, gods and goddesses passing in his vision like pictures in a cinema show<sup>1</sup> (Sangoram, Deshpande 1978:111).

But in the two incidents mentioned above the name or form of God in the *Mahayuddha*, the names or forms of gods and goddesses etc. have not been disclosed.

The need of the hour is to bring to light systematically the hidden jewels of anthropomorphic and other kinds of mystical experiences of great saints such as Baba disregard of where and when they were born in order to exalt the thinking humanity to a Divine Kingdom of Gods.

*Notes :*

1. Once on the way to Mahalingpur, Baba saluted the idol of Hanumanta and on seeing this, the priest of the temple asked him, "You tell that gods made up of stones cannot be regarded as real gods. Why did you salute then our god?" Baba replied, "I saluted my god only on "seeing" it on the head of your god". It is in this spirit that Baba explained Tukaram's Abhang. *Maze Paya Tuze Doi*, i. e., promise me to see the feet of my Atmaswarupa on the head of your idol (Vide Kulkarni 1995: 60).

2. Once the disciple of Baba asked, "Baba, what is meant by Samadhi?" Baba at once replied, "When you have the full-fledged vision of your Atman exactly as you are that state is called Samadhi" (Sangoram, Deshpande 1978:112).

3. Baba used to say, "In front of Rambha. Urvasi, the women of this world appear like monkeys and have dirty stinking smell (Kulkarni 1995 : 512).

4. Once Baba was shown a cinema at Chhatre theatre in Bijapur (vide for details Kulkarni 1995 : 284).

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**Sri Amburao Maharaj's Total Surrender :**

"Ere-long, I have never entertained the idea that I can do anything. I believe that things take their course as directed by the omnipotent Sadguru. My repeated prayer to my Sadguru is that I should feel inclined to act according to his advice...I followed Maharaj upto Jigajinni. And after he proceeded to Umadi, I returned to Inchageri. About Ten days have elapsed since then. Still I strongly feel that I am always in the company of Maharaj - not only in wakefulness but also in dream and sleep. It is only when I specially try to remember that Maharaj has gone to Umadi, that I become aware of it. I have always submitted to you at Bijapur that I have completely surrendered my all to you. From that time I have really developed a firm conviction that Sri Maharaj always takes care of me, looks after my welfare. I am ever ready to execute your behests. All my words and deeds are really the outcome of your inner guidance. There is practically nothing which I can claim as my own . I have written this also as is prompted by you.

ETERNITY COMPRESSED IN TIME :

MY

REMINISCENCES

OF SHRI GURUDEV

(Continued from April-June 2009 issue...)

-Prof. M. L. Sharma

Shri Gurudev's analysis of the ascending stages of

Tulsidas's Philosophy of Devotion now proceeds to the consideration of the relationship of Nama and Rupa. Tulsidas regards Nama and Rupa as the two attributes of God. Though he regards a sort of parallelism between the conceptions of Nama and Rupa, he does not wish to make a commitment regarding the question of superiority of one over the other. He tells us that the philosopher knows the answer in his heart and sits speechless.

नाम रूप दुइ ईस उपाधि । ...

को बड़ छोट कहत अपराधू । सुनि गुनभेद समुझिहहि साधू ॥

(8) However, Tulsidas is soon compelled to say that the Nama may be regarded as superior to Rupa, for the reason that the Rupa is dependent upon the Nama, the Nama being its cause. Further, Tulsidas tells us that God comes with greater force and love to the heart of a devotee who meditates merely on the Name of the God without caring for the Form, a superb illustration of what may be called *Nishkama Bhakti*:

(a) देखिअहि रूप नाम आधीना । रूपज्ञान नहि नाम विहीना ॥

(b) सुमिरिय नामरूप त्रिन देखे । आवत हृदय स्नेह विसेखे ॥

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(9) Shri Gurudev tells us that by considering the progress of the argument hitherto, we might come to the conclusion that the Name of the God might be regarded as the pinnacle of Tulsidas's Philosophy of Devotion. He goes on to compare the views of Tulsidas and Kabir in this regard, and points out that the Name of God is the fundamental category for both Kabir and Tulsidas. Both of them insist on the Name of God as the fundamental vehicle of meditation. But they differ from each other when Tulsidas insists on a रसनाजप being the chief way of meditation, while Kabir insists upon a श्वासजप :-

(a) काहे न रसना रामहिं गावहि, says Tulsidas.

(b) बिन ही मुख के जप करो नहिं जीभ डुलावो, says Kabir.

Shri Gurudev tells us that there are four kinds of Japa : रसनाजप, ओष्ठजप, श्वासजप, and मानसजप, : the first belongs to Tulsidas, the second to Manu who characterizes it as उपांशुजप, the third to Kabir, and the fourth, मानसजप, might be regarded as underlying all these, so far as the fructification of the process of meditation, namely, the realization of God, is concerned.

(10) Shri Gurudev remarks that Tulsidas was so much enamoured of the importance he attached to the Name of Rama that he had no difficulty in making a triade against all those who followed the path of अलख, calling their minds back to the conception of Rama-Nama as the only way of salvation : तुलसी अलखै का लखै । रामनाम जपु नीच । On the other hand, Kabir veritably says that the अलख, may be regarded as the highest goal of experience and that it may



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be possible for the man to supersensuously visualise it :

“अलख पुरुष निर्वाण है, वा को लखै न कोय ।

वाको तो वाही लखै, जो उस घर का होय ॥

Concluding his analysis of the ascending stages of Tulsidasa's Philosophy of devotion in a comparative manner, Shri Gurudev says, "It is in this way that we might have a comparative understanding of the ascending stages of Tulsidasa's Philosophy of Devotion, particularly so far as the relationship between such fundamental conceptions as Saguna, Nirguna, Nama, Rupa and Dhyana are concerned." (Pathway to God in Hindi Literature, p. 352).

Shri Gurudev has referred to the two-fold relationship that exists between God and saints, both practical and philosophical. As regards the practical relationship he discusses two Dohas of Kabir, then two Dohas of Tulsidas, and then two Dohas again, - one from Kabir and the other in the Surdasian style. In the first Doha "चलती चक्की देखकर" we are told that Kabir began to weep when he saw the two parts of a grind-stone reducing all grains of corn to powder. Kamal, who was present, rejoined that his father need not weep because those grains of corn which lay nearest the central peg remained unpounded. Shri Gurudev brings out the high moral and spiritual significance of the allegory involved in this Doha. The two grind-stones stand not merely for themselves but also for heaven and earth, the grains of corn for human beings, and the central iron peg, for God, proximity to which means protection. God, the Centre of the Universe, rewards His devotees with protection from the painful atrocities of the worldly life.

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Kabir's son Kamal tells his father in all humility that they should rather keep in mind the central iron peg than the two parts of the grind-stone, the proximity to which is sure to proect us:

चक्की चक्की सब कहै, कीला कहै न कोय,  
जो कीला से लगी रहै, साबत बचता सोय ॥

Shri Gurudev tells us that in Maharashtra Kamal as a boy was regarded as being wiser than his father Kabir as is clear from the following episode. Once Kabir was walking on a road and Kamal was following him at a distance, Kabir saw a piece of gold on his way and for fear that Kamal might be tempted to pick it up, Kabir stopped a while, covered it up with dust, and then proceeded. Kamal, who was looking forward, stopped at the spot where his father had stopped, and called his father and asked what he had done. Kabir returned and told him that he wanted to save Kamal from misappropriating the piece of gold which lay there. "Do you think that it is a piece of gold", asked Kamal, "To me it appears nothing but a slab of yellow stone." Shri Gurudev remarks that this episode is just in the spirit of the great Vyasa and Shuka in the Bhagavata, when Shuka was going ahead, naked, the Apsaras in the lake, who were bathing without clothes, took their bath in that condition without minding the presence or peregrination of Shuka. But when Vyasa, who was fully dressed, followed behind Shuka and came near the lake, the Apsaras hastily covered their bodies with their sarees. Vyasa was astonished that this was not done by the ladies when the naked Shuka was going. The Apsaras replied that in his eyes there was a distinction between man and woman, masculine and feminine - तवास्ति स्त्रीपुंभिदा, while Shuka was incapable of such distinc-

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tion. In this connection, Shri Gurudev quotes the verse which is worth etching on the heart of every aspirant.

दृष्ट्वाऽनुयान्तमृषिमात्मजनप्यनम्रं  
देव्यो हिया परिदधुर्न सुतस्यचित्तम् ।  
तद्वीक्ष्य पृच्छति मुनौ जगदुस्तावास्ति  
स्त्रीपुंभिदा न तु सुतस्य विविक्तदृष्टेः ॥

Another Doha of Kabir, "कबीर कुता राम का", tells us about the limits of human freedom. Kabir described himself, like Nanak at a later date, as the dog of God. Kabir says that he is dear to his Master like the pearl, like the spiritual pearl, "मुतिया मेरा नाउँ", that his neck is tied by the cord of God's Name, and that he goes wherever his Master pulls him. This suggests, says Shri Gurudev that according to Kabir, all actions of man are determined by God. But Shri Gurudev recalls how William James in his essay on the Dilemma of Determinism has used a similar example to illustrate the doctrine of indeterminism. A falcon, to whose leg a tether has been tied, could fly anywhere within the orbit and not outside. This, says James, betokens ethically the limits of human freedom. The word which Kabir uses is 'जेवडी,' and not 'शृंगला', which should indicate flexibility of a cotton cord, and not inflexibility and rigidity of an iron chain. Thus Shri Gurudev comments, "While the Doha may have been intended by Kabir to designate the determinism of all actions by the divine Power, James's illustration, that it might also involve indeterminism and limited human freedom is also worthy of consideration

After considering the above two Dohas from Kabir, Shri Gurudev passes on to two other Dohas from Tulsidas con-

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cerning the service which God renders to the saints: घर घर मांगे दूब , i.e., "At that time Tulsi used to beg, now emperors fall at his feet. At that time, Tulsi was without Rama, now Rama has become his helper and guide". Shri Gurudev refers to a similar case of Mahatma Gandhi who lived like a naked Fakir, during his life-time, as was once called by Winston Churchill, but his magnificent Samadhi on the Rajghat in New Delhi is visited by Presidents and Plenipotentiaries for placing wreaths with full honour.

