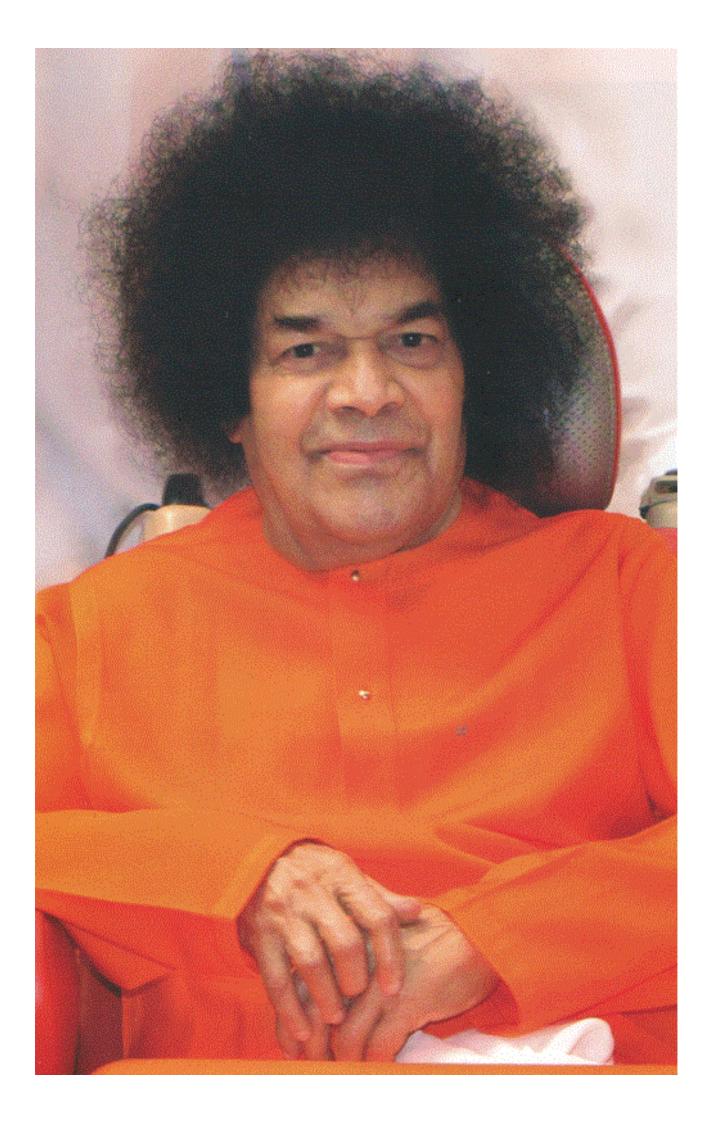
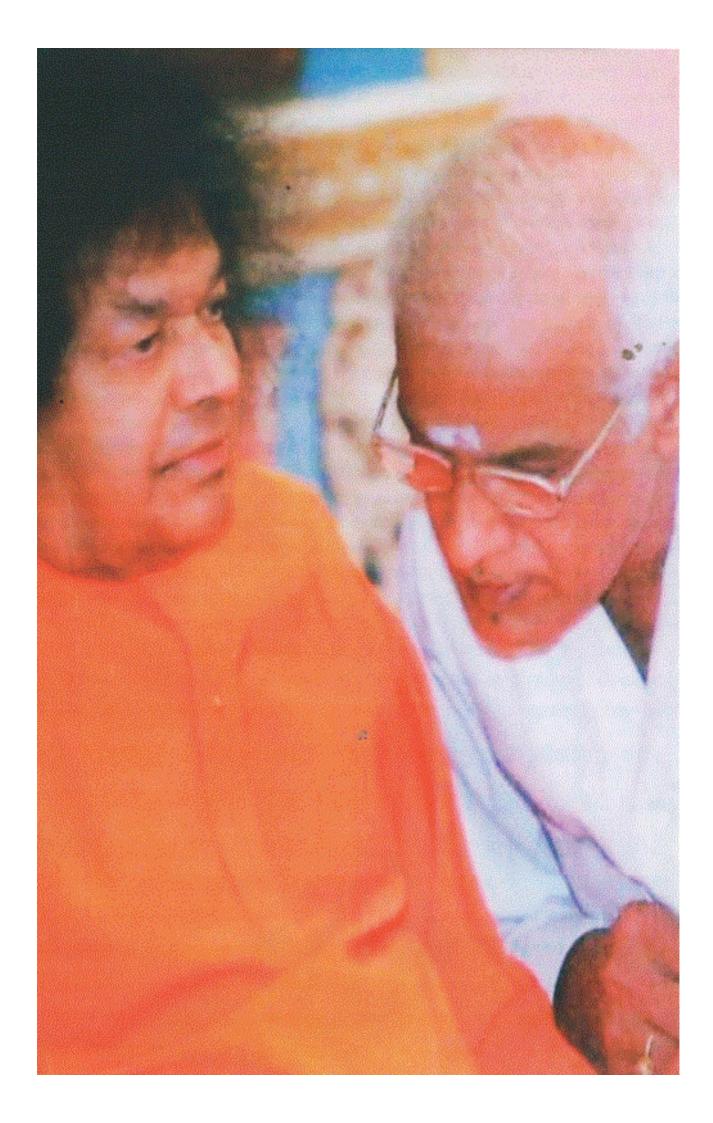


## BHAGAWAN AND HARI GOVINDAM

A Profound Symphony For the Young Pysche

N. S. VENKATESHVARAN





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## Bhagawan And Hari Govindam

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N.S. VENKATESHVARAN



**PRASANTHI NILAYAM** 

#### Sri Sathya Sai Sadhana Trust, Publications Division

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God Himself comes in human form, as Avatār, guiding man every time through His life and message. Many masters, messiahs and messengers also help man, leading the 'blessed lot' to realise the true essence of life.

One such master was Sri Adi Shankaracharya, the foremost pioneer of *Advaita Vedānta*, the principle of non-dualism, who, in his brief lifespan of 32 years, established a firm foundation for the ascetic order of Hinduism. His seminal work 'Bhaja Govindam' is considered a spiritual treatise for every aspiring soul, urging man to come out of the clutches of illusion, holding on to the Lotus Feet of Govinda. In this profound work, Sri Shankaracharya has infused the essence of his *Vedāntic* compositions bringing to light the oneness of two paths, *bhakti* and *jñāna*.

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai's epochal advent aims to transform the individual to transform the world. In His tireless crusade for establishing a value-based world order, Bhagawan has often mentioned in His discourses the works of Adi Shankara, especially 'Bhaja Govindam'. On one such occasion in 1973, He addressed the college students in a series of Divine discourses during the Summer Course in Indian Culture and Spirituality held at Trayee Brindavan, Whitefield, Bengaluru.

Delving into the finer aspects of 'Bhaja Govindam' in His inimitable style, lucidly explaining the quintessence in 16 musical Telugu verses, Bhagawan exhorted the young hearts to engage in 'ceaseless study', to 'Become and Be'! Bhagawan said: "The essence of all the *Vedas*, all the *Śāstras*, and all the *Purāṇas* is contained in an explicit manner in these verses; preserve them in your heart." He further added, "When you go back to your places, you will be able to see the *Jyoti* or the Lamp of Wisdom which will enable you to help yourselves and others, only if you practise what you have learnt here."

One of the longstanding devotees of Bhagawan, Sri N.S. Venkateshvaran, an avid reader of spiritual literature, has explained the 16 verses by Bhagawan in his book 'Bhagawan and Hari Govindam' while explaining their importance in attaining Self-realisation. Sri Sathya Sai Sadhana Trust, Publications Division, is pleased to present this special endeavour at Bhagawan's Lotus Feet to benefit readers seeking spiritual wisdom. May Bhagawan bless them with success in their efforts to know the Self!

"Samasta Lokāh Sukhino Bhavantu"

Dated: 22.02.2022 Prasanthi Nilayam

Convener, Sri Sathya Sai Sadhana Trust, Publications Division. The stream of gratitude proceeds first and foremost towards my origin – Beloved Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. It lovingly flows and caresses those Petal Soft Lotus Feet with profound reverence for being my 'all' in the journey of my life from nothing to everything.

At the outset, I express my gratitude to M/S Central Chinmaya Mission Trust, Powai, Mumbai, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Mumbai for their kind copyright consent in using some of the published material. Furthermore, my gratitude goes to Sri K.R.Paramahamsa and Sri (Late) T.M.P. Mahadevan for the single paragraphs used from their publications.

Then, with so much love, respect and appreciation, it swirls around my dearest life partner, Bhanuma, for her invaluable presence in this voyage, and so too, to my children towards fulfilment of the goal of life with ethical perfection.

So too, it gushes to my children - Dr Ashwin Venkateshvaran and Dr Deepak Venkateshvaran for their attitude, their inclination, their drift in the direction of the divine, their adoration, respect and love...and, for their constant nudge and encouragement that my learning, insight, divinisation, observations, and experiences should be penned so that sincere seekers may have easy access to it all. With the supreme grace of Beloved Swami, both Ashwin and Deepak have studied in Sri Sathya Sai Educational Institutions, from KG to PG, and have had the immense fortune to receive gold medals from the Divine Hand.

I am grateful they remain grounded and centred through it all, totally in tune with the flow of this narrative – Hari Govinda!

Innumerable devotees of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba have time and again encouraged and inspired me, especially during my overseas lecture tours in 2018/2019, to bring forth a book and thus, I must thank all of them too for their conviction in my commitment.

Now, my heart wells with gratefulness to Shri Ramu Bandalaiah Etikala, from Pune, who spontaneously offered his services with regard to the Telugu verses that flow in 'Hari Govinda' and has ever so patiently facilitated in making 'print worthy' the handwritten Telugu stanzas from my manuscript.

I am also grateful to Ms Jullie Chaudhuri for her loving efforts in painstakingly assembling and proofreading the manuscript, to Sri Ramdas Kasav (Pune) for his creative theme for the cover design.

Finally, I am grateful to all those who have indeed heeded the inner prompt to select this book, are holding it in their hand right now and perusing through it, listening to the words that dance through the pages, while imbibing the lessons verbalized by the Master Himself...thereby choosing to elevate their life and destiny.

With Love and In Celebration of Oneness,

N.S. Venkateshvaran Prasanthi Nilayam



## Foreword C

Aum Śrī Ganeśāya Namaḥ... Aum Śrī Sarasvatyai Namaḥ... Aum Śrī Gurubhyoḥ Namaḥ...

#### Aum Sri Sai Ram

In all humility, with 'adoration replete', I seek an infinitesimal drop of the ever glistening pure, pristine, invincible and eternal grace of Beloved Bhagawan, in order to pen a few lines as regards this most heartening treatise... an unwavering, unflinching beacon through any kind of internal and external storm that serves to illumine the path, the way, each step towards the highest mode of living, being and becoming...that which the Master wants each of us to become.

The manner in which I am inspired to perceive this manuscript is that - it has two authors.

The first is Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba Himself and the second is His dearest bhakta and fond associate – Sri N.S. Venkateshvaran, who has intrinsically as well as consciously allowed his association with the Lord Incarnate in human form to brim, brew, percolate and bring to the fore from within...all that is Divine...

Absolutely aware that 'the devotee, the path, the flow of devotion and the Supreme Being' transcend barriers and do not need a channel of words, yet, he stepped beyond his mother tongue – Tamil...and learnt Telugu so as to refine, attune and fine tune his understanding, communion

and connection with the Lord and the language. He chose as a communication medium for His latest Advent as Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai. Being steadfastly centred, completely approachable, his spiritual talks are a delight for any participant. He makes spirituality flavoursome, nectareous and mellifluous. More so because...akin to his Master...during his talks, he spontaneously, endearingly sings couplets and verses, some of which flow through these pages. Hence, his spiritual meets are lovingly welcomed and appreciated by all. He is solemn when required, yet, there is a fair speckling of humour that swirls with a twinkle in his eye when one interacts with him. So too, often his emotions gush unrestrained, radiating ceaseless adoration for Bhagawan when the talk sensitively centres around Him.

Every second spent with Beloved Bhagawan has been valued and savoured...not a moment of his blessed association with the Avatar has been allowed to be forgotten, wasted or lost. This is what one experiences through exchanges with him. A shadow may feel separation from its origin, however, Venkatesh Uncle, as the author is known to many (...and Beloved Bhagawan affectionately referred to him as 'Venkatesh'...!) forever exudes Oneness with His Source. And, the same tender, gentle love of the Source flows from him to all beings around him, be it for the mineral, plant, animal or the world of mortals.

It is this unconditional love that compels him to painstakingly work for the upliftment of all, to make each one arise and pay heed to the clarion call of the cherished Master, to awaken to the Divinity within and beyond, knowing each person has the wherewithal, but is hitherto ignorant of it or has neglected it having relegated it to gather rust and dust upon the backseat. A mirror only shows what is on the surface...but meditation on the Sacred Name, on *Hari Govinda*, stirs what is beneath the exterior. Life is a tug-o-war between the outer and the inner, the flimsy and the steady, the ephemeral and the eternal. This is where this book steps in.

And so, I am obliged to express...

A Few More Words...

The most enlightening treatise presented here 'Hari Govindam', personifies sixteen evergreen, colourful, fragrant petals of wisdom for all of humanity definitely... but specially so for the young psyche, the rising generation. It represents a wondrous lighthouse, an incessantly glowing polestar to light the path, show the way, stir, inspire, compel and impel any would be seeker seeking 'that' hidden higher purpose in their tryst with destiny on earth...according a sacred and impactful meaning to the ultimate cosmic blessing - of being born as a 'human being', of receiving a human birth.

When all too soon life ebbs and one leaves the physical sphere to be face to face with the Creator, and is shown a colourful documentary, a detailed powerpoint presentation upon the 'cosmic silver screen' showcasing the journey of their life - the blessings bestowed, the gift of an intellect, the myriad near slips into temptations, the choices made between the 'preyas' and the 'śreyas' - the transient and the enduring...material and transcendental, one should then have the courage, confidence and satisfaction, sans any doubt, to look into the eyes of the Supreme and say, "Yes, I did well, didn't I?". Or vice versa, look down in shame, crestfallen with innumerable rues and regrets.

