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Swamiji is a scholar par excellence in vedic scriptures as well as in the puranic texts. His deep knowledge and lucid exposition of Srimad Bhagavatam, Bhagavad Gita and Ashtavakra Gita have made him a popular guide to spiritual aspirants. His simplicity, transparent deep faith in the divine force and absolute surrender to the Supreme have made him an ideal combination of Jnana, Bhakti and Vairagya.

Swamiji's prodigious learning and deep devotion to the tenets of Indian philosophy and culture have reflected themselves in all his works, which are practical guides for inner personal experience and to raise oneself to a higher level of being. His emphasis has always been on 'Practice, practice, practice'.

Srimad Bhagavatam is a unique text among all the epics and puranas of our spiritual heredity. Its uniqueness lies in the fact that the highest divine power whom one may also call as God or Brahman or Krishna has entered deliberately into every word of the 18,000 verses in Srimad Bhagavatam, in His full explicit manifestation.

This book is a collection of selected hymns of amazingly beautiful prayers, which are not only highly inspiring but are packed with dispassion (Vairagya), Bhakti (devotion) and Jnana (knowledge). Revered Swamiji has provided translation of all these hymns in his characteristically simple style for the guidance and benefit of the readers.

A Treasure Trove of prayers from Srimad Bhagavatam



Swami Shantananda Puri

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Dedicated
at the Lotus feet of
Lord Krishna
the Indweller and Controller of all



H.H. Srimad Swami Purushottamanandaji Maharaj



Sri Swami Shantananda Puri

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Introduction

Srimad Bhagavatam is a unique text among all the epics and puranas of our spiritual heredity. Its uniqueness lies in the fact that the highest divine power whom one may also call as God or Brahman or Krishna has entered deliberately into every word of the 18,000 verses in Srimad Bhagavatam, in His full explicit manifestation.

“सैषा हि वाङ्मयी शक्तिः प्रत्यक्षं वर्तते हरेः॥”

“तिरोधाय प्रविष्टोऽयं साक्षात् भागवतार्णवे।”

(From भागवत माहात्म्य)

In Srimad Bhagavatam, a number of hymns of amazingly beautiful prayers occur, which are not only highly inspiring but are packed with dispassion (Vairagya), Bhakti (devotion) and Jnana (knowledge). The highest principles of Advaita (non-dual) philosophy are contained in the hymns of the Elephant king (Gajendra) in the eighth Skandha of Bhagavata. Similarly Kunti's prayers are excellent for the intense devotion and the intimate Love for

the Lord they demonstrate. When Kunti in her last boon begs Krishna that he should tear asunder her attachment to her sons and to all the relatives on her parents' side, as it is impossible for her to get rid of them by any means, it is a superb situation.

The last item viz., the hymn of the Vedas is again an example of excellence on philosophy combined with its practical application. When Prahlada refuses to accept the invitation of Lord Narasimha to go to Vaikuntha unless this privilege is extended to all his colleague demon children, it is the acme of the magnanimity of a devotee who loves equally the entire world.

Thus one will find that each of the group of hymns has its own uniqueness and speciality which one will find highly alluring. I wish that all the readers find some guidance for their spiritual practice from all these hymns and benefit immensely.

-Swami Shantananda

CHAPTER 1

Kunti's Prayers

Kunti, the mother of the Pandavas prayed to Sri Krishna, on the eve of his departure to Dwaraka. It is an oft-quoted and a popular prayer. On this alone a full book has been written by H.H.Sri Prabhupada, the founder of ISKON. Some of the more important verses from the prayers are given below:-

Krishna, you are not an ordinary human being like us. You are the controller of the entire world and are beyond the primordial nature responsible for the creation of the world. You are all-pervasive and are both inside and outside of all beings. You are inside as you are the material cause of all beings. You are outside of them as the entire world is part of your cosmic dream¹. Still, none can see you as you are covered with the curtain of Maya, which is your own illusory power. It is just like an ignorant spectator who is unable to recognize the actual person who is acting a role in a drama².

My dearest Lord, how many times you have rescued me from great calamities in the past? You saved us when my son Bhimasena was poisoned, again when the enemy set fire to the wax palace at night, where myself along with my sons were blissfully sleeping unaware of the danger, again when Draupadi, my daughter-in-law was being disrobed in the public by the Kauravas and also from the dangers in the forest where we were banished to. On such numerous occasions you appeared from nowhere to protect us.

So my Lord, bless me that I shall be beset with calamities continuously so that I will be enabled to see you rushing to protect us from such calamity. Your vision is capable of giving us liberation so that we shall no more have to undergo the suffering of re-birth³.

You are capable of being seen only by those who own nothing i.e. who have no sense of possession. Hence it is that people who are puffed up with pride of being born in elite families, power, high learning, wealth etc. are unfit for even chanting your holy names⁴. There is a story to explain how to remain without a sense of possession.

The great sage Yajnavalkya used to hold a satsang meeting every day in his hermitage got built by King Janaka. King Janaka invariably attended the satsang and Yajnavalkya used to await his arrival and never

started the satsang till Janaka arrived. Other sages in the audience used to mumble “This great sage who is supposed to be liberated is also a sycophant of the king as he is heavily obliged to the king’s bounties”.

One day while the satsang was going on, some palace guards silently entered, whispered in the king’s ears and went away. After the entire meeting was over, Yajnavalkya asked the king “What is the matter? The palace guards looked visibly shaken and agitated”. The king replied softly, “The palace and especially my harem where my wives and children reside is on fire. I told the guards to inform the fire brigade.” Yajnavalkya exclaimed: - “My Lord! How could you remain quiet and calm, and attend the meeting for an hour while your own family is in grave danger?” King Janaka replied – “No doubt, I possess nothing. Nothing is mine. But from the realistic view point, my entire wealth (Which is only God, the Infinite) is inexhaustible. When the entire capital (Milthila) is burnt away nothing of mine is destroyed.”⁵

Oh my Lord, those who listen to your sportive actions (when you incarnate as Rama, Krishna etc.), who sing about them, who dance and offer prayers of praises and who remember you at all times, very soon they see and attain your lotus feet where the entire cycle of birth and death ceases once for all, leading to the ultimate bliss. These Sadhanas which form part of

the Bhakti (devotional) path are the easiest to perform.

So long as one has the least attachment to his sons, daughters, relatives, wife/husband etc. it will not be possible to have exclusive devotion to the Lord. It is not easy by any means to leave off all attachments unless we get the grace of the Lord.

Hence, the last boon asked by Kunti is “Oh Lord of the world; the only impediment to my Sadhana is my firm attachment to my sons and all the relations belonging to my race. Please extend your grace and destroy this attachment. Let my mind continuously flow towards you alone like the river Ganga flowing towards the ocean, eschewing all attraction to worldly objects.”⁶

Kunti's Prayers

1. नमस्ये पुरुषं त्वाऽद्यमीश्वरं प्रकृतेः परम्।
अलक्ष्यं सर्वभूतानामन्तर्बहिरवस्थितम्॥ (1-8-18)
2. मायाजवनिकाच्छन्नमज्ञाधोक्षजमव्ययम्।
न लक्ष्यसे मूढदृशा नटो नाट्यधरो यथा॥ (1-8-19)
3. विपदः सन्तु नः शश्वत्तत्र तत्र जगद्गुरो।
भवतो दर्शनं यत्स्यात् अपुनर्भव दर्शनम्॥ (1-8-25)
4. जन्मैश्वर्यश्रुत श्रीभिरेधमानमदः पुमान्।
नैवार्हत्यभिधातुं वै त्वामकिञ्चनगोचरम्॥ (1-8-26)
5. अनन्तं बत मे वित्तं यस्य मे नास्ति किञ्चन।
मिथिलायां प्रदीप्तायां न मे किञ्चित् प्रणश्यति॥
6. अथ विश्वेश विश्वात्मन् विश्वमूर्ते स्वकेषु मे।
स्नेहपाशमिमं छिन्धि दृढं पाण्डुषु वृष्णिषु॥ (1-8-41)

CHAPTER 2

Bheeshma's Prayer

Bheeshma, the invincible had promised that either he would kill Arjuna the next day or he would withdraw from the battle for ever. The battle was very fierce and he showered arrows continuously on Arjuna so that the latter was bleeding profusely. Krishna, the charioteer had earlier taken a vow that in that battle he would never touch any weapon. But he got so angry that he jumped down from the chariot, raised in his hand his Sudarsana chakra and rushed to kill Bheeshma. This was only a drama. He wanted that Bheeshma's vow should be fulfilled as the latter was a great devotee even though he might have to break his own vow. When Bheeshma was lying on a bed of arrows, in the pretext of taking Yudishtira for the former's guidance and advice, Krishna came before Bheeshma at his death bed. Bheeshma prays to the Lord: - "Oh my dear Lord, my mind has been freed from all desires and is now solely concentrated on you. I offer this pure mind to you. You are in reality

the only Truth, the Supreme Being. Just as a sportive entertainment, by your own power of Maya you have created this flow of universe and you have incarnated as a warrior in the Yadu clan. I do not seek even liberation. May I have unfailing and absolute love for you?"¹

Oh Krishna, when you stationed your chariot between the two opposing arrays of armies, by your very look you rendered the entire army of the enemy lifeless. May I have always intense devotion for you.

Oh Lord, on seeing the army of Duryodhana, where all his relatives were assembled to fight against him, Arjuna was afraid of the sin which would accrue by killing them and decided to run away from the battle. You then taught him the Atma Vidya, the knowledge of Atman, the ultimate Truth and thus dispelled the ignorance of Arjuna. Glory be to thee!

That memory haunts me when you, with your Sudarsana discus came rushing at me in order to kill me, with your upper garment falling down from the shoulder, with a view to keep up my vow in preference to your own pledge not to touch any arms². May I be always attached to that embodiment of compassion.

The Gopikas (Village belles of Brindavan) worshipped Lord Krishna with their smiles and Love-lorn looks. By completely surrendering themselves to

him and thus winning his exclusive love, they attained oneness with him. May my mind delight in that Lord³. Just as one sun appears as many in the reflections in the water kept in various pots, you are the one truth residing in the hearts of all beings creating an illusion of multiplicity. May the illusion of differentiation due to dualism be dispelled, may I become one with you!

Bheeshma's Prayer

1. इति मतिरूपकल्पिता वितृष्णा भगवति सात्वतपुङ्गवे विभूम्नि।
स्वसुखमुपगते क्वचिद् विहर्तुं प्रकृतिमुपेयुषि यद् भवप्रवाहः॥
(1-9-32)
2. स्वनिगममपहाय मत्प्रतिज्ञामृतमधिकर्तुमवप्लुतो रथस्थः।
घृतरथ चरणो भ्ययाच्चलद्गुर्हरिव हन्तुमिभं गतोत्तरीयः॥
(1-9-37)
3. ललित गति विलास वल्गु हास प्रणय
निरीक्षण कल्पितोरु मानाः।
कृतमनुकृतवत्य उन्मदान्धाः
प्रकृतिमगमन् किल यस्य गोपवध्वः॥
(1-9-40)

CHAPTER 3

(a) Suka's Hymn

One of the greatest of sages and an Ati-varnasrami like Bhagavan Ramana of recent days was Suka Deva. When the king Parikshit asked him the question as to what was the duty of a human being in general and especially the one who is at death's door (about to die) in particular, Suka was bowled over by such a beautiful question whose reply would benefit all posterity to come. He forgot to pray (as benediction) to the Lord before starting to reply. After three chapters of reply he began to sing a number of hymns to the Lord:-

Oh Lord! Salutations to thee who destroys the sins of the devotees and the wickedness of the wicked and bestows all blessings sought by the Paramahamsas who have renounced all for your sake.¹

Oh, Transcendental being! I bow to you, the Infinite. In order to carry out your leela (sport) of

creation, sustenance and dissolution of the world, you assume the three-fold power namely the power to desire, the power of knowledge and the power of action. You are the indweller of all beings and your ways cannot be seen by anybody.²

I bow again and again to thee whose fame bestows auspiciousness on all. Singing about you, your constant remembrance, a glimpse of you, prostrations to you, hearing your sports (leela) when you incarnate as a human being dispel all sins and defects of people instantaneously.³

People who do austerities, who do a lot of charity, who earn a lot of fame and work hard, those who know the Mantra sastra can never get success in reaching this goal unless they all fully surrender themselves to you. I prostrate to that Supreme Being of auspicious fame.

The wise men are able to understand the ultimate truth of Atman by Lord's grace only with an intellect purified by going into Samadhi and by continuous meditation and they express it in their own words as they have understood, in different ways. May that Lord be pleased towards me.

I bow to that Lord of sacred fame by worshipping whose feet all wise men easily overcome all attachments

in this world and hereafter (of the heaven) and reach the highest goal of being one with the Brahman, being rid of all the fatigue caused so far by severe practices (sadhanas).⁴

Oh Lord! You are the self recognised by those with self-control. You are the controller of all. You are all the scriptures; You are all the laws of righteousness. You are all austerities. Even gods like Brahma and Sankara who possess a pure mind cannot understand you.