The other Doha of Tulsidas चित्रकूट के घाट पर, tells us in an admirable manner how God serves the saints. On the Ghat of the पयस्विनी river at the foot of Chitrakoot hill, saints were bathing in order to climb up to the top of the hill after their holy ablutions. Shri Gurudev here points out that it is customary in northern India to have a Tilak (तिलक) on the forehead after the bath. The occasion of the Doha raises the question, by whom and to whom this holy sandal mark was applied, these explanations may be offered regarding the holy mark of Chandana to which a reference has been made in the Doha. In the first place, Tulsidas might have been rubbing sandalwood, and God Rama like a faithful servant rendering him service by putting the holy mark on the foreheads of the saints. Shri Gurudev here reminds us of Shrikhandya in Eknath's house, who as an incarnation of God, was performing similar service in rubbing the sandalwood himself and fetching pitchers of water to the house of Eknath : स्वकरे चंदन घासी, गंगेचे पाणी कावडी भरतो. A second explanation maybe that God, in order to test whether Tulsidas recognised

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Him or not came to him and put the holy sandal mark on His own forehead, and then went back, being glad that Tulsidas could not recognize Him. A third alternative may be that Rama might have put the holy mark on the forehead of Tulsidas himself, who on account of the brilliant 'Chhabi' (image) of Shri Rama remained unconsciously glaring without knowing that it was Rama who was putting the mark on his forehead.

Shri Gurudev tells us that we should not attach too much mystical value to these interpretations. He regards the psychological element in the third interpretation as certainly deserving our consideration.

Shri Gurudev takes up two other Dohas - one from Kabir and the other in Surdasian style - wherein we are furnished with some valuable observations about the question of pre-fulfillment of desires and of a eudaemonistic combination of material and spiritual welfare. Kabir's Doha " पीछे मांगे चाकरी, पहिले महिना देय ", tells us that God is not like other masters. His reward precedes service, as in the case of other masters, it follows. This indicates the pre-fulfillment of the desires of the saint by God. Before any desire arises in the mind of the saint, it is already fulfilled by God. In the second Doha written in the Surdasian manner we are told how Gopikas of Gokul went to Mathura not merely for selling their milk-products, but also and particularly for the vision of Krishna - "गोरस वेचत हरि मिलै, एक पंथ दो काज". Similarly, many seekers want to have not simply material or spiritual welfare alone, but their combination. Shri Gurudev tells us that greatness in the world

may not be incompatible with greatness in spiritual life; and he remarks autobiographically that "even a Vice-chancellor's chair may not be incompatible with the vision of a spiritual Form." It was not impossible for king Janaka to have his mind fully engrossed in the spiritual life, while he was ruling the entire world. When याज्ञवल्क्य came to the Court of king Janaka, Janaka asked him whether he had gone there for victory in the argument or for winning the cows and coins, which was the prize set for the victory, उभयमेव सन्नाद् was his characteristic reply which याज्ञवल्क्य gave to king Janaka. King Janaka had not any cause for dissatisfaction with the reply. No better reply than that of याज्ञवल्क्य could have been given to king Janaka who was himself an embodiment of the highest eudaemonistic combination of material and spiritual welfare. (Ibid., pp. 362-363).

After discussing the practical relationship that exists between the saints and God, Shri Gurudev comes to the question of philosophical relationship of saints and God. In this regard, he takes up the following three Dohas:

(i) जो चाहे आकार तू । साधू परतछ देव (ii) निराकार की आरसी, साधो ही की देह । (iii) भजन भरोसे रामके, मगहर तज्यो सरीर ।

In the Doha जो चाहे आकार तू , we are told by Kabir, that if we are unable to see the form of God in this world, the bodily form of Sadhu would be an excellent substitute for it. In fact, to Kabir the Sadhu would be a total representative replica of the Godhead. On the other hand, says Kabir, if we are anxious to see the Nirakara, we have to take recourse to the *Nijarupa*. By distinguishing between the two namely, *Sakara* and *Nijarupa*, Kabir tells us that we

should give प्रेम to the one and प्रीती to the other, personal and impersonal devotion respectively. Shri Gurudev tells us that there are parallels for both these conceptions elsewhere. Kabir has already said जाके दरसन साहब दरसै to see the saint is fully equivalent to seeing God, while Patanjali tells us in his aphorism तदाद्रष्टुः स्वरूपेऽवस्थानम् that the ultimate aim of the seeker is to abide in his own Form, the स्वरूप or निजरूप, In the triad of form, formless and transcending form, the *Saguna* corresponds to the first, *Nirguna* to the second and गुणातीत, to the third which transcends both form and formlessness. According to Patanjali and others, the निजरूप might be characterised as गुणातीत, instead of निर्गुण. (Ibid., pp. 363-364).

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**Samadhi of  
Sri Nimbargi Maharaj**

"Satsanga " means the company of good people who are virtuous, and superior to oneself. Remembrance of the Divine Name given by the Sadguru is indeed Satsanga. It is Satsanga to constantly weave the Divine Name in one's breaths. So also, the constant contemplation of Reality and the uninterrupted mystical Realization of Reality, is verily Satsanga. One must always have the association with the Nirguna. (The Impersonal Atman.) so that one would become "Achuta" i.e. Immutable Divinity and would be liberated. By association with "Achyuta", the Atman, one would imbibe and acquire the splendour of "Acyuta", the Immutable Atman.

- Sri Nimbargi Maharaj.

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**SEVEN**  
**VEDIC RIVERS :**  
**THEIR SPIRITUAL**  
**SIGNIFICANCE**

-Dr. T. N. Achuta Rao

"Sapta Sindhavah"

"Prajnyanan Brahma; Atma eva brahm"

*Symbolically, we have Shiva bearing Ganga on His Shikha. It is the most beautiful symbol (pratika or pratimaa) of the descent of Consciousness from the foot of the Lord, Purnaprajnya, Pure Consciousness, Shree Hari Narayana. Everything is consciousness here. It is 'sat', 'cit' and 'ananda'. It is Truth, Knowledge, and Bliss. This is just 'cit' the pure Consciousness in the beginning and it flows eternally as 'the flow', the River Sarasvati, Srujasvati, Drishadvati, cit, Jnyan and creative force. 'cit' are the electromagnetic waves, particles of light (photons) that radiate from the Omniscient, the supreme Lord of the universe and its miniature replica in the First Manu, Vivasvan, the Sun. The Sun Rays carry this Truth, Knowledge, and Bliss. These are the Sapta Sindhu, the Seven Rivers of the Veda. Rivers are the vital ingredients of Nature. They are the principal source of energy and the life-supporting force. Man lives not by bread alone but water too. The importance of water, i.e., rivers is eulogized in the Vedas.*



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The Vedic Rivers explored here are different from the physical waters that flow on the earth's surface. These are the flows of the elemental constituents, the vital forces of the universe. At first, these emanate from the supreme Lord; rather, these manifest as energy; and hence it is the 'energy flow'. It is Consciousness, *chaitanya*, and flow as *Prajnyaa* in all living creatures on earth. It is the life-force, vital breath, *Prana* that sustains all creatures, the *Pranis*.

There are some customs and habits handed down to some of us from our forefathers that dictate our conscience to offer our prayers to Gods and Goddesses, particularly, to the Sun-God, Indra, the Lord of the luminous Mind, Varuna, the father of our life force, Rudra and others. We offer our prayers to the Sun with Water (*arghyam and paadyam*) and chant the *Gayatri Mantra* beseeching Him to bestow on us the 'dhee', activate (*pracodayaat*) the supreme knowledge hidden within us, and protect us. Symbolically, we offer a handful of water to the Sun every morning afternoon and evening as a sign of our gratitude. Other customs include making a circle around our leaf-plates before having our lunch, with a few drops of water (*parshayamca*) chanting a *mantra* to ward off all intruding microbes or evil forces hovering over and waiting for an opportunity to get into our food and devour it; another one is taking a few sips of water with a *mantra* to sustain our five vital breaths (*prana*) before taking food. Yet another custom is to end the lunch with a few drops of water (*Aposhanam*) saying a *mantra* of gratitude for the food given to us. All these symbolic offerings of water are significant.

However, the most important aspect of the divine

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waters, "*divya Apah*" is explained in this article. It brings out how this eternal flow of Consciousness descended to earth from the vast Ocean of Consciousness, the *Prajnyaa Sagara*, in which *Shree Hari Narayana* rests on *Adishesha* in *yoganidra* ever aware of Himself creating, sustaining and dissolving this Universe. At first, this consciousness descends to earth and enters all vegetative matter and then onto the animal kingdom, and then to Man via the primates. It ascends to its highest state to *Shiva*, or *Buddhahood*, in course of several Millennia. We have the *Buddha* born to *Shuddodhana* and *Maya Devi* and he was married to *Yashoda*, his cousin, and had a son *Rahul*. These mythological characters are ever pure and pristine souls created once in a few hundred thousand years.

Ever since man appeared on this earth he has been a mystic creature and the riddle of the species is yet to be solved. A philosopher, a scientist, and a sage of ancient lore stand distinctly apart for us and we forget the fact that each one is none else but the other. This is the riddle. The ancient Sages practised spiritual exercises in order to attain the secret knowledge of creation and became the mystics. The philosophers fell in love with words and failed to experience the reality of existence; on the other hand modern day scientists developed ways and means to detect the underlying facts and figures of creation with the result that, now we know much better about this world. However, the mystic experiences of the sages and saints remain a secret for the unattained. This mysticism is what stands between man and God.

