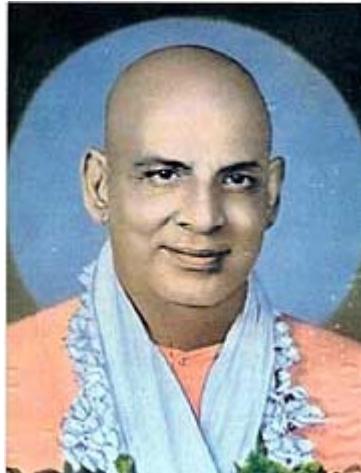


HOW TO GET VAIRAGYA

By

SRI SWAMI SIVANANDA



**Sri Swami Sivananda
Founder of
The Divine Life Society**



**SERVE, LOVE, GIVE,
PURIFY, MEDITATE,
REALIZE
So Says
Sri Swami Sivananda**

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OM

भोगे रोगभयं कुले च्युतिभयं वित्ते नृपालाङ्गयं ।
 माने दैन्यभयं बले रिपुभयं रूपे जराया भयम् ॥
 शास्त्रे वादिभयं गुणे खलभयं काये कृतान्ताङ्गयं ।
 सर्वं वस्तु भयान्वितं भुवि नृणां वैराग्यमेवाभयम् ॥

bhoge rogabhayam kule cyutibhayam vitte nrpālādbhayam |
 māne dainyabhayam bale ripubhayam rūpe jarāyā bhayam ||
 śāstre vādibhayam gune khalabhayam kāye krtāntādbhayam |
 sarvam vastu bhayānvitam bhuvi nṛṇām vairāgyamevābhayam ||

In enjoyment there is fear of disease; in social position, the fear of falling off; in wealth, the fear of (hostile) kings; in honour, the fear of humiliation; in power, the fear of foe men; in beauty, the fear of old age; in scriptural erudition, the fear of opponents; in virtue, the fear of traducers; in body, the fear of death. All the things of this world pertaining to human beings are attended with fear; renunciation alone stands for fearlessness.

—*Vairagya Sakatam of Bhartrihari.*

ब्रह्मादिस्थावरान्तेषु वैराग्यं विषयेष्वनु ।
 यथैव काकविष्टायां वैराग्यं तद्वि निर्मलम् ॥

brahmādisthāvarāntēṣu vairāgyam viṣayēṣvanu |
 yathaiva kākaviṣṭhāyām vairāgyam taddhi nirmalam ||

Spotless freedom from desires means such a dissatisfaction in respect of all objects from Brahma down to inanimate things as is felt in respect of the excrement of a crow.

—*Acharya Sankara*

VAIRAGYA DINDIMA

(A Proclamation of Dispassion)

कामः क्रोधश्च लोभश्च देहे तिष्ठन्ति तस्करः ।

ज्ञानरत्नापहाराय तस्माज्जाग्रत जाग्रत ॥

kāmaḥ krodhaśca lobhaśca dehe tiṣṭhanti taskaraḥ |
jñānaratnāpahārāya tasmājjāgrata jāgrata ||

There lurk thieves in the frame viz., lust, anger and greed to steal the jewel of thy wisdom.
Therefore awake! awake!!

जन्म दुःखं जरा दुःखं जाया दुःखं पुनः ।

संसारमागरं दुःखं तस्माज्जाग्रत जाग्रत ॥

janma duḥkham jarā duḥkham jāyā duḥkham punaḥ |
samsāramāgaram duḥkham tasmājjāgrata jāgrata ||

Birth is full of pains : old age is full of miseries: woman is again and again the source of all miseries and pains. This ocean of Samsara is full of grief. Therefore wake up! wake up!!

माता नास्ति पिता नास्ति नास्ति बन्धुः सहोदरः ।

अर्थ नास्ति गृहं नास्ति तस्माज्जाग्रत जाग्रत ॥

mātā nāsti pitā nāsti nāsti bandhuḥ sahodaraḥ |
artham nāsti gṛham nāsti tasmājjāgrata jāgrata ||

You have no mother, no father, no relatives, no brothers, no wealth, no house, (nothing will remain for ever, nothing will follow you after death). Therefore wake up! wake up!!

आशया बध्यते लोके कर्मणा बहुचिन्तया ।

आयुः क्षीणं न जानाति तस्माज्जाग्रत जाग्रत ॥

āśayā badhyate loke karmaṇā bahucintayā |
āyuh kṣīṇam na jānāti tasmājjāgrata jāgrata ||

You are bound in this world by desires, actions and manifold anxieties. Therefore you don't know that life is slowly decaying and is wasted away. Therefore wake up! wake up!!

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REMEMBER THE LORD

(The world is full of vanities)

याद हक्क करना कराना है फक्त साधुका काम ।

खलक को रस्ता दिखाना है फक्त सधु का काम ॥

yāda haqa karanā karānā hai phaqata sādhukā kāma |
khalaka ko rastā dikhānā hai phaqata sadhu kā kāma ||

It is the only duty of the Sadhus to remember and make others remember the “Right” (Absolute) and it is the only duty of the Sadhus, to be the guide of the whole world.

दिन नीके बीते जाते हैं ।
dina nīke bīte jāte hai |
The days are passing away speedily.

सुमिरन कर श्री राम नाम तज विषय भोग और सर्व काम ।
तेरे सङ्ग चले नहि एक दाम जो हेते है सो पाते है ॥
दिन नीके बीते जाते है ॥१॥

sumirana kara śrī rāma nāma taja visaya bhoga aura sarva kāma |
tere saṅga cale nahi eka dāma jo hete hai so pāte hai ||
dina nīke bīte jāte hai || 1 ||

Remember the (holy) Name of Sri Rama, i. e., remember God. Give up all the worldly and the sexual enjoyments, and all other deeds, too. Not a dama (1/20th part of an anna) will go with you. Only they get (something) who give (something). The days are passing away speedily.

भाईं बन्धु और कुटुम्ब परिवारा सब जीते जी के नते हैं ।
 किसके हो तुम कैन तुम्हारा किसके बल हरिनाम विसारा ॥
 दिन नीके बीते जाते हैं ॥२ ॥

bhāī bandhu aura kuṭuma parivārā saba jite jī ke nate haim |
 kiske ho tuma kaina tumhārā kiske bala harināma visārā ||
 dina nīke bīte jāte hai || 2 ||

Brothers, friends, relatives and family members—All these are related to you as long as you live. Otherwise “who is yours”? (Dear Ones!) On whose strength have forgotten the (holy) Name of Hari! (the Almighty)? The days are passing away speedily.

लख चौरासी भरम के आये बड़े भाग मानुष तन पाते ।
 तिस पर भीर्नाह करी कमाई किर पाछे पछताते हैं ॥
 दिन नीके बीते जाते हैं ॥३ ॥

lakha caurāsī bharama ke āye ba.De bhāga mānusa tana pāte |
 tisa para bhīrnāmha karī kamāī kira pāche pachatāte haim ||
 dina nīke bīte jāte hai || 3 ||

You have already travelled over the 84 lakhs of Yonis (wombs) of the animal world. It is very fortunate of you that you have got this human body. Still you have not done anything (for the next birth). And therefore, you will have to repent for it. The days are passing away speedily.

जो तू लागे विषय विलासा मूरख कँसे मृत्यु की पाशा ।
 स्क्या देखे आसा की आसा गये केर नहीं आते हैं ॥
 दिन नीके बीते जाते हैं ॥४ ॥

jo tū lāge viṣaya vilāsā mūrakha ka.Nse mr̄tyu kī pāśā |
 kyā dekhe śvāsa kī āsā gaye kera nahīm āte haim ||
 dina nīke bīte jāte hai || 4 ||

If you entangle yourselves in worldly enjoyments after the objects, Oh foolish people! You entangle yourselves in the clutches of the so-called death. And why! Are you hoping for breaths (after breaths)? (Remember) what is gone is gone for ever. They, those that have passed away will never return. The days are passing away speedily.

EVEN THIS WILL PASS AWAY

Once in Persia reigned a king,
Who upon a signet ring,
Carved a maxim strange and wise,
When held before his eyes,
Gave him counsel at a glance,
Fit for every change and chance:
Solemn words, and these were they:
“EVEN THIS WILL PASS AWAY.”

Trains of camel through the sand
Brought him gems from Samarcand;
Fleets of galleys over the seas
Brought him pearls to rival these,
But he counted little gain,
Treasures of the mine or main;
“What is wealth?” the king would say,
“EVEN THIS WILL PASS AWAY.”

Mid the pleasures of his court
At the zenith of their sport,
When the palms of all his guests
Burned with clapping at his jests,
Seated midst the figs and wine,
Said the king, “Ah, friends of mine.
Pleasure comes but not to stay,
“EVEN THIS WILL PASS AWAY.”

Woman, fairest ever seen
Was the bride he crowned as queen,
Pillooned on the marriage-bed
Whispering to his soul, he said,
“Though no monarch ever pressed
Fairer bosom to his breast,
Mortal flesh is only clay!
“EVEN THIS WILL PASS AWAY.”

Fighting on the furious field,
Once a javelin pierced his shield,
Soldiers with a loud lament
Bore him bleeding to his tortured side,
“Pain is hard to bear;” he cried.
“But with patience, day by day,
EVEN THIS WILL PASS AWAY.”

Towering in a public square
Forty cubits in this air,
And the king disguised, unknown,
Gazed upon his sculptured name.
And he pondered, "What is fame?"
"Fame is but a slow decay!
"EVEN THIS WILL PASS AWAY."

Struck with palsy, sore and old,
Waiting at the gates of gold,
Said he with his dying breath
"Life is done, but what is Death?"
Then as answer to the king
Fell a sunbeam on his ring;
Showing by a heavenly ray.
EVEN THIS WILL PASS AWAY."

—Theodore Tilton

SONG OF VAIRAGYA

Rama Rama Rama Rama Rama
Rama Rama Rama Rama Rama:
Why do you search in vain
For pleasure outside?
Go to the fountain source
In the subjective Atma:
Awake, arise, stop not
Till the goal is reached.

(Rama Rama ...) ...)

How long you want to remain
Slave of passion, tell me please?
Try to seek peace within
By dispassion; practice (Vairagya and Abhyasa)

(Rama Rama ...) ...)

Are you not really fed up
With illusory objects?
Enjoy the Atmic Bliss
By Manana, Nididhyasana,
Reflection, meditation.

(Rama Rama ...) ...)

SONG OF JNANA-VAIRAGYA

Sunaja Sunaja Sunaja Krishna
Tu Gitawala Jnana Sunaja Krishna.

At first there is a tender emotion and warm affection,
Then it gross into glowing love, burning passion.

Through Sravana and Satsang comes admiration,
Then attraction, attachment, supreme love.

I want my dear beloved Krishna alone;
I want neither Mukti nor temporal blessings.

The world is unreal, full of miseries,
God alone is real, full of Ananda.

You are running after the unreal shadow,
You have forgotten the real substance.

You came alone (weeping), will go alone (weeping), no one will follow,
Do Bhajan, do Kirtan, this will follow,

Why do you fight in vain with your brothers? Fight with the mind and the Indriyas.
Why do you weep in vain for the death of relatives? Weep for the separation of the Lord.

The love between husband and wife is selfish love,
Brothers, sisters are united for selfish ends.

Death is ever waiting to devour you all,
That 'tomorrow' will never come, open your eyes now (wake up now).

Life is short, time is fleeting, (many obstacles to Japa and kirtan),
Apply yourself diligently to Yogic Sadhan.

This world is a mela for two days,
This life is a play for two seconds, (This body is a bubble for two seconds).

When one is in union with God, it is Samadhi,
The Yogi gets infinite bliss and knowledge.

Bhakti-Yoga is crossing river by boat,
Jnana-Yoga is crossing river by swimming.

A Jnani gets knowledge by self-reliance,

A Bhakta gets Darshan by self-surrender.

When there is one Vritti it is Savikalpa,
When there is Triputi-Laya, it is Nirvikalpa.

When one is in fourth Bhumika, it is Jivanmukti,
When there is no body-consciousness, it is Videhamukti

When you are in a state of Turiya, it is Jivanmukti,
When you are in Turiyatita, it is Videhamukti.

When there is Svarupanas, it is Jivanmukti.
When there is Arupanas, it is Videhamukti.

When Jagrat appears as Svapna, it is Jivanmukti,
When Jagrat appears as Sushupti, it is Videhamukti.

FOUR SPIRITUAL GEMS

- 1. Remember the pains of Samsara**
- 2. Remember Death**
- 3. Remember the Saints**
- 4. Remember God**

1 and 2 will produce Vairagya. 3 will bring inspiration. 4 will cause attainment of God-Consciousness.

HOW TO GET VAIRAGYA

(Remember these seven vital points)

1. Hari Om, Sensual pleasure is momentary, deceptive, illusory and imaginary.
2. A mustard of pleasure is mixed with a mountain of pain.
3. Enjoyment cannot bring about satisfaction of a desire. On the contrary it makes the mind more restless after enjoyment through intense craving (Trishnas and Vasanas).
4. Sensual pleasure is an enemy of Brahma-Jnana
5. Sensual pleasure is the cause for birth and death.
6. This body is nothing but a mass of flesh, bone, and all sorts of filth.
7. Place before the mind the fruits of Self-realization or life in the soul or Brahman or the Eternal, such as Immortality, Eternal bliss, Supreme peace and Infinite knowledge. If you remember the seven points always, the mind will be weaned from the cravings for sensual pleasures. Vairagya, Viveka and Mumukshutva (dispassion, discrimination from the real and the unreal, and keen longing for liberation from birth and death) will dawn. You should seriously look into the defects of sensual life (Dosha-Drishti) and into the unreal nature of worldly life (Mithya-Drishti).

Read this once daily as soon as you get up from the bed.

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

To The First Edition

While it will be accepted on all hands that the first and foremost requisite or qualification for an aspirant treading the path of Ancient Wisdom or Yoga is Vairagya born of pure discrimination, it is strange that nowadays when numberless books on Yoga, Vedanta and other allied subjects are displayed at the sales window, none of these learned treatises has ever thought or taken into head to supply this dire and long felt need of spiritual aspirants. At such a time a book on "HOW TO GET VAIRAGYA" by no less an eminent sage, Yogi and philosopher than His Holiness Sri Swami Sivananda should be quite welcome to one and all.

True, the subject of Vairagya has been dealt with in the sacred books of India by ancient sages like Vasishtha, Vyasa, Yajnavalkya, Bhartrihari and others, but nowhere will the reader get a clear, concise and compact knowledge of the subject, at the same time suited to modern-conditions, tastes and requirements. While emphasis was laid on ruthless renunciation, mental as well as, physical, by the ancients as a precondition to Self-Realization, it is quite refreshing and heartening to hear from the Himalayan Yogi that "Vairagya is purely an internal mental state," "it is not a mere external show," and "a man may remain in the busy world amidst various luxuries, and yet he may possess perfect Vairagya, while a Sadhu who lives in a cave in the far-off regions of the Himalayas may be keenly attached to his Kamandalu, walking stick or piece of cloth."

It is earnestly hoped that the object with which this publication has been undertaken will be realized in the fullest measure.

1st October, 1938.

—THE PUBLISHERS

PREFACE

"Happiness is within," "What is Vairagya?" "Miseries of mundane existence," "Body," "Woman," "World," "Essence of Vairagya-Satakam" and "Inspiring stories."

In "Happiness is within," I have emphasized that happiness which is the driving motive of all human endeavours is not in the perishable objects of the world, but is within one's own self and that even the very little momentary pleasure you get from sensual enjoyments is but a reflection of the Atman Bliss only. Real and lasting happiness can be had only from God, or the Atman, which shines in the chambers of your heart.

In the chapter entitled "What is Vairagya," I have pointblank stated that Vairagya does not consist in running away in home, shirking the duties and responsibilities of life but that it is purely an internal state and that a man while living in the world amidst various luxuries may be a perfectly dispassionate soul. The chapter is for the sake of convenience and ease divided into thirteen headings, all useful and interesting. The need for renunciation of desire as a means to liberation from bondage, varieties of Vairagya, its various stages, how to develop it, the path of renunciation, what Vairagya is and what it is not—these and many other allied topics have been nicely handled.