(a) Suka's Hymn

1. यत्कीर्तनं यत्स्मरणं यदीक्षणं यद्वन्दनं यच्छ्रवणं यदर्हणम्।
लोकस्य सद्यो विधुनोति कल्मषं तस्मै सुभद्र श्रवसे नमो नमः॥
(2-4-15)
2. नमः परस्मै पुरुषाय भूयसे सदुद्भवस्थान निरोधलीलया।
गृहीत शक्ति त्रितयाय देहिनामन्तर्भवायानुपलक्ष्यवर्त्मने॥
(2-4-12)
3. भूयो नमः सद्बृजिनच्छिदेऽसतामसम्भवायाखिल सत्त्वमूर्तये।
पुंसां पुनः पारमहंस्य आश्रमे व्यवस्थितानामनुमृग्यदाशुषे॥
(2-4-13)
4. विचक्षणा यच्चरणोपसादनात् सङ्गं व्युदस्योभयतोऽन्तरात्मनः।
विन्दन्ति हि ब्रह्मगतिं गतक्लामास्तस्मै सुभद्रश्रवसे नमो नमः॥
(2-4-16)

(b) Kardama's hymn to Kapila

The devotees try to have a glimpse of you by resorting to solitary places by yoga and samadhi and by getting mature by practising for many births. Sometimes, out of your grace and compassion, you incarnate yourself in ordinary houses also in order to enhance the well being of your devotees. Your original nature is to be without any form. But you take various beautiful forms as desired by your devotees. ⁵

Lord, your feet are worshipped by learned people who seek to find out the ultimate truth and who are equipped with lordliness, dispassion, fame, knowledge, valour etc. in all their fullness. I seek refuge in you. ⁶

You are born as Kapila, but you are the transcendental supreme being. You are the regulator of all. You are the Primordial nature (Prakriti) and you are the supreme soul (Purusha). You are the inexorable time. You are the entire universe, all knowing, the protector of all and pervading the universe as their Self-awareness. ⁷

(b) Kardama's hymn to Kapila

5. बहुजन्मविपक्वेन सम्यग्योगसमाधिना।
द्रष्टुं यतन्ते यतयः शून्यागारेषु यत्पदम्॥ (3-24-28)
6. स एव भगवानद्य हेलनं नगणय्य नः।
गृहेषु जातो ग्राम्याणां यः स्वानां पक्षपोषणः॥ (3-24-29)
7. त्वां सूरिभिस्तत्त्व बुभुत्सयाद्धा सदाभिवादार्हणपाद पीठम्।
ऐश्वर्यं वैराग्यं यशोऽवबोधवीर्यश्रिया पूर्तमहं प्रपद्ये॥ (3-24-32)

CHAPTER 4

Dhruva's Hymn

Dhruva, the son of king Uttanapada, having felt humiliated by his co-mother (father's second wife), at the age of five went into the forest and did severe austerities. When Lord Narayana came before him, Dhruva became speechless. When the Lord touched his cheeks by his conch, Dhruva began to praise the Lord by the following hymns:-

Oh Lord, you are all powerful. By your¹ power you entered into me and awakened my dormant speech. What is surprising in it? It is you who activate the limbs like the feet, hands, ears etc. and even the very life-force (vital breath) in us. I bow to you, the omnipotent.

Even though you are only one, you created from your own infinite power called Maya the basic building blocks called gunas and entered into them.

You are manifesting yourself as the entire world with different objects with different characteristics just like the fire assuming different shapes and burning through different varieties of fuel².

You are the Kalpaka tree (the wish fulfilling tree) capable of granting to your devotees liberation from the cycle of birth and death. But alas, what a pity that people seek from you, only material benefits like having a son and comforts which one can enjoy even in an animal body. No doubt such people have been deluded by your Maya³.

The peace, relief and bliss one gets by meditating on your holy feet or by hearing stories of your disportation in your incarnations is something unique. One can't get such a bliss even by going into the Samadhi state by absorbing oneself in the super-consciousness, not to speak of those who go into the celestial worlds as a result of their merits for limited periods⁴.

Lord, grant me that I always live in the enlivening company of thy devotees from whom devotion is ever flowing like a river and also of such holy men whose mind is pure⁵. With pure mind and intense devotion we should get through our Sadhanas and if we are

unable to have it, seek the company of those who are having it in plenty. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa advised somebody that he should shed tears and weep for God. When the devotee expressed his inability to weep, Ramakrishna advised him to seek the company of those who weep for God.

By having such a company, all the troubles and the immense sufferings of the world will cease to trouble me and I can easily cross the ocean of the phenomenal world (samsara).

To become a monk and to worship the Lord one has to forcibly develop dispassion (vairagya) and leave off his wife, son etc. Those who seek the holy company of thy devotees, whose heart is attracted and intoxicated with the scent of the holy feet, they automatically forget their sons, friends, house, money and their wife. The vairagya comes effortlessly. I only revel in thy gross form which is visible where you have manifested as the birds, mountains, animals, plants, reptiles, gods, demons, human beings etc. I cannot see your supreme formlessness which is beyond description⁶.

You are the ever free, extremely pure and enlightened Atman, changeless and the Lord of all the three worlds. You are the indivisible Consciousness

who is the silent witness of all but illumines the individual Consciousness in every being.

As all powers emanate from you, it looks that all contradictory powers like the creative and destructive forces, the revealing and the hiding powers etc. co-exist. You are one but create the diverse universes and become infinite. You are subject to no changes. You are the Brahman, the Supreme Being who is all bliss. I seek refuge in you⁷.

Dhruva's Hymn

1. योन्तः प्रविश्य मम वाचमिमां प्रसुप्तां
संजीवयत्यखिलशक्तिधरः स्वधाम्ना।
अन्यांश्च हस्तचरणश्रवणत्वगादीन्
प्राणान्नमो भगवते पुरुषाय तुभ्यम्॥ (4-9-6)
2. एकस्त्वमेव भगवन्निदमात्मशक्त्या
मायाख्ययोरुगुणया महदाद्यशेषम्।
सृष्ट्वानुविश्य पुरुषस्तदसद्गुणेषु
नानेव दारुषु विभावसुवद् विभासि॥ (4-9-7)
3. नूनं विमुष्टमतयस्तव मायया ते
ये त्वां भवाप्ययविमोक्षणमन्यहेतोः।
अर्चन्ति कल्पकतरुं कुणपोपभोग्यमिच्छन्ति
यत् स्पर्शजं निरयेऽपि नृणाम्॥ (4-9-9)
4. भक्तिर्मुहुः प्रवहतां त्वयि मे प्रसङ्गो
भूयादनन्त महताममलाशयानाम्।
येनाञ्जसोल्बणमुरुव्यसनं भवाब्धिं
नेष्ये भवद्गुणकथामृत पान मत्तः॥ (4-9-11)

5. या निर्वृतिस्तनुभृतां तव पादपद्मध्यानाद्
 भवज्जनकथाश्रवणेन वा स्यात्।
 सा ब्रह्मणि स्वमहिमन्यपि नाथ मा भूत्किं
 त्वन्तकासि लुलितात् पततां विमानात् (4-9-10)
6. ते न स्मरन्त्यतितरां प्रियमीश मर्त्यं ये
 चान्वदः सुतसुहृद् गृह वित्त दाराः।
 ये त्वब्जनाभ भवदीयपदारविन्द
 सौगन्ध्यलुब्धहृदयेषु कृतप्रसङ्गाः (4-9-12)
7. यस्मिन् विरुद्धगतयो ह्यनिशं पतन्ति
 विद्यादयो विविधशक्तय आनुपूर्व्यात्।
 तद् ब्रह्म विश्वभवमेकमनन्तमाद्यम्
 आनन्दमात्रमविकारमहं प्रपद्ये। (4-9-16)

CHAPTERS 5

Vritrasura's Hymn

Indra, the king of Gods had killed his temporary Guru, Viswarupa by cutting off his multiple heads. Tvashta, the father of Viswarupa performed a sacrificial rite from which a demon called Vritrasura emerged, for the purpose of killing Indra. In the battle field, before his final battle with Indra, Vritrasura prays to his deity, Sankarshana. Vallabhacharya, the founder of Shuddha Advaita has considered these prayers as the essence of the entire Bhagavatam (from Bhakti point of view).

The Lord does not generally grant immense wealth or riches and comforts available either on the earth, in the heavens or the regions below, to his devotees whose mind is solely devoted to the Lord. It is so because these riches and other material benefits lead one to hatred, fear, anxiety, worry, pride, quarrels, grief and immense effort which cause a lot of suffering and tribulations.

There are four motivations in life – Dharma (virtuous acts), earning money, Enjoyment and liberation (Moksha). The one who wants to do Dharma may think of starting a school for the blind and acquire some land. Somebody gets a stay order from the court disputing the validity of the purchase, the case goes on for years and this meritorious act is blocked. Similarly, with great difficulty you go to Dubai to join a lucrative job and earn some good money but six months after going to Dubai you are dismissed from the job due to a bad recession. So your desire to earn a lot of money is not accomplished. Thus in respect of the first three motivations in life¹ called Trivarga all the efforts to progress get impeded. Obviously, these obstacles have been created by the Lord as there were no shortcomings or defects in the efforts put in.

This failure in all material fronts only denotes that the Lord's glance of grace has now begun to fall on these people. This grace of the Lord is visible only on those who have no sense of possession and hence own nothing. When once the wind of Lord's grace has begun to fall on us, what else do we need? Vritrasura was immediately aware that he was going to meet with defeat and death in the hands of Indra. He was not at all bothered by this as he had thorough faith in God's grace.

The next prayer indicates what a devotee should seek from God even though he may be demoniacal in nature and unfit to be His devotee even in the next birth. It is a beautiful prayer.

“Being born a demon in this birth, I may not be fit to be your devotee in my next births. So Lord, let me be born again as the servant of thy servants². This alone is not enough. While my body will be doing service to the devotees, let my mind be engaged in the constant remembrance of my Lord’s characteristics and my mouth be uttering prayers of your praise.” This is the attitude of a proper devotee.

Will I be satisfied if the Lord were to give instead plenty of power and riches? No; I do not want either² Indra’s position, nor Brahma loka, nor to be a suzerain king nor to rule over the Rasatala³ (a world below earth - full of riches). I do not want the mystic powers attained through yogic practices and not even the final liberation (cessation of the cycle of birth and death). I want nothing but you, my Lord.

Suppose the Lord asks how intense is your love for³ me. As the small birds in the nest whose wings have not sprouted await eagerly the return of their mother bird who is supposed to bring their food, I await your reunion with the same anxiety⁴.

When the cows have gone out for grazing, the hungry calves are waiting for their mothers to come back so that they can drink their milk. With what longing those calves will be waiting? My longing for you is similar.

The last example is that of a newly-wed wife whose husband has gone on a long official tour. The husband had indicated that he would be returning on next Monday. That day from morning onwards, whenever there was the sound of a taxi or auto rickshaw in the street, the wife would be running to the window to see whether it was her husband returning. Every second she would be looking forward to his coming. With the same longing my mind wants to see you, my dear Lord.

Lord, perhaps you may consider me unfit to be the servant of your devotees even. I may have to take birth again and again and be whirling in this never ending cycle of birth and death. Please grant me⁵ at least that I get the friendship of such holy people taking whose name endows us with a lot of auspiciousness. Now Vritrasura doubts whether he would be fit for this even. He asks for a negative boon. "If none of my earlier requests can be granted, please at least ensure that I

am not born amidst people whose mind is completely engaged about themselves, their sons, their wife, their house etc. due to the effect of your Maya.”

Vritrasura's Hymn

1. त्रैवर्गिकायास विघातमस्मत् प्रभुर्विधत्ते पुरुषस्य शक्र।
ततोऽनुमेयो भगवत्प्रसादो यो दुर्लभोऽकिञ्चनगोचरोऽन्यैः॥
(6-11-23)
2. अहं हरे तव पादैकमूलदासानुदासो भवितास्मि भूयः।
मनः स्मरेतासुपतेर्गुणांस्ते गृणीत वाक् कर्म करोतु कायः॥
(6-11-24)
3. न नाकपृष्ठं न च पारमेष्ठ्यं न सार्वभौमं न रसाधिपत्यम्।
न योगासिद्धीरपुनर्भवं वा समञ्जसत्वा विरहय्य कांक्षे॥
(6-11-25)
4. अजातपक्षा इव मातरं खगाः स्तन्यं यथा वत्सतराः क्षुधार्ताः।
प्रियं प्रियेव व्युषितं विषण्णा मनोऽरविन्दाक्ष दिदृक्षते त्वाम्॥
(6-11-26)
5. ममोत्तमश्लोकजनेषु सख्यं संसारचक्रे भ्रमतः स्वकर्मभिः।
त्वन्माययाऽत्मात्मजदारगेहेष्वासक्तचित्तस्य न नाथ भूयात्॥
(6-11-27)

CHAPTER 6

Chitraketu's Hymn

Vritrasura was born as King Chitraketu in his previous birth. He was disconsolate with grief after he lost his only son through poisoning by his other wives. Finally Sage Narada put him on the path by instructing him in meditation. After practising mediation for some days Chitraketu saw a vision of the Lord in his form of Adishesha and chanted a hymn of praise on him in this way :-

Oh ye the invincible Lord¹ Yes, you are the supreme but you are also conquered by your devotees who are of equal vision towards all and also who have conquered their own minds. Finally you conquer those devotees also whose minds are free from all desires by giving them your own self in their Unitary Consciousness which alone exists.