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. Man is essentially made of the same elements as of the earth. In fact, God has created man out of the locally available resources, viz, earth (vitamins and minerals), water, fire, air and space (ether) called the *panca mahabhutas*. In a way, all living creatures are animation of the inanimate by the 'divine will'! The solid and liquid parts of the body are made of minerals and water; the subtler parts are made of air, fire and ether. Thus man has come to possess a physical outward projected body covered by a network of electromagnetic communication system of mind and vital forces; there is yet another most subtle solar battery called the soul that supplies the much needed energy to the body to function . There are three forces operating in every living creature. These are the : 1. '*cit* shakti, 2. *jnyan* shakti, and 3. the *Kriyaa* shakti; besides there is also the *ability to transform* objects or things. This is the Knowledge, Information, Technology and Creative Ability to Transform (KITCAT) inherent in nature also available to Man, albeit, on a limited scale.

Thus, air, water and fire constitute the fundamental particles of both the earth and man. These three elements play a dominant role in creation. The Veda clearly explains the origin of the universe. The Sages like Narada, Bhrugu, Vashishta, Vishvamitra, have experienced the reality of existence and have explained in Suktas through a *Chhandas* (Metre) as envisioned by them with the help of their Devata in their Samadhi state. There are the Suktas in Rk Veda such as the *Agni Sukta* in Mandala I, *Vayu Sthuti*, in Mandala X-1, 34-1, *Nadi (River) Sukta* in *Sukta 33 of Mandala III* and *Sukta 108 of Mandala X* and

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*Purusha Sukta* in Mandala X, etc. that explain the origin of the elements\* .

All the constituent elements of the universe have manifested from the Parabrahman; it is the 'chitta' (Divine Will) of the Lord to manifest as matter and, 'cit' only has expanded into jnyan (knowledge) and creative force (kriyaa shakti). Time and Space have been created out of His Sankalpa, '*Ekoham bahusyaami*', meaning, 'I am alone and become many' and manifested in myriads of life forms as :

*sahasra shirsha purushah sahsraksha. sahasrapat  
sa bhumi vishvato vrutva atyatish Thad dashamgam II  
(Rk Veda, Mandala X. Purusha Sukta).*

*He, the Lord appears to the eyes of the beholder all the hands and feet of the living creatures as His only, and none else has individual existence apart from Him.*

The entire universe has manifested from 'tat' (That) which can never be put in terms of thoughts or words. In fact nothing can explain this supreme Consciousness that has pervaded the universe. The words and thoughts rebound, and Mind returns unable to reach there ("*yatra vaco nivartante aprapte manasa sah*") Rk Veda has made it amply clear that there exist, nothing prior or in front, before or after and That One, none else but He exists and the term 'Golden Egg' is coined to express 'that' which held this universe. He, the supreme Lord of the universe is called "*Hiranyagarbha*".

*'Hiranyagarbhasamavartatagre bhutasya jatah patireka asit' . I*

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*yasymah pradisho yasya bahu kasmai devaya havisha vidhema II*  
[Rk Veda 10-221-1-4]

This is reiterated in Taittiriya Upanishad [1-2-3-1; 2-2-1-1, 5-5-1-2 and Taitiriya Samhita 3-3-5-2]. Sankhya, Vedanta and Shiva Sutras also enumerate the order of manifestation of the universe from the Para-Brahman. Water existed as the primordial matter in the very early state of creation.

*Nasadiya Sukta says,*

"*kamsvidagarbham prathamam dadhra apo yatra devah samagaccanta vishve... yasminvishvani bhuvanani tastu II*"

[Rk Veda 10-82-6]

Once the secret of creation is realized, all other things become very clear. There is an instance of Shetaketu who was advised by his father-teacher Aruni Uddalaka "to know about *that* 'by knowing' *which* everything else, (the unheard, unseen, too) becomes known."

*"sanmulah somyemassarvah prajassadayatanah satpratishtah yatha tu khalu somyemastisro devatah purusham prapyatrivrut trivrut ekaika bhavati II"* [Chan. Upa. 6-8-6]

Everything is Brahman here. "*sarvam khalvidam brahmaa tadjalanti shanta upasita*" [Chan. Upa. 6-8-6]. This is "Atma Jnyan" or "Brahma Jnyan" since "Atma eva Brahm".

*Water, Culture and Religion Interface*

*"Sindhu spandana shiodakatmadevata"*

*"tatro mitro varuno mahanta maditi "Sindhu" pruthivi yata dyou"*  
[Rk Veda 1-94-6.16]

*This Mantra speaks of the importance of Water and its relation to Gods Indra, Varuna, Marut, Aditi, etc. It also speaks of its direct impact on the culture and civilization of people. Rivers and culture go together", says the Veda [Rk Veda 1-94-16]. R. Sindhu is the power*

*"ajanayo maruto vakshanabhyodiva"* [Rk Veda 1-134-4]

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*and strength of the ancient Indian culture and civilization. There is a list of Seven Rivers in the Nadi Sukta of the Rk Veda. The River is the source of Truth. The Rivers flow in unobstructed shoreless vast as well as here up on the earth. They are Seven strands of all being, the Seven Streams or currents or forms of movements of the One Consciousness, existence.*

*Agni (Sun God) is the first Deva, the All-Seer, manifest as Conscious force, or Divine/Cosmic Will, first hidden and building up the eternal worlds, then manifest ("born") building up in man the Truth and Immortality.*

The Seven flows are the "flow of consciousness from the Muladhara Plexus at the end of the spine to Sahasrar at the top of the head passing through the Svadhishtana, Manipura (Naval), Anahata (heart), Vishuddha (throat), Ajnya (Between eyebrows). It (the flow) also refers to the Seven Vyahrutis (Lokas-Bhu, Bhuvah, Svah, Mahah, Janah, Tapah and Satya) as also the Saptarshis (7 Rishis - Narada, Devala, Atri, Vyasa, Bhrgu (Son of Brahma), Vashista, and Vishvamitra.

The waters in which the gods discovered the visible Agni (Fire) cannot be terrestrial and material streams; this Agni increases by knowledge and makes his home and rests in the source of the Truth, "of whom the Heaven and Earth are the consorts"; 'who is increased by the divine waters in the unobstructed..... cannot be the god of physical fire. This passage reveals itself the mystical, spiritual and psychological character of the Vedas - in a disguised, but

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'transparent' apparant Truth. It appears in the Vishva Mitra Hymn (*Nadi Sukta*) as 'neither veiled, nor naked'.

Sri Aurobindo Ghosh in his commentary on the Rk Veda has beautifully described the Seven Rivers as the sacred waters, "divya apah" ("*Apoḥ Devih*" or "*Apoḥ Divyah*") and occasionally speaks of the "Waters which carry in them the "Light of the Luminous Solar World", or the "Light of the Sun", "*sarvatir apah*".

The prayer is :

'May these divine waters foster me'.....; 'may those divine waters that flow in channels dug or born foster me'.....; 'may those divine waters into whom Vaishvanara(Agni) has entered foster me" [Rk Veda, Mandala VII, Sukta 49 Verses 1-4]

Sage Vashishta refers to some streams (that Vamadeva's hymns also praise) that rise from the Ocean and flow into the ocean; the honeyed wave that rises upward from the Sea, from the flood that is the heart of things, streams of the clarity, "*vṛutasys dharahi*", They are the floods of the supreme and universal Consciousness, existence in which Varuna, time, moves looking down on the truth and falsehood of mortals' consciousness.

Varuna, here in the Veda is the 'master of an ethereal ocean, the Prajnya Sagara, the Cosmic Vastness of Cosmic Being, of its purity and has made paths in the pathless Infinite along which Surya, the Sun, the Lord and the Light can move.

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*Madhuman Urmih, ghrutasya dharah* in Vamadeva's Verse is replaced by "divya Apah" flood of honey, "ghrutaprusham madhumantam", "madhuscutah Urjam madanti" as if the Gods and Goddesses are in an exalted position inebriated by the elixir! The Prayer is : "May such waters protect us" [Rk Veda VII-47, 1-4].

Thus, the Rivers mentioned in the Veda are the spiritual flows, the flow of pure Consciousness.

### *The Indus Valley Civilization*

The ancient Vedic Indian civilization and its Aryan culture are traced to the Rivers like the Sindhu (the Indus), the Sarasvati, the Drishadvati, the Ganga (Bhagirathi), the Yamuna, and the Padma. There are references to these rivers in Rk Veda. Rivers have always been the source of life-giving water, as also, fertile soil for agriculture. The alluvium brought by the river (floods) renews fertility year after year and keeps the land fertile for crop production. But our main concern here is not that of the physical water of the rivers. It is beyond the physical, going deep into the essence of the water, the sattva. Once water asked Brahman, "Who am I" and "What is my true nature?" the Lord replied, "You are none else but My own Self"; the Water realized the truth and thus became the life-giving Prana, prajna, and the annam. 'Annam brahmaa' is the Vedic doctrine. A few drops of water revive the prajnya (Consciousness) in an unconscious person; and, so also, a few sips of water returns life (jiva) of a person dying of thirst. As long as one does not realize this truth: "Thou art that" (tattvamasi), he/ she remain ignorant of the Self and 'Avidya' (Ignorance) rules



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the life and activities.

The '*Sapta Sindhavah*' or the *Seven Rivers* mentioned in the Veda call for a detailed study in the light of the recent scientific developments, particularly in the field of Quantum Mechanics and Particle Physics. Rivers are actually the flow, the eternal flow of Consciousness, "*prajnyadhara*". It has its origin in MAHAVISHNU, the *PURNAPRAJNYA*. The supreme Lord of the Universe is none else but the all pervading Consciousness that creates Will, Knowledge, and Creative power. ('cit', 'jnyan' and 'kriya' shakti). But for the flow of Consciousness there would be no universe. The entire universe is nothing but Consciousness. This has pervaded all animate objects as *Chaitanya*, the 'Soul' or '*Atman*' and *Energy* in inanimate things. Consciousness is what makes a man what he is.