“Miseries of mundane existence” is the inspiring title of the third chapter. It should be borne in mind that ignorance is the real cause of all misery and hence it should by all means be done away with and Self-Knowledge attained, if these miseries of mundane life are to come to an end. One may easily renounce wife, son and property, but to renounce name and fame is an extraordinary feat of the highest spirituality. To attain knowledge of Self such a degree of renunciation is indispensably necessary. I have condemned building of Ashrams and making disciples with a reservation clause because this to me seems to be the prime cause of failure to attain the goal of Yoga practice in the case of many a good aspirant nowadays.

Chapter four deals with “Body.” Attachment to body is the cause of misery and bondage and this attachment is of course due to ignorance of the Reality. When attachment for one’s own body comes, then desire for sensual enjoyments, lust, anger, greed, worry, anxiety and innumerable other miseries also come in its train. If this is cut at the root by negating the body and identifying one’s self with the supreme Self, then all miseries and sorrows will come to an end. Hence the condemnation of attachment to the body is purely carnal; it is not pure, unselfish love. Hence condemnation of such love is justified.

“World” is the title of the sixth chapter. Due to ignorance man believes that the world in which he lives is a solid reality and that there is nothing beyond it. He therefore wants to indulge in all sorts of sensual pleasures with a view to get happiness from them. Had he known that the world in which he lives is unreal and that there is something else which is an embodiment of Happiness, realizing which one enjoys highest bliss, he would not do so. With a view to get happiness from objects, he undergoes severe pain, tortures and tribulations and yet he does not get the least satisfaction from them. I have tried to convince the reader that this world of names and forms is unreal, transitory and fleeting, that God, or the Atman alone is real and full of bliss and that he should try to realize the Atman and get the happiness he wants from it.

In the next chapter entitled “Essence of Vairagya-Satakam” I have given in a nutshell the sum and substance of Bhartrihari’s century of verses which will be found very useful to those who cannot afford to obtain each and every book pertaining to Yoga or Vedanta.

In chapter eight, entitled “Inspiring Stories,” the reader gets half a dozen thrilling and inspiring stories of great saints and Yogis of ancient India, which are calculated to produce deep Vairagya in him, and it is my firm belief that a book on Vairagya like the present one has never been presented to the public as yet.

Prasnottari of Sri Sankaracharya is appended at the end, which will be a source of strong inducement to lead a life of dispassion in the world.

May the students of Yoga and Vedanta in the East and West be all inspired to unstinted action by a perusal of this volume is the earnest prayer of :

SWAMI SIVANANDA
15th September, 1938.

PRAYER

O Adorable Lord! Thou art the subtle. Hence it is very difficult to understand and realize Thee. Thou art the past, present and future. There is nothing but Thee. Thou art the Infinite ocean of Grace and Mercy. Thou art known to Thy devotee alone. Thou art without attributes and without forms and yet Thou possess attributes and forms. It is very difficult to comprehend Thy glory and greatness. Thou art my father, mother, Guru and sole refuge. Salutations unto Thee! Protect me. Guide me. Lift me up from this terrible round of births and deaths.

O Lord! Thou art the indweller of all Thou art the soul in all! Thou art the womb of all! Thou art the protector of all: Thou art the bestower of fruits of Karma to all: Thou art all; Thou dwellest in all; Thou art the source of all; Thou art the giver of Moksha to all. Prostrations unto Thee!

O Lord! If Thou art the sun, then I am the ray; if Thou art the ocean, I am the wave: if Thou art the Himalayas, I am the tree; if Thou art the Ganga, I am the drop; if Thou art the garden, I am the flower; if Thou art the electric light, I am the bulb; If Thou art the landscape, I am the grass. By loving Thee, I have become Immortal. The noose of Yama is cut asunder. Salutations unto Thee!

O Self-effulgent Lord! Thou art the Supporter, the Saviour, the Creator, the Inner Ruler, the Governor, the Master, the Protector and the Deliverer. Thou art the Dispeller of the darkness of ignorance. Thou art the Remover of the miseries and sufferings of Thy devotees. Thou art the Destroyor of the three kinds of sufferings (Tapas) or fevers of human beings. O Venerable Lord! Salutations unto Thee! In Thee I take refuge. Give me purity and devotion. Let my wandering, mischievous mind always rest in Thy blessed Lotus feet.

O Sovereign Lord of all creations! I do not want any wealth, or Moksha or power or dominion. But I do want that sufferings and troubles of all beings should come to an end for ever. Thou art ocean of mercy. Thou art omnipotent. Thou can do this.

OM

In Memory of

Lord Buddha, Raja Bhartrihari and Raja Gopichand,

who were embodiments of Vairagya,

who renounced their kingdom,

throne and their all for the

attainment of the Infinite

or

the final beatitude of life

or Kaivalya,

the Supreme Abode of Immortality

and

Eternal Bliss

OM

HAPPINESS IS WITHIN

Man wants happiness. He shuns pain. He moves heaven and earth to get the happiness he wants from sensual objects and, lo, gets himself entangled in the inextricable meshes of Maya. Poor man! He does not know that these objects are perishable and evanescent, finite and conditioned in time, space and causation. And what is more, he fails to get the desired happiness from them.

This world is imperfect (*Apurna*) and there is uncertainty of life. A barrister-at-law talks at the telephone, ascends the staircase to take his meals and, alas, while ascending he dies on the staircase. Such instances are not uncommon to you all.

There is not an iota of happiness in objects, because they are insentient (*Jada*). Even the sensual pleasure is a reflection of Atmic Bliss only. Just as a dog that sucks a dry bone in the street imagines foolishly that blood is oozing out of the dry bone, whereas blood is really oozing from its own palate, so also worldly-minded people foolishly imagine that the happiness they enjoy in everyday life comes from objects only.

You can find eternal, infinite, supreme peace and bliss only in your Atma which shines in all its splendour and glory in the chambers of your heart. It is an embodiment of Bliss (*Ananda Swarupa*).

There is mental uneasiness, dissatisfaction, discontentment and restlessness even in multimillionaires and kings. Some kind of sorrow, misery or pain is invariably present even when they are in the height of enjoyment of worldly pleasures. Show me a man who is perfectly happy? When the marriage of his second son is being celebrated, the remembrance of the death of his first son who passed away only sometime ago torments his mind.

Mind is so constituted that the rhythm of pleasure and pain is kept up like the rhythm of systole and diastole of the heart. You entertain the fear that the happiness will pass away soon, when you are in happy surroundings. This adds pain, when you are in the enjoyment of sensual pleasures. Even if you remove the pain by some means or other, it again manifests in some form or other such as loss of property, disease, death, hostility and disappointment.

There is no hope of immortality by means of riches. Such indeed is the emphatic and irrefutable declaration of the *Upanishads*. “*Na karmana na prajayana dhanena tyagenaikamritatvamanasuh*. Neither by rituals, nor by progeny, nor by riches but by renunciation alone one can attain immortality.”

Mere giving up of objects will not constitute real renunciation. Dear friends, remember this point well. True Tyaga or renunciation consists in renouncing egoism, “I-ness,” “mine-ness,” selfishness, desires and cravings of all sorts.

For all beings a human birth is verily difficult to attain, more so with a male body. It is said that there are three things which are rare indeed and are due to the grace of God viz., a human birth, the longing for liberation and the protecting care of a perfected sage. The man who having by some virtuous actions done in previous births obtained a human birth with a male body and a good intellect to boot is foolish enough not to exert for Self-Realization verily commits suicide, for he kills himself by clinging to things unreal.

You will now ask me the pertinent question : “Why should I realize the Atman?” I say because Self-Realization gives you freedom from the Samsaric wheel of births and deaths with its concomitant evils. Hear the emphatic declaration of the Upanishads: “This Atman (Self) which is free from sin, undecaying, undying, free from sorrow, hunger and thirst, with true desires and true resolves—that is what is to be sought after, and which one must wish to understand; one who has sought after his Self and understand It, obtains all worlds and all desires.” (*Chhandogya Upanishad*).

Hear again the forcible utterances of the same *Chhandogya Upanishad*: “*Yo vai Bhuma tat sukham na alpe sukham asti, bhumaiva sukham bhuma tveva vijijnasitavyah*. The infinite (the Great) is bliss. There is no bliss in what is small (finite). The Infinite alone is Bliss. But one should wish to understand the Infinite.”

Every man in this world is restless, discontented and dissatisfied. He feels that he is in want of something, the nature of which he does not really understand. He seeks, in the accomplishment of ambitious projects, the rest and peace that he feels he is in need of. But he finds to his great sorrow and disappointment that worldly greatness when secured is a delusion and a snare. He does not find any happiness in it. He gets coveted degrees, diplomas, titles, honours, power, position, name and fame; he marries; he begets beautiful babies; in short, he gets all that he supposes would give him happiness. But yet he finds no real rest and peace.

Pious men, saints, sages, Acharyas and prophets are never tired of saying that this restlessness of every man, this state of discontentment, dissatisfaction and uncomfortableness of being ill at ease with himself and his environments is solely due to the loss of the companionship of the partner of his soul, who is ever eternally shining in the chambers of your heart, who is ready to embrace you with outstretched hands, if you really care to see Him and if you are really spiritually thirsty and hungry.

One anna of pleasure is mixed with fifteen annas of pain. Pleasure that is mixed with pain, fear and worry is no pleasure at all. If you carefully begin to analyze this one anna of pleasure also, it will dwindle into an airy nothing. You will find that it is a mere play of the mind. O man! Wake up. Open your eyes. Develop Viveka. You cannot get the real happiness from finite objects.

Nitya, Nirupadhika, Niratisaya Ananda (eternal, infinite Bliss) that is independent of objects can be had only in the Immortal Spirit or Atma or Soul or Brahman, the Indweller of your heart. Therefore shun all external things ruthlessly and run to the Feet of the Lord. Develop Vairagya. Vairagya is the rock-bottom foundation for the spiritual path.

Why do men run after the sensual pleasures? What is their concept of happiness? Do Samskaras force them to repeat the same sensual acts again and again? Is man a mere creature of environment or circumstance? Can he not obliterate his Samskaras by effective and suitable means?

On account of ignorance man runs hither and thither to seek happiness in objects. A little ginger bread and some sweetmeats, a son and a young wife, some position and power and a little money in the bank to boot will fill his heart with joy and calm down his nerves. That is all he wants. Bliss of Atma, supersensuous Ananda and Peace, spiritual ecstasy and knowledge are unknown to him. He does not want them. Nay, he dislikes them. He hates people who talk about higher and sublime things. Believe me, man *can* obliterate his Samskaras by *Purushartha* or right exertion. He is *not* a creature of environment or circumstance. He is the master of his destiny.

Amidst the din and boisterous bustle of worldly activities, there do come moments of tranquillity and peace, when the mind for the time being, however short it may be, soars above the filthy worldly things and reflects on the higher problems of life *viz.*, the why and wherefore of life and the riddle of the universe. Man begins to enquire: "Who am I?" The sincere enquirer becomes serious and gets absorbed in his reflections. He begins to search and understand the Truth. Discrimination dawns on him. He seeks Vairagya, concentration, meditation, and purification of the body and mind and eventually attains the highest Knowledge of Self. But the man whose mind is saturated with worldly *Vasanas* and materialistic poison is quite heedless and is irresistibly carried away by the two currents of *Raga* and *Dvesha* and tossed about helplessly hither and thither in the tumultuous Samsaric stream of worldly concerns.

Ah! How uncertain is sensual life in this world! If you constantly think of the transitory nature of sensual pleasure and its concomitant evils *viz.*, miseries, worries, troubles, tribulations, anxieties and premature death, then you will slowly develop Vairagya. The Vairagya that comes momentarily is due to the loss of either wife, relation, friend, son or property; this will not help you much in the spiritual path. What is really wanted is Vairagya born of discrimination or Viveka.

In the presence of sensual pleasure, spiritual bliss cannot exist, just as darkness cannot exist in the presence of light. Therefore show extreme contempt for worldly objects. Destroy all desires. Turn the mind away from the sensual objects. You will develop Vairagya.

You yourself have made your life complex and intricate. You have entangled yourself in this quagmire of Samsara. You have multiplied your wants and desires. Everyday you are forging an additional link to the chain of bondage. Simplicity has vanished. Luxurious habits and ways of living are embraced. No wonder there is unemployment everywhere. People are dying of starvation. There is depression in trade. There is unrest everywhere. There is wholesale devastation by earthquake. Divorce courts are also multiplying. One nation is afraid of another nation. One nation suspects that other nations are preparing for a big war. Life has thus become a matter of uncertainty. It has become a mass of confusion, chaos and bewilderment. It has become stormy and boisterous. It is full of under-currents, cross-currents, subterranean currents and mixed currents. Is there no way of escape from these troubles and difficulties? There is only one way. Lead a life of dispassion, self-control, purity, selfless service, cosmic love. Develop the habit of taking the right point of view, right thinking, right feeling, right acting, with right mental attitude or *Bhav*. Practice devotion and meditation.

O Mohan! You have no real sustained Vairagya. Your present mental state is due to pecuniary embarrassments. This will not help you in the spiritual path. The mind will be waiting to get back the object renounced, when it gets the first opportunity. No doubt you are a man of spiritual Samskaras. But your Vairagya must be of that type that is born of pure Viveka, (*Nityanitya-vastu-Viveka*), discrimination between the real and the unreal. This is a rare commodity, a rare virtue, though many people feign to be in possession of the same.

Thousands of young graduates and young doctors come to me with earthen pots in their hands and attired in orange coloured robes in quest of caves in Uttarakasi and Gangotri for deep meditation and practice of Pranayama. And some young research students in science and some Rajkumars go to the Punjab and Kashmir in silk suits with stiff collars and ties in search of girls for marriage. Is there pleasure or pain in this world? If there is pleasure, why do young educated men retire into forests? If there is pain, why do young men run after wealth, women and position? Mysterious is Maya! Mysterious is Moha!

Try to understand the riddle of life and the riddle of the universe. Acquire Viveka. Take recourse to Satsang. Enquire into the nature of the Atman. Study the *Yoga-Vasishtha* and the Upanishads. Then you will have a comprehensive understanding of the innumerable problems of life. There is not an iota of happiness in this world. Seek the happiness within.

Is not a kingdom valuable to be owned? Is not a summer palace in Kashmir or a pleasant garden with sweet-smelling flowers of various colours nice to live in? Is not the company of young Mabarans with tender waists and lotus-like eyes dear as life itself, very pleasing? Yet wise, dispassionate men like Bhartrihari, Buddha, Gopichand and others retired into forests kicking all these things as worthless as straw, to realize the Self which alone can confer infinite Bliss, Immortality, and eternal Peace.

The spirit comes and goes. Therefore you will have to be careful always in nourishing and protecting your spiritual Samskaras with burning Vairagya, intense and constant Sadhana and burning longing for liberation (*Mumukshutva*). You will have to increase your good Samskaras. You will have to develop them. You will have to multiply them.

Vairagya is purely an internal mental state. A man may remain in the busy world amidst various luxuries, women and wealth, and yet he may possess perfect Vairagya, while a Sadhu who lives in a cave in the far off regions of the Himalayas may be greatly attached to his Kamandalu, walking stick or piece of cloth.

WHAT IS VAIRAGYA?

An Internal Mental State

Raja Janaka, though he ruled a kingdom, was a perfectly dispassionate man. So was Raja Bhagiratha, too. Queen Chudala possessed perfect Vairagya, though she ruled a dominion, while her saintly husband, Raja Sikkidhvaja, who retired into the forest to practice penance and Yoga, was intensely attached to his body and Kamandalu (waterpot).

You cannot form a correct opinion of any Sadhu or Sannyasin or even householder as to his mental state of Vairagya or mental condition by just having a casual talk with him for a few hours or staying with him for a few days. You will have to live with him for a very long time to study his internal mental state.