Lifetimes come and go, Through eons, ages and decades, We grow, we glow... Still, the essence remains enmeshed in the material throe,

The soul ensnared in the transmigrational flow,

Then comes the Unique Avatar with His Teachings,

Incomparably Simple,

Yet, Profound and True...

Instilling aspirations anew,

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's Supreme Advent,

Powerful Dictums and Vibrant Words,

Elevate our psyche,

Enhancing our journey,

Making the Goal of Liberation,

The 'Jīvan Mukta' state,

So within reach,

Virtually a natural reality,

An Awakening call for all...

What more, what more, what more?

Even as we physically and materially grow...

...just where is lost the spiritual flow ...?

The quest must commence before we are no more,

Hence,

From all else the soul (should) divest,

For -

Youth is the time to invest...

Is it enough?

Are we to remain sanguine,

Steeped in ignorance allowing lifetimes to roll by?

Is it enough?

Should we allow the intelligence to remain afloat by mere rote,

To remain stagnant upon the Cosmic Screen?

Is it enough?

Must we be drawn constantly into the cycle of

transmigration?

Is it enough to remain awake and ensnared in the material

whirl...

...and permit the soul to slumber on...?

Hari Govinda helps you smoothly, ecstatically 'win the'
duel...

...between the aham (Jīva) and its material pursuits,
A jewel, a wondrous channel to help you beyond...
...the myth of all that is considered dual...
It loosens the dark grip of the worldly noose,
Bestowing glorious luminescence...
...delivering you into the waiting arms of
enlightenment,
Ascend...Ascend, O! Soul in slumber,
Must you remain a static statistic, ignorant and numb?
Be and Become,
Repent, Amend, Consent,
Refocus Intent, Reorient, Know your Extent,

Augment an Ascent, Chant Hari Govinda, So as to Arise, Transcend...Ascend.

Bhaja Govindam...Hari Govindam does not only lyrically convey chanting the Holy Names of the Divine...it also signifies a unique Satsang with the inner self, an intense quest that meanders to the dawning of 'Who am I?', a complete absorption, an equanimous revelling in trust and faith, an absolute Oneness with the One Supreme...shaking off the shackles of the I...it attracts you to that 'one sole attachment'...leading you enchantingly to know God as your True Guru.

Come and be drenched in this illumination most profound...a luminescent bridge, a vibrant link between the seeker and the Sought!

With immense Gratitude, Love, Light and Santușți for Samasta Sṛṣṭi.

Jullie Chaudhuri,

Pune.



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### **◯** Introduction **◯**

భజ గోవిందం భజ గోవిందం గోవిందం భజ మూధమతే సంప్రాప్తే సన్నిహితే కాలే నహి నహి రక్షతి దుకృజ్ కరణే

Bhaja Govindam Bhaja Govindam Govindam Bhaja Mūḍha-Mate Samprāpte Sannihite Kāle Nahi Nahi Rakṣati Dukṛñkaraṇe

Chant Govinda, Chant Govinda, Chant Govinda, Oh Fool! At the time of your death, Rules of grammar will not save you...

Bhagvatpada Shankaracharya was a great thinker, and the greatest advaitic philosopher, an inspired champion of Hinduism and one of the most vigorous missionaries of our great country – Bharat.\*1

Sri Shankara crossed the ocean of 'Māya' as easily as one steps over a small channel in an agricultural field. He wrote a number of Vedāntic works for imparting the knowledge of the 'Self'.\*2

It was during that time, when our society was ready for any ideal principle to thrive, that the lovely value of 'Ahimsa' (non-injury), Self Control, Love and Peace of Buddha came into existence in a big way. However, the followers of Buddha precipitated different viewpoints and, by the time Shankara appeared on the scene, he noticed a large section of the people turning to a certain atheistic school of belief. It was during such a chaotic intellectual atmosphere that Shankara brought out his life-giving philosophy of 'Advaita' – non dual philosophy of Brahman.\*1

Thus, Shankara was able to provide an impetus to people of those days to come back to their own native thoughts and ideology. Shankara began to propagate the great, immense, enormous and boundless philosophical truth of the Upaniṣats, thereby rediscovering through them the true cultural basis of our great nation – Bharat.\*1

Shankara has accomplished a vast programme of Advaita within a span of twenty effective years, for, at the age of thirty-two, he had finished his work and folded up his manifestation among the mortals of this world.\*1

Shankara composed a number of hymns to foster the sense of devotion in the hearts of men. One such is 'Bhaja Govindam'. This is one of the seemingly smaller but in fact an extremely important work of Adi Shankara. Bhaja Govindam illustrates the fundamentals of Vedānta Philosophy in simple musical verses, so that from the tender years of early childhood, children can grow up amidst the melody of Advaita. The musical rhythm in these stanzas makes it easy even for children to remember and repeat these verses that are expressively eloquent and vividly impressive. For an intelligent youth, sincere study of this poem can remove all his delusions (Moha) and thus the poem is also called 'Moha Mudgara'...where Mudgara unfolds to mean a 'Hammer'.\*1

During the initial days of Shankara, it was believed by some scholars that the way of devotion (Bhakti) is different from the path of knowledge (Jñāna). Such learned ones employed this distinction to emphasise a particular thesis. It is important to understand:

- a) When intelligence matures and lodges securely in the heart, it becomes wisdom Jñāna.
- b) When that wisdom is integrated with life and issues forth as actions, it becomes devotion Bhakti.
- c) At one level of maturity, Knowledge and Devotion -Jñāna and Bhakti are the same.
- d) Shankara's 'siddhānta' or tenets in Bhaja Govindam is Let attachment to the Lord be your single attachment. That attachment will help you free yourself from attachments. It has been the rule of the scriptures that If attachments are given up, salvation is a certainty...! (Mokṣa is 'Moha Kṣaya'.)\*2

The Bhagavad-gīta says:

Viṣaya Vinivartante Nirāhārasya Dehinaḥ Rasavarjam Rasopyasya Param Dṛṣṭvā Nivartate

If attachment is to be extinguished totally and if the mind should to be released from it entirely, the mind must be diverted towards Divinity. We must understand that except through devotion to God, there is no other way to restrain the senses. If Adi Shankara sang hymns to develop devotion, it is enough to show that knowledge and devotion are one.

Thus, to a reader, it directly applies to his or her mind that Sri Shankara has packed into this Bhaja Govindam song the substances of all Vedāntic works that he wrote, and subsequently, he has set the truth of the union of devotion and knowledge to melodious music.

This is a poem of a teacher who has an inspiring heart to convince the student.\*2

Here is an incident to reflect upon deeply.

Young Shankara was passing through the streets of Varanasi (Kasi, UP – India), with his 14 sisyas (students). He overheard an old Pañdit repeating to himself the rules of Sanskrit grammar and, at this futile effort put forth for a mere intellectual accomplishment, aware that the Pañdit was wasting his time in life without realising the spiritual unfoldment in himself, Shankara is said to have burst forth into these stanzas famous as 'Moha Mudgara'...now popularly known as 'Bhaja Govindam'.\*1

This set of thirty stanzas, together with the title 'Moha Mudgara', is meant to remove all delusions (Moha). 'Detach oneself from everything and then attach to God'...this enlightening adage was given to the world.

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba always insisted on Chāvu leni Chaduvu (Deathless Study).

He used to say:

తరచి చదువు చదువ తర్క వాదమె కాని పూర్ణ జ్ఞానంబెపుదు పొందలేదు చదువులన్నియు చదివి చావంగ నేటికి చావులేని చదువు చదువవలయు

Tarachi Chaduvu Chaduva Tarka Vādame Kāni Pūrņa Jñānambepuḍu Pondaleḍu Chaduvulanniyu Chadivi Chāvanga neṭiki Chāvuleni Chaduvu Chaduvavalayu

You study, study and study and get in to arguments. You do not attain the complete knowledge. What is the use of such education that cannot make you attain Immortality? Study, study to be steady...and to attain deathless education of complete knowledge.

We should study not to get general knowledge, but to attain fundamental knowledge - Jñāna. Therefore, a true disciple is one who, being taught by the teacher and who, as a result of the understanding so gathered, now becomes more introverted than before, and begins to independently curb and control all sense appetites and the vagaries of emotions and thoughts.

Here, the reader should note that Shankara in his 'Bhaja Govindam' brought out thirty-one verses. Whereas our Master, Sri Sathya Sai Baba delivered discourses on Bhaja Govindam explaining the need for us, especially the 'youth', to practise and put the teachings in 'Abhyāsa Yoga'.

Bhagawan Baba has given the essence of this great work in sixteen verses.

Sanctity of the 'Teacher - Taught' relationship.



<sup>\*1</sup> adapted from the work of Swami Chinmayananda, Bhaja Govindam, by Central Chinmaya Mission Trust.

<sup>\*2</sup> adapted from the works of Sri Rajagopalachari, Bhaja Govindam, by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

### Verse 1

## Avoid The Cycle Of Birth And Death

In short, the term 'Govinda' stands for the essence which is the Truth behind the ever-changing flux of things that constitute the universe of our experiences. Govinda is the 'Brahman' - the Ultimate Spiritual Source, the Highest Universal Principle, the Absolute Truth and Reality.

So Bhaja Govindam means – Seek your identity with Govinda...The Supreme, and do not waste your time in mere grammar hunting and such other secular knowledge of worldly possessions displaying transient name and fame.\*1

హరి గోవిందా హరి గోవిందా హరి గోవిందా అనరా మందా మృత్యువు దాపున మెసలేటప్పుడు వ్యాకరణము నిను కాపాడదురా హరి గోవిందా హరి గోవిందా...

- జ్రీ సత్యసాయిబాబా

Hari Govindā Hari Govindā
Hari Govindā Anarā Mandā
Mṛtyuvu Dāpuna Mesaleṭappuḍu
Vyākaraṇamu Ninu Kāpādadurā
Hari Govindā Hari Govindā...

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Lift the heart up to Govinda,
Chant Hari Govinda, Chant Hari Govinda
Oh! Foolish mind,
When thou art at the door of death,
The rules of grammar which you are trying to
master,
Will be of no avail....
Hari Govinda...\*2

Sing the glory of Lord Govinda, utter the name of Lord Govinda; Oh, you dull-headed, ignorant person. You should go on uttering the name of the Lord. It will not be possible for you to do so when death faces you and you are close to it. Reciting the rules of grammar certainly cannot save you when the appointed time comes.

Bhaja Govindam is a chant that is generally sung in congregations. The leader sings each line of the verse, and the entire audience takes up the chorus — Bhaja Govindam, Bhaja Govindam. In this refrain — verse, the disciple is asked to brim his heart with thoughts of adoration completely replete in God, rather than with anxieties to acquire or possess secular accomplishments.

Bhaja means – worship; it is not a mere ritualistic routine – throwing flowers or a mechanical chanting of mantras and hymns. Seeking our identity with the Lord is true Bhajan, true Service.\*1

True and perfect Bhajan is the total subjective surrender in love and devotion at the altar of the Lord as conceived by the devotee.

The term — Govinda... to indicate Vishnu, appears twice in the sacred Viṣṇu Sahasranāma. Adi Shankara in his commentary explains this term etymologically in four different ways. He softly elucidates and determinedly interprets the term Govinda to his students as follows...for a more comprehensive understanding.

- a) He who finds or knows the earth.
- b) He who is the Lord of the cattle.
- He who confers speech.
- d) He who is known through Veda texts.

If we seek Hari Govinda's grace, we shall succeed in keeping our senses in check. This eventually leads us to be dhārmic (righteous) in our approach to life, which is the ultimate aspiration of our existence.\*4

The simplistic Bhaja Govindam of Adi Shankaracharya is generally considered among the minor works of the āchārya, the Teacher. All great scriptural masters have the knack of giving the highest truth at their greatest moments of inspiration in the simplest language.\*1

Bhagawan Baba further simplifies it by asking everyone to chant the *mantra* – *Hari Govinda*, which is the superlative *mantra* to cross the ocean of *samsāra* during the stage, era, span or *yuga* known as *Kali* Age.

#### The Truth is:

హరి గోవిందా హరి గోవిందా హరి గోవిందా అనరా మందా మృత్యువు దాపున మెసలేటప్పుడు వ్యాకరణము నిను కాపాడదురా హరి గోవిందా హరి గోవిందా...

Hari Govindā Hari Govindā Hari Govindā Anarā Mandā Mṛtyuvu Dāpuna Mesaleṭappuḍu Vyākaraṇamu Ninu Kāpādadurā Hari Govindā Hari Govindā... This is a strange world.

By strange is meant – an inscrutable secret. This world is a marvellous fusion of fascinating beauty as well as aweinspiring enigma.

One should intelligently meditate upon them to arrive at the destination.

- a) To whom do I belong?
- b) From where do I come?
- c) Where am I going?
- d) To what factor of Divine do I owe my continuance?
- e) What is my destination?

Finally, by contemplating and meditating on the above, one can arrive at what exactly is one's duty – now and here.

Be Aware. This is the 'Tattvam' that Bhagawan Baba wants us to understand and realise.



\*2 adapted from the works of Sri Rajagopalachari, *Bhaja Govindam*, by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

<sup>\*1</sup> adapted from the work of Swami Chinmayananda, Bhaja Govindam, by Central Chinmaya Mission Trust.

<sup>\*4</sup> adapted from the works of Sri (Late) TMP Mahadevan from his book 'Shankara And Bhaja Govindam'.

### Verse 2

## Infant-Boy-Youth-Man-Grandfather... What Is Growing In Us...?

ఆటల పాటల బాల్యం బాయెను ప్రాయములో స్రేమాయణమాయెను ముదిమిని చింతలు ముదిరే పోయెను పర బ్రహ్మ కాబట్టక పోయెను హరి గోవిందా హరి గోవిందా హరి గోవిందా అనరా మందా

Āṭala Pāṭala Bālyambāyenu Prāyamulo Premāyaṇamāyenu Mudimini Chintalu Mudire Poyenu Para Brahma Kābaṭṭaka Poyenu Hari Govindā Hari Govindā Hari Govindā Anarā Mandā...

Childhood passes away in play and song Youth fleets away in love and adoration, Old age is gone in worry and anxiety, Devoid of the vision of the Eternal Supreme Divinity Chant *Hari Govinda*...