#### *"Sapta Sindhavah" or the Seven Flows*

The '*Sapta Sindhu*' refers to the rivers - Saraswati, Satadru (Sutlej), Vipasa (Beas), Asikni (Chenab), Parosni (ravi), Vitasta (Jhelum) and Sindhu (Indus). Among these, the Saraswati and the Sindhu were major rivers that flowed from the mountains right upto the sea. The hymns in praise of the Saraswati are probably some of the oldest, composed more than 8000 years ago. These are the physical waters that drain the surface of Punjab and Sindh Provinces that of Pre-Independence years, rather, the Sindhu Valley of ancient India.

However, we are more concerned with the 'Divine waters', the 'divya Apah' of the Veda than the mere water, here. In the order of creation, first comes the '*cit*', the Will of the Lord; and, then comes His *Shakti-Jnyan, Kriya*,

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*vikasa, vilaya and Ananda. In fact everything emanates or manifests from 'cit'. The subtler aspects of creation are the Akash (Mind), Vayu (air), Fire (Agni), 'Aps' (Water) and the Prithvi (Earth) in the form of 'tanmatras' and then in their gross form. Five Indriyas (Sense organs) have been formed to experience the qualities of these tanmatras—shbda, rasa, gandha, sparsha, and svada. Ultimately, Lord Shiva manifests Him Self as the Objective world in order to experience what He Him Self has created! Thus, "Everything is Shiva" here. Shiva is pure Consciousness that pervades everything!*

*It is significant here that sky, air, fire are the subtler elements and the earth and water are gross elements borne out of 'cit', pure Consciousness. Water is borne out of Fire, the Sun.*

*yah suryorashmibhiratanana yabhya indro aradadgatumurmim I  
te sindhavvo varivo dhatanano yuyam pata svastibhih saanah II  
[Rk Veda 7-47-4].*

*Everything is a 'FLOW' (A River) here. The hydrologic cycle shows how water of the oceans evaporates and forms clouds and then precipitates in rains and flows as rivers back to ocean. significantly enough, the Veda prohibits hindrances and obstructions to flow, (of water, wealth, knowledge and food). Nothing is static; that which does not move (static) gets polluted and perishes. Further, not only life depends on water for its sustenance, but it is also... vishvasya sthaturjagato janitrih [Rk Veda 7-49-2 & 6-50-7]. The Vedic concept of flow (River) is attributed to Fire (the Sun, the Solar Radiation). The radiation of electromagnetic waves is the principle Energy Flow, the source*

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*of all creation. It is the 'cit', pure Consciousness, the karanasya karanah or 'cause of all causes. It constitutes the basic force, or the fundamental force of creation on earth. The spectrum of Sunlight produces the seven bands of colours (VIBGYOR) that induce the qualities to objects on reflex action. The inherent qualities of objects are derived from the seven colours that are obtained from pure Consciousness, the radiation of energy from the Sun as electromagnetic waves (Sunrays). Hence, the 'Sapta sindhavah' are the seven rays, the Seven Plexus of Consciousness and the Seven states of our awareness.'*

*Consciousness* flows as electromagnetic waves creating micro-elements or Subatomic particles in constant motion almost at the speed of light. There are 200- and odd particles, starting from the massless gravitons (gravity-particle) and photons (Light particle), to low, medium and heavier masses and gross elements like the chronons (Time particle), hodons (Space particle), leptons, mesons, pions or pimesons, and to quarks, hadrons, fermions, bosons, electrons, protons, neutrons, atoms of gaseous elements, etc. These are mostly very abstract mathematical postulation and algebraic equations and our imaginations rather than matter or energy that one can lay his hands upon. These are *'Resonances'* that cannot be actually perceived; however they are the chief source of all thoughts, sounds, words, and matter (objects like the gross light, heat, and life-force-Jiva or Prana); and, time space and causality begin here in the *'sapta sindhavah'* of the Veda!

The Solar Radiation received on this Planet Earth is obtained mainly from the Sun, albeit, may be, a small part of it, is also received from other stars and galaxies as well. This radiation from the Red-hot mass or ball of Fire. The Sun (due to fission of Hydrogen (H) and then its fusion into He<sub>4</sub> (Helium) is the main cause of creation of the known 9 or ten Planets and their Satellites, and life on earth. The Sub-atomic particles of Hydrogen explode and annihilate producing other new particles of Helium that vibrate as *Quanta* or *wavicles* (particles in wave motion) producing all that we call *Radiation of Energy*. It is this Solar Radiation, i.e., the '*sapta sindhavah*', or the *Seven Rivers*, and its variations are the Seven Colours VIBGYOR, the Seven Consciousness Plexus (*Muladhara, Svadhishthan, Manipura, Anahata, Vishuddha, Ajnya and Sahasrara*), the Seven Spheres (*Vyahrutis- Bhru, Bhvuh, Svah, Mahah, Janah, Tapah, Satya*) of existence, the Seven states of Awareness/Prajnyaa (*Jagrata, Svapna, Sushupti, Turiya, Turiya Atita, Vishva, Daiva and Brahm-prajnya*) and the Seven States of Bodies from Childhood I- upto 7 years, childhood II 7-14 years, Youth 14-21 years, Mature 21-28, Grihasta 28-35 and in Old age, obtaining the state of *nirvana*, absolute calmness or *Shunya Sthiti*. Non-dual or *Ekam, 'Samatvam'* to '*aham brah asmi*' states of pure Consciousness or *the Buddha State* could be attained during the last stage of 35-49 years of age by strictly adhering to spiritual sadhana, Yoga.

Man is a special creation since the Lord created Man in his own image. Unfortunately, he is still in his adolescent state projecting the animal propensities in his behavior. In fact, the very structure of the human body

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is specially suited to attain to this highest state, the supreme state of the *Buddhahood*, one of *pure Consciousness*. *It is 'nirvana' when one reaches this state*. However, it is not possible to attain to this highest state in one or two, or not even in a few hundred, repeated births! It may take a thousand births requiring about 300 to 400 years taking birth after every death. Enlightenment, Liberation or Nirvana - all left to the divine will and "Divine Grace" of the Lord Almighty. It is His will and pleasure to redeem us from this duality of existence and re-births or not at one stretch.

*Our Life and activities are governed by sheer reflexes of Consciousness*. There is a mirror, the reflexes of Consciousness and it is called the *Maya*. This *Maya* is the source of all that we see and hear, touch and feel, experience in this world and this includes all that is visible and invisible, the gross and the subtle, the known and the unknown, the heard and the unheard. Ultimately, it is one of Vibrations and Waves of Consciousness and the consequent stream or '*flow*' of thought forces, of course, governed by Consciousness. The moment a person becomes unconscious, all his thoughts and activities cease and the world ends for him/her.

### *The Sacred Rivers of India*

Now coming to the physical waters, the flow, the stream or the river we have the seven Rivers of Punjab and Sindh Provinces of ancient India. Etymologically, Water means Prana, Prajnya, Life-force. The term 'River' stands for a stream of '*flow*', a stream of knowledge (Sarasvati); these waters are different from the stream of consciousness and

the Rivers that are eulogized in the Veda. The Seven Rivers of Vedic India may, also, thus represent the thoughts and words of ancient Sapta Rishis. The Subterranean flow (sub-conscious thoughts) of the Sarasvati (Knowledge) is significant in this respect. The experiences or revelations gained by a spiritual seeker in his Samadhi state are the most important source of higher Knowledge (Para Vidya) that has been preserved as 'Shruti'(what is heard) and the Smrutis (Memorized) and handed down to us through the ages. Creative potentialities of the hidden Sarasvati manifest in numerous ways. This, in deed, is the spiritual heritage of India, the gift of the people of the Indus Valley, who lived along the Banks of the Rivers Sindhu (R. Indus), the Sarasvati, the Drushadvati, the Ganga, the Bhagirathi, the Yamuna, the Padma and the like took to an austere way of life and realized the highest, the supreme, the 'sat', the Truth...

All the rivers of India, rather the divine waters, '*divya apah*' are, thus, the symbolic presentation of a culture, a civilization, of the people and their achievements attained by the level of Consciousness attained by them.

Some of the shlokas (verses) of Rk Veda describe the river Saraswati:

1. "*maho arnah sarasvati pra cetayati ketuna dhio visva virajati*" means river Saraswati like a great ocean, appears with her ray, and she rules all inspirations.

2. "*ni tvà dadhe vara a prthivya ilayspade sudinatve ahnam; Drsadvaty am manuse apayayam sarasvatyamrevad agne didhi*" Means we set you down, oh, Sacred Fire, at the most holy place on earth, in the land of Ila, in the clear brightness of the day. On rivers

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Drishadvati, Apaya and Saraswati shine out brilliantly for men.

3. "*ayasi puh vishvo apo mahina sindhur anyah, sucir yati girbhya a samudrat*" means, river Sarasvati is like a bronze city surpassing all other rivers and waters, pure in her course from the mountain to the sea. It appears that the honour of the greatest and the holiest of the rivers was not bestowed on the river Ganga. In fact the name of Ganga appears only once in the Rk Veda. Whereas the name of river Saraswati features about sixty times.

The hymns or verses in Rk Veda describe the life-style of people of learning, all along the banks of this mighty river. "*ambitame naditame devitame saraswati*" exemplifies the importance of this river, because this was the very river which nurtured the people who lived along its banks and supported a very vibrant intellectual society with its places of learning with its own resident scholars, sages and seers. Maybe, this is the place where the Vedas and the Upanishads were written.