Generally most people commit serious blunders in these matters. They are deluded by mere external appearances. They mistake a physically nude Sadhu for a great Mahatma in the beginning. Later on they feel obliged to change their impression after closer contact. Physical nudity alone will not constitute real Vairagya. The mind of the physically nude Sadhu may be full of fantastic desires, cravings and appetites. Who knows! What is wanted, therefore, is mental nudity, *i. e.*, complete eradication of *Vasanas*, egoism, etc. Do not be deceived by external appearances. Beware! Beware!! Beware!!!

Defects of Sensual Pleasures

If you do not possess Viveka, if you do not try your extreme level best for the attainment of salvation, if you spend your whole life-time in eating, drinking, sleeping, marrying and propagating race, you are no better than a horizontal being. You will have to sit at the feet of these animals and learn several lessons from them. Even animals possess self-restraint to an astonishing degree. O man, where has your self-restraint gone

Sensual enjoyment is attended with various defects. It is attended with various sorts of sins, pains, weaknesses, attachments, slave-mentality, weak will, severe exertion and struggle, bad habits, cravings, aggravation of desires and mental restlessness. Therefore shun all sorts of sensual enjoyments and rest in peace.

The *Narayana Upanishad* says: “In the beginning these two roads were laid—the road, through Karma and Sannyasa. The latter consists of the renunciation of the threefold desire (son, wealth, and fame). Of these the road through Sannyasa is preferable.” The *Taittiriya Upanishad* also says: “Renunciation (Tyaga) certainly is to be preferred.”

Mere outward giving up of thing is nothing. It is not real renunciation. Real Tyaga or Sannyasa is absolute renunciation of all *Vasanas* and destruction of the heart knot (ignorance), the *Chit-jada-Granthis*.

The Glory of Vairagya

What should be renounced is that *Bhedabuddhi* which says: “I am superior to that man. I have done that. I have done this. I am the body” and the *Kartritwa abhimana* which thinks: “I am the doer.” There is no use of renouncing your home, wife and children, if you cannot renounce these also.

He cannot be truly regarded as having renounced the world altogether who has merely withdrawn himself from worldly possessions. But he, who living in actual contact with the world, finds out its faults (*Doshas*), who is free from every passion and whose soul depends on nothing, may well be said to have truly renounced the world. Read the story of Raja *Sikhidhvaja* in the *Yoga-Vasishtha*. You will clearly understand this point.

Renounce this world. Renounce the desire for *Moksha*. Renounce renunciation itself. Then you will become That. You will become itself.

Dear brother! If you have no real sustained Vairagya, you will find no improvement or progress in spirituality. Vows, austerities, energy and meditation will leak out like water from a cracked pot. Be careful.

There is verily no sword more powerful than Vairagya to cut off all sorts of attachment to this world. Hold this sword in your hand and march along in the spiritual path. You will safely reach the goal.

The shadow of clouds, the friendship with a fool, the beauty of youth, wealth, all these last only for a very short time. They are impermanent. Shun them all ruthlessly.

Only a thirsty man drinks water. Only a hungry man eats food. Even so, a man who is spiritually hungry and thirsty will only drink the Nectar of Immortality.

The life of Vemanna is worthy to be read. He was a *Jnani* of Andhra Desa. He was leading a voluptuous life, most abominable indeed. The moment Vairagya dawned in him, he became an entirely different man. He made no *Sadhana* as he was a *Yoga Bhrashta*, or one who had fallen from Yogic practices in his previous birth, and became a *Jnani*. He was, and is very much revered by devotees.

This search after God and God-Realization is a question of supply and demand. If you really want God, if there is a real demand from your heart for God, then the supply would come.

He is really a Sannyasin who is free from passion, egoism and who possesses Sattvic qualities.

Atma-Vichara (enquiry into the nature of the Atman, or Self) and Yogic practices done without intense Vairagya becomes fruitless.

To get Vairagya one should seriously ponder over the various entanglements and bondage of married life.

If you get Vairagya, rest assured that is a sign of purification of mind (*Chitta-Suddhi*).

The things that used to afford you delight before give you displeasure now. That is a sign of Vairagya.

Vairagya that comes momentarily after such accidents as the loss of some dearly loved relative or wealth is known as Karana Vairagya. It will not help you much in your spiritual advancement. The mind will be simply waiting for an opportunity to catch hold of the sensual objects, when an opportunity arises.

Therefore, Vairagya born of discrimination or Viveka is the premonitory symptom of spiritual development. That will help the aspirant. That will give him a good spiritual uplift.

Varieties of Vairagya

Vairagya is of two kinds viz., Karanavairagya (on account of some miseries) and Viveka-purvaka-Vairagya (on account of discrimination between the real and the unreal).

The mind of a man who has got the former type of Vairagya is simply waiting for a chance to get back the things that have been given up or lost. As soon as the first opportunity occurs, the man gets a downfall and goes back to his former state. Vishaya (sensual object) does havoc in him with a vengeance and redoubled force from reaction. But the other man who has given up objects on account of deep enquiry and Viveka, on account of the illusory nature of objects, will have spiritual advancement. He will not have any downfall.

“Drishta-anursravika vishaya-vitrishnasya vasikarasamjna vairagyam—That particular state of mind which manifests itself in one who does not hanker after objects seen or heard and in which one is conscious of having controlled or mastered those objects is non-attachment.” (*Patanjali’s Yoga-Sutras: 1-15*)

It is only when the mind is absolutely free from attachment of all sorts that true knowledge begins to dawn and Samadhi supervenes. Secret powers, attainment of heaven, states of Videha and Prakritilaya, etc., are all temptations. One should be perfectly free from all sorts of temptations. Samadhi comes by itself when the Yogic student is fully established in perfect Vairagya. Para-Vairagya is the means to Asampra-jnata Samadhi.

Stages in Vairagya

There are four stages in Vairagya:

- (1) *Yatamana* :— This is an attempt not to allow the mind to run into sensual grooves;
- (2) *Vyatireka* :— In this stage some objects are attracting you and you are endeavouring to cut off the attachment and attraction. Slowly Vairagya develops for these objects also. Then the Vairagya matures. When some objects tempt and delude you, you should ruthlessly avoid them. You will have to develop Vairagya for these tempting objects and it must also mature. In this stage you are conscious of your degree of Vairagya towards different objects;
- (3) *Ekendriya* :— The senses stand still and subdued, but the mind has either *Raga* or *Dvesha* for objects. Mind is, in other words, the only sense that functions independently;
- (4) *Vasirara* :— In this highest stage of Vairagya, the objects no longer tempt you. They cause no attraction. The senses are perfectly quiet. The mind also is free from likes and dislikes (*Raga* and *Dvesha*). Then you get supremacy or independence. Now you are conscious of your supremacy. Without Vairagya no spiritual progress is possible.

Vairagya is of three kinds *viz.*, dull (*Manda*), intense (*Tivra*) and very intense (*Tivrataara*). Dull Vairagya cannot help you much in the attainment of your goal.

Vairagya is the opposite of *Raga*, or desire. It is dispassion or non-attachment. It is indifference to sensual objects herein and hereafter. Vairagya thins out the fatty sensual mind. It turns the mind inward (*Antarmukh Vritti*). This is the most important qualification for an aspirant. It is the one and the only means to enter into Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

Vairagya that is born of discrimination is lasting and steady. If you seriously think of the various kinds of pain in this Samsara such as birth, death, worries, depression, suffering, disease, loss, hostility, disappointment, fear, etc., if you understand intelligently the defects of sensual life (*Dosha Drishti*), and the transitory and perishable nature of all objects of the world, Vairagya will immediately dawn.

How to Develop Vairagya

Study of Vairagya-Satakam of Bhartrihari, and the company of dispassionate Sadhus and Sannyasins will also help one in developing Vairagya. The temporary Vairagya which one gets when he is attending the funeral of a dead person and the Vairagya which a pregnant lady in pangs gets cannot help one to attain spiritual exaltation. The mind will pounce upon the objects when it gets opportunities.

Aspirants generally complain to me “Swamiji Maharaj, we are meditating for the last 12 years. But we do not know the reason why we have not made any substantial spiritual progress.”

This is due to lack of intense Vairagya only. The mind will be ever thinking of objects even during meditation. Intense Vairagya only can help the aspirant in attaining Self-Realization.

“*Tarparampurushakyateh gunavaitrismyam*: Para-Vairagya or supreme non-attachment is that state wherein even the attachment to the qualities (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) drops, owing to the knowledge of the Purusha.” (*Patanjali's Yoga Sutras* : 1-16).

The Vairagya described earlier is Apara-Vairagya (lower one). Now comes supreme Vairagya. In the former state, there is preponderance or Sattva. Sattva is mixed with Rajas and Tamas. The Yogi gets Siddhis and becomes a *Videha* or *Prakritilaya*. But the Yogi with Para-Vairagya rejects the Siddhis also and gets Sakshatkara, or *Darsan*, of the Purusha.

In ordinary Vairagya there is a trace of Vasanas and desires. But in Para-Vairagya all Vasanas, Samskaras and desires are fried in toto. In Para-Vairagya there will be no desire at all. Perfect desirelessness is Para-Vairagya. In the Bhagavad Gita you will find: “Objects fall away from the abstinent man, leaving the longing behind. But his longing also ceases, who sees the Supreme.” (11-59).

Note how Vairagya arises in the mind. The transitory, evanescent and perishable nature of all things creates a sort of disgust in all minds and in proportion to the depth and subtlety of nature, this reaction from the world works more or less powerfully in the mind of every individual. An irresistible feeling arises in our mind viz., that the finite can never satisfy the Infinite within us, that the changing and perishable cannot satisfy the change-less and deathless nature that is ours.

When you are not impressed with rich living, rich style of living cannot attract you. When you are impressed with the idea that meat and wine are not at all pleasurable, meat and wine cannot tempt you. When you are impressed that a woman is nothing but a leather-bag of pus, blood, urine, bones and flesh, woman cannot tempt you. In that case, if you fail to get meat or wine or woman, or to have a rich living, you will not be agonized at all in your mind.

Why are you attracted towards a young, beautiful lady? Have you ever seriously thought over this life-and-death problem? The answer is: because owing to your ignorance you vainly think you will get pleasure from her. If you have Vairagya and Viveka, it will at once tell you that you will get immense pain from her rather than pleasure. Then your mind will recede or withdraw from the object, viz., woman.

It is only when the mind, being divested of all its desires is indifferent to pleasure and pain and is not attracted by any object that it will be rendered pure, free from the grip of the great delusion like a bird freed from the cage and roaming about freely in the Akasa.

As soon as Vairagya arises in the mind, it opens the gate of Divine Wisdom. No true and lasting satisfaction comes from the enjoyment of worldly pleasures. Yet, people rush headlong towards objects, even when they know full well that the objects they are trying to seize are unreal and that the world in which they live is fraught with miseries of all sorts. This is *Maya*. When the mind rests in Atma then the only *Nitya-Tripti*, or eternal satisfaction comes. Because the Atman is Paripurna (All-Full). All desires are gratified by realization of Atma or Self.

Sometimes the mind gets disgusted with one kind of Sadhana. It wants some other kind of Sadhana. It rebels against monotony. The aspirant should know how to coax the mind on such occasions and to extract work from it by a little relaxation of mind. The cessation of Sadhana is a grave blunder. Spiritual practices should never be given up under any circumstances. Evil thoughts will be waiting to enter the gates of the mental factory. If the student of Yoga stops his Sadhana, his mind will become the devil's workshop. Do not expect anything. Be sincere and regular in your daily meditation, routine and Tapas. Do not deviate from the path you have chosen. The fruit will come by itself. Your efforts will be surely crowned with roaring success. It takes a long time to purify the mind and get one-pointedness. Be cool and patient my child.

Cut the Knot of Attachment

Attachment is the first child of Maya. The whole Lila of the Lord is being kept up by the force of attachment only. A sober man just tastes a small peg of Champagne, when he is caught up in an evil company and becomes ultimately an inveterate drunkard through attachment to spirit. A teetotaler just takes a whiff of Gold-Flake Cigarette and becomes in due time a terrible smoker through attachment. There is in the mind a gummy substance which is like a mixture of castor-oil, glue, gum-arabic, mucilage of tragacanth, gluten paste, honey, glycerin, jack-fruit's juice and all other pasty substances of this world. The mind is glued, as it were, to the objects of the world with this mixture. Therefore attachment is very strong.

Therefore O man, never say "My body, my son, my wife, my house, my property, my garden, etc." Attachment is the root cause of the innumerable miseries and troubles of this world. Discipline your mind little by little. The old evil habits will creep in. Destroy them to the very root. Lead a life of perfect non-attachment. This is the master key to open the realms of Brahmic Bliss.

But work incessantly without attachment, without any identification. Then alone you can feel that you are a different being. Karma Yoga elevates a man to sublime, magnanimous heights, when done in the right spirit, with the right mental attitude or Bhav. One should patiently work. That is all. No meditation or Samadhi is ever possible without a preliminary training in Nishkamya Karma-Yoga. To work without attachment is doubtless a difficult task. It is an uphill work. But it becomes a very easy job and pleasant too to a man of patience and determination. You will have to do it at any cost, if you want final beatitude and immortality. Everyone of you will have to do it, though not now, at least after taking five hundred births. There is no other alternative but to do so. But the question is: Why not now? Why not in this very birth itself? Why not cut short the cycle of births and deaths and enjoy the Bliss of the Self right now, this very second? Therein lies real wisdom.

Work cannot bring misery, but it is attachment and identification with work that brings in all sorts of unhappiness and bondage. Understand the secret of work, the technique of Karma Yoga and attain God-Consciousness. This *Jnanagni* or fire of wisdom will consume all fruits of actions in toto.

Nivritti-Marga, or the Path of renunciation

Have a strong determination and a strong will. Never think of returning home after taking up to the Nivritti-Marga. Look before you leap. Have courage, fixity of mind and a definite purpose in life. Be not wavering. Are you ready to give up all possessions, including body and life? Then alone come to me. Then alone take to Nivritti-Marga and embrace Sannyasa. Think twice before you come to definite conclusions. This is not a rosy path as you may imagine. It is full of thorns. It is beset with countless difficulties and hardships. Be humble, patient and persevering. Never care for Siddhis or quick awakening of the Kundalini. I shall serve you. I shall help you. I shall take care of you. Be not troubled. Be not anxious. I am your servant always. Be noble-minded. Mere emotional bubbling will not help you much. Some young men have returned to their homes. Difficulties are many in this path. But it can make you a King of kings, an Emperor of emperors.

Those who want to take to seclusion and Nivritti-Marga should observe Mouna, non-mixing and disciplining the Indriyas, mind and body while living in the world. They should train themselves to a laborious hard life, coarse food, sleeping on the ground or a hard mattress without pillows, walking barefooted without umbrellas. Then alone they can bear the rigorous austerities of an ascetic's life. They should give up timidity and shyness in getting alms.

Aspirants who take to the Nivritti-Marga generally become lazy after some time, as they do not know how to utilize their mental energy, as they do not keep any daily routine, as they do not follow the instructions of their masters. They get Vairagya in the beginning, but they have no experience in the spiritual line. They do not make any progress in the end. Intense and constant meditation is necessary for entering into Samadhi.

Have you fully determined with an iron will to stick to this line at any cost? Are you really prepared to sacrifice this body and life in the cause of Truth? Have you understood the glory of Sannyasa and the importance of seclusion? If your daughter, brother, mother or son comes here and weeps, have you got the requisite strength to resist Moha? After coming here can you cut off all sorts of connections with your relatives? Can you stop all correspondences? Do not hide anything. Be absolutely candid. Be frank and guileless. Speak to me the truth now. Open out your heart to me.

Sleepless vigilance is necessary, if you wish to have rapid spiritual advancement. Never rest content with a little achievement or success in the path a little serenity of mind, a little one-pointedness of mind, some visions of angles, or Siddhis, a little faculty of thought-reading, etc. There are still higher summits to ascend, higher regions to climb up.

The attraction for objects and ties of various sorts make a man bound to this world. Renunciation of all attractions and breaking up of all ties constitute real renunciation. That Sannyasin or Yogi who is free from attraction and ties enjoys infinite bliss and supreme joy and peace. Fluctuation and imagination are the two seeds of the mind. Fluctuation is the fuel. Imagination is the fire. The unceasing fire of imagination is kept up by the fuel of fluctuation. If the fuel of fluctuation is withdrawn, the fire of imagination gets extinguished by itself. The mind becomes tranquil. It is withdrawn into its source, the Atma.