Bhagawan Baba always encouraged the devotee to:

Come – See – Examine – Understand – Experience and then - Accept.

When a *Guru* appears, his primary goal is to practise before teaching. "My Life is My Message," says Baba. When a disciple follows the Master, it should be such that the disciple must make his life his Master's Message.

Indeed life is short. Today's men have not realised this fact of life. Today's generation, being deluded by desires and cravings, discovers an enchantment in 'kanchan' (gold) and 'kāmini' (women). Immersed in lust, drunk with passions, the dull headed man (manda) wanders away from the path of dharma.

The essence of the second verse of 'Hari Govinda' reveals that the childhood days of man is wasted in his attachments or relationships with toys and games natural to that age.

As he grows, the youthful days and energies are dissipated in his passion for his beloved and in lusty sports. As age gathers upon him and forces him to bend upon his staff, the grey hairs on him conceal a head heavy with anxieties and fears. Thereupon, when the time comes to crawl on the surface, attached to one thing or the other, never getting any chance nor finding time to attach himself to the supreme purpose of life, he struggles with pain. Play, Passion and Pain...these seem to be common tendencies in every thoughtless man's life.\*1

According to Hindu Śāstra, while in 'Grhastha Āśram' (the second of the four life stages prescribed for any individual), man and woman in wedlock must live in the spirit of togetherness. However, the Masters insist — Let there be space between them, let there be no clinging attachments to each other, for this will only retard their growth for perfection. In other words, let there be intense attachment for carrying out their dharma, with an eye on supreme detachment in their pilgrimage of life.\*1

Here...the very important truth of transformation is revealed. One should avoid the cycle of birth and death. How to do so is the question?

Swami once said:

కానిదిది యని చెప్పంగ గలరు కాని బ్రహ్మమిది అని చెప్పంగ వశము కాదు సత్య నిత్యంబు జ్ఞాన మనంతమైన అదియే బ్రహ్మంబు వాక్కున కలవి కాదు

Kānididi Yani Cheppanga Galaru Kāni Brahmamidi Ani Cheppanga Vasamu Kādu Satya Nityambu Jñānamanantamaina Adiye Brahmambu Vākkuna Kalavi Kādu

You can say of *Brahman*, 'not this' 'not this',
You can never surely say it is 'this',
The Supreme *Brahman* is Eternal, True and Infinite,
That Supreme Reality is beyond the ken of verbal
expression.

One can point out at a thing and say it is not *Brahman*. But no one can say that this is *Brahman*. Whatever is unchanging, eternally true, whatever is knowledge and is infinite is *Brahman*. It is not possible to explain this in terms of words.

Life is like a long garland of flowers. This garland has two ends. One end is birth, while the other is death. In between there are many flowers, flowers of dreams, thoughts, ideas, plans, sorrows, joys, pleasures and pain. We have to consider and come to a conclusion - whether we should view life itself as the garland, or we should regard the connections of our body with life as the garland. When

we look at the ends of the garland it will be quite clear that these ends – birth and death, are relevant only to the body and not to the *Jīva* (individual self) inside the body.

If it is so in this context, whether it is pain or pleasure, sorrow or happiness, dream or imagination, all of them are connected with this body and not with the Jīva (Ātma) inside the body. It is the body which is undergoing many changes and transformations.

The *Ātma* does not undergo any change but remains permanent, steady and firm.

Truly our body goes through various stages like – boyhood, youth, adolescence and old age. Depending upon the stage through which the body is passing at a particular moment, it will decide for itself the work which is appropriate for that particular age.

Be Aware. Avoid the cycle of birth and death.



<sup>\*1</sup> adapted from the work of Swami Chinmayananda, Bhaja Govindam, by Central Chinmaya Mission Trust.

### Verse 3

## Seek The Company Of Good People

# Good Company > Detachment > Removal of Illusion > Steadiness of Mind > Liberation of Jīva

సత్సంగముచే సహజ విరక్తి ఆ విరక్తిచే విగత భాంతి భాంతి తీరితే శాంతి స్థిమితము స్థిమిత శాంతిచే జీవన్ముక్తి హరి గోవిందా...

Satsangamuche Sahaja Virakti Ā Viraktiche Vigata Bhrānti Bhrānti Tīrite Śānti Sthimitamu Sthimita Śāntiche Jīvan Mukti Hari Govindā...

Through the company of good,
natural detachment arises,
Through detachment arises
destruction of delusion,
Through destruction of delusion,
peace arises steadily,
Through this Eternal Peace,
arises the state of 'liberation in life'.

Hari Govinda...

Association with good and enlightened men provides an opportunity for the practice of withdrawal from desires and attachments in the world. We are all aware of the results of good company. Seek and speed towards the company of the good, as advised by Bhagawan time and again, does not exclusively relate to the company of humans, but other life forms too, as there is a colossal amount of learning that can be imbibed through our association with nature, other beings in nature, the flora and fauna, etc.

As desires and attachments reduce in an individual, the delusion (మాడు) which preys upon life diminishes. Delusion is the name given to the state where one is unable to distinguish between what is true and what is false. Desires and attachments are the cause of this delusion. As these vices diminish, one gradually gets free from this delusion. When it vanishes completely, the mind ceases to be agitated and becomes steady, and internal purity steadily ensues. That purity is Divinity Itself.

When that state is reached, it is salvation, the state of 'Jīvan Mukti' itself.

In His discourses, Bhagawan Baba speaks directly to the devotees explaining the Truth. For example, the 'Ceiling on Desires Programme', if applied by each of us as directed by the Master will make our *sādhana* progress to a higher level.

In fact, these commandments gushing down from the soft flowing hearts of peaceful Masters constitute the Upaniṣats. In the above verses under review, Bhagawan Baba gives a simple ladder of progress by carefully climbing which a seeker can arrive at the highest pinnacles of perfection. The modern man is living every hour of existence amidst temptations of life where 'Kanchan' (gold/wealth) and 'Kāmini' (woman) form the main enchantments.\*1

One can artificially build an intellectual barrier against his or her passions and lust. And thus, one may restrain them from their onward flow for some time. However, the objects of fascination are so numerous and their enchantments so powerful that the mighty sorcery of the sensuous world is too irresistible for an individual seeker to fight against.\*1

In order to reinforce the efforts of the follower in his or her early days of seeking and to instil more courage and strength, Bhagawan Baba advises us to seek 'good company'.

Bhagawan says –

త్యజ దుర్జన సంసర్గం భజ సాధు సమాగమం కురు పుణ్య మహో రాత్రం స్మర నిత్య మనిత్యతాం

Tyaja Durjana Samsargam Bhaja Sādhu Samāgamam Kuru Puṇya Mahorātram Smara Nityamanityatām

Give up company of the bad,
Seek company of the good,
Perform, day and night, deeds meritorious,
Contemplate constantly on
what is Eternal and ephemeral.

The company that we keep is very important. We should not carelessly choose our friends or associates. The company of good significantly relates to people who are in the company of those holy, who feel value-based education is the only way to move further. In such a company, we are safe and sure to realise our goal. This 'good company'

gives us the capacity and the impetus to withdraw from the sensuous field of attraction – 'Nissangatvam' (నిప్పంగత్వం). When the sense of attachment is taken away, delusion (Moha) and all other delusory and false values drop off.

The mind is responsible for everything. It is the mind that puts value to the outer objects, and thus, thereafter, the inert objects of the world become adept at enchanting that mind. When the mind starts seeing things as they are in the original sense, that is when it redeems itself from the clutch of 'vāsanas' (past tendencies); then, the mind gets a glimpse of the true reality. When this experience becomes more and more established in oneself, that individual becomes 'God Realised' – a Liberated Being (Jīvan Mukta).

The term 'Nischalatattva' indicates steadfastness – immutable reality. We all have steadfastness. We can gain it with some amount of hard work. When the delusion of the mind is wiped out, the mind attains steadfastness. And, with this steadfastness in our meditation or contemplation, the experience of the highest state, of Jīvan Mukta, could be obtained.

The company of the good helps to root out all attachments. Where there is no attachment, there is no delusion. When delusion vanishes, the mind becomes steady; study to be steady in the equal minded state for Peace. A steady mind makes way for Jīvan Mukti.

Be Aware.

Bhaja Sādhu Samāgamam... Seek Good Company.



<sup>\*1</sup> adapted from the work of Swami Chinmayananda, Bhaja Govindam, by Central Chinmaya Mission Trust.

### Verse 4 🗢

## You And I Are One Reality, Be Equal Minded To Realise 'That'

నీలో నాలో నిజమొక విష్ణువె ఓపిక లేని కోపము వ్యర్థము ఎల్లెద సమమై ఉల్లంబుంటే అపుదే అనుభవమగు విష్ణుత్వము హరి గోవిందా...

Nīlo Nālo Nijamoka Viṣṇuve Opika Leni Kopamu Vyarthamu Yelleḍa Samamai Ullambunṭe Apude Anubhavamagu Viṣṇutvamu Hari Govindā...

In you, in me then in deed,
is one Vishnu Principle in reality.
Anger devoid of patience is utter futility,
When the mind, under all cirumstances,
is in equanimity,
Then alone you will experience
Vishnu Principle for certainty.

Hari Govinda...

In you, in me, elsewhere...there is one Vishnu – the All-Pervading Reality. Unable to listen patiently, you get

angry. If you want to attain and experience the Vishnu principle – God Self, be equal minded in all circumstances, giving up false sense of differences.

The Teacher of Truth asserts here the Eternal Truth that has been the experience of thousands of Masters through thousands of years.

These Masters have declared thus:

In you and in me and all over...in other places too, there is but one All-Pervading Reality...the Vishnu Principal.

As a student of the Teacher, one is bound to frustrate oneself and become impatient to grasp the Truth. There are certain truths the Teacher repeats and repeats to make the student absorb and put into practice in day-to-day life.

There was an occasion once, when Swami was speaking to the students in the portico. During this time, one primary school boy was busy doing his homework. Looking at him, Swami said, "Hey boy, I am telling you all something, yet, you are busy doing something else, not listening to Me." The boy in all his innocence answered, "Yes, Swami...You have said it earlier and repeating now...I have heard it several times." To this Swami turned towards us and said, "Yes, he is right, but who practised it? I will keep repeating till you put it in to practice."

Spiritual Truth must be repeated.

The repetitions of the Teacher sap out the patience of the student, and perhaps he unconsciously expresses his restlessness on his countenance. Noticing this, the Teacher then openly points out, "Being impatient, you are unnecessarily angry. There is no other way in which this subtle message can be conveyed to the seeker.\*1

Don't be angry, Oh! Student. It is futile for you in your impatience to feel upset or angry." In order to obtain the reality of 'Vishnuhood', the Master advises – Be equal minded (సమాన మనస్సుగల) in all circumstances.

'Samatvam'... this word is repeated more than forty times in the sacred Bhagavad-gīta. It is essential to know its significance and practise it in our day-to-day life. 'I am that I Am' is revealing the Oneness of the Ātma. This sacred sound 'I' is appropriate only to the Ātma. Since the same Ātma is present in everyone, equal mindedness too is possible for everyone to acquire.

Our likes and dislikes, 'Rāga – Dveṣa', are responsible for our dual nature. It is not in the other object; it is in ourselves. We revel and deal with that. That is why Shakespeare wrote, "There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so."

Having obtained a sacred human birth, if we still conduct ourselves like animals and birds, we will then be wasting our lives and, not justifying God's priceless gift to us. We have to recognise the Ultimate Truth that the One Divine *Ātma* exists in all. It is only then that we will justify this human birth and drive away the ignorance from our mind.

'Brahman' is Truth.

Brahman is shining as Ātma. is the 'Ātma' in all different forms of living beings...organic and inorganic too. It is only when we recognise this Truth that we will be able to attain this all pervasive Vishnu principle. It is to enable us to understand and attain the status of Vishnu that Swami asserts and enrichingly elucidates in the above poem, part of Shankara's beautiful Bhaja Govindam.

It is absolutely necessary for everyone to realise this One Supreme Principle behind the entire creation. It is only then one can develop an equal minded nature. Unity in diversity has to be practised. "See, examine, understand-experience and then accept" says Bhagawan Baba.

When a holy man says...

"You are not the body,
You are not the mind,
You are the  $\bar{A}tma$ ."
...then he is speaking about the ' $\bar{A}tma$  Bhāva'.

This is the Truth and this Truth is the same, independent of different names and different forms. This simple reality is *Brahman*.

Such a *Brahman* is in you, above you, below you, besides you, behind you and everywhere too. One needs to be patient; anger is fruitless and harmful. Such anger that arises from a sheer lack of patience leads to unhappiness. With equal mindedness, one can establish oneself in peace and tranquillity. For such equal-minded nature, one needs to make an 'enquiry'. To attain this, the feeling of Oneness alone helps.

It is said: There is only One, and not two. (Ekam Eva Advitīyam)

'Brahma Satyam Jagat Mithya'.

Brahma alone is Truth; the rest comes and goes. *Ja* – Comes; *Gat* – Goes... *Jagat* is transient So, there is only one Eternal Principle.

For instance, if I ask, "Who amongst you is Rama?" One person will get up and say, "I am Rama." If I ask another question, "Who amongst you is Krishna?"

Another person will get up and answer, "I am Krishna."

Here, Rama and Krishna are two different individuals with different forms.

The common factor is - "I am". The 'I' - is common to both. That 'I' is all pervading. And this is Ātma, the One Ātma That Jesus had expressed.

Be Aware. Human Life is sacred - Do not waste it.



<sup>\*1</sup> adapted from the work of Swami Chinmayananda, Bhaja Govindam, by Central Chinmaya Mission Trust.

## Verse 5 Vedānta Asks...

Ce .

ఎవతె భార్య ఇంకెవదో బిద్దడు ఎంత చిత్రమో ఈ సంసారము ఎవరివాద వెవ్వద వెటు వచ్చితి తత్వమిక్కదే తమ్ముద తెలియర హరి గోవిందా...

Evate Bhārya Inkevado Biddadu Enta Chitramo Ī Samsāramu Evarivāda Vevvada Vetu Vachhiti Tatvamikkade Tammuda Teliyara Hari Govindā...