Gradually, with the changing climate, the rivers dried up; and, probably, the recurring earthquakes, too, affected the rivers to change their courses in due course of time. There are references to Shree Krishna's brother Balarama's visit to various Ashrams of Sages and Rishis along the banks of the once great river but dying at the time of the *Mahabharata*. Satellite Imageries (Insat Maps) showing large fissures and fault on the ground of the dry bed of the river Saraswati are now available. The Land-sat imagery has found large numbers of fissures

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and faults in the earthquake-prone North-western India that constituted the Saraswati-Sindhu Valley. Such ground faults caused the seepage of water of the Saraswati into under ground channels thus referring to the Saraswati as the dying river. The river has almost disappeared or gone under-ground as a subterranean stream. Surprisingly, the same re-appears as a spring at Prayag where the Ganga-Yamuna and Saraswati meet at Sangam. Even today there is a channel which at places is more than a kilometer wide in Harayana. Here it is cultivated and the locals call it the Saraswati. During monsoon this channel carries a small amount of water which is mostly used for irrigation. Then, after all, river is not really dead!

Next to the Saraswati, the River Ganga (R. Ganges) has the greatest sanctity and prominence in India's history and culture. The river has attracted millions of people to its banks since early times. It makes a very interesting story of rise and fall of empires of India. More than 400 million people live along the fertile banks of this river. The density of population along the middle and lower reaches of the Ganga is unimaginably high, may be exceeding 500 persons per square kilometer. Any Westerner, not used to the crowds, would be shocked and stupefied finding so many people in a place here. The Bihar and Bengal Plains of the Ganga are examples of human tolerance limit. *Varanasi*, on the banks of river Ganges is the holy city of Hindus.

The Ganga is mentioned in the Rig-Veda. It appears in the nadistuti (Rk Veda 10.75) and a list of some rivers from east to west are given here. There is a reference to the Ganga in Rk Veda 6.45.3, but it is not clear whether



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this reference is to the river. The Ganga is called divine waters, *divya apah* since it has virtually descended from the Heavens. In *Vishnu Purana*, Ganga is said to have issued forth from the toe of Lord *Vishnu's* left foot. And was gushing downward. The Pole Star caught her in the middle of descent and kept her on his head round the clock. In *Valmiki's Ramayana*, Ganga is described as the daughter of Lord *Himalaya* and *Menaka* who was abducted to the heavens by the deities and started to live in heaven from then, inside Kamandala, a vessel with a spout.

The river Ganga is the most sacred river of India. As such it is customary to have 'Ganga Jal' in the house. As the mythology goes, "Lord Vishnu agreed to send Ganga to earth to redeem the souls of the departed souls of the Sixty thousand sons of Emperor Sagara who were cursed to ashes. Thus, Ganga came down to earth due to the efforts of Prince Bhagiratha, Lord *Shiva* agreed to bear the force of the descending Ganga from the Heavens and thus, came to be symbolically resting on the matted hair of Shiva. It is said, "King *Sagara* had sixty thousand sons, all of them were burnt to ashes as they disturbed the mighty Sage *Kapila* in his meditation. King Sagara, being informed by the heavenly wanderer *Narada* sent his grandson *Anshuman* to *Kapila* to ask for his mercy. *Kapila* granted that the souls of the sixty thousand sons of King Sagara can be retrieved, but only by the mighty waters of the Ganga. Anshuman's Grandson Bhagiratha approached Ganga and made her agree to come down."

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People believe that it is redeeming to die in Varanasi (Kasi) on the banks of the river Ganga and the body put in the river or, at least, burn and put the ashes in the river here. As stated above, before the River Ganga came to the Plains here, the Emperor Sagara had lost all his sons due to the curse of a sage. His grandson Prince Bhagiratha wanted to redeem the souls of his uncles and other ancestors and did a serious penance (*Tapasya*) for many years and finally got the heavenly river Ganga down on the Earth with the help of Lord Shiva. The Ganga is not just a river but the divine mother, a goddess, a life-force, a tradition, a culture, a source of strength for our survival, and much more.

Recent findings suggest that Ghaggar-Hakara river did once flow in great strength, and was of major importance to the *Indus Valley Civilization*, but that it dried up due to the redirection of its tributaries and loss of rainfall in much of its catchment area due to deforestation and overgrazing. This might have happened at the latest in 900 BC. If the Ghaggar-Hakara river is the original Sarasvati of the Vedas, it implies that the Vedic Aryans were residents of the Punjab as early as the late *3<sup>rd</sup> millenium BC*. If it was the Afghan Helmand river, it may support an Aryan migration at a later time, around the mid *2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC*. (According to National Geographic maps, the river Saraswati flows through the Indus Valley. National Geographic Vol. 197, No. 6, Page 114). The Indus Valley Civilization existed along the Indus River in present day Pakistan. Many

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archeological sites have been located in the Indus Valley, along the course of the Ghaggar-Hakra river, but not further south than the middle of Bhawalpur district. It could be that the permanent Saraswati ended there, and its water only reached the sea in very wet rainy seasons. It may also have been affected by much of its water being taken for irrigation. In the *Manu Samhita* (II.17-18), the sage *Manu*, escaping from a flood, founded the Vedic Culture between the Saraswati and Drishadvati rivers. In the *Shatapatha Brahmana* there is a description of the God *Agni* burning out rivers, which may be a reference to the drying up of rivers. *Indra* was the river deity of the Saraswati river, the disappearance of the river Saraswati may have been one of the causes for the diminishing popularity of *Indra* in Vedic culture. *Indra* may have been "replaced" by the similar deity *Shiva*, who is the river deity of the Ganges. The *Manu Smriti* or Laws of *Manu*, in one of the eighteen *Smritis* of the *Dharma Sastra* (or laws of righteous conduct).

It is observed that during the early Indo-Aryan Ages, the Indus and the Saraswati were the only major rivers of importance, but not the Ganga. Geomorphological evidences prove this point; many West-flowing rivers turned eastward due to tectonic disturbances and the consequent changes in the topography. The three Vedas seem to give more importance to the Ganga, as shown by numerous references. As already stated, the Goddess Ganga was at the foot of Shree Hari Narayana in Vaikuntha. Prince Bhagiratha worshipped *Shiva* and got Ganga to descend on earth. But for the obliging Lord

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Shiva, the force of Ganga descending from the Heavens could be disastrous. Since Prince Bhagiratha is instrumental in getting the Ganga to earth, it is also known as the Bhagirathi. In fact, Ganga is a major character in *the Mahabharata*, where she's the mother of Bhishma. Here it is symbolic that the eternal flow of Consciousness in the form of the Ganga is the divine Mother of the Grand Sire Bhishma who is an embodiment of 'limited consciousness', *avidya* and being a bachelor by choice, faces all the muddle of *Sansara* (of Kauravas' misdeeds). It is interesting to note, the term Ganga is mentioned in the *Nadi Stuti* (Sukta 75), along with the other rivers in RV 6.45.31 is not clear whether it refers to the river, or a person.

The river Padma is another important Eastern river numerously mentioned in *Hindu Mythology* including the *Vedas*, the *Puranas*, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. In all myths, the river is mentioned as a Goddess though the origin differs.

Geological record indicates that during the late Pleistocene glaciation, the water of the Himalayas was frozen and that in the place of rivers, there were only glaciers. When the climate became warmer, the glaciers began to break up and the frozen water held by them surged forth in great floods, inundating the alluvial plains in front of the mountains. The melting of glaciers has also been referred in Rig Vedic literature, in mythological terms. It was the first interglacial period in Holocene marking the break-up of glaciers and release of the pent-up waters that flowed out in seven mighty river

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channels referred as the '*Sapta Sindhu*' in the Rig Veda, traced from east to west. The '*Sapta Sindhu*' refers to the rivers *Saraswati*, *Satadru (Sutlej)*, *Vipasa (Beas)*, *Asikini (Chenab)*, *Parosni (Ravi)*, *Vitasta (Jhelum)* and *Sindhu (Indus)*. Among these, the *Saraswati*\* and the *Sindhu* were major rivers that flowed from the mountains right up to the sea. The hymns in praise of the *Saraswati* are probably some of the oldest, composed more than 8,000 years ago.

Rk Veda mentions about the river *Saraswati* in many of its *Suktas*, especially the *Nadi Sukta*. The verse "*ambhi tame devi tame nadi tame Saraswati.....*" meaning "*You are the mother. You are the goddess. You are the river-Saraswati.*" The river *Ganga* also fits into this greatness. The river and its major tributaries like the *Hooghly* are the lifeline of the population of the entire northern Plains as they are perennial and navigable. However, the river *Saraswati* was much larger in ancient geologic times. The very archeological sites like the *Lothl*, *Kalibangan*, *Dwarka*, and about 23 other archeological sites associated with the legendary river *Saraswati*. There is a kilometer wide or much wider stretch of dry stream bed in *Haryana* which the locals call the *Saraswati*. These braided channels carry water during *Monsoon*, thus not making it virtually dead.

The following Vedic Verses on the river *Saraswati* highlight the importance of the river

1. "*maho arnah saraswati pra cetayati ketuna dhiyo visva*

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*virajati*". Meaning, the river Saraswati is like a great ocean that appears with her rays of colour and hues, (meaning Consciousness that has cit, jnyan and kriyaa shakti in it), and she rules all our inspirations.

2. *"ni tva dadhe vara a prthivya ilayspade sudinatve ahnam;*

*Drshadvaty am manuse apayayam sarasvatyamrevad agne didhi*" Meaning, "we set you down, oh! Sacred Fire at the most holy place on earth, in the land of Ila, in the clear brightness of the day on the Drishadvati, the Apaya, and the Saraswati rivers."

3. *"ayasi puh visva apo mahina sindhur anyah, sucir yati girbhya a samudrat"*. Meaning, the river Saraswati is like a bronze city surpassing all other rivers and waters, pure in her course from the mountain to the sea.

The honour greatness and the holiness of the rivers are, thus, bestowed to the river Saraswati. The name of Ganga appears only once in the Rk Veda. The hymns in Rk Veda also describe the history, culture and civilization of the people residing in the Saraswati valley. There are many scriptures giving reference to many Gurukulas, seats of learning, with famous Sages and Seers having their own resident scholars, along the banks of the river. Maybe, some of the *Upanishads* and the Vedic scripture were created here by the attained Rishis.