Ultimately it is only you², who by your own glory create the universe, sustain it and destroy it also.

The various gods like Brahma the creator, Vishnu the sustainer and Siva the destroyer etc. consider themselves as separately responsible for these cosmic actions and compete with each other.

Lord, who can guess how infinite you are. In each galaxy and cosmic system you are enveloped in seven sheaths of five basic elements (earth, air, water etc.) , the I- sense (Ahamkara) and the cosmic mind (Mahat), each succeeding sheath being ten times bigger than that of the earlier one and each such cosmic system is called Brahmananda. Amidst such numerous Brahmanandas, our world is whirling about like a small atom. This will give an idea of thy Infinite glory.

The people who go after the mean material³ desires are no better than animals. They worship the small deities instead of you the Supreme one and the benefits they get are as evanescent and temporary like that of those deities at the onset of the deluge. They are like the dependents of a king who fall from favour on the fall of the king.

If People with a lot of desires turn their minds towards you, the Lord, they will cease to have any more desires for worldly objects just as the seeds once fried never sprout again⁴.

You are one full of knowledge and no more subject to any of three Gunas (modes like Tamoguna). All the opposite pairs like heat, cold, joy and sorrow in this world come out of the net of Maya made out of these three Gunas. As you are beyond all these Gunas no desires can grow in you.

While you remain invincible, you easily conquer people by explaining the laws of the world (Dharma) through Srimad Bhagavatam⁵. The various sages who have no sense of possession and revel in their own Self, worship you for getting moksha by performing all the virtuous acts propounded in Bhagavatam.

The sages who follow the Bhagavatha Dharma have equal vision where the differentiation of you and I as also of yours and mine do not exist. Whenever such unequal vision exists, he is imperfect, impermanent and full of transgressions of dharma⁶.

You only have, Lord, expounded this Bhagavata Dharma and your vision extends equally towards all. Hence, those who follow you, see thy scintillating presence in all beings and hence this vision is equal towards all beings whether moving or unmoving, animals or plants. There is nothing impossible in this so that by your very vision your devotees get rid of all the sins. What is there¹ surprising in one by hearing whose names even once, people from the untouchable

community also are liberated from the continuous circle of birth and death⁷.

Oh Lord, you are the cosmic mind and hence all the actions and all the thoughts of the people are all revealed to you. There is nothing which we should reveal to you. It will be like the fire-flies trying to inform the sun about their own power of light. Prostrations to thee, my adorable Lord who is the master of all the creations, of sustaining them and their ultimate destruction. You are the Paramhansa who is beyond all distinctions and differentiations. The Yogis going on the wrong path of dualism will never be able to understand you.

Lord, only when you breathe, all the gods like Brahma breathe. In other words, you are the energy behind them all. Only when you function, the powers of the senses function. The entire earth, when it rests on your head looks as small as a mustard seed. I bow to you, Lord⁸.

Chitraketu's Hymn

1. अजित जितः सममतिभिः साधुभिर्भवान् जितात्मभिर्भवता।
विजितास्तेऽपि च भजतामकामात्मनां य आत्मदोऽतिकरुणः॥
(6-16-34)
2. तव विभवः खलु भगवन् जगदुदयस्थिति लयादीनि।
विश्वसृज स्तेऽशांशास्तत्र मृषा स्पर्धन्ते पृथगभिमत्या॥
(4-16-35)
3. विषयतृषो नरपशवो य उपासते विभूती न परं त्वाम्।
तेषामाशिष ईश तदनु विनश्यन्ति यथा राजकुलम्॥
(6-16-38)
4. कामधियस्त्वयि रचिता न परम रोहन्ति यथा करम्भबीजानि।
ज्ञानात्मन्यगुणमये गुणगणतोऽस्य द्वन्द्वजालानि॥ (6-16-39)
5. जितमजित तदा भवता यदाऽऽह भागवतं धर्ममनवद्यम्।
निष्किंचना ये मुनय आत्मारामा यमुपासतेऽपवर्गाय॥
(6-16-40)
6. विषममति र्यत्र नृणां त्वमहमिति मम तवेति च यदन्यत्र।
विषमधिया रचितो यः स ह्यविशुद्धः श्वयिष्णुरधर्म बहुलः॥
(6-16-41)
7. न हि भगवन्नघटितमिदं त्वद्दर्शना नृणामखिल पाप क्षयः।
यन्नाम सकृच्छ्रवणात् पुलकसकोऽपि विमुच्यते संसारात्॥
(6-16-44)
8. यं वै श्वसन्तमनु विश्वसृजः श्वसन्ति
यं चेकितानमनु चित्तय उच्चकन्ति।
भूमण्डलं सर्षपायति यस्य मूर्ध्नि
तस्मै नमो भगवतेऽस्तु सहस्रमूर्ध्ने॥ (6-16-48)

CHAPTER 7

Prahlada's Hymn

Prahlada, an ardent devotee of the Lord and the son of Hiranyakasipu, the demon king starts praising the Lord when the latter came before him as Narasimha (half lion and half man).

I feel that none of these factors like having huge wealth, coming from a famous race, beauty, austerity, learning, physical vigour, brilliance, power to influence, physical strength, aggressiveness and intelligence is absolutely of any use in getting the realization of the Supreme being. It is only intense devotion alone which can please the Supreme Lord who hurried to protect the Elephant, which possessed none of the qualifications mentioned above but had sheer devotion to the Lord¹.

Even a person of very low birth (say a dog eater) is thousand times greater than a man of very high birth (say a Brahmin) who may possess all the factors listed

above but still be indifferent to the Lord's holy feet. A person of low birth whose mind, speech, expectations, objects of desire and life itself has been dedicated to the Lord's feet makes holy his entire race while other persons are only proud of their birth and are not pure themselves, not to speak of purifying others².

The Lord of our Self is perfect in himself and does not lack a single thing. He accepts the worship of an ignorant person not for fulfilling any purpose of his own but out of sheer compassion and concern for the good of the worshipper. Whatever offerings are made by people are returned by him as blessings to those very people just as when ornaments are put on the body they go only to magnify the body's beauty in the reflection in the mirror³.

Even though I am the son of a demon (a low birth) I have no hesitation in praising the Lord to the extent of my ability. For a person caught in the circle of Maya (the illusory power of God) whose manifestation of the three Gunas envelopes him, the best way for purification of the mind is to praise the Lord.

Why should one fear God? He is ours and one should love him. The various Gods created out of your sattvic glory are all your servants meant to carry out your commands. Hence they are afraid of

you. We the Asuras do not fear you. After all, your attractive incarnations as Rama and Krishna etc. are either meant for the good of the world or for your own sportive entertainment. Why should one fear them?⁴

Lord, the asura is dead. Contain your anger. You will only kill those people who are a menace to the world. After all even a holy man will be happy when scorpions and serpents are killed. The entire world which was tortured by the asura, Hiranyakasipu are now greatly relieved by the latter's death. Please bless that henceforth whoever wants to rid himself of any fear has only to think of this Narasimha form of the Lord.

Oh my dear Lord. I am not in the least afraid of your terror striking form. Oh lover of the lowly, I am only afraid of the unbearable and intense sufferings to which one is subject to in this circle of birth and death. My own actions of previous birth have bound me and made me born among demons. When will you release me from this bondage and afford me refuge at your holy feet granting me liberation? In every birth of mine, I am being burnt by the fire of grief and joy alternating at the meeting and separation from my beloved relatives and friends as also my enemies⁵. Due to Maya I am taking the false for the real (the body as

real) and thus wandering from birth to birth. When shall you give me the remedy for this unhappiness and make me your servant?

Oh Lord, you are the best beloved of all friends and the Supreme deity. The best methods to reach the Lord are to sing your glories and praise you as also to seek the company of great Paramhansa devotees who have renounced everything and sought refuge at your holy feet. These two methods are capable of overcoming all the obstacles in crossing the ocean of samsara.

No parents can protect the child, no medicine can cure the disease and no boat can save a drowning man unless God exercises his will in that direction. Everything happens by God's will alone and nothing is in our hands. Any remedial measure adopted to alleviate the sufferings and the pain of those who are tortured in this phenomenal world can never be effective if God does not will it. God alone is our protection.

The power of Maya of the Lord consists of the three Gunas (Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas) which are activated at the proper time and create the subtle bodies of Jivas under the will of the Purusha, i.e. thyself, the Supreme Lord. The subtle bodies continue from one gross body

to another and contain the latent effects of the karmas (actions) of all the previous births (including the prarabdhas which come as sufferings in that birth).

The mind, the principal constituent of the subtle body has its root in desires (based on the tendencies created by past acts). This mind is verily the wheel of the phenomenal world (Samsara chakra). Only you are beyond it and hence those who surrender to you can cross the wheel of samsara.

I have already seen as to what happens to those who desire to have a long life, riches and all the luxuries enjoyed by the heavenly beings. All these were destroyed in a second by one knitting of the brow of an asura, who was my father. Even such a mighty father of mine was tumbled down and destroyed in a trice by you. There is no use of aspiring for such evanescent objects in life. I do not want them⁶. Such evanescent objects of the world, longevity, riches, after which all men and gods up to the level of Brahma are mad do not entice me. They can all be destroyed in no time by you in the form of Time. I only pray that you should lead me to the company of your devotees. (Even a demon may be redeemed only by satsanga i.e. holy company of devotees).

Where are these sensuous pleasures which are very attractive to hear about but are far from being substantial like the mirage? Where is also this body, the medium of enjoyment which is the source of all diseases? Being aware of it, even wise and literate people do not get disgusted with them but try to satisfy their insatiable desires with tiny drops of honey obtained with great effort.

Lord, there is nobody high or low which you take into consideration when you confer your boons as you are only in the form of all beings. In the case of Kalpataru, the wish fulfilling tree, one has to go near that tree and ask for the boon, after worshipping it. Similarly one has to do some sadhanas and reach the proximity of the Lord and serve Him before one can expect Lord's boons. Lord's favour does not depend on considerations of high and low but sadhana and sincerity to the Lord.

Lord, having fallen into the jaws of a cobra called samsara and moving down from one desire to another due to the effects of bad company, it was the causeless compassion of a saint called Narada, which lifted me up from the frightful samsara⁷. I am grateful to him forever and how can I ever abandon the service of such holy devotees?

Lord, you are the only real Existence. You are the universe too. But even though it is your creation, you are separate from it too. You existed before the universe came into existence as also after its dissolution. You also existed in the middle when the universe manifested itself. This is just like a painter who existed before he painted a picture, as also after the painting was destroyed. Thus as one existence has manifested as various objects of the universe, the differentiation as to ‘This is mine’, and ‘This belongs to someone’, is meaningless.

At the time of the great deluge you withdraw the entire universe back into your own self and you revel in your own infinite bliss with your eyes shut, established in your Pure Consciousness, ever awake, remaining in the fourth state which can be neither called as sleep, nor as waking state.

Thus you make special manifestation as man, animals etc. at different times to protect the good and to destroy the wickedness of crooked and violent people. In Kaliyuga (the present one with predominant materialism) thy presence remains hidden.

Grace: Oh Lord, my propensities for evil dominate my mind and direct it to sensuous objects. I am overcome by intense lust and alternating joy and

unhappiness etc. I am very helpless and how can I ever think of you at all?

My various senses draw me in different directions just like the many wives of one person. I have lost my willpower to do any action by myself.

Lord, don't you see us all having fallen in this hellish samsara by virtue of our actions, struggling with panic from the repeated cycle of birth and death. Please take pity on us and protect us.

Master of all the worlds, who else is there but you who can uplift us? If you can show a high level of compassion to the ignorant how can you ignore us who serve your devotees and do the sadhanas as per their directions? Grace is more needed in our case.

I do not care if I am thrown into the hell as my mind is ever reciting your glory and your attributes. But I very much grieve for the ignorant persons who have forgotten to go by the path of devotion but remain sub-merged in the evanescent pleasures of this world.

Lord, please do not bother to offer to grant me alone liberation and to take me to your divine abode, Vaikuntha⁸. How can I be so selfish as to abandon all these colleagues of mine, of the demon race with whom I have grown, lived and studied together? Who

else is there other than you who can be a refuge for them from the travails of this phenomenal world. It is only the sages who can be selfish enough to do austerities in solitude and achieve their salvation with no consideration for others.

The pleasures of sex life and other enjoyments available in a householder's life are all very petty and end in miseries after miseries. Still they like it just as a man continues to scratch (when there is an itch) knowing well that it would result in wounds. It is only a rare devotee who is able to overcome the temptation for petty pleasures by your Grace.

If one is unable to have control over his mind, all the sadhanas and austerities like silence, study of scriptures, repetition of mantras (Japa), Samadhi or Super Conscious state are all of no use. (How to attain it?- As per Gita by repeated practice and a through disdain for worldly objects (Vairagya)).

The scriptures have declared that you are the one manifest existence and the manifestation as the universe is your second form. It is you who has become many. You have entered into all the creation as the in-dweller. You are the seed and its sprout too. Those who are in your quest seek you in both the forms as you are like the dormant fire in the wood. The means are devotion to the Lord and concentration on Him.