Who is your beloved? Who is your son?
Very mysterious indeed is the family bond,
Who are you? Who are you?
Whence did you come, brother mine?
Reflect on the truth of it all...
Know the Essence of the Ultimate Truth!
Hari Govinda...Hari Govinda...

The course of worldly life is a great mysterious enigma, Whose property are you?
Whence did you come?
Where were you previously?

Did you come in to existence yourself?
What is the bond between the persons whom
you love and worry about and...yourself?
Why all this anxiety and attachment?

According to the 'Gṛhastha Āśram', the married couple should live in the spirit of togetherness, but as such there should not be any clinging attachment. There should be space between the two in family life.

Is not every living creature a temple of Govinda? Why do you grieve in vain imagining enmity in your heart? Is not every living creature the temple of Govinda? Does not the same Ātma dwell in your body as well as that of your neighbour whom you fight against? Give up the false sense of difference from other living beings everywhere.

Be Aware.

Bhagawan Baba insists:

నీటియందు పదవ నిలచి ఉందుట మేలు నీరు పదవయందు నిలువ కీదు జగములోన జనులు నిలచి ఉందుట మేలు జనులయందు జగము నిలువ కీదు

Nīṭiyandu Paḍava Nilachi Unḍuṭa Melu Nīru Paḍavayandu Niluva Kīḍu Jagamulona Janulu Nilachi Unḍuṭa Melu Janulayandu Jagamu Niluva Kīdu

The boat that remains in water is safe,
If the water is allowed into the boat, it is unsafe.
Likewise,

Man can remain in the world performing his duty/dharma,
But do not allow the world to remain in man.

To live in attachment and sink into the family mire seems natural for man and woman. The mind takes to it as readily as a duck to water. Therefore, a philosophical idea is necessary which will prescribe a technique by which one can grow into the required state of detachment. For this, a method of enquiry is to be adopted. The wife before marriage is someone's daughter. The son after birth becomes your son. But, before that, what was the esoteric secret, the veiled mystery?

It is extremely vital to understand this. When this aspect is analysed carefully, we can quite plainly comprehend that this relationship has come from a long time. Initially, the son has become a son after birth; prior to that, it was a foetus, and before that, it was a 'seed'. That seed originated from the food. Thus, the clod of earth in its various manifestations becomes (in association with *Chaitanya* - Life force) what we call 'Body' - Son, Wife, Husband... so on and so forth.

That means Body = Earth = Body. Be it son, father, mother, etc...one piece of mud gets attached to another piece of mud. How strange? How powerful is మాయ – Māya?

Bhagawan Baba reminds:

మాయలోనే పుట్టి మాయలోనే పెరిగి మాయ నెరుగ లేరు మందమతులు బ్రతుకుట మాయ పుట్టుట మాయ సంసారంబు మాయ చావు మాయ భవబంధములు మాయ మాయను ఎరుగరే మాయ బ్రతుకటంచు మాయలో పదనేల Māyalone Puṭṭi Māyalone Perigi Māya Neruga Leru Mandamatulu Bratukuṭa Māya Puṭṭuṭa Māya Samsārambu Māya Chāvu Māya Bhavabandhamulu Māya Māyanu Erugare Māya Bratukaṭanchu Māyalo Paḍanela

You are all born in Māya,
You grow in Māya,
Oh! Dull headed man, you can't understand Māya,
Life is Māya. Birth is Māya,
Growth is Māya. Death is Māya,
Relationship is Māya,
When you are unable to understand,
why fall into Māya?

Life is the field of trial and test, a playground wherein the individuals can grow into healthier personalities, but it is not in itself the final destination. One should learn to live life with detachment. One should discern and determine the technique of intense attachment to discharge *dharma* in doing work, because work is worship. However, having completed or discharged the work, one should develop supreme detachment because work should specifically be on the lines of 'Nishkama *Karma*' (action sans expectation or desire for personal benefit, non-attachment to consequences of action).

Māya is defined as:

ఎద్ది కలదనుచుంటిమో అద్ది లేదు ఎద్ది లేదనుచుంటిమో అద్ది కలదు

Eddi Kaladanuchunțimo Addi Ledu Eddi Ledanuchunțimo Addi Kaladu What appears to exist, does not exist; What does not appear to exist, exists in reality.

The only way is to apply ourselves throught the path of intelligent enquiry, to understand life and move on. The method of enquiry to be adopted is indicated in the above stanzas. That is to know the 'Tattva'...the essence, the very purpose of life.

Thus, one should commence this enquiry, here and now, introspecting...

Who is the wife? Who is the son? What a mystery is this life?

Simultaneously, one should engage in reflecting on the Truth as put forth by Sri Shankaracharya. "What is the permanent relation between you and your wife, whom you love? You adore your son passionately, yet, who is he?" The course of worldly life is a great mysterious enigma. Ask, enquire and try to ascertain within:

- Whose property are you?
- Whence did you come?
- · Where were you previously?
- Did you come into existence by yourself?
- What is the bond between the persons whom you love and worry about and, yourself?
- Why all this anxiety and attachment?

When we reflect on all these, our delusion will vanish, and we will be at peace. One should not confuse the body that is perishable with the imperishable soul. One should not be a victim of erroneous attachment.

Family life is the learning ground. Innumerable are the tests and trials in family life that present themselves, wherein the individual can grow into a mature personality. Nevertheless, it is not the final destination. One has to live life with detachment. One needs 'attachment' only to discharge the purpose 'dutifully' and in a *dhārmic* sense. Once the work is discharged along these lines, it is most desirable to show 'supreme detachment'.

Along our journey of life, while living in the world, we experience desirable and undesirable happenings. Consequently, it is during these times that man needs utmost stability at the 'mind' level. The practice of even-mindedness...of mindfulness is advised here.

Bhagawan always insists on 'Samatvam' (equality of all beings, even mindedness) in life. He says:

మంచికి పొంగుట చెద్దకు కృంగుట – పశుత్వము

Manchiki Ponguṭa Cheḍḍaku Kṛnguṭa - Paśutvamu

Rejoicing – When something good happens.

Depressed – When things go wrong (animal nature).

The external world of objects and happenings can disturb us only when we have the positive and negative  $v\bar{a}sanas$  (tendencies) in ourselves. Objects conducive to our existing  $v\bar{a}sanas$  will attract us, while objects contrary to our  $v\bar{a}sanas$  will repel us. In order to develop mental equipoise, one must strive to filter away from one's mind all existing  $v\bar{a}sanas$ . There are certain procedures to do this. This state of equipoise can be reached through the following:

- Devotion to work,
   Dedication to work,
   Determination to succeed in work.
- Devotion to the Lord,
   Fear of sin,
   Practice of Morality in society.
- Help Ever, Hurt Never, Service to society.
- Svādhyāya The study of Spiritual Literature, Contemplation upon the Highest, Love All, Serve All – Ātmic Oneness.
- 5. Follow and Practise...Strive hard to follow Sāmājika Samatvam
  Prakṛta Samatvam
  Bhakti Samatvam
  Karma Samatvam
  Jñāna Samatvam

The Bhagavad-gīta says సమత్వం - Samatvam.

Bhagawan Baba advocates five types of *Samatvam* for the seeker of Truth as given above. This *Samatvam* – equanimity of mind on all things and beings, in all circumstances, if adopted systematically then one can attain the highest knowledge – *Jñāna*.

What is Jñāna?

Advaita Darśanam Jñānam అద్వైత దర్శనం జ్ఞానం. With this state of Jīvan Mukta, one can experience Viṣṇu-tattvam - విష్ణు తత్వం.

This is the last stanza's essential essence. In creation it is only the man who has the power to discriminate. The other creatures live as commissioned by their instincts. Man

has the freedom to rationally judge himself, his inclinations, experiences and experiments. He has the power to reject all those negative aspects that come in the way of his progress towards perfection.

Life is wasted in the quest of what is transient and deluding. Though aware of the delusion, yet, at no period of his life does man seek to know the Real, The Truth.

Be Aware.

Conquer your senses, and there will be no sorrow.



#### Verse 6

#### Time And Tide Waits For No Man

రేయి పగళ్ళు సాయం ప్రొద్దులు చెలి వేసవులు సారెకు మారును కాలక్రీడల గడిచే నాయువు అయినా వదలదు ఆశా వాయువు హరి గోవిందా

Reyi Pagaḷḷu Sāyam Proddulu Chali Vesavulu Sāreku Mārunu Kālakrīḍala Gaḍiche Nāyuvu Ayinā Vadaladu Āśā Vāyuvu Hari Govindā...

Night follows day,
Day follows night,
Summer follows winter,
Winter follows summer,
Time passes on engulfing us,
shortening our existence on earth,
In spite of this, we cling to our desires.
Hari Govinda...

Time and tide waits for no man.

No Master objects to our enjoyment of life, using our talents in approved ways while adhering to dharma. If one

seeks pleasure in wrong ways, the joy that one may get will be far outweighed by the sorrows one must suffer. If a man leads a *dhārmic* life, he must submit to sorrows as willingly as he accepts pleasures. Both must be borne with equanimity. The day dissolves, into night. When the night disappears, one can see the following day. The gentle dawn fades to give rise to the heat of noon, but then, the noon soon wanes away to be the mellow dusk.

Men may come, and men may go...but I go on forever, says Time beamingly!

Time moves on.

Yesterday has become today and so too, today has to merge in tomorrow. Today's 'Present' is tomorrow's 'Future'. Time never stops. Man may escape all other hardships, but death and the parting it imposes is inevitable. Things born must die and perish away only to be born again.

Nothing is permanent.

Therefore Bhagawan Baba says:

మరణానికి భయపడవద్దు లోకాన్ని నమ్మవద్దు, దైవాన్ని మరువవద్దు

Marananiki Bhayapadavaddu Lokānni Nammavaddu, Daivānni Maruvavaddu

Don't fear Death. Don't Believe This World – Transient World. Never forget God

One needs to remain in the 'Present' and move on.

What is life?

Among several factors, it is our station, our position in life which most powerfully influences our idea of life. One has to live life to understand it fully. There are three different dimensions of living.

The first one is Identifying the ideal. And, to live a fulfilling life, one must have a Definite Destination in one's journey of life and must work to achieve it. The last one is Realisation and Manifestation of the Divinity within. The only 'way out' is the 'way in'.

In this context, it is necessary to understand that the goal of life should have three important components to make it the journey meaningful and worthwhile. The goal should be:

Transcendental (b) Ultimate in nature (c) Selffulfilling

Life is at the mercy of Time. Without recognising this, man desires to enjoy sense objects, striving, sweating and toiling endlessly to acquire, to possess and aggrandise, yet...finally death snatches away everything from him. Man is compelled to leave everything here. He moves on carrying the heavy bundle of desires and painful *vāsanas* (tendencies) to the unknown realm beyond. How sad!

'Day and night, dawn and dusk, winter and spring, again and again come and depart,
Time sports and life ebbs away,
And yet, one leaves not the gust of desires.

Hari Govinda...Hari Govinda.'

Life is moving fast, like the wind. The life span is melting away like a block of ice, and one will drop the body sometime or the other and leave this world without knowing the purpose of life. The sanctity of human life is that man must recognise the blessed and hallowed task for which he has taken birth. The life span of an individual is an important factor. Therefore, time should be used properly. Man is relying very much on his physical and mental strength. Therefore, instead of relying too much on his physical and mental strength, man must use his allotted time wisely.

Unfortunately, man is not making the slightest attempt to fall back on Divine strength.

Death is inevitable. Either the wife loses the husband, or the husband suffers the grief of separation from his wife. There is no escape from other sorrows too. To bear these with fortitude, one must acquire True Knowledge. To attain this True Knowledge, chant the Name – Hari Govinda.

Numerous are the calamities man has thus to bear. Many may say – Why all this *Vedānta*? Let us go through life somehow.

However, when calamities and difficulties assail them, they suffer uncontrollable grief. Therefore, it is good to realise that life is a mixture of joy and grief. Man has no choice and cannot have one without the other.

And so, Bhagawan Baba says:

కష్ట సుఖములు రెందును కలసియుందు వీని విడదీయ ఎవ్వరి వశము కాదు సుఖము ప్రత్యేకముగ నెందు చూడబోము కష్టము ఫరించెనేని సుఖం బటంద్రు

Kaṣṭa Sukhamulu Rendunu Kalasiyundu Vīni Vidadīya Evvari Vaśamu kādu Sukhamu Pratyekamuga Nendu Chūdabomu Kaṣṭamu Phalincheneni Sukhambatandru Pain and pleasure together exist, No one can separate them apart, Pleasure cannot exist alone, Pleasure is verily the fruition of pain.

Sorrow cannot be eliminated outright. We must seek and achieve the strength of mind to bear it. To be able to do that one should obtain True Knowledge.

Life is considered as an interlude between the two events called – Birth and Death. But the scriptures always insist and exhort – Human birth is a bridge to Eternity. Herein lies the significance.

The river of life flows incessantly unto Him. Hence, perennially does Bhagawan Baba assert –

పదవ నీటియందు నిలచి ఉందుట మేలు నీరు పదవయందు నిలువ కీదు జగములోన జనులు నిలచి ఉందుట మేలు జగము జనులయందు నిలువ కీదు

Paḍava Nīṭiyandu Nilachi Unḍuṭa Melu Nīru Paḍavayandu Niluva Kīṭu Jagamulona Janulu Nilachi Unḍuṭa Melu Jagamu Janulayandu Niluva Kīḍu

It behoves well for boat to be in the water
It behoves ill for water to be in the boat
It behoves well for the people to be in the world
It behoves ill for the world to be in the people

Allow the boat to be in the water, Don't allow the water to get into the boat. Likewise, Allow the Man to be in the world, But, World should not get into the man.

It is immaterial as to what form and by what name do devotees offer devotion to worship God. Theological differences do not affect the process. The devotee's heart will be moved by the form as well as the manner of devotion to which he has been accustomed. It is important that the heart should melt. That will bear fruit.

Purity of heart is supremely important. If the heart does not melt, any amount of devotional practice for any amount of time will be futile.

The difference between Shiva and Vishnu are only in the name.

In the excessive exuberance of their devotion, devotees sing of Vishnu as subordinate to Shiva...and a similar excess makes others sing of Shiva as subordinate to Vishnu. It only reflects the fervour of the aspirant's devotion. It affects neither Shiva nor Vishnu. The traditional names are various ways of calling the same God. There is absolutely no need for any confusion here.