Thus, Rk Veda has been immortalized by the verse *"ambitame naditame devitame \* saraswati"*. river Saraswati is neither a myth nor reality. It is left to one's imagination. Every object on this earth has several dimensions and only 3 or 4 of them are within the grasp of

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some intelligent persons. The solid or the gross has its liquid and gaseous counterparts, for example, ice, water vapour and water. It is a ground reality, *idam satyam*, when it is in perceptible form. What that all are heard seen, or even felt by touch are not real since they are only a temporary nature of existence as matter in resonance, waves and vibration of particles. The sublime aspect is concealed and the Truth is never found.

The river Saraswati has its source Har-ki-Dhun Glacier in the west Garhwal, Bandarpunch massifs in the Himalayas along with river Yamuna (Jamuna). The two rivers flow parallel for some distance and later join together and then proceeded southward as the mighty River Saraswati of Vedic importance. Seasonal rivers and rivulets, including the Ghaggar, join Saraswati as it follows the course of the present river Ghaggar through Punjab and Haryana. The Sutlej and the Shatadru, also mentioned in the Veda, join Saraswati as a tributary at Shatrana (approximately 25 k.m. south of Patiala). Saraswati then follows the course of the Ghaggar through Rajasthan and Hakra in Bhawalpur before disappearing into the marshes of Rann of Kutch (through Nara in the Sindh Province running parallel to the River Indus). Therefore this river which carried the waters of three perennial rivers and numerous seasonal rivers was a mighty one indeed, and praised as '*naditame*' which means 'the Greatest River'.

But, the great epic *Mahabharata* refers to the Saraswati as the dying river. It describes Shree Krishna's brother Balarama making a pilgrimage to Mathura along this dry river bed.

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*niryate tu jane tasmin  
sagaro makaralayah,  
dvarkan ratna-sampurnam  
jalanaplavayattada*

*(Mahabharata. MP. 7, verse 40)*

Symbolically, it is discernible that these rivers are the flow of consciousness, prajnya, prana and the vital breaths. It is thus clear that the level of consciousness of the highly placed spiritual people deteriorated to the extent that there was intolerance and fight and people separated and moved out to form their own religions and religious faiths. There was delusion. This is evident from the following observations from the pages of history and geography.

“After all the people had set out, the ocean flooded the City of Dwarka which still teemed with wealth of every kind. Whatever portion of land passed over the ocean immediately flooded over with its waters.”

The drying up of Saraswati was nearly fatal and the scarcity of water forced the people to migrate, Saraswati-Sindhu civilization did not vanish but there was a shift in population after the economy around the river collapsed. The civilization moved east towards Ganga-Yamuna Doab plains, west northwest, and south towards the R. Godavari plains. The people of Mithila and Kashi are probably the people belonging to the Saraswati civilization of West since these are the migrants from the Saraswati plains which desiccated under the change in climate. They are the people who worship the Vedic gods.



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*Since the river Saraswati has completely dried and there is no trace of any perennial stream of the name the question arises whether it is myth or a reality.* The major rivers of the north west of the Indian Subcontinent (Punjab, Sindh, Rajasthan, and Gujarat) viz. the Saraswati, the Sindhu (Indus), the Shatadru (Sutlej), the Vipasa (Beas), the Parushni (Ravi), the Asikni (Chenab), the Yamuna, the Drishadwati and the Lavanavati - all have changed their courses since Vedic times. Of these, three rivers : Saraswati, Drishadwati and Lavanvati no longer exist. The rivers - Beas, Jhelum, Ravi, and Chenab joined the Sindhu to form one channel from Himalaya to the Arabian Sea. The river Saraswati and its tributaries, the Yamuna, Sutlej, Drishadwati and Lavanyavati followed a separate course from the Himalayas to the Arabian Sea. The river Saraswati was huge and the stream bed was as vast as 10 k.m. in some places. In the early days, it joined the Arabian sea at the Rann of Kachh. After the Sea level at the Rann increased, the river crossed the Rann to join the Arabian Sea at the gulf of Khambhat. It was on the banks of this vast river system that the Ashrams or famous Gurukulas, thrived. Vedic culture thus owes its development to the river Saraswati, also called the goddess of knowledge. Goddess Saraswati incidently, is better known as Annapoorneshwari (annadayini) Giver of food, than Vidyadayini, the bestower of knowledge, in early Vedic literature. The famous Centre of learning Takshshila was located here. During the later Vedic period the tectonic movements pushed up the Aravali hills, in northern Rajasthan and thus changed the drainage pattern of the Northwest India dramatically. \*\*

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Saraswati lost her major tributaries i.e. Yamuna and the Sutlej. The Sutlej turned west and joined the Beas-Sindhu system. Yamuna started migrating east to join Ganga. Yamuna now was basically carrying the waters of the river Saraswati and flowing into the river Ganga. The river Yamuna thus joined by the river Saraswati (as Subterranean stream) flows into the Ganga at Prayag near Allahabad. This Sangam, the confluence of the three rivers - Ganga, Yamuna and the Saraswati is the most sacred Waters of the Hindus and the married women offer a tuft of hair from their 3-plaits (tri-veni) for their wish fulfillment here. And, hence it came to be known as 'Triveni Sangam'.

In conclusion, it may briefly be summarised here that the ancient rivers of India are not mere material flows giving us water and food for survival but these were the source of life, Prana. These Rivers stand for the eternal flow of Consciousness carrying the essence of the elements of creation, sustenance, expansion (vikasa) and dissolution (vilaya) i.e. involution and evolution of Consciousness on Earth.

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*Ours is neither mere Dualism nor mere Monism. It is Dualistic Monism. (dvitmaya advaita). We believe in One Spiritual Reality-One God. He has two attributes - Nama or Primeval Sound or Rupa or Primeval Light. Nama is Rupa and Rupa is Nama. There is no difference between them. As stated by a modern Saint, Nama is luminous Sound and Rupa is sonorous Light. Nama has many letters while Rupa has several forms.*

- Sri Amburao Maharaj (Baba).



Sri Amburao  
Maharaj, (Baba).

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# REALITY

## AND

### EXISTENCE

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Dr. M. G. Betgeri

In pursuing the nature of ultimate reality, the thinking has proceeded by study in two worlds, one the external, the other internal. The external world is what is revealed to us through the five senses. We study that world and that study, when conducted in a very systematic way, we call it science. Today the scientific approach to the external world (Object) has become very thorough. That is what makes the science a subject of profound respect for every lover of truth. On the other hand, the studies in the internal world look deep into oneself (Subject) and try to understand what is reality. It may not have the mathematical precision of physical sciences where you are dealing with quantities (object). Here, you are handling yourself and dealing with the quality of life (Subject). There is no conflict between the two worlds. This division of space into external and internal is only one of convenience; however, the space, like 'truth', is indivisible.

#### The Objective Reality :

Some of the studies in physical and biological sciences point to the relevance of defining the Reality. The first observation stems from the field of Physical Sciences.

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This is a trip at high speed. Starting with 1 meter, we observe the macrocosmos and continue to observe as we keep increasing the distances by a factor of 10 till the limits of our imagination. Later we return to the starting point and continue reducing distances by a factor 10 into the microcosmos.

<i>Distance</i>	<i>Observation</i>
1 m.	Typically a bunch of leaves in the garden.
10 m.	Foliage in the garden.
100 m.	Boundary of the forest and edifications
1 km.	Possible to jump with a parachute
10 km.	City can be observed; no details
100 km.	Full state can be observed
1000 km.	Typical sight from a satellite
10,000 km.	North hemisphere and portion of Earth
100,000 km.	Earth starts looking small
1 million km (1 Mkm.)	The earth and moon's orbit seen
10 Mkm.	Part of the Earth's orbit around the Sun
100 Mkm.	Orbits of Venus and Earth
1 billion km. (1 Bkm.)	Orbits of Mercury, Venus, Earth and Jupiter seen.
10 Bkm.	Solar system and orbits of planets seen
100 Bkm.	Solar System starts looking smaller
1000 Bkm.	Sun is in the middle of thousands of stars
10,000 km. ( 1 light year)	Sun is a very small star.

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10 L.Y.	Nothing in infinity
100 L.Y.	"Nothing"; Only stars and Nebulae
1000 L.Y.	Milky Way
10,000 L.Y.	more of Milky way
100,000 L.Y.	Reaching periphery of Milky Way
1 M L.Y.	Milky Way and other galaxies
10 M L.Y.	All galaxies look small with immense empty spaces in between.

In this journey into the macrocosmos, one wonders; Who are we? Where are we going? and where did we come from? These questions precisely form the matter of discussion among students of Veda (Shevtaasvatara Upanisad) *Harih aum | brahmavadino vadanti |*

*Kim karanam brahma kutah sma jata*

*Jeevam kena kva cha sampratistha*

*Adhistita kene sukhetareshu*

*Vartamahe brahmavido vyavastham*

(Students of Veda discuss among themselves: What is the cause? Is it Brahman? Whence are we born? Why do we live? Where is our final rest? O, ye who know Brahman, tell us at whose command we abide here whether in pain or in pleasure).

Let us return to the starting point and continue our journey by decreasing the distances by a factor 10

10 cm	We can delineate the leaves
1 cm.	Structure of leaf visible.
1 mm.	Cellular Structure starts showing
0.1 mm.	Cells can be seen; union between cells
(100 microns)	can be observed
10 microns	Start the trip inside the cell.

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1 micron	Neucleus of the Cell visible
0.1 micron (1000 Angstrom)	Chromosome becomes visible
100 Angstrom	DNA Channel is visible
10 Angstrom	Chromosome blocks can be seen
1 Angstrom	Appears like clouds of electrons; Carbon atoms that form our world can be seen
0.1 Angstrom	Electrons orbiting the Carbon atoms can be seen
0.01 Angstrom (1000 Fermi)	Immense empty spaces between nuclus and the electron orbits
100 Fermi	Nucleus can be seen
10 Fermi	Nucleons of Carbon atom can be seen
1 Fermi	Face to Face with the Proton
0.1 Fermi	Quarks?