You came alone. You came naked. You came weeping. You will go alone. You go naked. You will go weeping. Wily then are you proud of your titles, false wealth and false knowledge? Become humble and meek. You will conquer the whole world through humility. Become pure in thought, word and deed. This is the secret of spiritual life. The Upanishads and the Gita harp again and again upon this one note.

To a passionate man there is much pleasure in this world. He runs after money and women. His mind is intoxicated, perverted and clouded. Poor man, he does not know what he is really doing. But to a Yogi or a man of discrimination this world is a ball of fire. It is a huge furnace in which all beings are roasted. The three kinds of heat *viz.*, *Adhyatmika (internal)*, *Adhidaivika (heavenly)* and *Adhibhautika (external)* are burning him.

Friend! Is there any limit to the number of fathers and mothers and wives you had in the crores and crores of previous incarnations? Yet this clinging and false relationship have not gone. Discrimination has not dawned.

Are you not ashamed to repeat the same old process of eating, drinking and sleeping day in and day out? You are proud of your titles and knowledge. Have you improved your life even a bit? What have you learnt from the recent Bihar and Quetta earthquakes? Are you attempting to reach that imperishable seat, wherein all desires and Trishnas are completely eradicated? Are you endeavouring, in however small a measure it may be, to attain the highest goal of life, Atmic realization, which gives immortality, bliss and peace? You are not crawling now. You have learnt to stand up and walk. You can think, reason out, judge, infer and ratiocinate. Will you not utilize this precious life and all your various faculties in meditation and Self Realization? Can you give me a definite word of promise to the effect? Speak to me the truth now. Climb up the ladder of Yoga. Drink the Nectar of Immortality.

Vairagya born of Viveka is enduring and everlasting. It will not fail the aspirant at any time unlike the Vairagya that comes temporarily to a lady who gives birth to a child or to a man attending a funeral in the crematorium. The view that everything in the world is unreal causes Vairagya or indifference to the enjoyments of this world and the other heaven worlds also. One has to come down to this Mrityu-loka from heaven when the fruits of good works are exhausted.

The same five kinds of enjoyment of sensual pleasures prevail in the heaven worlds also. But they are more intense and subtle. This cannot give real and lasting happiness to a Viveki. He shuns all enjoyments of the heaven world also. He kicks them mercilessly. He is keenly aware of the pleasures of the three worlds and is convinced that they are only a mere drop in the ocean of Brahmic bliss.

Remember the sayings of the Gita

Meditation on the following Slokas of the Bhagavad-Gita will induce true Vairagya: "The delights that are contact-born are, verily, wombs of pain, for they have a beginning and an ending, O Kaunteya, not in them would rejoice the wise." (*Ch. V-22*). "Indifference to the objects of the

senses, and also absence of egoism, insight into the pain and evil of birth and death, old age and sickness.” (*Ch. XIII-8*). “That which from the union of the senses with their objects is at first as nectar, but in the end is like venom.” (*Ch. XVIII-38*). “Having obtained this transient, joyless world, worship Me.”

What Vairagya is not

Vairagya does not mean abandoning social duties and responsibilities of life. It does not mean detachment from the world. It does not mean a life in the solitary caves of the Himalayas or in the crematorium. It does not mean living on Nim-leaves, cow’s urine and dung. It does not mean wearing of matted-hair and a Kamandal made of fence-gourd or coconut shell in the band. It does not mean shaving of head and throwing of clothes.

What Vairagya is

Vairagya is mental detachment from all connections with the world. That is all. A man may live in the world and discharge all the duties of his order and stage of life with perfect detachment. He may be a householder. What if? He may live with family and children. But at the same time he may have perfect mental detachment. He can do his spiritual Sadhana. That man who has perfect mental detachment while remaining in the world is a hero indeed. He is much better than a Sadhu living in the Himalayan caves because the former has to face the innumerable temptations of life every moment.

Wherever a man may go, he carries with him his fickle, restless mind, his Vasanas and Samskaras. Even if he lives in solitude, still he is the same worldly man, if he is engaged in building castles in the air, and thinking of the objects of the world. In such case even the cave becomes a big city to him. If the mind remains quiet, if it is free from attachments, one can be a perfect *Vairagi* even while living in a mansion in the busiest part of a city like Calcutta or Bombay. Such a mansion will be converted in a dense jungle by him.

A dispassionate man has a different mind altogether. He has a different experience altogether. He is a past master in the art or science of separating himself from the impermanent, perishable objects of the world. He has absolutely no attraction for them. He constantly dwells on the Eternal or the Absolute. He identifies himself every moment of his life with the witnessing consciousness that is present in pleasure and in pain, in joy and in sorrow, in censure and in praise, in honour and in dishonour, in all states of life. He stands adamantine as a peak amid a turbulent storm, as a spectator of this wonderful world show. He is not a bit affected by these pleasant and painful experiences. He learns several valuable lessons from them. He has, in other words, no attraction for pleasant objects and repulsion for painful ones. Nor is he afraid of pain. He knows quite well that pain helps a lot in his spiritual progress and evolution, in his long journey towards the Goal. He stands convinced that pain is the best teacher in the world.

Let me sound a note of warning here. Dear aspirants! Vairagya also may come and go, if you are careless and mix promiscuously with all sorts of worldly-minded people. You should develop Vairagya, therefore, to a maximum degree. The mind will be waiting for golden opportunities to get back the things once renounced. Whenever and wherever the mind hisses or raises its hood (for the mind is verily like a serpent), you should take refuge in Viveka and in the imperishable fortress of wise, dispassionate Mahatmas. There are different degrees in Vairagya. Supreme dispassion comes when one gets himself established in Brahman. Now the Vairagya becomes perfectly habitual.

A man can develop inner mental detachment from pleasure and pain while living in the world. He should see that he is not carried away by the pleasant experiences of the world. He should not cling to them. He should simply remain as a silent spectator. If he thus practices for some years, every experience will be a positive step in his ascent in spiritual ladder. Eventually he will be crowned with sanguine success. He will then have an unruffled mind. He will have a poised mind also. A dispassionate man is the happiest and the richest man in all the three worlds. He is also the most powerful man. How can *Maya* tempt him now?

Best Training School

Doctors have a wide field for developing Vairagya. Everyday they come across patients with incurable disease. Everyday they see dead bodies in the mortuary. Thus they have innumerable chances of seeing *Maya* in all her naked state. They can be convinced beyond a ray of doubt of the impermanence of life here in this world of man.

The superintendent of jail and all the officers there also have wonderful chances of developing Vairagya, if they are lovers of Truth and Emancipation. The sight of hanging a condemned prisoner will open their eyes.

Hey Saumya! Your mental state is laudable indeed. The life of a Sannyasin is the best kind of life in the world. A true Sannyasin is the monarch of the three worlds. Even an aspirant is an emperor of the whole world. Lord Krishna also says : “Only wishing to know Yoga, even the seeker after Yoga goes beyond the Brahmin world.”

I am extremely glad to note that you have got exceptionally good spiritual Samskara which want to burst out in this birth. They need protection and tender nurturing for your further growth and evolution. Do not be carried away by the temptations of the world. Be careful. Be wise. The beginner in the spiritual path should not remain in the company of worldly-minded people. He should resort to Satsang. The company of worldly-minded people is a deadly poison. You will not become a prey to lust if you shun their company. Remain in seclusion under the direct guidance of a Guru who is fully established in Brahman till you get perfect Vairagya and till you are established in the path of Sannyasa.

A Note of Warning

Many aspirants come to me with great Vairagya and enthusiasm in the beginning. But they do not keep up the same spirit for a long time or till the end of their Sadhana. When they begin to encounter some difficulties, they retrace their steps. It is indeed a great pity. Look before you leap. Have a firm determination. Stick to the path of Sannyasa till you reach the goal and realize the fruits of Sadhana.

If you lack any of these qualifications, wait for three more years. Do spiritual Sadhana, Asanas, Pranayama, concentration and meditation at home. Plunge deep into silent meditation. Plunge your-self in selfless service also. This is very necessary for purification of mind. Keep up your Brahmacharya. Destroy all evil habits, if you have any of these, such as smoking, tea, coffee, etc. Develop all virtuous qualities. Mark the change in your mental attitude. Then come to me. Come here and be prepared to lead a hard, active life.

Some aspirants come in a hurry. Due to lack of Vairagya they go back. This is not good. Hence the warning.

Many aspirants want to do some nice work such as writing, collection of flowers for Puja, arranging books in the library, some kind of supervision and management. They dislike works such as drawing of water, cleansing utensils, washing clothes of sick persons, sweeping, nursing, cooking, cleansing bedpans, etc. They consider these works as menial. They have not understood the real spirit of Nishkamya Karma Yoga. They are yet Babus.

Dear Prabhu! There is a dull spiritual awakening in you and a dull type of Vairagya. You will have to develop both. Dull Vairagya are mere bubbling, emotions will not help you much to stick to the path of renunciation. For some time leave the house and remain in a secluded place for a week or two. Enquire. Cogitate. Investigate. Do self-analysis and find out if you have any Moha, attachment to your family members. Find out if your mind runs after sensual pleasures. Be sure whether you will be able to leave the sensual objects, relatives and all sorts of comforts and conveniences. If you can completely disconnect yourself from the world, then alone come to me. I will make you a yogi of Yogis in a very short time. There are many who have advanced in the spiritual path considerably in course of one or two years. You can also do that. Implicit obedience and faithful carrying out of instructions of the spiritual preceptor to the very letter is what is expected of you; that is the secret of success in the spiritual path.

MISERIES OF MUNDANE EXISTENCE

Ignorance is the Cause of Misery

You are but repeating the same action of yesterday yielding but momentary pleasure and enjoyed things do recur again. Things seen yesterday are again present today. Ornaments worn with exultation yesterday are, again, donned by you. And yet, even intelligent persons do not get disgusted with them and are not ashamed of enjoying them again and again.

Like ignorant children that do taste again and again sweetmeats which impart sweetness for the time being, you are also afflicted, ignorant of the true path. Days, nights, weeks, fortnights, months, years and Yugas do cycle again and again, and nothing new crops up. Wealth which only makes a host of thoughts whirl in the brain will not confer Bliss on you. This wealth which the mind so much covets and which is so very ephemeral in its nature is utterly worthless like a flower-bud in a creeper growing in a well encircled by a serpent.

Nobody Comes and Goes

The Prana! Life which is like a drop of rain water dripping from the end of a leaf turned overhead flits out of the body at unseasonable times. This life is ephemeral like the autumnal clouds or a gheeless lamp or ocean waves. Life and death are but two acts in the drama. Really nobody comes and goes.

The lives of those who have freed themselves from rebirth are the noblest. There is nothing so baneful as the life which is perishable in its nature and fleeting in the bestowal of pleasure.

Fire of Desires

The fire of desires has scalded you quite. In the present state even a full bath in a pool of ambrosia will not cool you down. It is these ever-waxing desires that bring on pains of rebirths, the heaviest and the most excruciating of all pains. This body which is composed of muscles, intestines, urine and fecal matter and is subject to various changes, being at one time fat and at another time lean, shines in this mundane existence simply to undergo pains. What beauty is then to be enjoyed in this body which is composed of flesh, bone and blood, which has the tendency to rot, which is of the same nature in the rich and in the poor, and which is subject to growth and decay?

Three Fevers

There are scorpion stings on one side. Serpents are on the other side. Flies, fleas, bugs, mosquitoes, thorns and other insects trouble you from one corner. The sun scorches you in summer.

Cold stings you in winter. Influenza, plague, fashionable appendicitis, pyorrhea, smallpox are all ready to devour you. Then there are the three fevers, *Adhyatmika, Adhidaivika and Adhibhautika*. Fear, delusion, grief, sorrow and misery kill you every moment.

Desire, anger, hatred, jealousy, worry, anxieties and cares torment you every second. Deaths of persons whom you loved so dearly give you severe shocks. Yet you will never renounce the momentary pleasures of the senses of this unreal mundane existence. Such is the depth of sensual enjoyments. You will speak through egoism, "O, I am a powerful man. I am very intelligent. I can do any thing. There is no God." You will twist your glued moustache and when the scorpion stings you sharp, you will cry out bitterly: "O Narayana, Narayana, Narayana, help me. Relieve me of this horrible pain."

If the hair becomes gray, you invent various dyes to blacken it. You invent monkey gland grafting for rejuvenation. If the teeth are fallen, you put on a new artificial dental set. You will never leave the "will-to-live and enjoy." Miserable wreck that you are! Hopeless specimen!

Think deeply. Cogitate. Reflect. Have constant Satsang. Do selfless service of country and humanity. Develop the four means of salvation. Study the Bhagavad Gita, Yoga-Vasishta and Viveka-Chudamani of Sri Sankara. Clear your doubts by approaching learned Sannyasins. Have recourse to *Sravana, Manana* and *Nididhyasana*. Remove the veil of ignorance and rest in your own Svarupa—the Satchitananda state. "*Atma va are drasktavyah srotavyo, mantavyo, nididhyasitavyah*—The Self must be seen, heard, thought upon and deeply pondered." (*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*: IV.5).

Shun honour, respect, degrees, name, fame, power, position and titles. They are absolutely worthless. They will not give you eternal satisfaction. They will only intensify your vanity. They are all intoxicants of the mind. They will bring misery and mental disturbance. That is the reason why Raja Bhartrihari, Raja Gopichand and Lord Buddha deserted their kingdoms, riches, honour, etc. They treated them as trifles.

Uncertainty of Life

Only your actions, good and bad, will follow you after death. And God will judge you according to your deeds.

The attraction for external objects ceases, but there yet remains the internal craving or sense-hankering or thirsting which is called Trishna. That is why the Gita says: "The objects of sense, but not the relish for them, turn away from an abstemious dweller in the body, and even the relish turns away from him after the Supreme is seen."

Friend! Is there any limit to the number of fathers, mothers, wives, sons, daughters, uncles and aunts you had in the countless incarnations in the past? And yet the clinging and false relationship has not gone. Discrimination has not dawned. What a great pity it is!

Are you not ashamed to repeat the same acts of eating, drinking and sleeping day by day? You are proud of your titles and honours. Have you improved your life even a bit? What lessons have you learnt from the recent Bihar and Quetta earthquakes? Are you attempting to reach the Imperishable Seat wherein all desires and Trishnas will be utterly annihilated? Are you endeavouring to attain the highest end of life, Divine realization which confers immortality, bliss and peace?

In the recent Bihar earthquake (this was written years ago, when the earthquake took place there) a rich banker had to beg for nine rupees just to protect himself and his family from death by starvation. A Pundit earned slowly twenty-five thousand rupees by selling his books. But he had to spend that money in a short time in the treatment of his chronic chest complaint. He tried all sorts of medicines, but all in vain. He had to leave the house to lead a life of a hermit.

Life is quite uncertain here. Diseases of various sorts attack the body. Yet man clings blindly to this ephemeral life! He forgets the truth. O man, seek everlasting peace and bliss in the Atma or Soul within you by purifying your mind and practicing intense meditation. This is the right royal road to extricate yourself from the pains of Samsara. Be quick in taking to spiritual practices. Hairs are becoming gray. Teeth are failing. Indriyas are getting cold. Practice meditation and Japa while you are young. You can do nothing in old age, when you retire from service.

It is extremely difficult to have a pure and calm mind. But you must have such a mind, if you want to have progress in meditation and Yoga.

Lord Buddha had *Viveka* from his very boyhood. He was one who had been profoundly impressed from his early youth by the transient and impermanent nature of all conditions of worldly existence and by the sufferings and wretchedness in which he saw all beings immersed. Will you not become another Lord Buddha?

You have spent eight hours in sleep, and the rest of the day in idle gossiping, telling lies, deceiving others, in selfish activities, in amassing wealth. How can you expect spiritual good, how can you expect immortality and peace, if you do not spend even half an hour in the service of the Lord, in singing His Names and in divine contemplation?