Be aware. Worship a picture as God...but not God as a mere picture.

### Verse 7

#### Peace...Truth...Ananda

యోగియైన మరి భోగియైన సంసారియైనను సన్యాసియైనను స్వాంతము సత్యము ననుభవించితే ఆనందమె యానందము నందును హరి గోవిందా...

Yogiyaina Mari Bhogiyaina Samsāriyainanu Sanyāsiyainanu Svāntamu Satyamu Nanubhavinchite Ānandame Yānandamu Nandunu Hari Govindā...

Whether one is a *yogi* or *bhogi*,
Whether one is a wordly man or renunciate,
If he experiences communion with Divine,
He harvests Supreme Bliss.
Hari Govinda...

Whether one is a *yogi* – given to simple living, Whether one is a *bhogi* – given to luxurious way of living,

Whether one has renounced everything and is a sanyāsi,

Or is still in the family way of living and enjoying attachment,

Peace and Truth are the only thing to give him 'Ananda'.

His peace is his happiness supreme.
While practising *Yoga* or enjoying something else,
Whether in company or in solitude,
If one's mind finds delight in communion with the
Supreme Reality (*Brahman*),
Such a one is indeed truly happy.
Consequently, 'Samatvam' (equal mindedness) is
very important.

Pleasure is a state of mind. The satisfaction that one derives from sense enjoyment is of one kind, however, the bliss that one gets by being in union with God is absolutely different. It is a joy that knows no qualification or diminution.

Mind at rest is the temple of God. So long there is desire, passion and attachment, these turbidities and turbulences drag one away from the state of equal-mindedness. The mind can turn to God and be fixed on Him, even if one is engaged in worldly concerns, is not immersed in meditation or has not taken to sanyāsa (renunciation). Great men have experienced such bliss. That is why God is spoken of as an enormous hill that gives endless bliss.

To a man of self-realisation, after his experience of the highest, there is nothing more needed. He can remain practising self-control if he needs it. This may be through *Yoga* - union, or appearing to live in seeming indulgence at sense level. Let him be in the world, serving the world without the world getting into him, ...without getting stuck at the banks of pleasure and pain, for his ultimate goal is to reach the Ocean of Immortal Bliss. Therefore, it is essential that one does not trifle with one's life or fritter it away but live it the right way.

The right way is the effortless simplicity of life devoid of all artificiality and pretentiousness. There must be a delicate blend of contrasting shades of intense activity and utmost tranquillity, attachment and detachment, tradition and progressiveness, humility and courage, and most importantly — a mother's heart and a child's nature.

Qualities like purity, modesty, compassion, serenity, forbearance, etc., are to be present. The bottom-line for all activity is to be the touch of spirituality. Uninterrupted communion with God makes one's life simple, natural and beautiful."

So chant the Name of God... Hari Govinda!

There are three types of sādhana – spiritual practice to develop an unwavering mind.

- Mīna Sādhana (like the Fish)
- Mṛga Sādhana (like an Animal)
- 3. Kūrma Sādhana (like the Tortoise)

'Mīna Sādhana' can be explained by recalling that a fish can survive only in water. The moment it is taken out of water it perishes. Similarly, Mīna Sādhana is one that can be done only in solitude. If you sit in public, the sādhana will not be successful. Being unable to concentrate when in the company of people, and being able to get concentration only in solitude is called 'Mīna Sādhana'.

Mṛga Sādhana is that in which one can get concentration on earth only. One cannot go elsewhere, say into water, and do this type of sādhana.

However, the tortoise can live equally in water or on land. Thus, 'Kūrma Sādhana' means one is able to concentrate like a tortoise. Such a one can concentrate irrespective of any situation.

Today there is no equal-mindedness among youth; what you develop is related to the society around you. In this age of youth, it is certainly possible for you to develop intense concentration. While the body and mind are strong, you must concentrate and rein in your organs. Otherwise, you will always have a wavering mind which you will not be able to control when you grow older. A wavering mind means a colossal waste of a life. Consequently, 'Samatvam' (equal-mindedness) is very important.

మంచికి పొంగుట చెద్దకు కృంగుట పశుత్వము

Manchiki Ponguṭa Cheddaku Kṛnguṭa - Paśutvamu

Something good happens,
you get excited and celebrate,
Something adverse occurs,
you get into depression.

Such an attitude is an animal attitude. So work for equal-mindedness through *Yoga* - Union of Thought, Word and Deed. For this reason, whether one is a *yogi* or a *bhogi*, whether one is in society or in solitude, if such a one knows and understands the nature of God, he will change and transform into becoming One with the Divine.

This is the substance of this verse.

Be Aware.

Detach yourself and Attach to Him.

<sup>\*3</sup> adapted from the works of Sri KR Paramahamsa from his book 'Living In Spirit'.

#### Verse 8

#### Gīta...Ganga...Worship Of Hari...

కించిత్ భగవద్దీతా పఠనము కొంచెము గంగా తీర్థము పానము హరి పూజన మొకపరి కావించిన అతనిని యముదేమని తర్మించును హరి గోవిందా...

Kinchit Bhagavad-gīta Paṭhanamu Konchemu Gangā Tīrthamu Pānamu Hari Pūjana Mokapari Kāvinchina Atanini Yamuḍemani Tarkinchunu Hari Govindā...

A little study of or the recitation of a
very small portion of the *Bhagavad-gīta*,
Drinking sacred water of Ganges
even in a tiny quantity,
Performing a casual worship of Hari (Krishna)
even once,

Can make one so sacred that even Yama the God of death,

Will have nothing to ask of such a person.

Oh! Man, these will save you from debate with death.

Be Aware. Hari Govinda... The Master says you will be liberated if you worship Hari Govinda with devotion every now and then. In this poem, the Master has blended devotion (భక్తి), wisdom (జ్ఞానం) and austerities (కర్మ).

Three Divine exercises for spiritual unfoldment are being indicated:

- a) Study of Bhagavad-gīta
- b) Sipping holy Ganga water
- c) The Worship of Murari (Krishna)

The above are fundamentals that are essential for life, thus in a way that is the goal of life. The study of the Bhagavad-gīta is an intellectual discipline by which we can understand the secret essence of life, the goal of life and the various methods by which this goal can be attained. River Ganga is known as 'Ākāśa Ganga', flowing truly high above the human intellectual approach. It was brought down to man's level of experience by the great King Bhagiratha, and today it is emerging out from the pure intellect of Lord Shiva. Thus the Ganga stands for 'Spiritual Knowledge'.

So too, the *Gīta* is like Ganga water. It is enough even if a small portion of it is studied. Is it necessary to drink the entire water of Ganga? Is it possible to do so? No. Consequently, let us pay heed to what Bhagawan asserts - Think of *Hari Govinda* at some moment or the other; that is sufficient. One need not then live in fear of death.

It is known that Ganga water remains unspoilt for any length of time. It contains the elements that give us health and strength. It is wholly sacred because it comes from 'Viṣṇu Pādam' (the Lotus Feet of Sri Vishnu) and even if one drop is taken in, it will bestow immense benefit. Not only this, the Ganga flows in all the three worlds with three distinct names and three different qualities.

In heaven, it gushes with the name Mandakini, while on Earth it streams forth as Bhagirathi, and in Pātāļa or the netherworld, it flows as Bhogavathi. The three attributes (guṇas) of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas are all contained in the sacred Ganga. In the same manner, in the three possible divisions of time – Past, Present, Future, River Ganga is flowing. These are the extraordinary qualities of the sacred Ganga.

The Vedāntic meaning must be like this. He who recognises Oneness in all and derives peace from such knowledge should be considered to be living in Heaven or 'Svarga'. On the other hand, the person who makes distinction between insects, birds, animals on one hand and human beings on the other, considering humans to be superior and distinctive entities, will certainly be in 'Martya Loka' or the Earth Planet (world of mortals), where the human race exists. Finally, those humans who forget their real nature and become 'Mṛga Maniṣi' (animal man) exhibiting qualities like selfishness, greed, arrogance, ignorance, totally ignoring or disregarding the Śāstras (scriptures) and the Vedas will be living in 'Pātāļa Loka', the netherworld or lower realm.

Life is a mixture of all three *Gunas – Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. When a man is happy and is in good circumstances, his ideas too will be of the *Sattva* type. On the other hand, when something goes wrong, he is immediately excited, and the *Rajo-guna* shows up. When he has eaten heavily, he will surely go to sleep, and the *Tamo-guna* appears. In this way, all the three *Gunas* co-exist in the same body, and a combination of them comes up according to the circumstances. In the same manner, Heaven, Earth and *Pātāļa* also show up in each man according to his state of mind.

Coming to the *Viṣnu-tattvam*, the all-pervading principle –  $\bar{A}tma$  or Vishnu, one can understand the same better by citing the example of performing Vishnu  $P\bar{u}ja$  or the worship of Hari. The one, who performs a  $P\bar{u}ja$  of Hari even once, cannot be punished by the God of death – Yama.

Hari has no particular form but is an All-Pervading Principle. For instance, if we consider rice flour, it will not have any taste on its own. However, by adding sugar, one can consume any amount, and it will be tasty. Similarly, when Vishnu (Hari) *Tattva* is added even to a lifeless thing, that object radiates a wondrous feeling of Omnipresence. This realisation that the world consists of various things, but there is only one essential common element *Visnutattvam* in all of these, will certainly enable one to develop love for all.

This will then be known as the state of 'Atmic Oneness' – of Visnu-tattvam.

Be Aware.

Grace of God can change a foolish person into a Learned Scholar.

#### Verse 9

#### Nature Of Life... Water Drops On Lotus Leaf...

తామరాకు పై తళ తళ లాదే నీటి బొట్టు వలె నిలకడ లేనిది బ్రతుకభిమానపు తెగులు పుట్టరా దిగులు దుఃఖముల తెర రా లోకము హరి గోవిందా...

Tāmarāku Pai Taļa Taļa Lāḍe Nīti Boṭṭu Vale Nilakaḍa Lenidi Bratukabhimānapu Tegulu Puṭṭarā Digulu Duḥkhamula Tera Rā Lokamu Hari Govindā...

Life is like a droplet of water on a lotus leaf,
The droplet of water of this leaf is always unsteady,
Life is the product of heaps of attachment,
Troubles, sorrows and worries constitute the world
scene.

Hari Govinda...

The water drop on the lotus leaf trembles, So too...is life precarious and unstable, Know it to be in the grip of disease and anxiety, And smitten by sorrow. In the above poem or śloka, the nature of life is being analysed. One should ask oneself two very pertinent questions –

- a) What is life?
- b) How is it to be lived?

It is said – We part only to meet again and vice versa! Every being is a means to an end and there is no end in existence. Demise of life is confusion worst confounded. Death comes and goes, and life continues. What then is human life?

It is our station in life that most powerfully influences our idea of life. Our aspirations and ambitions, past experiences and present circumstances, successes and failures, shape our understanding of our life. If we open ourselves to good, noble and healthy forces of life, we are blessed with positive qualities of the head and heart. On the contrary, if we are open to narrow, unhealthy and unethical influences, we will be subject to a degenerate life.

Life can also be visualised from the angle of being and becoming.

'Being' is a state of 'Is-ness'...of what one really is, while 'Becoming' on the other hand is a 'state of change'. It is our response to happenings and circumstances. Outward circumstances may change our way of life, but the state of inner being remains unaffected. Life very often swings between these two poles.

The lotus leaf floats on water. A drop of water rests on it credulously, feeling quite safe as it dances on the lotus leaf. The joys derived through senses are as unstable as such a water droplet. Man's mind skips here and there, similar to the water drop that dances on the lotus leaf. Unceasing

desires is its nature. Understand that the very Jagat...the world (Ja- comes; Gat – goes) is consumed by disease and conceit and is riddled with pangs. Life is as uncertain as a minute particle of water trembling at the tip of a lotus petal. During this stage of existence, it is engulfed by disease, ailments and vainglorious conceits presented by a hundred different voiceless pangs!

At first, in the initial part of this verse, Bhagawan is painting the mortality of individual existence. In the second half, life itself is sketching the pain-ridden nature of the world. Life is so uncertain, and the world, in one sense, is nothing but sorrow. There is no time to waste on anything. Death does not announce its arrival. Therefore, one should strive right now...in the present moment. Now and here is the urgency in the context of this particular *śloka*.

Bhagawan Buddha used to say -

Life is...

Sarvam Duḥkham Duḥkham Sarvam Kṣaṇikam Kṣaṇikam Sarvam Śūṇyam Śūṇyam...

All is Misery, All is Momentary, All is Empty... whatever we seek to obtain.

Just as a lotus flower is born in water, stays in water, lives in water and ultimately withers in water, so also, this human life is born in the 'Ātma-tattvam', stays and lives in the 'Ātma-tattvam', and finally merges in 'Ātma-tattvam'.

This particular verse conveys that the 'Ātma-tattvam' is the pond or the lake, that 'Māya' is the bunch of leaves, and that the 'Jīva' comes out as the lotus flower in this pond of 'Ātma-tattvam'.

This lotus spreads the fragrance of many good qualities. While spreading such fragrance, even the water in the pond becomes one with  $\bar{A}tma$ -tattvam. The drops of water that come out of the pond of  $\bar{A}tma$  come to the leaves of the lotus and go back to the  $\bar{A}tma$ .

This going back to the source is what is contained as the essence in this verse.

In the Infinity of the Ātma, the Jīva comes as a lotus, because Māya appears to spread as leaves. The Jīva which is like the lotus exudes the fragrance of good qualities which can be ascribed to the 'jīvātma'.

Viṣṇu-tattvam is synonymous with the realisation of Omnipresence. Out of the navel of Lord Vishnu comes the Lotus, which gives rise to the Creator – Lord Brahma. The various petals that constitute this Lotus are the different components of this world. Thus, from this Vishnu aspect or the aspect of Omnipresence arises the Creator – Lord Brahma, and from Lord Brahma comes the Jīva-tattvam. This is the threefold description of what we see – Jīva, Īśvara and Prakṛti.

Our feeling that the threefold description of the Universe is equivalent to a diversity therein...is an illusion.