Oh Lord, no men or gods and no intellect etc. are capable of understanding you, the eternal reality because they are all limited by time, i.e. by a beginning and an end. Knowing this the wise men leave off all their self-centred efforts to know you, for example, study of scriptures, philosophies etc. but resort to complete surrender to you.

Lord, devotion to you is the only means of enlightenment. Only surrender, prayers of praise, formal poojas (worship), service, hearing about you and constant remembrance are the means to get an intense love for and faith in you. All the Pramahamsas who renounced all, practiced as above and attained enlightenment are the live examples.

The aforementioned prayers of Prahlada, in my opinion is a master-piece among the prayers as they contain the various sadhanas one has to do without much effort and indicate what stage of exclusive love and dedication one should reach.

Prahlada's Hymn

1. मन्ये धनाभिजनरूपतपः श्रुतौजस्तेजः प्रभावबलपौरुष
बुद्धियोगाः।
नाराधनाय हि भवन्ति परस्य पुंसो भक्त्या तुतोष भगवान्
गजयूथपाय॥ (7-9-9)
2. विप्राद् द्विषड्गुणयुतात् अरविन्दनाभ
पादारविन्दविमुखात् श्वपचं वरिष्ठम्।
मन्येतदर्पित मनोवचनेहितार्थप्राणं पुनाति
स कुलं न तु भूरिमानः॥ (7-9-10)
3. नैवात्मनः प्रभुरयं निजलाभपूर्णो मानं जनादविदुषः करुणो वृणीते।
यद् यज्जनो भगवते विदधीत मानं तच्चात्मने प्रतिमुखस्य
यथा मुखश्रीः॥ (7-9-11)
4. सर्वे ह्यमी विधिकरास्तव सत्त्वधाम्नो
ब्रह्मादयो वयमिवेश न चोद्विजन्तः।
क्षेमाय भूतय उतात्मसुखाय चास्य
विक्रीडितं भगवतो रुचिरावतारैः॥ (7-9-13)
5. यस्मात् प्रियाप्रिय वियोग सयोग
जन्मशोकाग्निना सकलयोनिषु दह्यमानः।
दुःखौषधं तदपि दुःखमतद्वियाहं भूमन्
भ्रमामि वद मे तव दास्ययोगम्॥ (7-9-17)

6. तस्मादमूस्तनुभृता महमाशिषो न आयुः
 श्रियं विभव मैन्द्रियमाविरिञ्चात्।
 नेच्छामि ते विलुलितानुरुविक्रमेण
 कालात्मनोपनय मां निजभृत्यपार्श्वम्॥ (7-9-24)
7. एवं जनं निपतितं प्रभवाहिकूपे
 कामाभिकाम मनु यः प्रपतन् प्रसङ्गात्।
 कृत्वाऽऽत्मसात् सुरर्षिणा भगवन् गृहीतः
 सोऽहं कथं नु विसृजे तव भृत्यसेवाम्॥ (7-9-28)
8. प्रायेण देव मुनयः स्वविमुक्तिकामाः
 मौनं चरन्ति विजने न परार्थं निष्ठाः।
 नैतान् विहाय कृपणान् विमुमुक्ष एको
 नान्यं त्वदस्य शरणं भ्रमतोऽनुपश्ये॥ (7-9-44)

CHAPTER 8

Hymn of the royal Elephant (Gajendra)

Introduction: A royal elephant, while bathing and playing in a river, was caught in its legs by a strong crocodile. He was unable to release himself. All his herds abandoned him to his fate and went away. The elephant was tired after battling with the crocodile for more than 1000 years. Desperate, he called on the Lord to save him and sang a hymn of praise which is full of the highest vedantic principles. The hymn is as follows:-

Salutations my Lord, this entire inert world has come out of you who has lent it your Consciousness that makes it look as if it is all conscious (Chaitanya) . You are the first seed and you are the supreme controller of this universe. As the universe has come out of you, you are its material cause. The universe subsists in you

as every illusion subsists in its substratum. You are its instrumental cause too. But you are far beyond the scope of the universe as the entire universe is a tiny speck on you. I bow to the unborn Lord.

You are the unbroken consciousness and the witness of all. The entire universe is not real by itself. But it is a creation of your illusory power (Maya). While it is seen by us at one time, you withdraw it into yourself so that the universe disappears into the causal state.

Neither the gods nor the sages (Rishis) can really understand you when once you act as the billions of people on the stage of this world. How can an ordinary being like me ever understand and praise you properly? Please protect me.

In order to have your direct experience , the sages had abandoned all their attachments to family, riches etc. and in a solitary place in the forest, observe vows of continence (brahmacharya) and other unusual austerities, consider all beings with equality and friendship and as their own Self. You are my only refuge¹.

Oh Supreme Brahman with unparalleled might, you are with form as also without form. (Even a normal

light or sound energy is formless but, also assumes a form and makes quantum leaps. Sound energy which is formless is caught in a compact disk or cassette as lines and dots etc.) Who can ever understand your astonishing sports when you incarnate as a man etc.?

As Brahman you are absolutely inactive and you are never born. You have neither a form nor a name nor any attributes. Still for furthering the sport of creation and dissolution of the world you assume various forms by the power of Maya.

Lord, still you can be realized as one's own inner self by those wise men who are purified by totally renouncing the world and developing Sattva guna – full of light, harmony and peace. You are the one who can dispense to us the ultimate bliss of liberation.

You are the witness of the activities of all the senses of people and their attributes and you are the source as the sub stratum which makes us have faith in the existence of all worldly objects. Just as an image points to the real object, your presence is felt from the temporary I –sense (ego). You are always shining.

Lord, you are the cause² of all this universe but you yourself was never born and have no cause. Whenever a material cause say, clay is used in the creation of a

pot, it is but natural that the more the effects (more the number of pots made) the more the clay is used up and the quantum of clay becomes less and less. Here is an amazing cause (the Lord) that even though such a big universe has come out of Him, its quantum has remained the same without any reduction. You are the ocean from which all the scriptures and religious texts are flowing for the guidance of the Sadhaks. You are the ultimate whom the great renunciates see as their inner light after they dedicate all their activities and their results to the Lord and ignore the injunctions and prohibitions of the scriptures as they have gone beyond them.

I bow to you, my Supreme master. You cannot be realized by those who are attached to their own body, sons, friends, house, riches etc. You are beyond all the three Gunas, though functioning through them. You are realised by those whose mind is pure and free from ignorance, in their own hearts³.

People worship you for different reasons. Some want to do Dharma (charity), some want to accumulate money, some want to enjoy and a rare few want liberation too. You grant them the fulfillment of their respective desires. Oh Lord of infinite compassion, please release me from the jaws of the crocodile as

also from this samsara (birth and death cycle) as you can make my body immortal.

Those who have been doing their austerities in solitude and have completely surrendered themselves to Lord's will do not want anything at all from you (except to be with you all the time)¹.

They are always drowned in an ocean of bliss and spend their time singing your auspicious and astonishing glories.

Oh Lord, glory be unto you! You are that ultimate reality called Brahman. The supreme controller can only be obtained by the inward spiritual sadhana. You cannot be grasped by any of the gross senses. You are so subtle, infinite and a perfect being, and the one who though remaining nearest to us appears as if is far off. From a very minor particle of you, all the gods, all the scriptures, and the entire universe of men, birds and animals have been created. These objects of the universe have been given a name and a form. Just as the sparks of the fire and the rays of the sun emanate and finally get absorbed in the source, all the individual modes, the intellect, the mind, senses and bodies, emerge and dissolve in you alone. Glory to you, Lord, who cannot be categorized neither as

a god nor a demon, neither as man nor as animals/ birds, neither as a woman nor as an eunuch and who is neither being nor non-being. The entire world is negated by declaring “This is not the Brahman, the ultimate”, “This also is not”, etc., and whatever is left, i.e., the proclaimer alone is left and He is the Truth.

I do not want to continue to live in this world as an elephant when I am completely covered hiding any spiritual vision both from within and without. Sir, I do not pray that I should be released from the grip of the crocodile but I want to be released from the screen of ignorance and to be aware of my spiritual heritage which cannot be destroyed by time. In other words, I want moksha, a final release from samsara. Lord, I again and again bow to you who have created the universe and thus have become its instrumental cause. I bow to the one who has become the entire universe as the material cause but at the same time, remains absolutely untouched by the world. You are the soul of the entire universe, you are the unborn. I salute you, my Lord, who is revealed to the yogis in their pure hearts which have been freed from the effects of all the past karmas by the observance of various austerities. Oh Lord, your power is immense and all the three powers, namely the power of thought, the power of action and power of knowledge, belong to

you only. You have become the intellect and all the Gunas (modes).

You protect all those who surrender unto you. Those who are unable to control their sense will never be able to find out the way to reach you.

I seek refuge in you, Oh Lord, whose glory is beyond understanding. Because of your power of Maya, you have created an ego sense (identification with the body) as a result of which we are unable to know you even though you are our own self.

Hymn of the royal Elephant

1. दिदृक्षवो यस्य पदं सुमङ्गलं विमुक्तसङ्गाः मुनयः सुसाधवः
चरन्त्यलोकव्रतमव्रणं वने भूतात्मभूताः सुहृदः स मे गतिः॥
2. नमो नमस्तेऽखिलकारणाय निष्कारणायान्द्रुतकारणाय।
सर्वागमाम्नायमहार्णवाय नमोऽपवर्गाय परायणाय॥
(8-3-15)
3. आत्मात्मजाप्तगृहवित्तजनेषु
सक्तैर्दुष्प्रापणाय गुणसङ्गविवर्जिताय।
मुक्तात्मभिः स्वहृदये परिभाविताय
ज्ञानात्मने भगवते नम ईश्वराय॥ (8-3-18)
4. एकान्तिनो यस्य न कञ्चनार्थं वाञ्छन्ति ये वै भगवत्प्रपन्नाः।
अत्यद्भुतं तच्चरितं सुमङ्गलं गायन्त आनन्द समुद्रमग्राः॥
(8-3-20)

CHAPTER 9

Stayavrata's hymn to the Lord (Incarnated as Fish)

Satyavrata, a king, was warned by the Lord that on the seventh day, all the worlds were going to be submerged in a huge deluge. He was further instructed to fill a ship with all the seeds of trees and vegetation as also with representatives of all species of creatures. While the boat will be rolling in the storming sea, the Lord will be appearing as a fish with a horn to which the ship was to be tied with a rope. Satyavrata did as instructed by the Lord and praised the fish who was the lord himself in the following terms:

The people whose knowledge has been hidden by the ignorance which had no beginning are subject to intense miseries in the samsara and a few of them surrender themselves to the Lord by the latter's grace alone and attain Him. Oh granter of liberation, please be my teacher. The ignorant people are bound by the

tendencies of their past actions and do further actions with the hope of getting more happiness. At that time, it is only your worship and service to you which can cleanse the mind of its ignorance and also tear asunder the knot in the heart formed by considering the non-Self like the body as one's own Self. Oh Lord, be my teacher. Just as the gold is purified only by putting it directly in fire, one can redeem oneself of his ignorance only by serving you. You, the eternal one, is the supreme teacher of all teachers. Even an infinitesimal portion of your Grace cannot be matched by the combined efforts of all the deities, teachers and other competent teachers put together. Lord, I seek refuge in you. What is the use of making one blind man to lead another blind man and what is the use of having a teacher as ignorant as a disciple? We select you as our Guru as you are like the sun which reveals everything on this earth as you want us to attain our own original form. Ordinary teachers are only capable of inducing our mind in wrong directions so that we get lost in the intense darkness of ignorance. You are the only one who can give us that permanent knowledge by which we can regain our original nature and form.

You are the friend of all the people in the world, their dear Lord, their very Self, the every embodiment of knowledge and a teacher who can grant all desires. In spite of this fact, it is surprising that the world remains blind to this and do not realise that the Lord

is in their very heart. Oh Lord, I completely surrender to you the best of Lords, worthy of being approached for any boons for the purpose of being enlightened. Please tear asunder the knot of ignorance in my heart through your beautiful instructions.

CHAPTER 10

Prayer of Lord Brahma and Siva to Krishna in the womb

When Lord Krishna was in the womb of his mother Devaki inside the prison, both Brahma, the creator and Lord Siva came inside the prison and began to sing songs of praise:-

Oh Lord, who is the form of Truth, we seek refuge in you. You have taken a vow to adhere to the Truth at all times. You are established in Truth.¹ Even though there is one reality, you are manifesting in the relative field as the threefold Truth i.e., Vyavaharika Satya (for transactions in the world) Pratibhasika Satya (as in the dream which appeared as the truth but ultimately is found to be an illusion) and Paramarthika Satya (the ultimate truth which alone is).