On the Whole, Life is Sorrow

Lord Buddha says: "On the whole, life is sorrow." You will find an echo of this statement in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras "*Sarvam duhkham vivekinah*—All indeed, is pain to a person of discrimination." This is not the philosophy of the pessimists. This is wonderful optimism, as it induces deep Vairagya, weans the mind from sensual pleasures and directs it towards God, the Atman, to realize eternal and infinite Bliss.

"*Mamsa-lubdho yatha matsyo lohasamkum na pasyati, Sukha-lubdhastatha debi yama-bandham na pasyati.*"

Just as a fish in its desire to eat flesh does not see the hook that lies beneath, so also man in his passionate desire to get sensual pleasure does not see the noose of death.

How to Eradicate Sense-hankering

Trishna means an intense craving or sense-hankering. Through constant repetition of enjoyment of an object, the longing for the object becomes very keen and acute. This is *Trishna*.

It is all easy to become a big research scholar in the Oxford or Cambridge University and to get an M.A., Ph.D., degree. But it is extremely difficult to eradicate these *Trishnas*. That is the reason why Sri Vasishtha says to Sri Rama : “You can even uproot the Himalayas. You can even drink the waters of the whole ocean. You can even swallow balls of fire. But it is difficult to destroy the *Trishnas*. *Cravings cause incessant trouble in many different ways. These cravings are the seeds of this Samsara*” (*Yoga-Vasishtha*).

A worldly man is always drowned in sorrow. He is ever struggling to get something, some money, some power, some position and so on. He is always anxious as to whether or not he would get it. Even when he is in actual possession of the things he so passionately longed for, he is very anxious lest he should lose it. There is pain in earning money. There is more pain in taking care of it. There is still more pain if the money gets decreased. And when it is lost, just imagine for a moment the magnitude of the climax and the intensity of pain it gives a man! Therefore renounce money and rest in peace in the blissful Self.

In the presence of light, you cannot have darkness. In the presence of sensual pleasures, Atmic Bliss cannot exist. Worldlings want both sensual pleasures and *Atma Ananda* in one and the same cup and one and the same time. This is an absolute impossibility. They do not want to renounce sensual pleasures. They do not want to develop real Vairagya in their hearts of hearts. They simply talk a lot.

Though a man knows he might die at any moment, still he thinks he would live for ever. To get oneself entangled in the meshes of Maya till death is simply foolish. He who is attached to wife, wealth and children will not derive even an iota of benefit in the spiritual path.

A bachelor who is full of passion from head to foot imagines that he is miserable because he has no wife! A householder who is tired and exhausted of worldly life thinks wife and children are a mighty hindrance in his spiritual march.

Desire for Name and Fame

One can renounce wife, son, property and all else, but it is very difficult and rare to renounce name and fame. Pratishta is established name and fame. This is a great obstacle in God-Realization. This brings downfall in the end. This does not allow the aspirant to march forward in the spiritual

path. He becomes a slave of respect and honour. As soon as he gets some purity and ethical progress, ignorant people rock to him and begin to pay homage and salutation. He gets puffed up with pride.

He thinks he is a great Mahatma. He becomes eventually a slave of his admirers. He cannot notice his slow downfall. The moment he mixes up freely with householders. He loses what little he had gained during the eight or ten years of his intense Sadhana. He cannot influence the public now. His admirers also leave him because they do not find any real solace or spiritual influence in his company.

People imagine that the Mahatma has got Siddhis and that they can get children through his grace, plenty of wealth and Himalayan herbs for the rooting out of diseases and the building up of radiant and healthy bodies. They always approach a Sadhu with some selfish, ulterior motive or other. The aspirant through bad association loses his Vairagya and Viveka. Attachment and desire crop up in his mind. Therefore you should hide yourself always. Nobody should know what sort of Sadhana you are doing. You should never attempt to exhibit your psychic powers of Siddhis. You should be very humble. You should pass for quite an ordinary man. You should not accept rich presents from householders. You will be affected by the bad thoughts of those who offer presents. You should never think that you are superior to this man or that man. You should not treat others with contempt. You should always treat others with great respect and profound consideration. Then only respect will come by itself. You should treat respect, honour, name and fame as dung and poison and wear disrespect and dishonour as gold necklace. Then only you will reach the goal in safety.

Why this Trouble

Building of Ashrams and making disciples bring about the downfall of aspirants. Then, are all stumbling blocks in the path of God-Realization. The aspirant becomes another sort of householder. He develops institutional egoism. He gets attached to his Ashram and disciples. He has now the same cares, worries and anxieties for running the Ashram and the monthly magazine and feeding his disciples. He develops slave-mentality. Thoughts of Ashram revolve in his mind, when he is in a dying condition.

Some Ashrams are nicely managed by the spiritual heads of the respective institutions while they are alive. When they pass away, the disciples who are petty-minded fight amongst themselves in open courts. You can see so many cases going on. The Ashram becomes a fighting centre. Ashram owners have to flatter the donors and appeal for funds very often. How can thought of God remain in his mind, when one has his mind fixed on accumulation of wealth and development of his Ashram? Those who have started Ashrams already may now say: "We are doing good to the people in various ways. We are having religious classes daily. We feed poor people. We are training religious students."

It is quite true that an Ashram run by a selfless dynamic Yogi or a realized soul or a *Jivanmukta* is a dynamic centre of spirituality. It is spiritual uplift of so many thousands of people.

Such centres are needed in all parts of the world. Such Ashrams can do immense spiritual good to the country. But such ideal Ashrams with ideal spiritual heads to run them are very, very rare nowadays. Money is collected in a variety of ways. Some portion is spent for useful purposes. The rest goes to the comforts and conveniences of the founders of the Ashram and their beloved disciples.

The founders of the Ashram in course of time become unconsciously slave of worship and Puja. Maya works in a variety of ways. They are quite eager that people should drink their *Charanamrita*. How can a man who has the *Bhav* that he should be worshipped as an Avatar serve the public? Workers are petty-minded. They fight amongst themselves even for trifling things and disturb the peaceful atmosphere of the Ashram. Where then is peace in the Ashram? How can outsiders who visit the Ashram to get Santi, enjoy Santi there?

The founders of the Ashram should live on daily Bhiksha from outside. They should lead an ideal life of absolute self-sacrifice, a life of ideal simplicity like the late Baba Kalikambliwala of Rishikesh, who carried water-pot on his head for the Ashram and himself lived on Bhiksha from outside. Such people alone can do real good to the people. Founders of Ashrams should never appeal for funds. It brings great discredit to the order of Sannyasa itself. It is another way of respectable begging. The habit of begging destroys the subtle, sensitive nature of the intellect and those who appeal for funds frequently do not know what they are doing.

It is very difficult to get good workers for the Ashram. Then why do you bother about building Ashrams when you have neither money nor workers nor dynamic spiritual force? Keep quiet. Do meditation and evolve yourself quietly. Mind your own business. Reform yourself first. How can you help others when you are yourself groping in darkness, when you are yourself blind? How can a blind man lead a blind man? Both will fall into a deep abyss and break their legs.

Generally an aspirant is very enthusiastic about his Sadhana in the beginning. He is full of zeal. He takes a great deal of interest. He expects to get some good results soon. When he does not get these results within the expected time he gets discouraged. He loses his interest and slackens his efforts. He gives up his Sadhana entirely. He loses faith in the efficacy of Sadhana itself.

Worry and Anxiety

Man always thirsts for possession of objects, wife and cattle. This surely makes him selfish. Selfishness causes attachment. Wherever there is attachment, there are “Ahamta” and “Mamata.” The whole misery starts here. The whole *Maya Chakra* begins to revolve from now. Man becomes a slave now. Strong iron chains are fastened to his hands, legs and knees. He is entangled like the spider or the silk-worm. This is his own self-created web for his own destruction.

Sit for a moment alone in a quiet room. Enquire. Cogitate. Investigate. Happiness is a mental state. It does not depend upon money or possessions. You actually see very rich people are very miserable, while a poor clerk is very happy, and a Sadhu with a loin-cloth only dancing in divine ecstasy.

Enjoyment cannot bring satisfaction of desire. On the contrary, it aggravates and intensifies desires and makes the mind more restless through sense hankering or *Trishna* just as the pouring of ghee or oil aggravates fire. The fewer the wants, the greater the happiness. Milk gives pleasure to some and pain to some others. The fourth cup of milk brings retching or nausea. It does not give pleasure during fever. Therefore pleasure is not in the objects but it is in the imagination or inclination of the mind.

Mango is not sweet but the imagination is sweet. Woman is not beautiful but the imagination is beautiful. An ugly woman appears very beautiful to her husband because his imagination is beautiful. There is a grain of pleasure in objects, but the pain that mixed with it is of the size of a mountain.

Sensual pleasure is tantalizing. There is enchantment so long as man does not possess the objects. He exerts hard. His mind is filled with anxieties. He is under despondency because he doubts if he would get the desired object. The moment he is in possession of the object, the charm vanishes. He finds that he is in entanglement. The bachelor thinks of his marriage day and night. He thinks he is in imprisonment after the marriage is over. He is not able to satisfy the extravagant wants of his wife. He wants to run away from the house to forests. The rich but the childless man thinks he will be more happy by getting a son: he worries himself day and night to get a son, goes on pilgrimage to Ramashvaram and Kasi and performs various religious ceremonies.

But when he gets a child, he feels miserable. The child suffers from epileptic fits and his money is given away to doctors. Even then there is no cure. This is *Mayaic* jugglery. The whole world is fraught with temptation.

When you cannot get the objects, you feel miserable. The man who is addicted to taking tea, who is in the habit of taking fruits and milk after meals, feels very miserable when he cannot get tea or fruits and milk in a certain place. He scolds his wife and servants without rhyme or reason out of sheer irritability. When the wife dies, the husband is drowned in sorrow, not because of the loss of his loving partner in life, but because he cannot get sexual pleasure now. The cause of pain is pleasure. The cause of death is love for sensual life. Give up all sensual pleasures, if you do not want pain. Give up sensual life, if you do not want death.

To wear spectacles at the age of ten, to wear ring-watch, to buy a car by borrowing money, to wear fashionable dinner-uniform and Ellwood hat, health boots, to have a French crop or bobbed hair, to smoke Three-Castles cigarettes or Navy-cut or Manila cigars, to constrict the neck with stiff collars, to walk along the beach with their wives in clasped hands, to have newspaper in their pocket, to have a trimmed or Kaiser-moustache at the middle of the upper lip, to take meat and drink brandy, to play bridge, to gamble, to dance in ball-rooms, to borrow money to go to talkies and, in short, to lead a life of dissipation—this is modern civilisation! Fashion and style have made you a beggar of beggars!

Raga and Dvesha

The two currents of the mind viz., Raga and Dvesha (attraction and repulsion) really constitute world or Samsara. The mind gets intensely attached to pleasant objects through attraction because it derives pleasure. Wherever there is sensation of pleasure, the mind gets glued, as it were, to the object that gives pleasure. This is what is called attachment. This only brings bondage and pain. When either object is withdrawn or perishes, the mind gets unspeakable pain. Attraction is the root cause of human sufferings. The mind runs from those objects which give pain. Hatred arises in the mind. For instance, nobody likes a cobra, a tiger or even a scorpion. Attraction and pleasure, repulsion and pain coexist. A worldly man is a slave of these two mighty and devastating currents. He is tossed about hither and thither like a piece of straw. He smiles when he gets pleasures, he weeps when he gets pain. He clings to pleasant objects, he runs away from objects that cause pain.

The desire for sensual enjoyment is deep rooted or ingrained in the minds of all. The Rajasic mind is so framed that it cannot remain even for a single moment without thoughts of enjoyment of some kind or another. People invent various sorts of subtle enjoyments. Modern science has made marvellous contribution towards bringing forth refined ways of enjoyment. Modern civilisation is only another name for sensual enjoyment. Hotels, cinemas, aeroplanes, radios intensify sensual enjoyments. Man invents new dishes, new syrups, new drinks, to satisfy his palate. Fashion in dress is making vast strides year by year. So is the case with hair-dressing. Even the man treading the path of Truth wishes to find out lasting and intense sensual enjoyment by means of his Yogic practices. He wants to move about in celestial cars. He wants to taste the nectar of immortality underneath the Kalpa-Vriksha side by side with Indra and other Gods. He wants to hear celestial nymphs and Gandharvas singing and dancing. These are all subtle temptations. The sincere aspirant will resolutely turn his back to all these sorts of refined, subtle, intense enjoyment herein and hereafter. He will treat them all as vomited matter, as offal or as the urine of a donkey or as poison.

This world is full of difficulties and troubles. No one save a Yogi or a Bhakta or a Jnani is free from these worldly miseries and anxieties. Go wherever you like. It is all the same.

Kamala and Krishna had no children. They were building castles in the air one night, when they were sleeping on a raised bedstead. Kamala asked Krishna : "How will you manage for the sleeping place of our son, if I get a child?" Krishna replied: "I will make room in this very wooden cot itself." So saying he moved some inches away from his wife. She again asked: "What will you do, if I beget a second son?" Krishna answered: "I will again make room in this very cot itself." So saying he actually moved a few inches further to the edge of the cot. Kamala again asked: "My dear husband, what will you do if I beget a third son?" The husband said : "I will give him room in this very cot." While moving to the extreme end of cot, he tumbled down and fractured his left leg. Krishna's neighbour came and asked him : "What is the matter with your legs?" Krishna said: "I broke my leg on account of my false sons." Such is the case with the people of the world also. They suffer on account of *Mithya Abhimana* (false egoism) and *Mithya Sambandha* (false relationship).

BODY

Woman is the source of constant vexation and greatest bondage. The figure or form of woman is nothing but a network of bones coated with fat and flesh. This observation also applies to man.

Woman is the source of all misery. She is an embodiment of passion. She sucks your vitality. You do many vicious actions just to please her. You have to reap the fruits of these actions and suffer. What happiness is there to be derived from the string-tossed puppets of female bodies? Where is the beauty in a female? Do Vichara and analyze. Will any Viveki think of this illusory figure? The beauty you see in the form of a woman is the emanation from the Atman within. Look at the condition of the eyes, face and body of a woman after an attack of seven days' illness! Where has the beauty gone? Look at the wrinkled face of an old woman? Analyze the parts of a woman, realize their illusory nature and abandon these totally. If you begin to analyze this body into flesh, blood, bone, sweat, etc., the attraction towards woman will perish in a short time. Love and attachment to a woman destroy Buddhi, Mukti and virtuous deeds and cause contraction of heart.

If lust for woman which is the source of all enjoyments ceases, then all worldly bondage which has its root or substratum in the mind will automatically cease. Even the most virulent poison is no poison at all when compared to sensual objects. The former defiles one body only whereas the latter adulterates many bodies in successive births.

This body is certainly not meant for the satisfaction of petty ends. It is for rigorous penance here and infinite happiness hereafter. It is an instrument for achieving the goal of human life i. e., the attainment of Brahma Jnana. It serves the purpose of a boat to cross this ocean of Samsara to the other side.

This body is the source of infinite miseries. It is full of impurities. It brings disrespect, censure, pain, etc. It passes away without a moment's notice. It is subject to disease, decay and old age. Therefore think of Atma which is eternal, pure and all-pervading.

The physical body appears only in the present. A thing that has neither past nor future must be considered as non-existent in the present also. If you think over this matter more deeply with Suddha-Buddhi, you will find Atyanta-abhav (complete nonexistence) of the world.

This body which is full of impurities, urine, fecal matter, pus, etc., is perishable. It is like froth or bubble or mirage. It is despised by your enemies. It remains like a useless log of wood on the ground when the *Prana* departs from the body. It is the cause of the pain and suffering. It is your real enemy. You should treat this body with extreme contempt as dung. Why should you cling to it (*Abhinivesa*) and worship it with scents, powders, and flowers? Do not be foolish and silly in adorning it with fine silks and ornaments. It is dire *Ajnana* only.

Nothing on this earth belongs to me. This body even is not mine. This is true wisdom. "He is my son. She is my daughter. She is my wife. That bungalow is mine. I am rich. I am a kshatriya. I am a' Brahmin. I am lean. I am fat." This is foolishness of a superior order. This physical body is the rightful property of fishes, jackals and vultures. How can you call this as yours?