The Oneness of it all is the basis of Advaita.

In the case of every man the 'sankalpa' that creates him is like a seed. So long as the sankalpa of desires is in man, it is not possible for him to escape being born. The day he becomes completely free from his sankalpa of desire, that day he will be free from rebirth.

Be Aware.

Detachment gives peace even amidst troubles.



# **Verse 10** *Ātma* And *Māya*

శ్రతువు మిత్రుదు పుత్రుదు బంధువు అనుచు ఉపేక్షాపేక్షలు మానుము అన్నిటిలోను ఆత్మనె చూదుము భేదమనే అజ్ఞానము వీదుము హరి గోవిందా...

Satruvu Mitrudu Putrudu Bandhuvu Anuchu Upekṣāpekṣalu Mānumu Anniṭilonu Ātmane Chūdumu Bhedamane Ajñānamu Vīdumu Hari Govindā...

Don't think in terms of friend or foe, son or relative, Don't harbour attachment or hatred, See Ātma in every one and every thing, Leave the ignorance of differentiation.

Hari Govinda...

To think that some are your enemies,
To think that some are your friends,
To think that some are your children,
To think that some are your relatives...
...and to develop Rāga (attachment)...
...and Dveṣa (hatred), towards them is not right.

See the One *Ātma* in all and give up the ignorance and illusion (*Māya*).

Friendship and enmity only perpetuate the impediment of attachment; from attachments flow grief and delusion. One must attain freedom by gradually reducing and getting rid of attachments. Therefore, in our dealings with everyone and everything around us, we should develop an equal minded attitude (Samatvam) and try and see Divinity everywhere. One should develop impartiality and cultivate it steadily. This type of expansion is called — Viṣṇu-tattvam. Vishnu is the all-pervading principle.

When the entire universe has emerged from one 'Womb of Reality', who is the 'other'...whom I can afford to hate? Nor is there one whom I love particularly. All are the manifestation of one Reality. One may ask, "Can one become free from hatred and love alike? Can this be achieved in worldly life?"

Whatever may be the condition of the emotional mind, can one forget or ignore anger and go forward? If it is truly difficult to forget or ignore, then it is no use pretending to be calm externally when anger burns inside. One should burn anger before anger burns them.

The remedy to forget and remain calm lies in reminding ourselves that 'Hari Govinda' is residing within us.

The way to control and overcome anger and aversion is to keep asking and reminding ourselves -

How many times have I been guilty of the innumerable lapses?

How many of the evil thoughts that lodge in my heart... have I concealed from the gaze of others? Others too are like me. Their lapses too...like mine...are the sport of God. What avails my anger or my grief? To weed one thing out from the mind, it must be filled with something else. It is for this reason that we are instructed to lift our hearts to *Hari Govinda*! Countless are the defects and sins... to expiate them and make myself good...the only way is to cry out to Govinda. Am I to waste my precious time thinking of the vices of others?

One needs to purify one's heart – this is the immediate need. This will be possible only when we take refuge in *Hari Govinda*. Keeping this in view, Bhagawan Baba, instructs "After having done your duty, whenever you finish your work, keep some time to look up to *Hari Govinda* within."

This is the purpose of life.

From the standpoint of great *Atma*, all that you are, including your body, in the ultimate analysis belongs to the universe, which is composed of five basic elements. The entire temporal world is spun out of your ego. Appearances are concoctions of the mind. Our final goal is to ascend from humanity to Divinity.....

So, we must utilise this transitory period of our lives to achieve our cherished objectives.

The body has life only so long as the 'Jñāna Svarūpa' resides in it. The Vedānta says that the body is the temple in which God in the form of the Jīva is residing. The term 'sthira' and 'chara' must be well understood. That which keeps changing is 'chara', and that which is stationary is 'sthira'. Body is 'chara' and the Indweller is 'sthira'. Man is a blend of body and Ātma...'Kṣetra' and 'Kṣetrajña'. It could be regarded also as Prakṛti and Paramātma - Nature and God.

It is like a seed consisting of two halves – reality and illusion or 'sthira' and 'chara'... the non-moving and moving principle. If the 'Kṣetrajña', the one living in the 'Kṣetra', is not there...the question of the body existing does not arise at all. The word 'Kṣetrajña' has got the additional letter 'Jña'. This word 'Jñāna' is wisdom or knowledge. 'Kṣetra' is contained in 'Kṣetrajña'. Without 'Jñāna Svarūpa', the Embodiment of Wisdom, there can be no 'Kṣetra'. The body has light and life so long as 'Jñāna Svarūpa' resides in it.

The *Vedānta* tells us that our body is the temple in which God in the form of the *Jīva* is residing. Nature is always moving but *Paramātma* is the Eternal Principal.

We keep changing all the while but the Source within has no change.

"The body is like a boat to cross the ocean of life. Hence, it should be used appropriately to understand our Source, which is also our Goal...that is - Brahman."

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

What we see and perceive are only five elements that keep transforming in the form of the body, and all of us are simply experiencing the body-mind complex. Thus, what is there to like...? What is it one dislikes? The need for pursuing sacred ideals is based on the awareness that the body is made up of five elements and is therefore sure to die. The one *Ātma* which resides in the body is permanent and will not die. 'That' is referred to as God. If it is so, ask these questions – Who are your friends, who are your brothers, who are your relatives, who are your enemies and who is your son?

ఎవతె భార్య ఇంకెవదో బిద్దదు ఎంత చిత్రమో ఈ సంసారము

Evate Bhārya Inkevado Biddadu? Enta Chitramo I Samsāramu?

Who is the wife? Who is the son? What a play is this samsāra...?

'That' is referred to as God. If it is so, ask these questions -

Who is the wife? Who is the son? What a play is this samsāra...?

తల్లిదండ్రులేవరు తనయులు మరి ఎవరు మిత్రులేవరు ఇలను శ్రతులేవరు ధనము లెవ్వరివి ధాన్యము లెవ్వరివి గృహము లెవ్వరివి గేస్తులేవరు మనమెవరమో పూర్వం ఎచటుంటిమో తిరిగి ఎచటుందుమో ఏమీ తెలియలేము

Tallidanḍrulevaru Tanayulu Mari Evaru Mitrulevaru Ilanu Śatrulevaru Dhanamu Levvarivi Dhānyamu Levvarivi Gṛham Levvarivi Gestulevaru Manamevaramo Pūrvam Echaṭunṭimo Tirigi Echaṭundumo Emi Teliyalemu

Who are parents, who are sons? Who are friends, who are foes? Whose wealth is this, whose produce is this? Whose houses are these, who are owners?
Who are we, where were we earlier?
Again where will we be...?
Nothing is known.
Hari Govinda...

Be Aware. Detachment gives peace even amidst troubles.

## Verse 11

#### Wealth Is Not Welfare

"Wealth must always be regarded as potentially harmful. One cannot derive permanent happiness from it. This is the axiomatic truth. The wealthy person may

sometimes even be afraid of his own son. This happens in the world constantly. "

-Baba

ధనమే కీదనుకొనరా నిత్యము లేదు దాన సుఖలేశము సత్యము కొడుకు కైన భయపడురా ధనికుడు నదిచే దిదియే యెల్లెదల నెప్పుడు హరి గోవిందా...

Dhaname Kīḍanukonarā Nityamu Ledu Dāna Sukhaleśamu Satyamu Koḍuku Kaina Bhayapaḍurā Dhanikuḍu Naḍiche Didiye Elleḍala Neppuḍu Hari Govindā...

Wealth makes for your undoing,
Reflect on this always,
Verily do I say there is not the slightest happiness...
...at the end of the pursuit of wealth?
The wealthy come to fear even their sons,

This is what has happened everywhere again and again.

Hari Govinda ...

One may derive happiness from anything, but not from the amassing of wealth. There is absolutely no objection for earning to make one's living. What the Master says is that one should not be greedy. The Teacher, Bhagawan Baba, advises the seekers of the higher life to reflect constantly.

Wealth is calamitous (artham anartham). Money, no doubt, has value, but it is only in as much as it can procure things for us. But, to give exaggerated importance to money as such amounts to thoughtlessness, which will go on to breed lovelessness, hatred and a thousand subhuman impulses in the 'money mad' people. As wealth increases, the desire to amass more of it will also increase. It breeds pain and misery; it gives no lasting satisfaction. Further, one gets anxious about its safety. Acquiring wealth and care for its safety grows together. It is not that one needs to guard it only from thieves and cheats; even one's own son becomes an enemy and a source of fear for the miserable man who has amassed wealth.

It is strange...this money psychology:

This money psychology is strange. When you have not any, you will pant, puff, pursue and rush to get some; when you get some, then you become jealous of others who have more, and feel conceited as compared to those who have less!

In the above poem, the 'son' is spoken of as an example. However, close relatives and others too become a cause of fear. Natural love is disrupted. This happens in every place.

It is said:

Deyam Dīna Janāya Vittam

If You have wealth, give it to the poor and earn happiness thereby.

It is only by giving it to the poor that one derives joy.

The Master says, "Do not increase your grief and anxiety by storing and hugging your money and increasing your miserliness."

Wealth is not welfare - Artham Anartham.

Therefore, always keep in mind the sane idea that money or wealth is only a means to an end and not an end in itself. It is not the source of happiness in itself. There is a limit to the extent of money that each man needs. If that limit is exceeded, the result will be the oppressive weight of excessive money as well as anxiety on that score.

Therefore, always keep in mind the sane idea that money or wealth is only a means to an end and not an end in itself. It is not the source of happiness in itself. There is a limit to the extent of money that each man needs. If that limit is exceeded, the result will be the oppressive weight of excessive money and anxiety on that score. What we seek is happiness itself. Yet, forgetting this, we believe that the bundle of currency notes itself is happiness and thereby become its slave.

Wealth is not merely paper money...bits of paper on which something has been printed. No, it is not even that. It is only an account of what someone holds in the bank and benefits from. You look at the paper where this is recorded and feel satisfied about it. These days we will call it 'digital money'; no paper currency.

There is nothing wrong with making money on a dhārmic, legitimate basis. One should not be deluded into thinking that one can secure everything with money. One should be careful not to ruin the life, a priceless gift from God. One should do one's duty without undue and foolish attachment. Do not become a miser... is the advice, guidance and wise counsel.

The miser does not really hold the money; the money holds him.

There are three words which are noteworthy. All the three words begin with the letter 'W'. They are – Work, Worship and Wisdom.

Work here stands for sacred work which one should undertake for promoting the prosperity of the country. One should always do good work. So too, one should worship with a pure mind. Wisdom is superior knowledge, and one should aspire to acquire knowledge with wisdom. These are the three things that will enable one to lead a prosperous life.

There are three other words...and all of them too... begin with the letter 'W'. However, one must avoid these.

They are – Wealth, Woman, Wine. They will, if one is after them, drag one to barbarous depths of human living. So one needs to be careful. Subsequently, this deepens our understanding of why Sri Ramakrishna used to teach his sutras based on the principle of 'Kanchan' (gold) and 'Kāmini' (woman) and how he would insist on keeping away from such.

Be Aware. Seek Work, Worship And Wisdom. Avoid Wealth, Wine And Woman.

#### Verse 12

### Freedom From The Endless Cycle Of Samsāra

"To be born again and again, to die again and again, to be dormant in the womb of mother every birth...is an endless cycle of samsāra. Oh! God, kindly quickly get me out of this cycle."

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

మళ్ళీ పుట్టుట మళ్ళీ గిట్టుట అమ్మ కదుపులో అణగి యుందుట అంతులేని సంసారము దయతో దాటించుము నను దబ్బున దేవా హరి గోవిందా...

Maḷḷī Puṭṭuṭa Maḷḷī Giṭṭuṭa Amma Kaḍupulo Aṇagi Yunḍuṭa Antuleni Samsāramu Dayato Dāṭinchumu Nanu Dabbuna Devā Hari Govindā...

To be born again and again,
To die again and again,
To lie in the mother's womb again and again,
Is the endless cycle of worldly life...
Pray, carry me across this ocean of birth and death.
Hari Govinda...

To be caught in the cycle of transmigration repeatedly, getting back in the Mother's womb over and over again...it is hard to cross over this ocean of recurrent life and death. Save me from it, Oh! Merciful Lord!

In this creation, there is a constant process of Jīva coming and going. In fact, the name Jagat is split into two; 'Ja' means coming, whereas 'Gat' implies going. The wheel of birth and death is never at rest for the Jīva. The individualised ego prompted by desires, entertained by the imagination of the individual soul and cultivated by habits is responsible for our arrival.

During one's life span, innumerable experiences are gained but never completely fulfilled. There is a constant need to seek ever-fresh experiences. In each lifetime, instead of exhausting the existing 'vāsanas' or accumulated desires, each time one gathers for himself or herself a new set of 'vāsanas'. We all come here into the world for a purgation, for expulsion, for purification of residual negative tendencies, but then, due to our ignorance of the way and the goal, the 'extrovertedness' in us compels us to get ourselves attached to the objects which have a beauty and charm created solely by the imaginations of our mind. This is called 'Māya' at work.

Bhagawan Baba once pointed out:

మాయలోనే పుట్టి మాయలోనే పెరిగి మాయ నెరుగ లేరు మందమతులు బ్రతుకుట మాయ పుట్టుట మాయ సంసారమ్ము మాయ చావు మాయ భవబంధములు మాయ మాయను ఎరుగరే మాయ బ్రతుకటంచు మాయలో పదనేల Māyalone Puṭṭi Māyalone Perigi Māya Neruga Leru Mandamatulu Bratukuṭa Māya Puṭṭuṭa Māya Samsārambu Māya Chāvu Māya Bhavabhandamulu Māya Māyanu Erugare Māya Bratukatanchu Māyalo Paḍanela...

We come into the world with our own backlog of 'vāsanas' pushed into a crisscross 'vāsana circle' that reflects the extensive world of objects and beings. The aim of man should be to live up to Sahaja Vāsanas (normal tendencies), and exhaust them through actions without ego and egocentric desires (aham-mama), so that no new vāsanas precipitate in our individual frame of life. This is the only way which is to be considered vital in our journey. Our actions should be in an attitude of dedication, with an idea to love all and serve all. Consequently, when the existing vāsanas are reduced, the thought disturbances calm down, and thus, when the 'sūksma deham' (mind and intellect) dies a mystic death...that is to say, when it is transcended, then the experience is of the Infinite Spirit. Accordingly, the individual vāsanas are reduced, and any disturbances in the thought processes are subdued and quietened. Therefore, when there is no subtle body to claim a new embodiment to function in any fresh environment, the causes for all repeated births (punar-janma) totally ceases.