You are the Truth beyond all relative Truths. You are the source of Truth. You are embedded in Truth, the Truth which governs this world and the law of Truth which governs the entire cosmos (Ritam). You, the only existence formed the source, the resting place and all the beings. The men whose minds are

trammelled by the Maya see all those things as many, ignoring the one source but the wise men do not do so. Lord, in your various incarnations, you assume various forms for the good of the entire world and these very incarnations based on satva guna make the devotees very happy while it spells inauspiciousness to the wicked.² The devotees whose mind is merged in you during the Samadhi state leave the boat of your holy feet for the benefit of the posterity, to enable them to cross the ocean of samsara easily in a trice.³ It is all your blessings which fall on the good devotees. Those who have scant regard for your holy feet ascend the steps of spirituality, somehow with difficulty, but soon slip and fall down. But your devotees who have absolute love towards you never slip down at all. They roam everywhere fearlessly well protected by you and are able to overcome all obstacles with ease.

In order to protect the world, you assume the form of pure Satvaguna which makes it possible for the devotees to worship you in order to advance on their spiritual path. Different people adopt different means like the scriptures, the rituals, meditation, and the Samadhi state and all these are made possible because you are able to assume a body like human beings. Oh Lord, even when you incarnate in various forms like Rama, Krishna etc., by assuming a name, a form, various attributes, birth and action, Your glory

can only be inferred by the mind and the words as you are yourself the witness of the actions in your incarnations.

To one whose mind is continuously engaged at your holy feet and who is always hearing and thinking of your auspiciousness and forms of your incarnations is never reborn as he gets his moksha.⁴ This earth is blessed by you even though it is an insignificant creation because you are born on this earth in order to efface all the miseries of this earth. We are also blessed, as we can visualize this earth and this heaven as the objects of your Grace and imprints of your holy feet left on this earth. Lord, when you manifest embodied as a man, unlike in our case, there is no special reason like past karma.

It is all entertainment for you and is done out of your own free will. In the case of Jivatma, it is because of Avidya (ignorance) that it is reborn again and again and getting involved in the samsara. You do protect us and the world by taking embodiments as fish, tortoise, boar, swan, as Sri Rama, Parasu Rama and Vamana etc. I bow to you again and again, Lord, and please lighten the burden of Mother Earth (by turning the minds of all people towards you.)

Prayer of Lord Brahma and Siva to Krishna in the womb

1. सत्यव्रतं सत्यपरं त्रिसत्यं सत्यस्य योनिं निहितं च सत्ये।
सत्यस्य सत्यमृतसत्यनेत्रं सत्यात्मकं त्वां शरणं प्रपन्नाः॥
(10-2-26)
2. बिभर्षि रूपाण्यवबोध आत्मा क्षेमाय लोकस्य चराचरस्य।
सत्त्वोपपन्नानि सुखावहानि सतामभद्राणि मुहुः खिलानाम्॥
(10-2-29)
3. त्वय्यम्बुजाक्षाखिल सत्त्वधाम्नि समाधिनाऽऽवेशित चेतसैके।
त्वत्पादपोतेन महत्कृतेन कुर्वन्ति गोवत्सपदं भवाब्धिम्॥
(10-2-30)
4. श्रुण्वन् गुणन् संस्मरयंश्च चिन्तयन्
नामानि रूपाणि च मङ्गलानि ते।
क्रियासु यस्त्वच्चरणारविन्दयोराविष्टचेता न भवाय कल्पते॥
(10-2-37)

CHAPTER 11

Hymn of Nala – Koobara

Nala – Koobara and Manigriva were the twin sons of Kubera, the treasurer of Gods. They were cursed by Narada to become twin Arjuna trees, in order to dispel their arrogance and lack of proper behavior. Lord Krishna, when he was bound to a mortar, pulled the mortar through the interspace between those trees in Brindavan, which fell down. Nala – Koobara brothers freed from the curse emerged out of the trees in their celestial splendor in their original form and began to praise the Lord:-

Oh Krishna, you transcend everything and are the Supreme Lord sporting as a human being. Both your un-manifest state as the cause of the universe as also your manifest state as the universe are known only to the realized souls. You alone are the body, the self and the senses of all beings. You are the Time and

Lord Vishnu himself (the substratum of universe) and the eternal controller. You are the subtle un-manifest primordial nature (Prakriti) with all its three modes (Satva,Rajas and Tamas). You are the Purusha (Being) who knows all the changes taking place in the body mind complex.

Our various senses of perception etc. which are the evolutes of primordial nature cannot grasp you. Who can ever understand you because you had existed much before our senses etc. were created? We bow to you Lord Vasudeva, whose infinite glories are hidden by the attributes which have been assumed by you.

Oh Lord, though you yourself do not possess any body, you embody yourself while taking various incarnations like Rama, Krishna etc. In each incarnation you exhibit your incomparable valour, at the same time remaining detached from outside objects.

You, the infinite Being incarnated yourself for protecting us and to make us prosper, by using a small part of your ability. You are the Lord capable of giving us all blessings. You come for the good of us all and bestow all auspiciousness on all of us. You always exude peace.

The last hymn of Nala- Koobara brothers is the most beautiful one. This contains details of what sadhanas a devotee should do daily:-

Lord, grant us the following boon. May our speech be only about the narration of your glory, may our ears be used only to hear your glories, may our hands be always engaged in your service and may our mind always think of your holy feet. Lord, the entire universe is your residence. Let our head bow to the world again and again. May our sight be engaged in seeing the holy people who constitute your body¹.

Hymn of Nala – Koobara

1. वाणी गुणानुकथने श्रवणौ कथायां
हस्तौ च कर्मसु मनस्तव पादयोर्नः।
स्मृत्यां शिरस्तव निवासजगत्प्रणामे
दृष्टिः सतां दर्शनेऽस्तु भवत्तनूनाम्॥ (X-10-38)

CHAPTER 12

The hymn of Brahma (the creator)

In order to test the divinity of Lord Krishna, Brahma (the creator) took away all the cows and the cowherd boys (gopas) accompanying Krishna and hid them in caves. Krishna took the exact forms of all the boys and the calves and went on his routine unperturbed. Later on, he confused Brahma himself by turning each one of all the duplicate boys and calves into Lord Narayana with four arms holding his usual weapons etc. when Lord Krishna freed Brahma from the clutch of his Maya (delusive power), the latter began to praise the lord with the following hymns:-

You are the Supreme Reality who has taken the form of Krishna in order to bless me. Your body is not made up of the five elements like others. You have assumed it out of your own sweet will. With all my

controlled mind, I (Brahma) am unable to understand your form. In such a case how can one experience you as the final bliss of the Atman?

There are your devotees who do not make effort for going in the path of knowledge. They live only by hearing the stories of your glories from the mouths of holy people.¹ By their body, speech and mind they are devoted to you and it looks as if you are defeated by them even though you are unconquerable.

There are people who ignore the path of devotion and love with contempt and put in a lot of efforts in order to get bare knowledge alone. It will be like husking the chaff of paddy for getting rice. It only results in torturing the body without any result.

Many are the Yogis of yore who quickly attained you through an intense devotion generated by hearing your glories, who had dedicated all their desires and actions at your feet, having been inspired to this means of Sadhana by the noble action of love and devotion done in previous births.²

It is a rare few whose mind is pure, who can understand your attributes of glory by direct experience of your formless form. There is no other way in which we can understand you unless the mind

is freed from ego, attachment, enmity or hatred, desires, anger, greed etc.

Lord, when once you incarnate yourself as a human being for the welfare of the devotees, nobody will be able to measure your Gunas (attributes). You are the one who created all the Gunas of all the people.³ It may perhaps be possible to measure the number of dust particles on the earth over a very long period or count the number of stars in the sky but never can anyone be able to measure the attributes you possess.

This following prayer is a master piece which gives in brief the Sadhanas one should do to attain Moksha.

No amount of Sadhana by any type of Yoga can get us Moksha (liberation) but for the compassionate Grace of God.⁴ It is not a right. The last lap in Sadhana can be crossed only by his Grace. His Grace can be conceived by us as the gravitational force of the Lord. In order to get it, we have to do enough Sadhana so that we can reach the ambit of the gravitational force. Sri Ramakrishna put it in another way. The wind of the Grace of the lord is always blowing. We have to set sail and take our boat to the direction in which the wind is blowing. We have to pray for the Grace of the Lord. During the Sadhana period, whatever

sufferings, sorrows, tribulations etc. come, face them with forbearance. Know that they are the results (reactions) or Prarabdhas of our own bad actions in the previous birth and we have no right to accuse God. So experience the result of past karmas which were done by us. Surrender yourself unconditionally to the Lord with all your heart, speech and body and ceaselessly pray to him. Such a person becomes entitled to liberation.

Lord, we do commit so many blunders. We even dare to test you. When a matured child inside a womb kicks at the mother's stomach, it is considered a permissible offence. On the contrary, the mother is delighted. We are all inside your belly (cosmic) and any inadvertant blunder should be excused by you. Actually, there is nothing called inside your body or outside your body. You are all pervasive.

Oh Lord, I (Brahma) was born out of you. At that time when I searched for you in the cosmic waters for thousand years, I could neither find you there nor in my heart. But after meditating and undergoing austerities for thousand years I could see you immediately.

Lord, in your incarnation as Krishna, you showed the entire world inside yourself to your mother when

you opened your mouth. You only have created the world outside too by your power of Maya (illusion).

For the ignorant people who do not understand your glories, it looks as though that you assumed the role of Brahma and created the entire world, as Vishnu you have sustained it and as Lord Siva, you dissolve it. Ultimately, you alone exist and rest is all Maya (illusion). Oh almighty Lord, how, when and in what way you are going to play as an incarnation, who can ever know?

This entire world is a projection of your own Maya. This has no reality at all. It is just like a dream (it never happened). As you are its substratum, it looks as if it is real.

Oh Lord, you are the only Reality, the Self of all, the ancient being, self-effulgent, infinite, eternal, immortal, a continuously flowing bliss incarnate, perfect, second to none and free from all limitations.

For getting the Lord, an illumined and a live Guru is essential who opens the eye of the devotee with his Upanishadic knowledge. Then a person is able to look at all beings as his own Self. This is an essential factor in our reaching the Supreme Lord.

Those who are ignorant that all the beings are one's own Self, project the phenomenal world of relationship of ownership or father etc. and get entangled in it. When once the real knowledge dawns on him, the projected world dissolves in its substratum just as a snake seen on a rope gets dissolved in the rope on getting the knowledge.

Bondage in the samsara and liberation are all created by ignorance and there are no such separate entities. When you enquire into the Supreme Self which is ever conscious there will be no more bondage or liberation, just like there is no day or night in the ever shining sun. You are within all and reveal yourself as the I-sense as someone outside and consider the body as Self -experienced through the I-sense.

What a pity that one considers the body which is outside as one's own, the Atman (which is one's own Self) as somebody outside and search for it. It is sheer stupidity.

The wise man rejects all that is anatman (the non-self) and search for you inside. How can one recognize the rope which is nearby without first rejecting the illusory perception of a snake? But, Lord, one comes to know the truth only when he is blessed with a little

Grace from you. Otherwise, No amount of Sadhana or Vichara (enquiry) alone for any length of time can make one understand the final truth.⁵

Lord, let me have the immense luck of being one of your devotees irrespective of whether I take birth in future as a human being or an animal or a bird.

How fortunate are the Gopikas (cowherd women) and the cows of Brindavan among whom you incarnated as Krishna.⁶ Even the great rituals of fire sacrifices (Yagas or Yagnas) could never give you that much satisfaction as when you had when you sucked their milk from their breast as their children.

What a luck to Nanda (the leader of the cowherds at Brindavan) and all the people of Brindavan (Vraja)!⁷ The Supreme Being, eternal, perfect (plenary), embodiment of the everlasting bliss himself had incarnated as Krishna and sporting with them as if he was their close friend.

Let alone the luck of the residents of Brindavan. We have five senses of perceptions like eyes, ears etc. and five senses of action like hand and feet etc. Mind is considered as the eleventh (inner) sense. Each of these senses has a presiding deity – for instance the sun for eyes and Indra for the hand etc. See their luck.

As Krishna has incarnated as a human being, all these deities have been able to drink the intoxicating nectar overflowing from Krishna's body, through the senses, an extremely rare privilege.

Krishna was all, their very life⁸, force for all the inhabitants of Brindavan where they played every day rubbing shoulders with the Supreme Lord. It would be an immense good fortune for all of us if only we could take birth at least as a grass in the forests of Brindavan where we would be bathed in the holy dust of the feet of its residents. This holy dust is so valuable that even the Vedas (highest scriptures) till today are searching for it.

Till that time attachment⁹, hatred etc. will remain as thieves and steal our knowledge, when we do not become Lord's own. Till that time the house will be a jail where we are bound, when we do not become intense devotees of the Lord who is our master. Till that time delusion becomes a shackle in our own feet, till we consider ourselves as God's own.

Let those who think they understand think so. I (Brahma, the creator) cannot understand even an iota of your greatness by any effort of my mind, body or speech.