Application of soap to the body, oil to the hair, powder to the face, looking into the mirror thousand and one times a day, wearing rings on the fingers, these and many as these will intensify your attachment to the body. Therefore give up all these things ruthlessly.

A big boil is washed with lotion. Then boric ointment is applied. Then bandage is put on. Even so this nasty body is a very big boil. It is washed daily. Food is thrust into it. This is the ointment. Cloth is worn. This is the bandage. Sadhus treat this body as a very big boil or wound with an oozing discharge. But the body is worshipped by worldly-minded persons on account of delusion and infatuation.

Wearing cloth is not for enhancing the beauty of the body. This body is a dirty leather-bag filled with various sorts of impurities. Cloth is meant to cover up this impure body. Wear simple clothing. Have sublime thinking. Virtuous life in God or Atman can give you real beauty.

The “beauty” of this body is only superficial (*apata-ramaniya*). The beauty of the skin is also superficial. You can have undecaying, infinite beauty in God alone.

O man! Are you not ashamed to call this filthy body as “I” and to say “this is mine,” “he is my son,” when everything is perishable? Even jackals, vultures and fishes say : “These bodies of human beings are ours.” This world or Samsara is *Asara or Virasa* (essenceless). Give up identification with this feeble, perishable and impure body of five elements whereof the bones are the pillars, which is strung by the nerves, coated over with flesh and blood, covered up by the skin, is of bad odour, full of urine and feces, is ever haunted by dotage and miseries and is the seat of all ills. This identification with the body is the seat of Raurava hell. What is the difference between the worms and men that rejoice in this ill-smelling body?

Maya, the great juggler, prepares a skeleton, covers it with flesh, and hides the various impurities with a shining skin. O deluded man! How long are you going to call this body as yours? How long are you going to cling to this perishable body? Give up this identification with the body and identify yourself with your real nature the Satchitananda Swaroop.

When this body is free from disease and decrepitude, when old age is still far off, when the powers of the senses are not affected and life is not decaying, the man of discrimination should exert for God-Realization? It is useless to dig a well when the house is on fire.

WOMAN

Marriage is a curse and a life-long imprisonment. It is the greatest bondage. A bachelor, who is full of passion, imagines that he is miserable because he has no wife. The bachelor who was once free is now tied to the yoke of family and his hands and feet are chained. This is the experience of all married people. They weep after marriage. More beggars are brought forth into this world through lust. He who has understood the magnitude of human sufferings will not dare to bring forth a child.

Woman (wherever woman is represented from the view-point of man, with a view to induce Vairagya in him, the reader will do well to remember that a similar representation of man from the view-point of woman is implied therein) is the source of constant vexation and sorrow and is the greatest bondage. One cannot sacrifice a noble and sublime ideal, Self-Realization, for the sake of pleasing a bewitching woman.

Wife is only a luxury. It is not an absolute necessity. Every householder weeps after marriage. He says : "My son is ailing from typhoid. My second daughter is to be married. I have debts to clear. My wife is worrying me to purchase for her a gold necklace. My eldest son-in-law died recently." Indeed such miseries are not uncommon to all.

Wife is a sharp knife to cut the life of the husband, and *vice versa*. Anasuya and Savitri are very, very rare. If the gold necklace and Benares silk saris are not supplied, at the proper time, the wife frowns at the husband. The husband cannot get his food at the proper time. The wife lies down in the bed under pretext of acute abdominal colic. You can see for yourself this pitiful spectacle in your own house or in the house of your friend and in daily experience. Indeed I need not tell you much. Therefore be wedded to Santi and have Vairagya, the worthy son and Viveka the magnanimous daughter. Eat the delicious fruit of Atma Jnana which can make you immortal.

When your wife is young and beautiful, you admire her curly hair, rosy cheeks, fine nose, shining skin and silvery teeth. When she loses her beauty on account of some chronic incurable malady, you have no attraction for her. You marry a second wife. Had you loved your first wife with Atma Bhav, had you a comprehensive understanding that the Self in you and in your wife is the same, your love for her would have been pure, unselfish, lasting, undecaying and unchanging. Just as you love old sugar candy or old rice the more, so also you would love your wife more and more, even when she becomes old, as you have Atma-Bhav through Jnana. Jnana will only intensify Prem and make it lasting.

He who is attached to his wife, children and wealth., will not derive even an iota of benefit in the spiritual path. By indiscriminate clinging to wife, children, house, wealth and objects, you have forgotten your essential divine nature. Even the old needles without eyes will not follow you, when you die. Only your actions, good and bad, will follow you. And God will judge you according to your motives and deeds.

A passionate bachelor is ever thinking "When can I live with my young wife?" A dispassionate householder in whom Viveka has dawned is ever thinking: "When can I disentangle

myself from the clutches of my wife and retire into the forests for contemplation on Atma?" The mind alone is the cause of bondage and freedom. Kill this mind and rest in the Atman.

You have become the sporting lap-dog of the caprice of woman. You have become a slave of countless desires, emotions and passions. When are you going to rise up from this miserable state? In the Yoga Vasishtha you will find: "Those persons, in spite of the knowledge of the non-existence of happiness both in the past and the present in the baneful objects of the world, do yet entangle themselves in them with their thoughts clinging to them, deserve the appellation of an ass, if not a worse one."

Human love is all hollow. It is mere animal attraction. It is passion only. It is carnal love. It is selfish love. It is ever-changing. It is all hypocrisy and sheer show. The wife does not care for her husband, if he happens to be on the roll of- unemployment. The husband dislikes his wife, when she loses her beauty on account of some chronic disease. Dear man, you can find real, lasting love in God and God alone. His Love knows no change.

Remembrance or image of a woman disturbs the mind. Lust is very powerful. It carries a flowery bow equipped with five soft arrows, *viz.*, *mohana*, *stambhana*, *unmadana*, *soshana* and *tapana*(fascination, stupefaction, maddening, emaciation and inflaming). Viveka, Vichara, devotion and contemplation will eradicate this dire malady. If lust is conquered, anger, greed, etc., which are all auxiliary weapons, will become ineffective. Love's principal weapon is woman. If this is destroyed, its followers or retinue can be quite easily conquered. If the commander is killed, then it becomes easy to conquer the soldiers. Conquer passion first. It will then be easy to subdue anger, who is only one of his followers.

When a tiger has once tasted human blood, it always runs after human beings. It becomes a man-eater. Even so, when the mind has once tasted the sexual pleasure, it always runs after that pleasure. It is through constant Vichara and Brahma-Bhavana that the mind has to be weaned out from lustful thoughts and tendencies. Make the mind understand by repeated auto-suggestions and hammering that sexual pleasure is false, worthless, illusory and full of pains. Place before the mind the advantages of a life in the Atman-bliss, power, and knowledge. Make it understand fully that the exalted, eternal life is in the immortal Atma, not certainly in sensual pleasures. When it hears constantly these suggestions, it will slowly leave off its old habits.

In the Bhagavad Gita you will find "Humility, unpretentiousness, harmlessness, forgiveness, rectitude, service of the teacher, purity, steadfastness, self-control, dispassion towards the objects of the senses, and also absence of egoism, insight into the pain and evil of birth, death, old age and sickness, unattachment, absence of self-identification with son, wife, or home, and constant balance of mind in wished-for and unwished-for events, unflinching devotion to Me by Yoga, without other objects, resort to sequestered places, absence of enjoyment in the company of men, constancy in the wisdom of the Self, understanding of the object of essential wisdom; that is declared to be the Wisdom; all against it is ignorance (Ch. XIII-8-12).

"Demoniacal men know neither right energy, nor right abstinence; nor purity, nor even propriety, nor truth is in them." "The whole universe is without truth, without basis," they say, "without a God; brought about by mutual union, and caused by lust and nothing else." Holding this

view these ruined selves of small understanding, of fierce deeds, come forth as enemies for the destruction of the world surrendering themselves to insatiable desires, possessed with vanity, conceit and arrogance, holding evil ideas through delusion, they engage in action with impure resolves. Giving themselves over to unmeasured thought whose end is death, regarding the gratification of desires as the highest, feeling sure that this is all, held in bondage by a hundred ties of expectation, given over to lust and anger, they strive to obtain by unlawful means hoards of wealth for sensual enjoyments"(*Ch. XVI-7-12*).

In the Vishnupurana, it is said: "If the deluded fool loves the body, a mere collection of flesh, blood, pus, feces, urine, muscles, fat and bones, he will verily love hell itself! To him who is not disgusted with the nasty smell from his own body, what other argument need be adduced for detachment?"

Sage Vasishtha says to Sri Rama "What is there of an auspicious nature in the cage like automation of a woman—a veritable doll of flesh, joined with knots made of muscles and bones? Scrutinize her eyes closely and see, after an analysis, if there is, after all, anything charmingly beautiful about the membranous sheaths muscles, blood and tears composing them. Why, then, are you enamoured of them in vain? Her breast, whereon the movements, hither and thither, of the pearl necklace, are comparable, in point of elegance, to the swift waters of the Ganga rolling down the summits of mount Meru, the self-same breast, of a damsel is, however, voraciously devoured, when occasion arises, by dogs, on the cremation ground situated in some out-of-the-way spots, even like a small ball of rice. Wearing the soot-like locks of hair and therefore best left untouched, though attractive to the eye, women, who are the veriest flame of the fire of sin, consume men like so much straw. It is women who, though appearing all juicy and green, are verily devoid of grace and who, by their attractive looks, allure men to their destruction and feed the fires of hell raging on a far off region. They are verily traps laid by the bird catcher Cupid, to catch his bevy of birds, viz., unsophisticated men. Woman is the treacherous bait, attached to the line of impure latent desires, to catch men, who are, so to say, so many fish in the pond of birth and death, wallowing in the mire of the mind. Enough with woman—the treasure chest, wherein the serene gems of the deadliest sins are kept and the endless chain of torturing misery. Made up of flesh here, blood there and bones in a third place, this female form, O Brahman! After all disintegrates in a few days. He feels the desire for intercourse, who has a woman about him. Where is the scope for such enjoyment to the womanless? Abandon her and you abandon the whole world; by abandoning the whole world, you find Supreme Bliss."

Lust is a potent force, very difficult to get rid of. Hence I have to place such a mental picture before the minds of the vast majority of persons. Really, women should be adored, as Mother-Shakti. She is the creatress, generatrix and nourisher of the universe. She must be revered. In India, religion is being preserved and maintained only through the devotional element of women. Devotion is a fundamental characteristic of Hindu ladies. Hate lust, but not women.

"Yatra naryastu pujvante ramante tatra devatah, Yatraitastu ne puiyante sarvastraphalah kriyah."

"Where women are honoured, there the gods are pleased; but where they are not honoured, no sacred rite is fruitful" (*Manusmiriti*)

WORLD

This is a strange world indeed. This is a very big museum or a wonderful show. The flowers and the Himalayan landscape, the Niagara waterfalls and the blue seas, the sky and the Taj Mahal are all very beautiful and charming. But the earthquakes, Volcanic eruptions, lightnings, cyclones and epidemics of influenza and plague are frightfully awful and threatening.

A beautiful wife is very charming. She is very sweet, when she is young, when she smiles, when she puts on beautiful dress, when she sings and plays on the piano or violin, when she dances in the ballroom. But she is horrible to look at when she loses her temper, when she quarrels with her husband for not getting silk saries and gold necklace, when she is suffering from acute abdominal colic or some such disease and when she becomes old.

The spring is very lovely. The trees are adorned with flowers and fruits. The cool gentle breeze is really exhilarating but the summer is scorching. The winter is bitingly cold.

Man laughs when he gets a son, when he gets married, when he gets some sudden fortune or increase in salary, but he weeps when his wife dies, when he loses his money, when he is thrown out of employment, or when he suffers from some acute disease.

Now, tell me, friend! what do you really find in this illusory world-happiness or pain, joy or sorrow? Have you now understood the illusory nature of Mayaic creation? This world is a mere appearance. Mind and the senses are deceiving you every moment. You have mistaken pain for pleasure. There is not even an iota of happiness in this sense universe. Abandon these selfish struggles and schemes for amassing wealth. March directly to that wire-puller who is moving these toys of fleshy human bodies, who is keeping up this big show, who is behind this show. In Him only you will find lasting happiness and perennial joy. Merge in Him by practicing daily meditation and Japa.

This world is as unreal as the shadow, bubble or froth. Why then do you run after the toys of name and fame?

How uncertain is sensual life in this world! How transitory and fleeting is sensual pleasure! Mark how many thousands of people were carried away in the recent Bihar and Quetta earthquakes! (refers to incidents occurred long ago before this book was written) How many big palatial mansions were destroyed! This is *Adhidaivika Tapa*. Yet people want to build bungalows in Simla and Mussoorie and attain immortality there! How foolish these people are! Poor self-deluded souls! Pitiable is their lot! They are earth-worms only as they revel in filth. I pray for them. May God bestow on them Viveka, Vairagya and Bhakti!

Go wherever you may, to Gulmarg or Pahalgao in Kashmir, to Darjeeling or Simla, to Vienna or Alps. It is all the same.

You will not find any real rest. The charming scenery may soothe the retina for a second. Raga, Dvesha, jealousy, passion and greed are everywhere. You will find the same earth, the same sky, the same air, and the same water. And you carry with you the same mind. Imagination and

change of places have deceived not a few. O man! Be contented. Live where you may. But discipline the mind and the senses. Meditate on the inner Self (Antar-Atma) ceaselessly. Here you will find the everlasting peace. Mind will stop deceiving you now.

To me the whole world appears as a ball of fire. To me the whole world appears as a huge furnace wherein all living creatures are being roasted.

Will your son or daughter or friend or relative help you, when you are about to die? Have you got one sincere, unselfish friend in all this world? All are selfish. There is no pure love. But that Lord, your real Friend of friends, Father of fathers, who dwells in your heart, will never forsake you, though you may forget Him. Adore Him in silence, that God of gods, that Divinity of divinities, Highest of the highest. May He bless you with His Love, Wisdom, Power and peace.

As everything is unreal in this world, treat love and respect as poison. Be indifferent. Be reserved and reticent. Give up mixing with others. Live alone and enjoy the Atmic Bliss in your heart. You don't want any company, when you can live in the Soul.

You must show extreme contempt towards worldly objects. Treat all earthly possessions and sensuous enjoyments as dung, poison, dust, and straw. Turn the mind away from them. Then only you will get Jnana.

Give up clinging to this illusory life. Be fearless. Take refuge in Vairagya. All fears will melt away. Cling to the Feet of the Lord. Cling to the indivisible, unseen, unknown, unknowable Atman or Brahman of the Upanishads.

By indiscriminate clinging to wife, children, house, wealth, and objects, you have forgotten all about your essential divine nature. You have become an atheist. Wife, children and money have become your gods, whereas in reality they are your enemies.

If you develop keen Vairagya, if you subdue your senses, and shun all enjoyments and pleasures of this worthless world, mixed as they are with pain, sin, fear, craving, miseries, disease, old age and death then nothing can really tempt you in this world. You will become proof against all temptations. You will have eternal peace, and infinite joy. You will have no attraction for women and other worldly objects. Lust cannot possess you then.

If you really want God and God alone, kick this world mercilessly. Enough, enough of your tea and coffee, enough of soda and lemonade, enough of father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister and relations. You have had countless fathers and mothers, wives and children in the past. You came alone. You will go alone. None will follow you save your own actions. Realize God. All miseries will come to an end.

He who indiscriminately clings to wife, son and daughter and the objects of the world has no other alternative but to forget all about his divine nature.

The company of worldly-minded people is as dangerous, if not more, as the company of a woman to an aspirant.

Worldly men think they are quite happy because they get a few ginger biscuits, some money and a woman. O, if they would just taste the nectar of immortality, what should be the intensity of happiness they should feel!

Dear friend! The past now appears to you as a dream. Then why do you not believe that the present also will appear as a dream in the near future?