Birth is painful. Death, of course, is excruciatingly so too. Then, once again to come into the womb of the mother, to be crushed, twisted, imprisoned and persecuted by physical and mental upheavals, along with jerks in the womb of the mother is indeed a terrible and cruel experience for the soul. And yet, as we are today, we are seemingly helpless.

The momentum gathered by this great fall from perfection is too powerful to be halted by ourselves. The ego born out of 'me' has now become a mighty power ruling over us relentlessly, and in front of this usurper of our bosom, of our peace, we become, but a slave of passion.

To free ourselves from this great inner tyrant, we need to turn to a mighty friend within – Hari Govinda!

To surrender to that *Hari Govinda* and to sincerely invoke His Grace...is to create and ignite within us...all that which is Divine and Godly.

Some say that man's mind alone is responsible for his bondage or vice versa - his liberation. This is not the complete truth. Both body and mind are responsible for our bondage and liberation. Without the body, one cannot recognise the nature of one's mind. The mind and intelligence become evident only while accompanying the body. Therefore, we should use such a sacred body for the useful purpose of seeing the Truth. A human being is the most sacred of all living beings.

Such a sacred human life remains in a miserable state in the womb of the mother. Man gets some relief from such a state after his birth. Consequently, he must make his life a sacred one.

Everything is held together by power of God. God is present everywhere. We are only a means through which God is seeing everything in the world. Being full of God in the world outside, then, what we see is only God. The body is a water bubble, the mind – a mad monkey. There is only one Eternal Principle – the *Ātma*!

పుట్టినప్పుడు వీడ్చినారు చచ్చినప్పుడు వీడ్చినారు మధ్య మధ్య విషయాలకు ఎందుకెందుకో వీడ్చినారు ధర్మ గ్లాని సంభవింప ఉద్ధరింప ఏడ్పినారా సత్యస్వరూపునికై ఏడ్పినారా! లేక ఏద్పుకోస మేడ్చినారా

– శ్రీ సత్యసాయిబాబా

Puṭṭinappuḍu Edchināru
Chachchinappuḍu Edchināru
Madhya Madhya Viṣayālaku Endukenduko Edchināru
Dharmaglāni Sambhavimpa Uddharimpa Edchinārā
Satyasvarūpunikai Edchinārā!
Leka Eḍpukosamedchinārā

When you are born – you cry,
When someone close to you dies – you cry,
In between birth and death you cry ever so many
times...

...for want of this and that,
When the practice of *Dharma* declined
did you cry for its sustenance?
Or did you at least cry for God (*Satya-svarūpa*)?
Maybe you cried for the sake of crying...
- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

It is much better for one to live as a swan for a few minutes than to live a wasteful life like a crow. Prahlada has said that we should use our hands to do sacred tasks. We should utter the Name of God all the time. If we cannot reflect value-based living in our life, our entry into the world is a waste. As a result, such a birth is only to ruin the health of our physical mother. Since we have been in our mother's womb for so long and given her so much trouble and pain, we should do things that would give her happiness after we come out of her womb. 'That' is a good life.

We all have come into this world to do work that would not bring us back to life again.

Be Aware.

'Present' is the most sacred of all times.



# Verse 13

#### The 'Who Am I?' Quest

కామము క్రోధము లోభము మోహము విడువుము నేనెవ్వద నని యనుకో తము తామెరుగని దద్దమ్మలకగు నరకములోపల నానా బాధలు హరి గోవిందా...

Kāmamu Krodhamu Lobhamu Mohamu Viduvumu Nenevvada Nani Yanuko Tamu Tāmerugani Daddhammalakagu Narakamulopala Nānā Bādhalu Hari Govindā...

Free yourself from lust, anger, greed and delusion,
Meditate on who you are,
Ask of yourself, "Who am I?"
The fools who fail to understand the Self,
Are caught even here in the fire of hell and
suffer torture.

Hari Govinda...

"Give up negative qualities such as lust, anger, greed and attachments.

Ask yourself - Who are you?

If you are so foolish as not to know who you are, you will have endless troubles in hell. "

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

When desire wells up in man's heart, he thinks that he can be happy if that desire is satisfied. Therefore, man exerts himself to the utmost for that purpose. But, there is no end to the steps on the ladder of desire. It is akin to going up on a treadmill – as we ascend the steps, the wheels go down and a new step appears before us. There is no end to the steps, and our labour, too, is equally unending. Till we die, we keep on getting up. Perhaps it appears as though we can rest if we go up one step; however, it is not possible to be satisfied with this thought. A fresh desire comes up.

This is the way of desires. Therefore, 'leaving desires, anger, and delusion', the seeker must strive with enthusiastic alertness to feel the inspirational experience of the Transcendental Reality. All our knowledge of the outer world is 'objective'. A hindrance appears just when a desire is sought to be satisfied.

This gives rise to anger. From anger arises hatred. The more one feels hurt, the greater is the anger. The disease of the body disappears after it has caused some damage. This is the nature of physical illness. But anger is of a different nature. It causes affliction continuously, without end, and itself grows in the process. It does not abate.

Desires are of various kinds. They are always in ascending order. Feed one, and it grows to demand the next. They are insatiable, always wanting more. There is a limit to the power of the senses which crave for pleasure. Even if the senses become powerless yet, the desires continue to haunt. This is the surprising truth! Thus, desire is spoken of as a monster.

In Sanskrit the desire for wealth is called -lobha. The mental agitation which craves sensual indulgence is called  $-k\bar{a}ma$ . Anger is the parent of all sins. It makes a man commit inconceivable atrocities. It destroys his reason and reduces him to an animal -Mrga.

The moment an unrighteous desire springs in the mind, it must be eschewed at once, and the mind must be diverted to a greater purpose. Good thoughts will effectively bar the entry of evil thoughts into the mind.

This is the secret of the nature of the mind. Though the mind travels all over, yet, there is no room for two thoughts in the same moment. If a good thought lodges in the mind and engages it completely, the other will automatically get pushed out. Taking this secret of the nature of the mind as a cue, one should try to get rid of evil thoughts and desires. If we yield to desires even in the slightest measure – we are lost.

Once a thought obtains a place in the mind, it very soon and quite easily takes the shape of an action. Even if it remains dormant as a thought, that impure thought itself is a sinful thing. It will fuel the pure heart, going on to defile and spoil it. It will be mirch, make foul and tarnish the temple of God within and pollute it.

This particular verse speaks of the fundamental negative words of life: kāma, krodha, lobha, Moha. Of these, Moha is the wrong value that we give to things, not knowing what is good, what is evil, what is desirable and what is repulsive. This is akin to a child or an inexperienced man or woman buying things in the market, being wholly taken in and attracted by the outward charm and appearances of the objects. 'Moha' leads to the profitless pursuit of things while being unaware and clueless as to their real nature and lack of value.

'Desire' is nothing but the combination of various forms of evil, of *kāma*, *krodha*, *lobha* and *Moha*. Desire refers to the pleasures of sense satisfaction. What is being condemned are desires contrary to *dharma*. One need not get rid of desires that are not opposed to *dharma*. The desire and the zest that we feel to do our duties while living in this world is not *kāma*. These types of desires are not condemned. Those desires that are in tune with *dharma* are not denounced. Such desires are a part of God. It is the soul force in our inner being.

#### The Gītāchārya said:

If you see in men, energy devoid of wrong desires and evil impulses, know that, that energy is 'I Myself'. If you perceive in the minds of men, desires not opposed to dharma know that I Am that energy.

All good desires not opposed to *dharma* should be looked upon as a part of God Himself. There is one thing more to be noted here; this too has been emphasised in the *Bhagavad-gīta*. If the mind is turned to the right path, even if sometimes it is not effective in the intended manner, that effort will do good on the whole.

Bhagawan wants us to get rid of all our faults. If we do not succeed, it is enough that we make an effort, and to that extent, we shall benefit. We may be deceived by an evil thought, but the effort to counter one such thought will shield us from ten evils. Like exercise of the body, this mental exercise strengthens the mind. This is the great secret of nature.

#### Thus, Swami pronounces:

The only way is to make an effort. Ask yourself the question – Who am I? Contemplate upon it. If this enquiry engages the mind constantly, there is less room for desire

and anger. If we continuously remind ourselves of the true nature of the 'ātman', we will acquire the strength to bear the troubles of life with fortitude and then anger will vanish and sorrow will decrease.

On the contrary, if desires, greed and anger are allowed to grow, life itself will become unbearable. Grief and sorrow will increase. You have to reject what you are 'not' and assert what your real nature is, and thereby awaken to realise the Oneness in all.

You are not the body, You are not the mind, You are *Ātma*.

Swami speaks of Atma that is the Indweller and says:

ఇంటిలోని జ్యోతి ఎంతయో వెలుగగా పరుల ఇంటి కగ్గి కరుగనేల తానె దైవంబై దైవంబు మరచుట తనను తాను మరచినట్లు కాదె

Ințiloni Jyoti Entayo Velugagā Parula Inți Kaggi Karuganela Tăne Daivambai Daivambu Marachuța Tananu Tānu Marachinațlu Kāde

When the lamp in your home
burns bright and brilliant,
Why do you go to houses of others for light?
When you are verily God your self,
if you ignore the Divinity in you,
Is it not ignoring yourself?

Ignoring and overlooking the radiance within, being attracted and distracted by outer enchantments, thereby succumbing to the quagmire of mundane cravings, man is forgetting his own Divinity.

Be Aware.

True Education Results In Humility And Equal Mindedness.

#### Verse 14

#### **Breath And The Control Of Senses**

ప్రాణాయామము ప్రత్యాహారము నిత్యానిత్య వివేక విచారము మంత్రము తోడ సమాధి విధానము జాగ్రత్తగ నిశ్చలముగ చేయుము హరి గోవిందా...

Prāṇāyāmamu Pratyāhāramu Nityānitya Viveka Vichāramu Mantramu Toḍa Samādhi Vidhānamu Jāgrattaga Niśchalamuga Cheyumu Hari Govindā...

Prāṇāyāma and Pratyāhāra,
Discrimination of the Eternal and Ephemeral,
Attainment of Samādhi state,
Perform the above with care and steadfastness,
Hari Govinda...

Prāṇāyāma — Practice by which one holds prāṇa
or breath,

Pratyāhāra — The way to control the mind through
the organs,

Contemplating on what is eternal and
what is transient...
...and thereby discriminating between the two,

Chanting mantras to attain equanimity to work out the process of samādhi, One needs to be steadfast in their practice without any break.

Organised regular breathing and 'Indriya Nigraha' (sense control), discriminating between what is transient and real (eternal) is required. With Japa (chanting) and meditation (dhyāna), drawing the conscious into the unconscious state of samādhi is - equal minded state of intellect in oneself. 'Sama' plus 'Dhi' is Brahman in equanimity...'Sama' means equanimous, whereas 'Dhi' means buddhi or intellect. One must exercise supreme care and be steadfastly and firmly rooted into the performance of these practices.

Pratyāhāra means holding back — controlling desires and keeping the senses under check, similar to horses being restrained by drawing in the reins and pulling at the bridle. The primary concern of a devotee is to see that the senses do not ply unrestrained. Devotion alone will give one the power to check the senses. A man may be ever so intelligent, but if that intelligence does not help him guard or keep a watch over his senses, it will not assist him in acquiring jñāna — knowledge. Enlightenment will come only if we offer adoration with faith unto God and implore Him to grant us the strength to control our senses.

We need to embark on a journey which imbues, absorbs and radiates the elements of inner exercise – Antaranga Sādhana.

These are indicated by Bhagawan as:

- a) Control of all life activity in the body
- b) Sense withdrawal
- c) Discrimination

- d) Japa
- e) Reaching a state of equanimity Samādhi

If the senses are controlled, that victory itself gives a rare joy. It is for just such a resolve that the teachers have prescribed several means. The above-mentioned activities are means to this end. Even if our efforts do not give us immediate success, we should endeavour without giving way to despair.

We are not the body, We are not the mind, Don't follow the body, Don't follow the mind, Follow the Conscience.

- Sri Sathya Sai Baba

In truth, we are the inner person. The external form is certainly care worthy, but it is the mind that is the seat of all our thoughts and activities. Thus, it must be guarded very carefully.

The various disciplines at the mental, intellectual and physical levels are to be undertaken with artistic poise, refined wisdom, and aesthetic and poetic finesse. There is no question of forcing the mind, crushing the instincts or vehemently dousing the passions.

Force will only create suppressions, deformities and abominable ugliness of personality. There cannot be any hurry in the natural unfoldment of one's personality. Hurry is unknown to all creative expressions in nature outside.

The examples are vivid:

Sun Rising, Moon Setting, Buds Blossoming, Arrival of the Fruits, Seed Germination, the Foetus in the Womb, the Bird Chick in the Egg - all take their own time to grow

and emerge out. Therefore, if we hurry the process, it will only prove right the phrase – Haste is Waste.

On the path of Truth, this warning is so beautifully given here, when Swami advises so lovingly – Please perform with care...with great care indeed.

Listening to spiritual discourses, recapitulating and digesting those discourses, moving in good company, and so on are the many different ways of serving the body. These may be called the outer practices. As against these, there are only two, which may be called the inner practices.

One is Prāṇāyāma and the other is Pratyāhāra.

Through our study here, we are trying to understand these terms properly. *Prāṇāyāma* is the *sādhana* or practice by which one holds the *prāṇa* or the breath. The significance of *Prāṇāyāma* may be clearly understood when we recognise the fact that there are five different vital airs, namely – *Prāṇa*, *Apāna*, *Vyāna*, *Udāna* and *Samāna*. The process by which these five airs are controlled is called *Prāṇāyāma*, and this gives us a glimpse of Inner Vision.

Prāṇāyāma is of three different kinds -

Rechaka (exhaling), Pūraka (inhaling) and Kumbhaka (holding of breath). Rechaka and Pūraka relate to the method by which one can get control over the various vital airs and take them in. To be able to hold them in during the process is described as Kumbhaka.