Beyond, there is only Nothing (*Shunya*, not Vacuum). In the *Upanishads*, the '*shunya*' (vacuum) is a dynamic silence, "*atyanta abhava*", that "*avyakta*" (from which everything manifests as subtle aspects) identified with the *Brahman*. It is a long "Journey from *Nothingness to Nothingness*"

An attempt has been made in *Taitteriyopanisad* to define Brahman. In Chapter III, the son approaches his father with a request to teach him the nature of Reality. The son is given the general features of Brahman and is asked to discover the contents which satisfy these requirements. "That from which these beings are born, that in which when born they live and that into which they enter at their death, that is *Brahman*". The son introspects and comes to the conclusion that matter (*Anna*/food) satis-

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fies all these criteria. He realizes that the matter does not hold the secret of life, though the life cannot exist without matter. He hits upon *Prana* or breath as the ultimate principle. The son is sure that life belongs to a different order from matter though *Prana* is the essence of the body. Again he is dissatisfied with the solution of *Prana* as the ultimate reality, for conscious phenomena which we come across in the animal world are not explicable by the principle of life. He finds that '*Manas*' (Psyche or perceptual consciousness) is a product different from *Prana* and matter. So the son believes that *Manas* is *Brahman*. Even this will not suffice, for these are intellectual facts which mere perceptual consciousness does not take into account. He is led to believe that *Vijnyana* or intelligence is *Brahman*. The son realizes that even intellectual self-consciousness is incomplete being subject to discord and imperfection. There must be something higher than mere intellect, where existence is no longer formulated in terms of knowledge. Reality is different from thought. *Ananda* or bliss is the highest fruition, where *the knower, the known and the knowledge* become one and is identified with *Brahman* - the Reality. Thus, the *Upanishads* discovered the five sheaths leading to the *Brahman*. As applied to a human being the body consists of five sheaths - *Annamaya* (matter), *Pranamaya* (breath), *Manomaya* (psyche), *Vijnanamaya* (knowledge) and *Aanandmaya* (the supreme Bliss) going inwards, the innermost is the reality. The *Upanishads* even mention that each succeeding sheath includes the previous sheath and does not replace it; '*ten esa purnah*'. The succeeding one fills the preceding ones.



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In Biology, the physical body of man (matter) is a centre of energy; we call it muscular energy. This gross energy, is very ordinary and was available to the primitive man at his command. But behind this gross energy, there is a subtle energy source. That is a nerve fibre (nourished by oxygen content in the blood) - small in size, but if it is cut, the muscle is dead. Thus we see a wonderful energy gradation. External energy is gross and limited, the internal energy is subtle and unlimited. Behind this nervous system is the psyche, which has greater energy and unseen. When there is psychic breakdown, all muscles and nerves are dead. Even more powerful and subtler is genetic in origin and current research indicates a field of knowledge which promises cure against genetic disorder.

Thus as one goes deep into the human being, he/she finds energy organized on an ascending scale of subtlety, immens and inwardness. The first four sheaths suggested by the *Upanishads* are exactly what are discovered in Biology.

### The Subjective Reality : The Existence

In solving the question of the nature of ultimate reality, the *Upanishad* thinkers seek to supplement the objective vision by a subjective one. Some wise person wishing for immortality saw within himself the self, the one reality ('*Ekam Sat*') which realizes itself in all the variety of existence. This self, they called as 'Atman'. What is the nature of the Self of man? Prajapati opens the discussion in *Chhandogya Upanishad* by giving certain general characteristics which the true self should possess. *"The self which is free from sin, free from old age, from death and grief, from hunger and thirst, which desires nothing"*

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*but what it ought to desire and imagines nothing but what it ought to imagine, that (Tat) it is which we must try to understand*. The development of the definition of Self proceeds through four stages of (1) the bodily self, self, (2) the empirical self, (3) the transcendental self, and (4) the absolute self. It is the subject which persists throughout the changes, the common factor in the states of waking, dream, sleep, death, rebirth and final deliverance.

The first answer given is that the body which is born, grows up and decays and dies is the true self. On introspection, Indra, the student cannot accept this definition. He was told by Prajapati that "he, who moves about happily in the dreams is the self". However Indra realizes that this definition is not satisfactory as in the dream one is conscious of pain and sheds tears. The self tethered to a local and temporal environment cannot be said to be eternal. Prajapati then tells Indra, "when a man being asleep, reposing and at perfect rest sees no dreams, that is the self". The difficulty with this perception is that the self cannot be reduced to a series of states which makes the Atman subject to vicissitudes of our chance experiences. The objects of experience require a permanent subject by which they could be experienced.

It is therefore necessary to urge that the self continuously exists even when the waking or the dreaming experience is suspended. In sleep, deep and dreamless, we have no 'felt objects of experience', but we cannot say that the self does not exist. The reality of a permanent self in the sleep has to be admitted to account for the continuity of consciousness despite the temporal gaps. That which exists in sleep without any objects to contemplate is the self.

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Such a transcendental view of the self leads to the following difficulty. This self, freed from all bodily experiences, from the shapeless mass of dreams etc., this objectless self is a barren of fiction. If the self is not what it knows, feels and reacts upon, if it is divorced from it and thus emptied of its content, what remains. *"Nothing"* said Indra. *"To be free from everything is to be nothing"* If the soul is in a perfectly dreamless sleep, thinks, wills and feels nothing, is there the soul at all and if it is, how is it?

These arguments show the risk in conceiving the self as a transcendental one. Prajapati points out how it is an identity, running in and through the differences. This body is mortal and all is subject to death. It is the abode of the self, which is immortal and without body.. The self is shown to be not an abstract formal principle, but an active universal consciousness existing both in its self and for itself. It is both the subject and object. The objects we know in experience are based on it. *The true infinite self is not the self which is not simply finite. It is none of the limited things, but yet is the basis of all of them. It is the universal self and the whole universe lives and breathes in it. There is nothing outside it. It contains all consciousness of objects implicitly. This absolute self which embraces all is the sole reality containing within itself all the facts of nature and all the histories of experience. Our small selves are included in it and transcended by it. This fundamental identity which is the presupposition of both self and non self, is called Atman. None can doubt its reality.*

The Mandukya *Upanishad* gives us an analysis of

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consciousness leading to the same conclusion. The soul has three conditions which are all included in a fourth. They are waking, dreaming, sleeping and what is called "turiya". The first state is that of wakefulness where the self is conscious of the common world of external objects. It enjoys the gross things. Here, the dependence on the body is predominant. The second state is that of dreaming, where the self enjoys subtle things, fashions for itself a new world of forms with the materials of its waking experience. The spirit is said to roam freely unfettered by the bonds of the body. The third is the state of sound sleep where we have neither dreams nor desires. It is called "susupti". The soul is said to become temporarily *one with Brahman (Brahmasayujya)* and enjoy bliss. In deep sleep, we are lifted above all desires and freed from the vexations of spirit. The oppositions are, so they say, lost in this pure objectless knowing subject condition. The analogy of eternal dreamless sleep is used to bring out how all the external activities are then suspended. But there was likelihood of its being confused with sheer unconsciousness. Hence the need for the highest fourth state of the soul, a pure intuitional consciousness, where there is no knowledge of objects internal or external. The fourth state 'turiya', brings out the positive aspect of the negative emphasized in the condition of deep sleep. The fourth is not that which is conscious of the subjective, nor that which is conscious of the objective, nor that which is conscious of both, nor that which is simple consciousness, nor that which is an all sentient mass, nor that which is all darkness. It is unseen, transcendent, inapprehensible, unthinkable, indescribable, the sole essence of the consciousness of the self, the completion of the world, the ever peaceful, all blissful, the one unit, this indeed is *the*

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## *Atman*"

The identification of the vacuum / *shoonya* with the Reality (called *Atman* in *Kathopnishad* is done beautifully, when it sings :

*॥ Anoraniyan mahato mahiyan  
Atmasya jantornihito guhayam  
Tamaakratuh pasyati veetshoko  
Dhatuprasadat mahimanamatmanah ॥*

Meaning: "Smaller than the smallest and bigger than the biggest is this *Atma* hidden in the cavity of the human being; that glory of the *Atma* is realized by one who is pure and whose body and mind become calm and tranquil and who thus becomes free from sorrow."

Thus, Vedanta considers the science of values as the link between the physical sciences and the science of spirituality.

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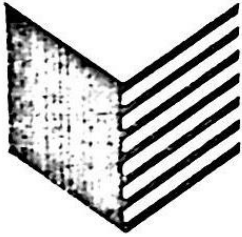
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Our only pursuit should be to follow the will of God and meditate on Him. If we do this, I think, He will come to our help in all circumstances.

- *Gurudev Ranade (1-5-1957)*



## BOOK REVIEW

Title of the book : *Mantra - "Hearing the Divine in India and America"*. Authors : *Harold D. Gower and David J. Goa*, Publishers : *Motilal Banarasidass*, Jawahar Nagar, New Delhi-110007, Pages : 123, Price : Rs. 195.

The authors mention in the preface that the original edition of the book was prompted by Diana L. Eck's book *Darshan*, seeing the divinity in India and the way the Divine is seen in Hindu Religion. But *Darshan* or seeing is only half of the Indian experience. The other half is hearing and this dimension of the Hindu genius has found its way into a number of other religions in India. From the perspective of Hindu Religion both senses provide powerful channels for the divine. This book studies Mantras as channel for hearing of the Divine as it flowered in Hindu tradition and took roots in Buddhism, Islam and Sikh Traditions and played a part in restoring contemplative prayers in Western Christianity. It helps introduce divinity to the students effectively.

It was the Hindu sensitivity to the power of spoken word to transform consciousness made them study the Indian religious life, say the authors. The Indian ability to hear the Divine sound in the spoken words of scriptures, in

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rituals and the language in general, in chanting of OM and singing of hymns is a continuing fascination. The *mantra* way of meditation has taken roots in the religions of North America amongst the Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs and the Muslims who have started practising *mantra* for an integrated life that affirms their dignity and place in cosmos.