The hymn of Brahma

1. ज्ञाने प्रयासमुदपास्य नमन्त एव
जीवन्ति सन्मुखरितां भवदीयवार्ताम्।
स्थाने स्थिताः श्रुतिगतां तनुवाङ्मनोभिर्ये
प्रायशोऽजित जितोऽप्यसि तै स्त्रिलोक्याम्॥ (10-14-3)
2. पुरेह भूमन् बहवोऽपि योगिन स्त्वदर्पितेहा निजकर्म लब्धया।
विबुध्य भक्त्यैव कथोपनीतया प्रपेदिरेऽञ्जोऽच्युत ते गतिं
पराम्॥ (10-14-5)
3. गुणात्मनस्तेऽपि गुणान् विमातुं हितावतीर्णस्य क ईशिरेऽस्य।
कालेन यैर्वा विमिताः सुकल्पैर्भूपांसवः खे मिहिका द्युभासः॥
(10-14-7)
4. तत्तेऽनुकम्पां सुसमीक्षमाणो भुञ्जान एवात्मकृतं विपाकम्।
हृद्वाग्वपुर्भिर्विदधन् नमस्ते जीवेत यो मुक्तिपदे स दायभाक्॥
(10-14-8)
5. अन्तर्भवेऽनन्त भवन्तमेव ह्यातत्यजन्तो मृगयन्ति सन्तः।
असन्तमप्यन्त्यहिमन्तरेण सन्तं गुणं तं किमु यन्ति सन्तः॥
(10-4-28)
6. अहोऽतिधन्या ब्रजगोरमण्यः स्तत्यामृतं पीतमतीव ते मुदा ।
यासां विभो वत्सतरात्मजात्मना यत्तृप्तयेऽद्यापि
न चालमध्वराः॥ (10-14-31)

7. अहो भाग्यमहो भाग्यं नन्दगोपब्रजौकसाम् ।
यन्मित्रं परमानन्दं पूर्णं ब्रह्म सनातनम् ॥ (10-14-32)
8. तद् भूरिभाग्यमिह जन्म किमप्यटव्यां
यद् गोकुलेऽपि कतमांघ्रि रजोऽभिषेकम् ।
यज्जीवितं तु निखिलं भगवान्मुकुन्द
स्त्वद्यापि यत्पदरजः श्रुतिमृग्यमेव ॥ (10-14-34)
9. तावद् रागादयः स्तेना स्तावद् कारागृहं गृहम्।
तावन्मोहोऽघ्निनिगडो यावत् कृष्ण न ते जनाः ॥ (10-14-36)

CHAPTER 13

Hymn of Kaliya's wives

In a pool of the Yamuna river, there lived a multi-hooded serpent called Kaliya along with all his family members. The water remained poisonous and a number of the cowherd colleagues of Krishna, who were unaware of the poison drank the water and fell down dead. Krishna, by his gracious look revived them. In order to get rid of the serpent and to purify the water, Krishna jumped on the hoods of Kaliya and began to dance. Kaliya began to vomit blood and was becoming almost lifeless.

Then all the wives of the serpent became panicky and pleaded with Krishna:-

Oh Lord, the punishment you meted out to Kaliya who has offended you and your friends is just indeed. You have no personal prejudice against anybody and you treat your son and enemy alike. You punish the wicked only for dispelling their sins.

Kaliya is born as a serpent obviously because of his past sins. Your punishment to him is well deserved. It is actually a gracious blessing in the interest of his reform.

Kaliya must have obviously performed several austerities or penance in his previous birth to deserve this blessing in this birth. Otherwise he must have rendered service to the needy out of compassion for them in the previous birth. You, who reside in all, get pleased by such righteous conduct and then only dole out your blessings. This is a privilege which even Goddess Lakshmi (your consort) got after long and intimate austerities after abandoning all enjoyments. What a great Grace that you have danced on his head?

Those who have surrendered at the dust of your holy feet do not want anything else. They neither desire for Indra's post, nor for Brahma's post, nor for mystic powers and not even for cessation of birth-death cycle. This king of serpents, though born of Tamo guna and ferocious by temperament got the blessing of thy feet, which is impossible for anyone else to get. For people who are roaming in the cycle of the phenomenal world, the dust of the holy feet of the Lord is enough to bestow all prosperity.

We bow to you, Lord, who resides in all the beings, the Supreme Being. You are the treasure-house of all knowledge (including experiential), of Infinite power

and the changeless one without attributes. You are the Time, source of Time, a witness of all parts of Time (Past, present and future). You have only become the Universe, the witness of the Universe, the material cause of it and the efficient cause (creator) of it.

You are the indweller in the gross and subtle elements, the senses, the vital force, mind, intellect and heart. You hide the inner direct experience of the Self by means of our ego (I-sense). You are the Infinite, the subtle, the unchanging core like the peak of the mountain and omniscient. You are the various philosophical systems. You are the one who gives the power of authenticity to the various valid proofs of knowledge like direct perception, inference etc. You are the repository of all wisdom, the source of all scriptures. You are the one who inspires one to go on the path of rituals (karmakanda) and also to renounce everything later. You are the one who kindles and reveals the three Gunas of the primordial nature, (Satva, Rajas and Tamo Guna). You hide yourself under the Gunas of Prakriti (nature). You are the witness to all the Gunas, you are indicated by all the Gunas. You play in the universe unseen and you are the cause of all the changes the universe is undergoing. I bow to you the controller of all the senses and to the silent being. You know all the things high and low and preside over all. You remain unaffected by the universe which you have created. You have become the universe too,

just as we become the dream world which we created while dreaming.

You are absolutely desireless as nothing exists apart from you and all the objects of the world are your creation. Still, in your sport, you become the time (time and space are created along with the world) and by your very will power kindle the latent tendencies of all beings and perform the threefold job of creation, sustenance and dissolution.

In this world you have created three categories of beings from yourself – the calm and the quiet people, people who always lack in peace and remain perturbed and the foolish ones. You love those calm and quiet people and in your role as the protector of the righteous conduct (Dharma) you take the side of those peaceful people and punish others when necessary.

CHAPTER 14

Hymn by Indra, the king of gods

Indra was enraged at Krishna's stopping his worship done every year by all the cowherds headed by Nanda. He sent the clouds to rain heavily in the Vraja (Brindavan) so that all the inhabitants including the cows and calves would get inundated and perish. But Krishna lifted the Govardhana mountain in his hand, in whose depression all the cowherds with their families, possessions and cows sought shelter and were saved. Krishna stood unmoving for seven days. Indra's pride having been humbled he came to Krishna, prostrated before him and began to praise him:-

Oh Lord, you are constituted by pure Sattva Guna in this form. You are at peace, full of the power of austerities with the Rajas and Tamoguna having been eliminated. This entire show of gunas (modes) by

you is only illusory and you are completely detached from all gunas. When that is the case, where is the question of greed, anger etc. -the products of the gunas- affecting you, which are the signs of ignorance. Still you, sometimes punish people for the purpose of upholding Dharma (righteousness) and for quelling the wicked people.

You are the, father mother and the lord of the world. In the frightening role of time, you wield the rod of punishment for the welfare of the world. Thus you destroy the pride of the people who consider themselves as the masters of the destinies of the world. These self –styled rulers of the world when they see you acting fearlessly, are compelled to abandon the pride and become your devotees.¹

I offended against you in the pride of my powers, status and prosperity, being ignorant of your glory. Please forgive me, a foolish person and bless me that my mind should never become perverse.

I bow to you, Lord the Supreme Self, who has incarnated himself as Krishna, the son of Vasudeva. You have taken up this body out of your free will, you are the embodiment of the pure absolute knowledge. You are all and the cause of all. You are the Self of all beings.²

Hymn by Indra, the king of gods

1. पिता गुरुस्त्वं जगता-मधीशो दुरत्ययः काल उपात्तदण्डः।
हिताय स्वेच्छातनुभिः समीहसे मानं विधुन्वन् जगदीशमानिनाम्॥
(10-27-6)
2. नमस्तुभ्यं भगवते पुरुषाय महात्मने।
वासुदेवाय कृष्णाय सात्वतां पतये नमः॥ (10-27-10)

CHAPTER 15

The musical hymn of the Gopikas (Gopika Gitam)

When Lord Krishna sported by taking as many forms as there were Gopikas (cowherd maidens), each Gopika thought that she alone was having Krishna with her and became full of pride. In order to teach them all a lesson and also to test their level of devotion, Krishna disappeared from their midst. All the Gopikas joined together and prayed to the Lord through a musical hymn called Gopika Gitam.

Oh Krishna, since the time you were born in Vraja Bhoomi (the land of cowherds), this place is more prosperous and flourishing. This is because Lakshmi, the goddess of plenty and riches and your escort in Vaikuntha has also come here in order to be in your proximity. You are the life of us, the poor Gopikas and we cannot live without you. We have nothing to do

with the prosperity of our houses. We want you alone. We are searching for you in all directions. The verse of this Gopika Gitam will melt anybody's heart. It is thus that we should cry in anguish at our separation from the Supreme Lord. It is a supreme sadhana.

Oh Lord of our love, we are your un- bought slaves. We have voluntarily come to serve you. When you look at us it causes such pain and agony that we want to be one with you. Are you not killing us with your looks?

Lord, how many times have you saved us, the inhabitants of Vraja from dire danger? When our boys drank the poisonous waters of the Yamuna pool and died, you revived them. When a demon called Aghasura in the form of a python swallowed all the cowherd boys, you saved them. You saved us when once we were surrounded by the forest fire as also from torrential rains let loose on us by Indra. Why don't you reveal yourself to us when we are undergoing pangs of death due to your separation?

In the next verse they explain that their love is not carnal as with a paramour. It is highly sacred divine love as they well knew that Krishna was the Supreme Lord Himself and not the mere son of a Gopika. It is a love from soul to soul.

Oh Lord, you are that Supreme Being who is a witness seated in all beings as the indweller. At the request of Brahma, the creator, you have incarnated among us as a village boy in order to protect the world.¹

Oh Krishna, please, for once, come back and place your hand on our heads. Your hands are the ones which guarantee protection from the fever of samsara (phenomenal world) to those who seek shelter at your feet.

Oh Krishna it is not enough that you have dispelled our woes in the past. We are your servants. Will you not show us your beautiful face once again? Your one smile is enough to pulverize our ego.

Lord, please place your feet on our breasts. They are the same feet which destroy the sins of those devotees who prostrate before them, the same feet that ran over hill and dale in pursuit of the calves and gave shelter to your consort, Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth. It is the same tender feet which trampled on the Kaliya serpent also.

Oh Krishna, your sweet words and charming speech, alluring even to the wise have all bewitched us and now we want you alone. Please rejuvenate us by feeding us the nectar of your lips.

The Gopikas feel as if Krishna is laughing at them – asking them :- Oh Gopikas, you said in the beginning that I was your life force and you were dying due to separation but you go on singing? The Gopikas sing as if in reply: - Krishna, it is not our fault that we still continue to live. As we are recounting your deeds, the ambrosia of your stories have the capacity to revive the scorched spirit of people. They are capable of demolishing all our sins and all holy men love to sing it. It is very auspicious even to hear it and all lucky people love it. Those who spread your name by chanting it and sing your glories give the greatest gift to the world. Chanting the names of the Lord loudly and spreading stories of his glories is a great sadhana which not only helps us but also the people who hear them.²

When in retrospect we think of your bewitching smile, your look full of love, your sporting with us etc., they are all worthy of being meditated upon. These and the love – prattle you used to make when we were alone agitate our minds. Please abandon this hide and seek and reveal yourself. You are a cheat and can you ever understand how much we love you. For instance, in the mornings you go away daily along with calves in order to graze them. Your feet are extremely tender. When some of the calves run away, you have to run

behind them over hill and dale. Throughout the day, till you return in the evening, we spend the day with palpitating hearts fearing how much your feet would have been wounded, with blood flowing from them on account of the stones and the thorns over which you might have been running.³

When in the dusk you return with your face smeared with dust and with your curly hair falling on your face, our minds are churned with passion and excitement.

These feet of yours are not ordinary but are the ones which exude immense divine love. They fulfill all the desires of those who surrender themselves to those feet. They are the same feet which Lakshmi, the Goddess of plenty and riches, worships daily. They enhance the beauty of the entire earth just like an ornament. When anybody is faced with danger he has only to think of these feet and all dangers will melt away. It gives instant peace. Please come before us and place your feet on our breasts.

Your lips in no way lag behind your feet. They enhance the passionate delight. They have the power to destroy all our grief and sorrows. It is alluring to see your flute constantly kissing your lips. When once we

get attached to your lips, it makes us forget all other desires and attachments in the world. Please distribute the nectar of your lips to us all.

When you go to wander in the forest in the daytime for grazing the cows, every minute of your absence seems like an aeon. Even when you are with us, we long to continue to see your beautiful face with curly hairs uninterruptedly, which is made impossible because we have to bat our eye-lids from time to time. How stupid is the creator (Brahma) who has unnecessarily provided us with eye-lashes making an uninterrupted vision of you impossible?

Oh crooked lover, how merciless you are. We have abandoned our husbands, children, traditional values, our brothers and relatives and sought your company. It is you who called us to your side through your enticing flute and we were bewitched by your music. Oh rogue of a lover, who else but you will abandon us in this midnight and disappear?⁴

Krishna, this form was assumed by you only for wiping off the miseries of the Gokula and Brindavan as also for the good of the entire world. We love you dearly. Please do not abandon us for a moment even. We are yours and you are here to take away the pain in our hearts.