Be Aware.

Turn your mind inwards to the  $\bar{A}tma$ .

#### **™Verse 15**

# Intensely Attached... Supremely Detached...

పాడుము గీతలు నామ సహాస్థము భగవంతుని రూపము భావింపుము సలుపు మెపుడు సజ్జన సాంగత్యము దీన జనులకై దానము చేయుము హరి గోవిందా...

Pāḍumu Gītalu Nāma Sahasramu Bhagavantuni Rūpamu Bhāvimpumu Salupu Mepudu Sajjana Sāngatyamu Dīna Janulakai Dānamu Cheyumu Hari Govindā...

Sing the *Gīta*,

Worship God through thousand names,
Meditate on God's form,

Keep good company – *Satsang*,

Serve the poor. *Hari Govinda*...

Chant the *Gīta*, and the thousand Names of the Lord, continuously meditate on Sri Lakshmi's Consort, Turn the mind to the company of the good, Share your wealth with the needy.

The sign of true devotion is ceaseless thought of God. There is nothing new in this. It is most vital and necessary to include four 'musts' in our daily life.

- a) Study of scriptures (Gīta)
- b) Worship of God
- c) Good Company
- d) Serving the needy

Bhagavad-gīta is the summary of the Upaniṣadic Truth with special reference to their practical application in man's everyday life. To study such a magnificent literature is to bring about a reorientation in our intellectual outlook on life, and so too in our attitude to the world of happiness.

Be in physical or mental company of the good, If you have wealth spend it in a fruitful way, Make it fruitful by bestowing it on the needy, The greatest joy one can find is while helping the poor.

త్యజ దుర్జన సంసర్గం భజ సాధు సమాగమం కురు పుణ్య మహో రాత్రం స్మర నిత్య మనిత్యతాం

Tyaja Durjana Samsargam Bhaja Sādhu Samāgamam Kuru Puṇya Mahorātram Smara Nityamanityatām

Give up company of the bad, Seek company of the good, Perform, day and night, deeds meritorious,

#### Contemplate incesstantly on what is Eternal and Ephemeral

The manner in which we spend our time in perfect blend with the above lines constitutes the very purpose of life, says Bhagawan Baba.

'Study and recite Gīta, Sing the thousand Names of God...'

What is the meaning of this verse and its counsel? What is the object of this twofold instruction?

Learning only to become a scholar is of no use. To be qualified to sing the sacred Names of God, there must be devotion in the heart. Even if there is an iota of devotion, it will increase in the course of time. One must read only scriptural books amplified with deep devotion. Mere reading without devotion will be of no avail. On the other hand, if we read with devotion, we will not be tainted by the pride of scholarship. Furthermore, our hearts will overflow with humility, love and true joy.

A brief recital of the lessons which the Gīta teaches will bring out the full meaning of 'Hari Govindam' (Bhaja Govindam).

The Lord explains the delusion of the body in the first part of the *Gīta*. As the soul and the body are intertwined, the real significance of 'I' is not clear to us. Happiness lies in Union with God. The pleasures which the senses give end quickly. More often than not, it leads to grief. Such pleasures cause cravings which are insatiable. One should attain the status of equal mindedness or equanimity, and that alone is true joy.

Death does not mean the end of the soul. The body is but a garment to man. Even as it is cast off when it becomes worn out and another garment is put on, so too, the soul gets into another body when one (body) is discarded.

The next principle to know is that - no human being can live without work. Do every work as a form of worship to God. That is true renunciation as explained in the *Gīta* by Sri Krishna.

It is said:

'They are free...who are free of desires.'

To renounce is to give up attachment. Therefore, one should not seek to give up the activity that is appointed as one's duty. Every act is a fulfilment of duty. It should be carried out in absolute selflessness, beyond any selfishness. That is the highest *Sanyāsa* (renunciation). This is the message of the *Gīta*.

Desire is the worry of man. The mind, which is the capital fort, must be fortified and safeguarded against the enemy's entry. If that fort is properly defended, then all will be well. This is the cordial and cardinal teaching of Sri Krishna to Arjuna.

The next is attachment. 'Intensely attached, but, supremely detached. So should it be.'

Let attachments be our one attachment to God. That attachment will help us free ourselves from other attachments.

He who has no attachments is God.

If His Grace is sought with a heart which brims and melts with devotion, all power will be at hand. To save oneself, one should cling to the Holy Lotus Feet of God, the Lord. Be Aware.

God is known by a thousand different names.

The thousand different names belong to that One Supreme Sovereign.

#### Verse 16

# Faith...Guru...Devotion... Purified Heart...God...

సర్గురు చరణాబ్జము పై భక్తే త్వరగా ముక్తికి చేర్చే మార్గము ఇంద్రియ మానస సాంద్ర నియమమే హృదయస్థుని చూపించును దేవుని హరి గోవిందా...

Sadguru Charaṇābjamu Pai Bhakte Tvaragā Muktiki Cherche Mārgamu Indriya Mānasa Sāndra Niyamame Hṛdayasthuni Chūpinchunu Devuni Hari Govindā...

Devotion to the Lotus Feet of the Lord...
...surely is the speedy path to liberation,
Restaint of the mind the senses...
shows the Supreme Lord seated in the heart.
Hari Govinda...

Vision of God can be obtained through...

unwavering devotion to the Feet of the Guru,
By relieving oneself of the shackles of family,
By controlling the mind,
And,
Through 'Indriya Nigraha' (sense control).

Trust and surrender yourself wholly at the Lotus Feet of the Teacher. Freed from the shackles of samsāra (worldly existence), with your senses and mind controlled in this manner, you will see God residing in your heart.

The Body is the temple of God. The elders taught us wisely through examples and their writings. Now, Bhagawan explains the value of 'Faith' thus:

Faith is to believe what you do not see, And,

The reward of this Faith is to see what you believe.

Faith in *Guru* makes us cross the world of *samsāra*, says the Master.

Sometimes, it may not be possible for everyone to receive instructions from a living Guru in person. The practice of being directly instructed by a Guru has almost ceased. Yet, whatsoever be the manner one gets enlightenment, it comes only from the Guru.\*1

A book may serve as a Guru. Even a sight of a temple tower may be the occasion for the dawn of the spirit, and the tower itself then becomes the Guru. The form of an elephant etched on a rock or a carved figure of Hanuman or perhaps any form or even a symbol may help bring about the beginning of true knowledge. Thus, anything may serve as a Guru. If we strive earnestly with devotion to it, surely we will obtain liberation.\*1

When our devotion enters into a lifeless object, it acquires enormous power. When we sing a *Bhajan* with *bhāva*, *Rāga* and *tāļa*, we will realise this vibration of power. We have not yet realised the secret of lifeless things.

God is 'Hṛdayavāsi'...which means God resides in the heart of each individual, of each and every being. Therefore,

it follows quite naturally that one should find Him only in the heart, and that heart is a purified heart.

Swami used to chant a beautiful śloka:

ఇంటిలోని జ్యోతి ఎంతయో వెలుగగా పరుల ఇంటి కగ్గి కరుగనేల తానె దైవంబై దైవంబు మరచుట తనను తాను మరచినట్లు కాదె

Ințiloni Jyoti Entayo Velugagă Parula Inți Kaggi Karuganela Tăne Daivambai Daivambu Marachuța Tananu Tănu Marachinațlu Kāde

When the lamp in your home
burns bright and brilliant,
Why do you go to houses of others for light?
When you are verily God yourself,
if you ignore the Divinity in you,
Is it not ignoring yourself?

When there is a luminous bright light in oneself, Man is trying to look for a matchbox outside, He looks for this in his neighbour's place. Being God yourself, forgetting 'that' aspect, Does this not amount to forgetting yourself...?

The last verse of 'Bhaja Govindam' reveals the essence of these lyrical sequences. After composing it, Adi Shankaracharya left Varanasi (Benaras). It is emphatically emphasised in this verse that you must have unwavering faith in the Guru. However, in this context we must try to understand what type of Guru Sri Shankara had in mind.

One who lights up Ātma-jyoti in us by teaching us what is right and good, helping us practise the sacred principles

contained in the *śāstras* (holy scriptures), brimming our minds with tranquillity, can be regarded as a proper *Guru*.

The word 'Gu' relates to darkness or ignorance whereas 'Ru' stands for removal of this dark ignorance. This means that the darkness of ignorance can be dispelled by the light of wisdom. Such is the function of the Guru.

'Gu' also denotes one, who is beyond all attributes, and 'Ru' signifies – Rūpavarjita...one who has no form. One who has neither any attributes nor any form is God. Accordingly, it naturally follows that Guru is God.

In the present world scenario it is possible for the Gurus to teach the right path and right ideas, but it is not possible for them to lead one from darkness to light or from ignorance to knowledge. This can only be accomplished by God.

The present-day teachers are of two types. First, there are those who claim to be exponents of *Vedānta*, but then, being pragmatic is their main purpose. They conform to the whims of their disciples and in doing so, they succeed in divesting them of their possessions. Such *Gurus* are an unbearable burden upon the surface of the earth. These types of *Gurus* establish another meaning for the word – *Guru*, which unfolds to mean weight, burden, load, and encumbrance.

The second type of *Gurus* are those who expound the sacred texts and convince the disciples to believe that the *Guru* himself is Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara, and *Parabrahma*. This is how such teachers enhance their own stature in the eyes of their unsuspecting disciples. There is a lot of difference between a Teacher and a *Guru*. A teacher transmits what was learnt in return for a reward, whereas a *Guru*, through his grace, enters the disciple's heart, expands

and broadens it, thereby enabling him to comprehend the fundamental aspects of Divinity and Oneness.

Such a being arriving at an appropriate time is similar to Sage Sukha appearing before Parikshit.

Be Aware.

God Alone Is your True Guru.

<sup>\*1</sup> adapted from the work of Swami Chinmayananda, Bhaja Govindam, by Central Chinmaya Mission Trust.

# A Conclusion... That Illuminates... And Signifies A Beginning...

Hari Govinda... A Bridge between the Sea and the Shore...

Beware and Be Aware, The Sea is Everlasting Consciousness, Whereas the shore is material existence, Caress the boundless or remain deluded in distress, Beware and Be Aware. Evince foresight, prudence, caution and care, Introspect, inspect, Just who you would like to choose... ...as your Guru, Beware and Be Aware. Chant Hari Govinda, Awaken to a most fascinating reservoir, Innumerable many may draw your attention, Strangers, Acquaintances, family and friends, How would you know their intention? Beware and Be Aware, Attractions distract... And,

Distractions attract.

Beware and Be Aware.

Sing Hari Govinda,

The goal, aim and purpose of life restore,

Senses incessantly tempt,

As well as draw you into a whirlwind of involvement,

Charmingly displaying an intricate play of many a game,

The intriguing enticement of women, wealth,

name and fame,

Know the world to be ephemeral and transient,

Leave no chamber for repent or lament,

Youth is the time to invest,

Posthaste desires and cravings arrest,

Vital life issues consciously address,

Verify, fortify, magnify spiritual progress,

Lest,

Time passes you by,

Honour...do not dishonour the human life with which...

...you have been so blessed,

Conquer the senses and there will be no sorrow,

Why leave regrets and rue for tomorrow,

Beware and Be Aware,

Intone Hari Govinda,

Explore the inner core,

Seek the company of good,

Imbibe and brim the wisdom of the scriptures,

The quest will then divinise its own answers,

Worship and seek the grace of God,

Detach from all and attach to the Lord -

The One Supreme Sovereign,

Differences are only in form and name,

Delve into the radiance within,

That is where He has always been,

Turn the mind to ātma,

Express equanimity,

Merge in Oneness with the Paramātma,

Chant Hari Govinda,

Pay immense heed to the words of the Avatār,

As the All-Pervading Consciousness,

And so too...as Hṛdayavāsa,

He remains forever within and around...

...enveloping and encircling...

Within reach never far,

Chant Hari Govinda,

Be Aware of the Oneness...

...in all that you touch, feel or see,

The Samatvam of all beings in Sṛṣṭi,

Revive the inner rapport and harmony,

So says He,

This is the only sure way out of this dark tunnel...

...known as the Age of Kali,

Know your truth,

Be and become that grain of sand upon the shore...

...that melts into the Sea of Reality,

Transcend the ocean of life, death and rebirth,

Sing, chant, revel and rejoice in this

Name of highest worth,

Imbue the purity of Ganga,

Offer worship and earnestly adore,

Get immersed in the most fascinating Cosmic Reservoir,

Hari Govinda, Hari Govinda...Hari Govinda,

Merge in this Gloriously Luminescent Celestial All Mighty River,

Let your heart, mind and soul reverberate with Hari Govinda,

Hari Govinda, Hari Govinda...

Arise, Awake, Manifest your divinity, Through *Hari Govinda, Hari Govinda, Hari Govinda,* So says Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba!



Starting from 1972, Bhagawan-Sri Sathya Sai Baba held a series of Summer Courses in Indian culture and spirituality, covering spiritual, moral, ethical and theological topics, for college students from all over India, in May at the Brindavan campus in Whitefield, Bengaluru. Eminent scholars used to address the students on various topics in these Summer Course sessions. Every evening, Bhagawan would give His Divine discourse to the blessed assembly.

In the summer of 1973, Bhagawan chose to enlighten the students on the spiritual gem of Adi Shankara, "Bhaja Govindam", which contains the essence of all Vedic teachings in thirty-one verses. In the opening discourse, Bhagawan exhorted the participating students to listen to the teachings and practise them in their life through Abhyasa Yoga and become torch-bearers of Indian culture. During the Summer Course, Bhagawan lucidly explained the quintessence of this great work of Adi Shakara in 16 beautiful Telugu verses of "Hari Govinda" that act as the mantra for crossing the ocean of samsara in the present Kali Age.

In this unique commentary titled Bhagawan and Hari Govindam Sri N.S. Venkateshvaran uses his vast experience and thoughts arising from deep inquiry in explaining the 16 verses, while retaining the original Telugu verses with transliteration and meaning. The author is an eminent spiritual speaker and a longstanding devotee, who enjoyed the good fortune of being in the immediate Divine presence of Bhagawan, receiving His blessings.





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