The authors emphasize that four basic points need to be considered briefly, viz., *Anadi*, *Karma*, *Sansara* and *Moksha*. *Anadi* refers to the endless and beginningless cycles of the universe. This includes the sacred sound of *Mantras* which are beginningless, uncreated and eternal. Each cycle goes through the stage of sprouting, growing, maturing and dying leaving behind a seed to begin the next cycle. The concept of *Karma* is widely influential and includes free will also. The *karma* created by an individual in a life time may be good or evil, but it can be improved or worsened in the course of time. Every time a thought or action is generated by man there is a trace of Karmic seed stored in his unconscious.

Chanting of *mantras* continuously reinforces a good *karma* or removes a trace of the evil *karma*, which are present in the unconscious in a huge storehouse, accumulated over many previous births since everything is beginningless. This is all called *Sansar* which includes births and re-births till the *Moksha* or liberation is attained. When predominance of good and elimination of evil traces are obtained one becomes god or semi-god and ultimately when all *karmas* are eliminated one becomes one with the Divine (*Brahma*). Chanting of *Mantras* is one

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of the most powerful practices of purging away the *karmas* and attaining *moksha*.

The *Rigveda* also saw *mantras* as the means by which the power of truth and order at the very core of the universe could be evoked. They are not thought as products of discursive thought, human wisdom or poetic fantasy. Sri Aurobindo maintains that the *Veda* is the rhythm not composed by the intellect but heard as a divine *word* that came vibrating out of the Infinite to the inner audience of a man who has previously made himself fit for the impersonal knowledge. The Vedic seers heard these *Mantras* supersensuously and uttered them in the form of Vedas for the benefit of the less spiritually advanced. In the later period, it is believed that the power encapsulated in the *mantra* is released when spoken. The power source is '*ṛta*' the transcendent truth of the cosmic and human orders. It is this power that is released when *Mantra* is repeated over and over again.

According to the *Mimamsa* school of philosophy every *sabda* or word has an eternal meaning and suggests that the sound produced in uttering a word is not a result of human choice but has some aspect of eternal cosmic order. It is for this reason that rishis are called 'seers' or 'hearers' of the Vedas and not the authors of the Vedas.

The Grammarians offer a theory of *Mantra* as manifestation of *Sabda* Brahman or Divine Word Consciousness. *Om* is identified as the original *mantra* out of which all other *mantras* arise. This sacred syllable is held to flash forth from the heart of Brahman while absorbed in deep meditation and have given birth to *Vedas* which contain



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all knowledge. *Om* and Vedic *Mantras* are described as at once a means of knowledge and a way of emancipation. Fundamental to all these is the notion that language and consciousness are inextricably intertwined. The great grammarian Bhartruhari goes on to say that the meaning of the word is the essence of consciousness urging all beings towards purposeful activity.

In Vedic rituals *Mantras* are experienced on various levels, from loud chanting by priests to silently rehearsed knowledge of the most esoteric formulas. On one level, there is the insensitive flash-like understanding of the meaning of the *Mantra* as a whole and is experienced in the seen unity of sound and thought in a blast (*sphota*). This is the direct supersensuous perception of the truth of the *Mantra* that occurs at the mystical level of the language. Bhartruhari calls this level of experience of *Mantra* as (*Pashyanti*) the full meaning of the *Mantra*, the reality it has evoked, stands revealed. For the Tantric devotee it is a visionary experience of the deity. Bhartruhari calls the ordinary utterances of *Mantra* as *Vaikhari* and when done repeatedly, clearly and continuously may purge all obscuring ignorance and the *Mantra* appears in its whole meaning.

Mantra theory in Patanjali Yoga Sutras -

The yogi who has understood the *Mantra* and its meaning must constantly repeat it and habituate his mind to its meaning. The yogi who habituates his mind with *Pranava (Om)* is purified of all *karmic* obstructions in his consciousness and sees the deity, Ishwara. As an additional aspect, Patanjali attributes the motive of all his

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actions to Ishwara (*Ishwara Pravidhan*).

In India, it is generally believed that one needs a guru to initiate a *Mantra* to suit his *karmic* condition. But many select a *Mantra* from the religious books for japa (repeated recitation). The *Mantra* has thus spread to all other religions. The Sikhs select the *Mantra* from Guru Granthsahib and repeat '*sat guru vahe guru*'. For Buddhists the *Mantra* is '*Om Manipadmehum*'. For Muslims, the Sufis have provided *Mantras* from mystical reading of the Holy Kuran.

In the 1960s Gurus started floating to America from India, bringing *Mantra* practice customised for Americans. One of the first to arrive was Maharshi Mahesh Yogi who taught a simple *Mantra* for meditation that he called 'Transcendental Meditation' (TM). He was a widely recognized Guru of the Beatles. The Maharshi soon started a university-based movement, called it as 'The Students International Meditation Society' (SISMS) and soon had centres over a thousand universities and colleges. By early 1980s the Society estimated over 1.5 million Americans who received the *Mantras* and began practising TM under a teacher's instruction.

In the stress-filled busy American life style TM has brought immediate benefit to a large number of people. The TM approach has been scientifically proven to slow down one's metabolism, induce a state of relaxation, reduce blood pressure and release stress. Today TM in America is practised by corporate executives, lawyers, military personnel and many others who claim that TM has improved their health and increased efficiency. It has brought practical approach to spirituality. It has adopted

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the language of science to describe its results.

A quite different *Mantra* practice was brought to America by A.C. Bhaktivedant in 1965. He retained the full Hindu approach of devotional or Bhakti *Mantra* chanting with idol worship, offering sweets etc. From humble chanting of 'Hare Krishna', 'Hare Rama' in New York Streets, Bhakti Vedant soon started attracting followers to his ecstatic chanting. Soon he opened his first temple and now he has temples in thirty cities. His movement is now called 'The International Society of Krishna Consciousness (ISCON).

The most notable of encounter of Christianity with the Hindu tradition of *Mantra* is that of Dom John Main (1926 to 1982). Stationed as a colonial officer of the British in Far East, he visited one Swami Satyananand, a master in meditation and learnt *Mantra* meditation and silent prayer. He brought the silent prayer of Christ to North America. Now Christians are engaged in the silent contemplative prayer "Lord Jesus Christ, son of God, have mercy on me".

The book is written in racy, interesting style and contains all historical information about "Mantra Hearing the Divine in Divine". It is a 'must read book/ for all those interested or engaged in meditation.

- P. D. Dharwarkar, *B.Sc., C.Eng., F.I.E.*  
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## **Attention Contributors !**

*It has been resolved to make the quarterly issue, Pathway to God more comprehensible and action-oriented as the changing times demand. Hence it is necessiated to modify the length of the articles. Kindly note the following points while sending your articles :*

- 1. The articles should not exceed four pages of A4 size.*
- 2. Only one long article of approx. 10 pages of A4 size will be published in each issue.*
- 3. The article should not be carried forward to the next issue*

*We thank all our contributors profusely and expect more and more insightful and erudite articles in future to make Gurudev's vision of one God, one religion and one humanity a reality.*

*-Editorial Board & Secretary A.C.P.R.*

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## **Reader's Column.**

*The Editorial Board of Pathway to God is happy to announce that it is going to introduce Readers' column to publish the views of the readers on various spiritual / philosophical / religious articles published therein. Their views/comments / appreciation will help us improve the quality of the magazine.*

*The views should be in 3-4 sentences only.*

*Looking forward to your views.*

**\*\*\***



### *Thus Spake Gurudev.....*

'A Guru is one who reveals the hidden form of the Lord..... A Guru realises his identity with the hidden Form of the Lord.'

\*

God must be the first object of our care whatever work we may undertake during our life. This will certainly enable the

boys to give a very good account of themselves, to their Society, Nation as well as to their own maker. (7-8-1946)

\*

'How are the two different strata to be seen in the divine picture?....Artists and poets might try to depict it in their own way. Would not the necessity of mystic experience, however, require a pictorial representation of the changing fortunes on the heavenly canvas, in which God with an uplifted flaming thunderbolt might strike mercilessly at one side of the battle, during the first period and at the other side in the reverse direction, with the same uplifted thunderbolt, in a second? A divine thunderbolt is probably the best weapon to annihilate the contending armies. It would have been extremely fortunate if one had been privileged to see the changing fortunes of the war on the heavenly canvas and to interpret the will of God accordingly.' (Gurudev's prophetic vision in 1940 on World War II)



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## ACTIVITIES OF A.C.P.R.

For the Period  
ending 15-09-2009

As part of Shravan month a series of lectures by Mrs. Vijayalaxmi Baburao Shirgaonkar on " GURU MAHIMA AND NAMASMARAN ( The Greatness of Guru and Chanting the Divine Name) was organised in Gurudev Mandir on 11, 12 & 13th of August 2009.

Having been an ardent follower of Gurudev and blessed by Gurudev during his lifetime Mrs. Vijayalaxmi's simple words were at once soul-stirring and inspiring and effective. Speaking about the power of Guru she said, 'Sadguru is beyond description and words. Gurus are beyond mind and words. Therefore falling at their feet with intense love and singlemindedness is the only thing that we can do. By the darshan of a Guru all conflicts are dissolved and mind becomes calm and placid.

The guest speaker was honoured in a traditional way.

Senior Advocate Mr. Ashok Potdar presided over the function. ACPR's secretary Mr. M. B. Zirali delivered introductory address. Mr. Subramanya Bhat & Mrs. S. S. Kotrannavar also spoke on the occasion.

# FOOTPRINTS ON THE SANDS OF TIME

A Profile of  
**ACPR**  
Global Mission of a Mystic Visionary



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- Prof. N. R. Deshpande

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Write to us, alongwith your address & Cheque / D.D. for Rs. 100/- payable to the  
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