All worldly pleasures appear as nectar in the beginning, but become virulent poison in the end. This world is a Mela (a congregational performance as a diversion or sport) for two days, and this body is a mere appearance for two seconds. Even if you become the sole monarch of the whole world, you can hardly be in the enjoyment of real Bliss and Peace.

Life of man on earth is nothing but a life of temptations and tribulations. Those who have real and intense Vairagya and strong Viveka can hardly be tempted by worldly objects, by *Mara* and *Satan*.

Being much hemmed in on all sides and whirling in, different conditions in this ever fluctuating world, you are ever whirling with delusion and afflicted with pains like dusts of sand floating on a large stone. Now, reflecting upon Time which is eternal in its true nature, you cannot but term as a moment the 100 years of your life. While so, how is that you estimate your life so greatly and fall into all sorts of despondencies through the insatiable desires? Who is there so debased in life as you who are spoiled through the gross-mind? Fie on-your uneven life, which cannot be considered as of any moment.

Comparing this life to the countless universes, you cannot but consider it as an atom. It is really surprising that you should rate high this universe full of pains.

Even the greatest of persons will in course of time become the lowest of the low. All enjoyments, great men, and their kindred have appeared in former times. Where then is the certitude of existence of all objects now? The innumerable earths with their countless rulers and wealth have all perished like fine sands; the Devalokas (celestial realms) with their *Indras* and wealth have all disappeared: no limit can be imposed upon the number of universes, *Brahmas* and *Jivas* that have come and gone. Where then are all the objects that have vanished out of sight? Where then is the permanency of earthly life? It is only by bestowing your desires on the illusion of the long dream of bodily delusion in the sable night of the unreal Maya that you have debased yourself to this ignorant state.

Enough, enough with all the deaths you had in previous times. Not one beneficent object exists on this earth either in the beginning, middle or end. Are not all created objects coated over with the varnish of destruction? You enact in your daily life with your body dire sinful acts, painful deeds and illimitable vices.

In youth you are enveloped in ignorance, in adult age you are entangled in the meshes of women; in old age you groan under the burden of *Samsara* and debility. You eventually die. Being thus always occupied, when will you find time to devote yourself to the commission of virtuous deeds? How came this *Maya* to play and dance in this world? This ghost of your mind dances in the

theatre of this universe to the music of the organs. If in the opening and closing of the eyelids many Brahmans are created and destroyed, what are you, a puny self, before them?

You cannot please the world, your wife and children. Remember the story of the old man, his son and the donkey. In the *Sastras* it is said “The pure man is looked upon as a devil, the clever man as presumptuous, the man of forbearance as weak, the strong man as cruel, the absent-minded man as a thief, and the handsome man as lewd. Who can then please the world? There is no means within knowledge wherewith one can satisfy all people. One’s own good should, by all possible means, be looked to. What can the myriad-tongued world do?”

The Blessed Lord says : “He, O Pandava, who hates not radiance, nor outgoing energy, nor even delusion, when present; nor longs after them, absent; he, who, seated as a neutral, is unshaken by the properties; who, saying: ‘The properties revolve,’ stands apart immovable, balanced in pleasure and pain: self-reliant; to whom a lump of earth, a rock and gold are alike; the same to loved and unloved; the same in censure and in praise the same in honour and in ignominy; the same to friend and foe, abandoning all undertakings, he is said to have crossed over the properties. And he who serves Me exclusively by the Yoga of Devotion, he, crossing beyond the properties, is fit to become the Eternal” (*Gita* : Ch. XIV-22-26).

To attain to this exalted state of spirituality, you should, in the first instance, fully realize the glory of life in the Spirit, or the Soul. Then only you will have the requisite strength to kick and spurn this world mercilessly and take to a life of meditation on the Atman and the path of renunciation. Constant remembrance, and meditation on the following verses of the Bhagavad-Gita will help you not a little in the attainment of your goal.

“He, whose self is unattached to external contacts, and finds joy in the Self, having the self harmonised with the Eternal by Yoga, enjoys happiness exempt from decay.” (Ch. V-21)

“That in which he finds the supreme delight which the Reason can grasp beyond the senses, wherein established, he moves not from the Reality; which, having obtained, he thinks there is no greater gain beyond it; wherein established, he is not shaken even by heavy sorrow.” (Ch. VI-21, 22).

“The Yogi who thus, ever harmonizing the self, has put away sin, he easily enjoys the infinite bliss of contact with the Eternal.” (Ch. VI-28).

“I shall declare that which ought to be known, that which being known immortality is enjoyed; the beginningless supreme Eternal, is called neither being nor non-being.” (Ch. VIII-12)

“When the dweller in the body has crossed over these three qualities, whence all bodies have been produced, liberated from birth, death, old age and sorrow, he drinks the nectar of immortality.” (Ch. XIV-20).

Dear friends! Do not relax your efforts. Keep the Divine Flame burning steadily. You are nearing the goal now. Thy Light has come. There is Brahmic aura in your face. You have crossed many peaks and insurmountable summits in the spiritual path by dint of untiring and patient

Sadhana. It is highly creditable indeed. You have indeed made remarkable progress. I am highly pleased with you, O Yogindra! But you will have still to ascend one more peak and go through one more narrow pass. This demands still more patient efforts and strength. You will have to melt your Sattwic egoism also. The Brahmakara-Vritti also should die. Then alone you will attain the Bhuma, the highest goal of life. You can do this. I am quite confident.

ESSENCE OF VAIRAGYA-SATAKAM

The Vairagya-Satakam, or the Hundred Verses on Renunciation, of Bhartrihari (for particulars about Bhartrihari's life see Chapter 8), are generally grouped into ten divisions, viz., condemnation of desire, futile attempts to abandon sense-objects, condemnation of poverty of a supplicant attitude, delineation of the evanescence of enjoyments, description of the working of Time, comparison of a king to an ascetic, control of mind by stimulating wisdom in it, discrimination of the immutable reality from the mutable, worship of Lord Siva and the ways of a Self-realized ascetic.

Even though you may roam about heaven and earth with a view to obtain riches at the sacrifice of dignity of birth, rank in life and self-respect, your efforts will not be attended with success; and even if perchance you do succeed, your desires will never be satiated. O ignoble man! What horrible sins and crimes have you not committed just to fill the cavity of your stomach and cover this body with a piece of cloth?

Hope is a flowing river. Desires are its water. Longings are its waves. Attachments for objects are the animals of prey living therein. One cannot cross this river because of the countless whirlpools of ignorance in the waters and the precipitous nature of the river banks. Only Yogis of pure mind can cross this river and enjoy the highest Bliss.

When you know fully well that all objects of enjoyments in this world are perishable and would leave you some day, why should you not voluntarily renounce them right now and enjoy eternal Bliss?

There is no miracle more wonderful to accomplish than that of a man of discrimination arising from knowledge of Brahman to wholly discard the wealth which has been giving him enjoyment!

The lives of ascetics living in mountain caves and meditating upon the Supreme Light are indeed blessed, not of those who live in mansions and indulge in sensual pleasures and vain imagination. The lives of ascetics living on alms, sleeping on the bare ground, self-reliant, and having but a worn-out blanket made up of a hundred patches is indeed the most exalted and blessed, not of those eating rich dishes, sleeping on royal beds and wearing excellent costly attire.

While the insects jump into the blazing fire and the fish sizes the bait attached to the hook through sheer ignorance, man who is supposed to have discrimination, and a knowledge of right

and wrong does not abandon sensual pleasures that are attended with various defects! How inscrutable is the power of delusion!

Ignorant are those that think that possessing tall buildings, learned sons, tons of gold, a young beautiful lady as wife, and vigorous health constitute real blessedness, for they are deluded to run into the prison house of worldliness, whereas the truly blessed are those that renounce the world with all its joys and pleasures on account of its transitoriness.

Is it that those Himalayan valleys and the celestial Ganga banks are all engulfed in ruin that shameless men hanker after wealth, women and wine? Is it that roots and herbs are no more available in those mountain-caves or that fruit-bearing trees are all destroyed that these men always want to revel in filth of worldliness?

Arise, O ignorant man, come with me. Let us go to solitary caves where even the name of that ignoble rich man is not heard. Let us live on roots and herbs and forest fruits; drink the cool, refreshing water of the holy Ganga and lie on soft beds of tender twigs and creepers. Let us repose on stone-beds in mountain-caves, meditate deeply day and night upon the All-merciful Siva, and lead a contented and peaceful life. Let us be happy, let the greedy and the avaricious be miserable. Even if gold equal to the *Maha-Meru* in weight were conferred upon me, I will not accept it.

Worldly life is always attended with fear, whereas renunciation alone makes man absolutely fearless.

Birth is eaten by death, blooming youth by old age, contentment by greed, happiness of self-control by the dangerous wiles of young women, virtues by jealous men, kings by the wicked ministers and power itself by transitoriness. Tell me what on earth is not eaten away by something else?

Health of men is subjected to various physical and mental ailments, wealth to peril of robbers, and whatever is born is carried away by death again and again. Enjoyments are fleeting, life is short and youthful happiness too little to quench one's thirst. Oh, this world is unreal. God alone is real. Renounce desires for worldly enjoyments and attain knowledge of the Self.

How dare you say there is happiness in this world, when you have come forth from within an impure womb, when in youth you are polluted by sensual pleasures and mental distraction, and in old age you become the laughing stock of lustful women?

How wonderful that man goes on doing sinful and vicious acts as usual regardless of everything when he knows that old age is waiting like a vulture to devour him, when diseases afflict his body and mind in various ways, and when days are wasted in useless pursuits!

O little man of little faith! Believe me, this world with all its enjoyments and sensual pleasures, is evanescent and fleeting. Why do you vainly search for happiness in these worldly objects and break your legs? If you really want happiness, do as I tell you. Concentrate. Meditate. Realize. Then you will enjoy the highest happiness.

Where are those lovely cities, powerful kings, their feudatory kings or vassals, their cabinet of shrewd ministers, those beautiful women with moon-like faces, those princes and lords of illimitable wealth and fame, those minstrels and their songs of praise and flattery that once flourished?

How strange again that man wants to enjoy the same pleasures of the senses, eat the same delicious foods, drink the same wine, enjoy the same women, pass the same day and night again, and that disgust for these have not yet arisen!

The span of man's life is very short—only a hundred years. Half of it is spent in sleep, and out of the rest, half is passed away in childhood and old age. Then there are periods of illnesses, bereavements and troubles, and serving others. What happiness can there be for a man in this world?

Who is great—a king or an ascetic? If you are a king of wealth and lands, I too am the king of the highest wisdom. If you are a king of great repute, my reputation resounds in all the four quarters of the globe and is envied greatly by all learned men. If you are cold and indifferent towards me, I too am perfectly indifferent towards you and your riches. If you exercise your kingly powers over riches I do the same over words. If you are a great warrior in the battlefield, I have the skill and the faculty to humble down the proudest of disputants.

O king, if you are rich in royal garment, I am perfectly contented with the bark of trees. He is verily poor whose desires are boundless, while he is truly rich who is contented with his lot.

O let us eat begged food, let the sky be our clothing, let the earth be our bed. We have absolutely nothing to do with the riches.

What a great fool you are to set thyself to winning good graces, so difficult to secure? O mind, wander not hither and thither. Rest in peace. Let things happen, if happen they must. Brood not over the past, nor plan about your future.

O mind, be calm and never desire for sensual enjoyments. Expel delusion and cultivate devotion unto Lord Siva, the Lord of lords, the God of gods, the Yogi of Yogis. Choose to live on the banks of the Ganga, the celestial river.

O mind, never again think of the frail Goddess of Fortune. Plunge thyself into deep and profound meditation on the Atma.

When there is devotion to Lord Siva, and fear of birth and death, when there is not the least attachment for family and excitement for sexual passions, when there is the solitude of the forests where the air breathed by worldly men does not exist, what better life is to be wished for?

Meditate on the supreme, infinite, ageless, effulgent Brahman, bereft of all imperfections and attain supreme Knowledge and Bliss.

When this body is free from disease and old age, when the senses are yet unaffected and life is still young, wise people should leave no stone unturned for the sake of their own supreme good, for it is of little avail to dig a well when the house is already on fire.

In our quest through the nook and corner of the three worlds ever since the beginning of creation, none has come within sight or hearing of a means to control the elephant of his mind, when maddened by the mysterious, deep-rooted infatuation for the female elephant of sense-object.

Sitting in the meditative posture at nights, when all sounds are stilled into silence, somewhere on the banks of the Ganga, and fearful of the horrible miseries of birth and death, crying aloud, "Siva, Siva, Siva" when shall we attain to that ecstatic state which is characterized by copious tears of joy :

If there is a loin-cloth worn out and shredded a hundred times, if one is free from all disquieting thoughts, if there is food, obtained from begging, and sleep on the cremation ground or in the forest, if one is at perfect liberty to wander about alone without any let or hindrance, and if one is steadfast in the festive joy of Yoga, what then is worth the rulership of the three worlds?

INSPIRING STORIES

Story of a Prince

Once a young prince saw a beautiful princess on the banks of a river, when he was on a hunting excursion. The princess had a philosophical bent of mind. She had mastered several Vedantic books. She was practicing deep meditation on the Atman. The prince approached and wanted her to marry him. She flatly refused. The prince again and again entreated her in various ways. She finally told him: "Please come and see me in my residence after ten days. I shall marry you." The prince also was a student of Vedanta but he had no real sustained Vairagya. He spent sleepless nights and on the morning of the tenth day eagerly proceeded to the palace of the princess.

The young princess had already devised a means to escape from the clutches of marriage. She took a drastic purgative of crouton oil continually for ten days and collected all the motions in ten separate enamel commodes and arranged them all nicely with numbers I to X in a big room covering all the commodes with beautiful silk clothes. She now looked all skin and bones. Her eyes were sunken and she lay down on her bed.

The prince came to meet her with great joy. The maid-servant conducted him to the room, where the princess lay. He could not recognize her. He asked the maid-servant : "Where is the young, beautiful lady? She is not the lady whom I met the other day!" To which the princess replied: "O dear prince, I am the very same lady. I have carefully stored up my beauty in the yonder room. Kindly go with me and see the accumulated beauty there. Come along with me now. I shall show it to you." So saying she took the prince to the room, removed the silk piece and asked the prince to look at her beauty: She added "This is the beauty of my skin and flesh. "The prince was simply stunned. He did not speak a word to the lady. He prostrated himself at her feet and took her as his

mother. He threw off his princely robes and retired into the forests. Now his heart was filled with intense Vairagya. He sought the protection of a sage, got instructions from him, practiced rigorous meditation and attained Knowledge of Self.

Story of Yogi Vemanna

Vemanna was born in the year 1820, in a small village, in the district of Godavari (Andhradesa). He had a brother by name Ramanna. His parents died, when he was quite a young boy. He was born in a rich family. He was a Reddy by caste.

Vemanna was sent to a primary school. He was not able to prosecute his studies. He fell into evil company and became a rowdy boy. But he was very handsome and active. Ramanna and his wife Jagadishvari liked Vemanna very much. At the age of fifteen, Vemanna became debaucherous. He spent much money for the sake of women. Yet his brother and sister-in-law liked him very much.

Ramanna and his wife wanted to correct the ways of Vemanna. They stopped giving him any money. So Vemanna stole at night the ornaments of his sister-in-law and gave them to a prostitute. When his sister-in-law came to know of the loss of jewels, she asked Vemanna: "Where are my jewels?" Vemanna replied: "As you did not give me money, I took them and gave away to my beloved." She did not speak a word. She did not even inform her husband of the loss of jewels. She liked Vemanna very much. She locked up all her ornaments in the safe.

The prostitute urged Vemanna to bring some more money or ornaments. So again at the dead of night Vemanna woke up from his bed and tried to remove some of the ornaments from the neck of his sister-in-law. She was wearing only the sacred ornament that was tied round her neck at the time of her marriage. Vemanna wanted to remove at least this ornament. When he was attempting to remove it, she woke up and caught hold of his hand and asked him why he came to her bedroom at mid-night. He replied in a daring manner: "my beloved asked me to bring some ornaments: I came here to take them." She asked Vemanna to get out of the room at once. Then he cried and fell at her feet. Jagadishvari prayed to God to give Vemanna good *Buddhi* (intellect) and make him a pure, virtuous soul. Then he promised to obey her words. Vemanna fully assured her to do so.