The musical hymn of the Gopikas

1. न खलु गोपिका नन्दनो भवानखिलदेहिनां अन्तरात्मदृक्।
विखनसार्थितो विश्वगुप्तये सख उदेयिवान् सात्वतां कुले॥
(10-31-4)
2. तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनं कविभिरीडितं कल्मषापहम्।
श्रवणमङ्गलं श्रीमदाततं भुवि गृणन्ति ते भूरिदा जनाः॥
(10-31-9)
3. चलसि यद् ब्रजात् चारयन् पशून् नलिनसुन्दरं नाथ ते पदम्।
शिलतृणाङ्कुरैः सीदतीति नः कलिलनां मनः कान्त गच्छति॥
(10-31-11)
4. पतिसुतान्वय भ्रातृबान्धवा नतिविलंघ्य तेऽन्त्यच्युतागताः।
गतिविदस्तवोद्गीत मोहिताः कितव योषितः कस्त्यजेन्निशि॥
(10-31-16)

CHAPTER 16

Akrura's hymn

Kansa, the King of Mathura and the uncle of Krishna had come to know that his own death will be by the hands of Krishna, which was vaguely predicted by the Aerial voice. Kansa sends his minister Akrura to bring Krishna and his brother Balarama to Mathura personally in the pretext of inviting them for a sacrifice in connection with a sacred bow. While bringing them in his chariot, Akrura got down for performing his evening rites in the Yamuna river on the way, and he saw Krishna and Rama inside the water as also as seated in the chariot. Then he began to praise them through a hymn.

I bow to you who is the cause of all causes. You are Narayana – the Supreme Lord, the eternal primordial being. It is from the cosmic lotus in your navel that Brahma who created the world was born.

All the five basic elements like the earth, water, air etc., the primordial nature (Prakriti), mind, senses, all objects of senses, all gods – which are all considered

as part of the world – came from you¹. None of them can understand you just as the lens of a microscope cannot see the microscope. Even Brahma, coming under the sway of Maya cannot understand you as he is bound by various modes like Rajo Guna etc.²

The spiritually evolved Yogis worship you as one Supreme Being. The Karmakandis worship through their sacrifice as prescribed in the Vedas (scriptures) in various forms and names. Some renounce all the actions and remain withdrawn. The Jnanis worship you according to the Jnana yagna (imparting knowledge to others) and through repeated chanting (Japa) of Mantras. There are others who follow the path of devotion and worship you in one form or many forms.

You are the only reality and all the gods are your forms. The different paths of worship followed by different religious sects are like the rivers originating from various mountains and finally entering into one ocean. They all lead to you. You are of multiple dimensions. All the various deities and their followers are all projected in you.³

You have only incarnated yourself in ten different forms (as a fish, tortoise, boar, half-man half-lion, vamana etc.). Your devotees whose heart is purified

by dispelling their sins and defects sing the glories of each of your ten incarnations.

Oh mighty Lord, the entire world and all the beings are deluded by your Maya. The sense of I and mine make us perform various actions, good and bad and make us wander in each birth in the path of action generating further action leading to re-birth.⁴ I am also no exception to this rule.

Akrura's hymn

1. भूस्तोयमग्निः पवनः खमादिर्महानजादिर्मन इन्द्रियाणि।
सर्वेन्द्रियार्था विबुधाश्च सर्वे ये हेतवस्ते जगतोऽङ्गभूताः॥
(10-40-02)
2. नैते स्वरूपं विदुरात्मनस्ते ह्यजादयोऽनात्मतया गृहीताः।
अजोनुबद्धः स गुणैरजाया गुणात् परं वेद न ते स्वरूपम्॥
(10-40-03)
3. यथाद्रि प्रभवा नद्यः पर्जन्यापूरिताः प्रभो।
विशन्ति सर्वतः सिन्धुं तद्वत्त्वां गतयोऽन्ततः ॥ (10-40-10)
4. नमो बुद्धाय शुद्धाय दैत्यदानवमोहिने।
म्लेच्छप्रायक्षत्रहन्त्रे नमस्ते कल्किरूपिणे॥ (10-40-23)

CHAPTER 17

The Hymn of Muchukunda

Muchukunda was a mighty king whom Indra kept with himself for a long time in order to protect himself from demons. While Indra was returning him to the earth, he gave him the boon of continuously sleeping uninterrupted for a long period of time inside a cave. Krishna, during one of his playful exploits got Muchukunda awakened and appeared before him. Muchukunda recognized the Lord and began to praise him with the following hymns.

Oh Lord, we the common people are all deluded by your power of Maya and being led by danger, fail to worship you. Being deceived by the external facets of the world, we are engaged in the so called pleasures of the house, which actually leads us to sorrows. Even after having got effortlessly a human birth, which is difficult to get, a man never uses it properly. Just like an animal which falls into a blind well, he does not tend to worship the holy feet of the Lord.

Oh Lord, what a pity that all my life so far has been spent in a futile manner. I was all along proud of my achievements in ruling a big kingdom, considering the mortal body as my Self and spending time in worrying about my wife, children, and riches. I ignored the Lord and was engaged in looking after my body which is subject to destruction like a mud-pot and surrounded by chariots, elephants, horses etc.

I was absorbed in my duties as a king and as the head of my family and with increasing greed absorbed myself in sensuous enjoyments. You were vigilant, on the other hand and waiting in the form of death just like a hungry snake waiting for its prey, the rat.

The body which was once a king wandering in golden chariots or an elephant is reduced by time to worms and ashes in no time. Even in later age, he is unable to have happiness as he abandons all worldly enjoyments and is engaged in performance of rituals with great austerities for becoming Indra (ruler of Gods). Thus again he is deprived of happiness and his greed continues.

A person who wants to stop the cycle of birth and death should seek the company of good and holy men. It is the Satsanga (company of holy men) which will take us to liberation from the Samsara. It is your blessing that you have easily withdrawn me from my

kingly involvements while many kings who seek it by retiring into the solitudes of forests have not been able to achieve anything.

Oh Lord who is everywhere, I do not desire anything other than to do service to your feet. That is the only boon asked for by your devotees who own nothing (who have no sense of possession). How can anybody who has once served you, who is capable of giving the ultimate blessing of liberation, ask for any objects of the world which are capable of binding us? Hence, abandoning all other blessings capable of binding me, I surrender to the Supreme Being who is untainted, bereft of the three modes, second to none and made of Consciousness.

Oh compassionate Master, I am tortured by my sins and being burnt by the six enemies like desire, anger, greed, delusion, pride etc. I have somehow reached your holy feet which renders your devotees fearless and bereft of sorrows. Please protect me.

CHAPTER 18

Rudra's Hymn in Bana's Battle

Krishna came to hear that his grandson, Aniruddha was a prisoner in the jail of Banasura. He went to battle with the latter. In the battle, Rudra (Lord Siva's one aspect) fought on the side of Bana who was his great devotee. When all the thousand hands of Bana were cut off by Lord Krishna, except for one pair, Rudra prayed to Krishna interceding on behalf of Bana.

Lord, you are the absolute Supreme Being. You are the light revealed by the Vedas (scriptures). The pure-minded see you as untainted like the sky. The entire world can be conceived as your limb – for instance, the sky as your navel, the ocean as your I-sense (ego) etc. Oh Lord, this incarnation of yours is meant for upholding Dharma (righteousness) and also for protecting the world from the wicked. We, being protected by you, look after the welfare of all the seven worlds. You are the first primordial being. There is nobody like you, you have transcended all the three states viz. waking dream etc. You witness yourself, the cause of all but yourself are causeless

as you never originated from another object. Just as the Sun is hidden by the clouds created by itself, but reveals the clouds by its own light, the Self is hidden by its own power of Maya (illusion) but also reveals the Jiva as also the I-Sense (Ahamkara).

With the intellect being deluded by your Maya, people get entangled in house, children, wife etc. and roll up and down in the ocean of Samsara. Thus even after getting the divine gift of this earth do not care for God, deceive themselves and are to be pitied. The mortal who abandons you, the beloved Self and the controller, for the sake of the sensuous objects of the world is like the fool who drinks poison leaving off the divine ambrosia.¹

The sages with pure hearts, the gods etc. completely surrender themselves to you who are the most beloved. Lord, you are the cause for the birth, dissolution and sustenance of this world. You are equal with all, highly peaceful and a friend of all. We all worship you for liberating us from this Samsara (world of ceaseless birth and death cycle).²

Rudra's Hymn in Bana's Battle

1. यन्माया मोहितधियः पुत्रदारगृहादिषु।
उन्मज्जन्ति निमज्जन्ति प्रसक्ता वृजिनार्णवे॥ (10-63-40)
देवदत्तमिमं लब्ध्वा नृलोकमजितेन्द्रियः।
यो नाद्रियेत त्वत्पादौ स शोच्यो ह्यात्मवञ्चकः॥
(10-63-41)
2. तं त्वा जगस्थित्युदयान्तहेतुं समं प्रशान्तं सुहृदात्मदैवम्।
अनन्यमेकं जगदात्मकेतं भवापवर्गाय भजाम दैवम्॥
(10-63-44)

CHAPTER 19

The hymn of the sages at Syamantapanchaka during eclipse

There once took place a full and prolonged eclipse of the sun. All the Yadavas (the royal clan to which Krishna belonged) including all gopas and gopikas and Nanda (their leader) went to Syamantapanchaka to perform a holy bath and certain rituals. Many great sages like Vyasa and Narada as also all the residents of Dwaraka led by lord Krishna went there. There was a very big gathering. The sages began to sing hymns of praise on Lord Krishna.

Oh Lord, we are the best of the devotees who are known as the knowers of Brahman and are even greater than the highest gods. Still when you assume a human form and play we are ourselves bewildered by your Maya and your sport as an incarnation is really wonderful.

Being desireless, you create this multi- phased world, sustain it and also dissolve it just like the variegated plants and trees coming out of the earth. With all that, you don't get entangled in it. What a divine sport? Still, in due course, for protecting your devotees, and to punish the wicked, you wear your Satva Guna and incarnate as a human being. At that time you uphold the eternal path of the Vedas (scriptures). You are also the soul of the varnasrama (castes like Brahmins, warriors etc. as also the station in life like monkhood -Sanyasa, householder etc.).

Lord, the Vedas represent your pure heart. The ultimate Supreme Being can be realized both in his manifest, unmanifest and transcendental aspects by means of austerities, study of scriptures and control of all the senses.

Today by meeting you, the purpose of our birth has been fulfilled. The purpose of our knowledge, austerities and insight has been achieved.

We bow to you Lord Krishna, you are the Supreme soul. Even in the incarnation your glory remains untrammelled. Just as a sleeping person considers his dream – ego as real and forgets his name, status etc. of the waking state, so also we consider the so called

waking state, the name and the body assumed in it as real and we forget the supreme Self who is acting as 'all' in our waking state.

Today we, the sages have been blessed to see your holy feet which are the source of Ganga, the most sacred river. Great sages of Yoga have been able to visualize your feet in their heart by continuously meditating on you. Only by intense devotion aspirants have been able to break open the shell as a Jiva (as an individual soul) and attain you.

CHAPTER 20

The Hymn of the Vedas

A question was raised by Parikshit, the king:-

Brahman is without any attributes or the three modes (Satva of light, Rajas of action and Tamas of laziness). The Vedas (Holy Scriptures) are constituted of limited words and can describe things within the jurisdiction of the three modes. How can they describe the Brahman who is indescribable and beyond cause and effect?

In answer, Sage Suka Deva cites the reply given by Sage Sunandana to an identical question posed in a seminar at Janaloka (one of the higher regions). Sunandana repeats a hymn sung by the Vedas in order to wake up the Lord from His cosmic sleep just before the start of a fresh creation in a new Kalpa (around four lakh years) Even though it looks as if the Vedas describe only the God with attributes, by delving deep into the esoteric meaning it is clear that their purpose

is only to describe the God without attributes. The hymn is as follows:-

- (1) Oh Lord invincible, Maya is your own delusive power by which all your glory remains veiled. It covers all the objects of the world, moving and unmoving with ignorance. Please annihilate that Maya i.e. with-draw it from all beings.

You are capable of conquering the Maya as you are the repository of all the powers. This Maya has assumed all the three modes like Satwa Guna in order to hide its mischievous nature of hiding the real nature of the individual souls and to put them into bondage. Hence it is worthy of being annihilated. You are the one who awakens all the powers like doing sadhana (spiritual practice), knowledge and various actions in all the movable and immovable objects of the world. Even though we are incapable of describing you in your real nature, we are able to talk of you a little when you assume attributes by creating the entire world through your Maya or when you sport revealing your real nature of existence, awareness and bliss.

- (2) The gods like Brahma, Indra, Varuna etc. as also the entire world which appears before us are not separate from you. Hence, even though through the hymns in the Vedas, we describe them separately,

they are only describing you, the only Reality, as they are all your various aspects. This is because when the entire world disappears during the great deluge, you alone remain. Then, does it mean that you are subject to change or modifications? No, you remain unchanged while the world is only an appearance in you and is not actually created. Just as a cup and a tumbler are only the mud in reality with various names given when their shapes change, whatever the sages think of or speak of is about you only. It is just like, whether you place your foot on a brick or a wooden plank, it is all ultimately on the earth only.

