

The sages who have been blessed with Self-knowledge have nothing else to gain. And this supreme knowledge has already been explained. Still, it is again delineated from another angle. While *Brahma jñāna* is the easiest to acquire for those who have purified their minds, it is the hardest and the least understood for those whose minds are steeped in worldliness. It therefore requires to be presented in as many ways as possible. The votaries of *Brahma jñāna* are designated as Munis. Perfection is theirs to the extent they make progress in this knowledge. While the advanced *Brahma jñānis* are ever perfect in themselves, their bodily existence often puts on apparent defects. The limits of the *Kshetra* ought not however to be imputed to the *Kshetrajna* or the self. But since this error is committed frequently, Self-knowledge requires to be expounded repeatedly and in a variety of ways.

Knowledge pertaining to Iswara is the real knowledge. Branches of arts and sciences, logic, grammar—learning such as these usually confuse the understanding instead of clarifying it. Sacred books often function as shackles that prevent free thinking. All learning is good if it can ever guide man Godward.

—Sri Ramakrishna

The benefits of *Brahma jñāna* are :—

इदं ज्ञानमुपाश्रित्य मम साधर्म्यमागताः ।

सर्गेऽपि नोपजायन्ते प्रलये न व्यथन्ति च ॥ २

इदम् ज्ञानम् उप-आ-श्रित्य मम साधर्म्यम् आ-ग(म्)-ताः ।

सर्गे अपि न उप-(जन्)जा-यन्ते प्र-लये न व्यथ-न्ति च ॥

*idam jñānam upāśritya mama sādharmaṃyāṃ āgatāḥ ।*

*'sarge 'pi no 'pajāyante pralaye na vyathanti ca ॥*