- (3) The wise persons given to inquiry are always drowning themselves in the ocean of stories of your sporting, which are capable of dispelling the sins of the entire world. Thus they get rid of their sufferings which are torturing them. What then is there to say about the great devotees who have destroyed the attachment and hatred in their heart as also the defects like old age and death caused by time and have taken refuge in your holy feet, the source of constant bliss?
- (4) The one who does not worship you and does not follow your commands is just like the bellows or a breathing machine. His entire life is a waste. The Mahat (cosmic mind), Ahamkara (collective ego)

etc. have been able to create this universe only because of your blessings. The Atman is covered by five sheaths namely annamaya (matter), pranamaya (vital force), manomaya (mind), vijñanamaya (intellect) and anandamaya (relative bliss). The one who exists in those sheaths as “I –I” is you. Their existence is seen because of your existence. You are beyond cause and effect. When they all disappear, you alone remain as the witness.

- (5) The various sages of yore adopted various paths to reach you. Those with a gross sight worship you in the manipuraka chakra (near the navel) in the form of fire. Certain other great sages worship the Brahman which is extremely subtle by concentrating on the heart.

The best path to reach the Brahman is the central nerve called sushumna which goes up to the sahasrara on the top of the head. The person who goes by this path which is highly effulgent is nevermore entangled in the vicious cycle of birth and death.

Oh Lord, you are at all times, at all places and in every form like the animals and birds. But it looks as if you have created these objects separate from you and have entered each of them. Just as the fire enters into the fuel of various dimensions, you have entered into all

the small as well as all the big objects and accordingly look small or big or as ordinary or extra ordinary. Hence it is that the holy men who are rid of the dust of impurities get disgusted with the commercially oriented rituals and their fruits. Because of their pure mind, they are able to distinguish between the Reality and the unreality as also the Self and non-Self.

They do not get entangled in the false form of the world and ultimately they are able to come face to face with your real nature which is undivided and equal everywhere.

Whichever bodies are inhabited by the individual souls, those bodies are the result of their past karmas (actions). Actually speaking, the Self is not covered by any covering veils like the bodies as these bodies do not exist in reality. In effect, they are your own forms but they are called as your part and they are considered as having been created even though they are not created. Hence it is that the wise people enquire into the real form of the individual souls and worship your feet with faith.

Oh Lord, it is very difficult to get the knowledge of the ultimate reality. It is in order to make us understand the truth that you take various incarnations and sport in such a manner that they are sweeter and more alluring than an ocean of nectar. And they do not

want even liberation (moksha). They find immense pleasure in hearing your stories at the feet of the highest renunciates called the Paramahamsas with the result that they even renounce their houses, wives and children.

When the body is used¹ as a sadhana for attaining you, then it behaves like your favorite friend and well-wisher. Oh Lord, you are the real well-wisher for the individual soul. You are its most favorite one and also the Self. You are always prepared to take the individual soul unto you. In spite of all these things, people forget you, take pleasure in the experiences of the non-existing senses and as a result, they murder their own Self. They go on roaming in insignificant bodies like that of animals and birds. The great yogis given to self-enquiry bring their senses and mind under their control through an intense practice of yoga but it is really astonishing that the goal they reach is also attained by those who entertain hatred towards you because they also have constant remembrance of you. This is nothing. Even those beautiful women who considered you as a limited human being because of their ignorance and were attached to you through physical attraction, they attained the same goal which is attained by the scriptures. It is all because you look at all with an equal vision. Lord, you are without a beginning and are infinite. How can the people whose

birth and death are limited by time can ever know you? At that time when you dissolve and take unto you all the creation including the great sages, there is no method by which the individual soul which sleeps all along with all of them can ever understand you. At that time, neither the bodies nor the time is active. Even all the scriptures get absorbed into you. Some people consider that the world which never existed was created and according to some when all the sufferings and unhappiness which look like real are dispelled, it results in liberation. All these theories are all due to delusion.

Oh Lord, those who worship you in the form of all objects as the soul of all of them, they contemptuously ignore death and conquer it. Those who do not worship you are bound by the rituals prescribed in the scriptures just like the animals. On the contrary, those who are linked to you by love not only purify themselves but others too and liberate them from the bondage of the world. How can those who ignore you ever can have such good fortune? Oh Lord, you are bereft of the various senses including mind, intellect etc., but you are always full of all the powers of all the senses etc. Even the small gods like Brahma, the creator, accept worship done by men and in their turn worship you. Out of fear of you, they perform all the tasks allotted

to them. Oh Lord, you are ever liberated and beyond all Maya and still out of your own free will, you sport with Maya. On the least sign from you, the subtle bodies and the conditionings of the previous births get awakened and thus all beings, moving and non-moving are created. You are extremely compassionate. As you treat all people equally, there is nobody who is your own and nobody who can be called 'another'. Neither the mind nor speech can ever enter into your natural form and describe it.

The individual souls are countless. If they are to be permanent and omnipresent they will become equal to you and the question of your controlling them never arises. You are in all the objects as their cause but still you are their controller. You are in all of them in equal measure but still it can never be known as to what is your nature. The one, who thinks that he knows you, in reality does not know you at all. You can never become the object of anybody's intellect.

It is not that you are transformed into an individual soul (Jiva). The Prakriti that creates and the soul (Purusha) which is inactive are both unborn. Just as due to the play of the water and air, the bubbles in the ocean are formed, the creation is due to the apparent union of both Prakriti and Purusha (the one being mistaken for the other). Due to the superimposition of the one on the other, the individual souls assume

various names and qualities (Gunas). Just as all the essences of the flowers are absorbed in the honey and all the rivers get absorbed in the ocean the entire world and all individual beings get absorbed in you, leaving off all their individuality. They all arise in you and merge in you.

All the individual, souls due to your Maya get into a delusion and remain roaming indefinitely in the vicious circles of birth and death. The wise people sometimes take shelter under your feet, with all devotion, which have the capacity to release us from the samsara (phenomenal world of birth and death) which is created and dissolved at the knitting of your eye-brows. How can the circle of time with its three fold constituents of winter, summer and rainy seasons create any fear in the minds of those people who surrender to you with love?²

Those who try to bring under control their rebellious and wavering minds by themselves by resorting to breath-control (Pranayama) etc. do not succeed but only become unhappy due to the efforts made by them. Those who make efforts without seeking shelter under a Guru(master) undergo hundreds of sufferings just like the travellers in a boat venturing into an ocean without the help of a helmsman to pilot them through the turbulent waters. In the spiritual path, a Guru is a 'must' and unavoidable.³

You, the Self, the embodiment of bliss are always there. What is the use of people going after their own body, relatives, son, wife, money etc. which are subject to destruction? They cannot give permanent happiness and have no existence of their own. What happiness can they give?

Oh Lord, those holy men who are bereft of the pride of their sadhanas (spiritual practice) learning etc. are the real holy places of pilgrimage in this earth and they purify others also. This is because your lotus feet are always shining in their hearts (i.e. they are constantly remembering you with love) and the water got by washing their feet is capable of destroying all the sins of those followers. When once they surrender their mind to you, the repository of infinite bliss, they never again get entangled in their bodies or houses etc. which only rob one of his real wealth namely discrimination, peace , courage etc.

Some hold that the world has come out of Reality and so it has also to be real. The very fact of differentiation that one is the cause and the other is an effect shows that both cannot be the same. For instance the father and his son (a cause and an effect) cannot be the same. Hence this view is untenable. When we mistake a rope and a serpent in the dark, even though the cause (the rope) is true, the serpent is false. As in the case of the rope and the snake,

because of the union of ignorance with reference to the substratum of the Reality, the world looks as if it is real. For the purpose of transaction in the world it can be accepted as a 'phenomenal' truth and not as an absolute one. The ignorant people however take it as an absolute truth and being conditioned by the delusions from earlier periods they accept it due to the blind tradition. These people whose intellect has become dull due to their being involved in rituals are deluded by the scriptures which declare the fruits of actions as eternal for a different reason.

This world never existed prior to creation and does not exist after the dissolution. This is only an appearance in the middle, a superimposition on the Supreme Being which is always of the form of undivided bliss. Hence it is an untruth. Hence it is that the scriptures describe the world through the following example. It is the gold which constitutes the ear rings, bangles and the anklets and the difference is only in the names. It is all gold only. The differences are only a fabrication of the mind, but the ignorant people consider them as true.

When the individual soul falls into ignorance, being deluded by your power of Maya, it gets entangled in the three modes (Gunas) i.e. satwa, rajas and tamas. It also gets entangled in the effects of these gunas namely the modifications of the mind, the senses and

the bodies and begins to revel in them. It forgets its real nature of bliss etc. and considers the death of the bodies etc. as its own death. You, as the Supreme Being, have no connection with Maya or ignorance and revel in your own glory of infinite wealth, fame, virtue, knowledge and dispassion. All the eight mystic powers like becoming light, heavy, becoming of atomic proportions, very big etc. come to you automatically.

If a person, even after renouncing all and becoming a monk does not uproot all his desires from the heart, he cannot realise the Supreme Being despite the fact that the latter resides in his heart. It is like a lady wearing a necklace in her own neck and searching for it everywhere else unsuccessfully. Those seekers who are engaged only in fulfilling the demands of the senses suffer in unhappiness both here and hereafter. Even after they die, they are beset with the fear of going to the hell. While alive they are beset with the fear of death, besides the futile efforts they make during their life time.

The person who knows your real nature does not know the fruits of merit or sin i.e. the happiness and sorrow which are given by you. As he has no sense of doer-ship and experiencer-ship, he rises above them all. Even the scriptures with their injunctions and prohibitions do not apply to such persons as they are essentially meant for those who consider the body as

their Self. If ever those who are attached to their bodies were to hear your sporting as various incarnations and seat you in their heart they will also go beyond the teaching of the scriptures. This is because you are the final goal of all in the form of liberation.⁴

Even the lords of the higher worlds like heavens could never measure you as you are infinite. You cannot also know them as countless universes, each one several times greater than the other, are always rotating round you along with their coverings which hide them, just as the small particles of dust arising in the sky due to the wind blowing. Even the scriptures describe you only by negating all the objects as 'not this' 'not this' etc. Finally, they negate themselves too so that they lose their existence in you. Thus the scriptures succeed in describing you.

Hari Om

The Hymn of the Vedas

1. त्वदनुपथं कुलायमिद मात्मसुहृत्प्रियवत्
चरति तथोन्मुखे त्वयि हिते प्रिय आत्मनि च ।
न बत रमन्त्यहो असदुपासनताऽऽत्महनो यदनुशया
भ्रमन्त्युरुभये कुशरीरभृतः॥ (10-87-22)
2. नृषु तव मायया भ्रमममीष्ववगत्य भृशं
त्वयि सुधियोऽभवे दधति भावमनुप्रभवम्।
कथमनुवर्ततां भवभयं तव यद् भ्रुकृटिः
सृजति मुहुस्त्रिणेमि रभवच्छरणेषु भयम्॥
(10-87-32)
3. विजितहृषीक वायुभिरदान्तमनस्तुरगं
य इह यतन्ति यन्तु मतिलोलमुपायखिदः।
व्यसनशतान्विताः समवहाय गुरोश्चरणं
वणिज इवाज सन्त्यकृत कर्णधरा जलधौ॥
10-87-33)
4. त्वदवगमी न वेत्थि
भवदुत्थशुभाशुभयोर्गुणविगुणान्वयांस्तर्हि देहभृतां च गिरः।
अनुयुगमन्वहं सगुण गीतपरम्परया
श्रवणभृतो यतस्त्वमपवर्गगतिर्मनुजैः॥ (10-87-40)

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1. Books published by Shri Purushottamananda Trust

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1	Autobiography in Malayalam	1956
2	Autobiography in English	1994
3	Autobiography in Hindi	2007
4	Updeshamrit	1979
5	Nectar of Spiritual Instructions	1986
6	A Peep into the Gita	1990
7	Gita ki ek Jhalak	2000
8	Adhyatma	2000
9	Spiritual talks	1990
10	Guide to Spiritual Aspirants	1986
11	Souvenir (in Hindi and English)	2004
12	Souvenir (in Hindi and English)	2011

2. Books authored by His Holiness Swami Shantananda Puri ji

Sr.	Title of Book	Year of Publication
1	Srimad Bhagavatam : Its message for the Modern Man	1998
2	Sadhanas in Bhagvad Gita	1999
3	Srimad Bhagvat - Adhunik Manav ke Liye Iska Sandesh	2000
4	Srimad Bhagvad Gita ki Adhyatmik Sadhanayein (In Hindi)	2001
5	Fragrant flowers	2002
6	Jivan Mukti : Liberation- Here & Now	2002
7	Stories for Meditation	2003
8	Answers to basic spiritual questions of Sadhaks	2003
9	Sri Lalita Sahasranama Stotram : An Insight	2003
10	Instant Self- Awareness : Talks on Asthavakra Gita	2004
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31	Sri Shiva Sahasranama Stotram (As per Linga Purana) Revised	2011
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3. Other documents authored by H.H. Swami Shantananda Puri ji

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2	What I Pray for
3	Gems from Srimad Bhagvatam
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6	Mantapushpam
7	Sri Suktam- an Exegesis
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