Jagadishvari said : "Vemanna, ask the girl to stand naked in front of you. Let her back be turned towards you. Then ask her to bend down and take the jewels from your hands by passing her hands through her thighs." Vemanna promised to do so and took the ornaments to the prostitute's house.

He asked her to do in the manner his sister-in-law had instructed. While she was bending down, he saw very clearly her private parts. At once Vairagya dawned in his mind. He retraced his steps to his house with the ornaments in his hands and related to his sister-in-law all that had happened. He said: "My dear sister-in-law, thank you so much for all your kind acts. I am a changed man now. There is no real happiness in this world. It is all jugglery of *Maya*. I am going now in

quest of real happiness.” He left the house at once and went to a Kali temple near his village and sat near the image of Kali.

Now it so happened that for some years a man named Abhiramayya was praying to Kali for Her *Darshan*. One day she appeared in his dream and said: “Come tomorrow at midnight. I will give you Darshan.” But the unfortunate devotee could not come the next day. When Kali came, Vemanna was there. She asked Vemanna to ask a boon of her. Vemanna said : “O Mother! Give me Brahma-Jnana.” Mother Kali then initiated him into the mysteries of Jnana. From that day onwards, Vemanna became a virtuous man with great devotion, Yogic powers and Jnana.

In the course of his wanderings, Vemanna went to Cuddappah. He lived in a forest near Cuddappah. He planted various fruit bearing trees, melons, cucumbers, etc. The cucumbers were all filled with gold. Vemanna built a golden temple in Sri-Sailam with this gold. Even today this golden temple of Sri-Sailam contains the famous *Jyotirlinga* of Mallikarjuna. It is a famous place of pilgrimage. One day some thieves came to rob the cucumbers containing gold. They all became senseless due to the Yogic powers of Vemanna.

Once, Vemanna entered the cottage of a poor Brahmin at mid-night and was sleeping on his bed. He answered the calls of nature on the bed itself. That portion of the bed that was soiled by the excreta became transmuted into gold.

Vemanna cast off his physical sheath in 1865. He wrote several books in Telugu on Yoga, chief among them being Vemanna-Tattva-Jnanam and Vemanna-Jivamritam.

Story of a Servant

Narendra Singh Bahadur, the Raja of Indrapur, had a servant named Hira Singh. Hira Singh resolved to break open the treasury of the Raja and steal away the ornaments and gold. Accordingly one day at the dead of night, he entered the bed-room of Narendra Singh on his way to the treasury, when he overheard a conversation between the Raja Sahib and the Rani. Lalitakumari, the Rani, asked the king: “When are you going to get our daughter Suratkumari married? She is quite a grown-up girl now. We cannot postpone the marriage any longer.” The king replied : “I am trying my level best during the last two years, but I am not able to get a suitable match.” The Rani would not accept such an answer, but again and again pressed the Raja to yield to her wish. At last the Raja said : “Lalita, I shall offer Surat in marriage to the first Yogi I would come across in the neighbouring forest along with half of my estate tomorrow morning.”

Hira Singh who was all the while keenly over-hearing this conversation thought within himself: “Why this hazardous attempt then? If I am caught, I will be severely punished. Let me go to the forest and sit like a Yogi. I will get the girl and half the estate also quite easily.” Immediately he dressed himself as a Yogi, repaired to the forest and sat in Samadhi on Padmasana with closed eyes. He did not shake the body even a bit. The Raja went to the forest the next morning and at last came to the place where this Yogi was sitting. He waited for a long time. The Yogi did not open his eyes. He gave one the impression that he was immersed in Samadhi. After full one hour he opened his

eyes. The Raja fell prostrate at his feet and sincerely begged him to visit palace. The Yogi finally condescended to do so.

The Raja took the Yogi to the Durbar hall, seated him on the *gaddi*, and washed his feet. The Raja was fanning him. Then the Raja with folded hands addressed the Yogi thus : “O mighty Yogi blessed Soul, we have a beautiful girl. Kindly accept her in marriage together with half of my estate.” Now real discrimination dawned upon the Yogi. Hira Singh who was wearing the false garb of a saint began to think very seriously and feelingly : “I am now honoured by this Raja and Rani simply because I am wearing the garb of a Yogi. If I were a Yogi and saint with divine virtues and God-Consciousness, how much more should I be held in esteem and honour by not merely this one petty chief but by countless kings, emperors and queens, and how many such princesses and kingdoms should I acquire?” At once he left the *gaddi* and the palace with a changed heart. God’s grace descended upon him now. His heart was burning with intense Vairagya born of discrimination. Tears of joy flooded his eyes. Hair on the body stood on ends. No sensual object of the world could tempt him now. He went back to the dense forests with a heart filled with righteous disgust for the world, did intense and constant meditation and attained Self-Realization.

Story of Lord Buddha

Some 2500 years ago there lived in North India a Raja named Suddhodhana. He had a son named Gautama, a fine and handsome youth. At the age of sixteen he was married to a beautiful wife named Yasodhara and had a little son named Rahula. He lived in fine palace enjoying all the splendours and pleasures befitting a royal prince.

Beyond the bare fact that from the age of sixteen right up to the age of twenty-nine he lived the life of a householder nothing can be said about the early life of Gautama, who was destined in course of time to shine forth as a brilliant pole-star in the spiritual firmament of the world.

Prince Gautama, also called Siddhartha, had always been a wise and thoughtful lad. Gentle in his speech, kind hearted, and full of mercy to all living beings, when one fine morning he accompanied his royal father for a ride on horse-back, he felt quite pleased and happy. But the next moment he saw a plough man beating a poor bullock that had a sore on its back till it dropped down with intense pain and agony. As he rode along a little further he saw a dove being eaten away by a hungry hawk. Then he saw another dove eating some flies. Gautama went back home full of sorrow.

After a few days Gautama had a dream. He saw an old feeble man unable to walk and hardly able to stand and groaning under the burden of old age. And a voice addressed Gautama: “Thou wilt also get old and feeble like this old man, O Gautama!”

He then saw a man suffering from some dire malady and crying aloud unable to bear the torturing pain. And the voice said to Gautama: “Thou wilt also get ill and full of pain like this, O Gautama.” Then he saw another man lying dead on the ground. And the voice again said to Gautama : “You must also die one day, O Gautama.”

Supreme Vairagya dawned upon Gautama now. He fully realized the utter transitoriness of life and leaving his home, wife and child and all the pleasures and joys of life, he retired into the forest and became an ascetic. For full seven years he lived in the woods trying to find out some means to put an end to pain, sin and sorrow in the world, to seek something higher and nobler than the things of the sense conditioned in time.

Thus we learn that Siddhartha's reason for renunciation was his profound conviction that all worldly pleasures and happiness were fleeting, and his intense longing to attain to peace and calm which nothing could shake or end. Of course he sought this first for himself only, but afterwards he thought that what had given him peace and calm would be equally beneficial to others as well.

One night as he sat meditating under a Bodhi Tree (the Tree of Buddhahood), Truth dawned upon him. He realized that man's life is full of pain, that desire is the cause of pain that pain can be ended by putting an end to all desires, and that desire can be ended by right thought, word and deed. From this memorable day onwards, he came to be known as Buddha or the "Enlightened."

Buddha was one of the noblest and kindest men who ever lived. His religion is called Buddhism. He taught the world to be good and kind to all beings including animals and crawling creatures and that it was a sin to hurt anyone. He had a large following. Even today Buddhism is considered to be a great religion by all right-thinking men.

Story of Raja Bhartrihari

Once when Raja Bhartrihari was on his throne, a great Tapasvin or Rishi came to his court. Bhartrihari at once got up from his seat, and prostrating himself before the Tapasvin began to serve him in various ways. The sage being extremely pleased with the Raja's demeanour, gave him a fruit that could bestow upon the eater immortality and peace.

Now Raja Bhartrihari had a very beautiful queen of whom he was very enamoured and whom he very dearly loved. He thought that the only person who deserved this fruit was his young queen and none else, and so he took this God-sent gift to her and offered her the same. This young queen, though for all practical purposes the beloved of the Raja, had a paramour in the person of the charioteer who used to take her for drives now and then. She therefore took this fruit to him and gave him the same. Again this charioteer had a prostitute whom also he loved, and, accordingly, he gave the fruit to her.

Now, this prostitute thought that the only person who best deserved this fruit was Raja Bhartrihari himself, and so she took this fruit in her hands went to the Raja's palace and offered it to him. Raja Bhartrihari was simply mystified. He was unable to solve the problem as to how it could be possible for this prostitute to get the fruit that was the rightful possession of his queen.

After deep thought and great deliberation, he was able to solve the problem by himself. Just before this incident, Bhartrihari's brother who came to know of the queen's love for the king's charioteer had told Bhartrihari that the queen was an unchaste lady and that it was a great shame on

the fair name of the royal family to keep a woman as queen in the palace when she secretly loved the king's charioteer. But the young queen rose equal to the occasion and brought forth evidences to disprove the validity of the charge against her and was able to prevail upon the king to exile his brother from the kingdom. After due investigation into the whole matter, with all the dexterity that he could command, Bhartrihari came to the conclusion that, after all, the charge brought against his queen by his brother was true and that he had been fooled by a woman to take the extreme step of exiling his own brother who loved him so dearly and who held as high the fair name of the royal family by zealously guarding it from insinuation and blot.

True Vairagya immediately dawned upon the king. He now thought that there was none in the world who was really dear to another, no, not even one's own wife or brother or friend. He became convinced that in fact these are one's real enemies. He felt extreme disgust for the world and its pleasures and at once left his kingdom, wife and children and retired into the forests to lead a life of a Sannyasin. He did profound meditation for many years and finally attained knowledge of Self. He wrote a book generally known as 'Bhartrihari's Vairagya Satakam, or the Hundred Verses of Renunciation' a perusal of which will produce immediate disgust for things mundane and induce one to renounce everything and lead the life of a recluse.

Story of Yayati

There once was a sagely king named Yayati, who lived for 1,000 years, enjoying all the pleasures a king of his position could command. When old age attacked him, and he had still great desire to enjoy all royal pleasures for some more years, he asked his sons one by one to take upon himself this old age and give him his youth in return, assuring him that after another 1,000 years he would return the youth and take back his decrepitude. Not one of them was willing to accept the offer except his youngest son named, Puru.

Puru said with all humility that he was quite willing to do as his father wished him and accordingly gave his youth to his father and got in return old age and its consequent weakness. Yayati, being exceedingly delighted with his new youth, began again to indulge in sensual pleasures. He enjoyed himself to the full extent of his desires and to the full limit of his powers and as much as he desired without violating the precepts of religion. He was very happy, but only one thought troubled him and that was the thought that the one thousand years would soon come to an end.

When the fixed time came to an end, he came to his son Puru and addressed him thus: "O son, I have enjoyed with your youth to the full extent of my desires and to the full limit of my powers and all according to their seasons. But desires never die. They are never satiated by indulgence. By indulgence they flame up like the sacrificial fire with ghee poured into it. If one becomes the sole lord of all the earth with its paddy, oats, gems, beasts and women, still it will not be considered by him enough. Therefore, the thirst for enjoyment should be abandoned. The thirst for enjoyments which is difficult to cast off by the wicked, which does not fail even with failing life, is truly a fatal disease in man. To get rid of this thirst is real happiness. My mind was attached to the

pleasures of life for full one thousand years. My thirst for them, however, without being abated, is daily being increased. Therefore, I shall get rid of it.

I shall fix my mind on Brahma, and becoming peaceful and having no attachment, I shall pass the rest of my days in the forest with the innocent deers." So saying he installed Puru on the throne after giving him back his youth and retired into the forest to lead the life of an ascetic.

Story of Hemachuda

There was a king named Muktachuda in olden times. He ruled the kingdom of Dasarna. He had two sons, Hemachuda and Manichuda. They both were very beautiful, and virtuous. They had good behaviour and conduct. They were also very proficient in all arts. They both went to the mountain Sahya with attendants and weapons for hunting. They shot many tigers and wild animals. All of a sudden there was a terrible sand-storm. Immense darkness prevailed. One could not see the other person.

Hemachuda, anyhow, managed to reach the hermitage of a sage which was full of fruit trees. He saw in the ashram a handsome maiden. He was quite astonished to see a fearless girl in that solitary forest. He asked the maiden "Who are you? Who is your father? Why are you alone here? How did you develop this courage?" She replied politely, "Welcome, O Prince. Take your seat. Take a little rest. You seem to be much tired. Kindly take these fruits, and nuts. I shall relate my story." The Prince ate those fruits and nuts and rested for a while.

The girl then began "O Prince, hearken to my story with rapt attention. I am the God-child of sage Vyaghrapada who is adored by all, whom has conquered the world by his severe austerities, and who has attained liberation. My name is Hemalekha. Vidyutprabha, a celestial nymph of matchless beauty and indescribable splendour one day came to the river Vena for bathing. Sushena, king of the Vengas, also came there. Sushena was captivated by the enchanting beauty of Vidyutprabha. The celestial nymph was also infatuated by the handsome figure of the king. Sushena pleaded his love towards Vidyutprabha. She responded. The king spent some time with her. Afterwards he returned to his capital.

Vidyutprabha soon brought forth a child. She left the child there as she was afraid of her husband, and went to her place. I was that child. Vyaghrapada went to the river for his daily ablutions. He saw me and took pity on me. He brought me up like a mother. I regard him as my father. I serve him with reverence. Through his grace I have become fearless here. My father will return presently. Please wait a little. Pay your respects to him and obtain his blessings." The intelligent girl understood the heart of the Prince and said : "O Prince, do not get disheartened. You can gratify your wish. My father will grant your wish."

Immediately the sage Vyaghrapada entered with flowers for worship. The Prince got up and prostrated himself before the sage. The sage understood that the Prince was in love with the girl. He gave Hemalekha in marriage to the Prince. The Prince returned with her to his city. His father was very much delighted. He celebrated their marriage with pomp and splendour.

The Prince loved Hemalekha immensely. He was very much attached to her. But he noticed that she was rather indifferent to sensual pleasures. He asked her one day "O dear Hemalekha: What is the matter with you? I am very much attached to you. Why do you not reciprocate my love? Nothing seems to have any effect on you. You are dispassionate. How can I enjoy when you have such an attitude of mind? You always sit with closed eyes like a statue. You do not laugh, play and joke with me. Kindly speak out your heart. Be frank."

Hemalekha replied respectfully: "O Prince; Hear me. What is love? What is dislike? As this is not clear to my mind, I am always reflecting over it. I have come to no definite conclusion. Please enlighten me on this point. I entreat you."

Hemachuda replied with a smile "it is true that women possess an innocent mind. Even animals understand what is like and dislike. We see that they like pleasing things and dislike unpleasant objects. Beauty gives us pleasure; ugliness gives us pain. Why do you waste your time daily on this?"

Hemalekha replied : "It is true that women have no independent power of thinking. So is it not your duty to clear my doubts? If you throw light, I will leave off thinking and be attached to you always. O Prince, you said that like and dislike or love and hatred arise out of objects which give us pleasure and pain. But the same object gives us pleasure and pain on account of time, circumstances and environments. What is your decision then? Kindly give me your definite answer. Fire is very pleasant in winter but in summer it is very terrible. You cannot go near the fire. The same fire gives pleasure in cold countries and pain in hot countries. The quantity of fire gives us different results. Similar is the case with wealth, wife, son, mother-country and so on. These induce positive sufferings and misery. Why is it that your father Muktachuda, despite his possession of immense wealth, sons and wife, is always sorrowful? Others are very happy even without these. Worldly happiness is mixed with misery, pain, fear and anxiety. So it cannot be called happiness at all. Misery is personal and impersonal or internal and external. The external one is caused by the impact of the elements on the body. The internal one is born out of desire. It has connection with the mind. Of these, the internal one is more formidable. It is the seed or cause for all sufferings. The whole world is drowned in such internal misery. The tree called misery has desire as the strong and never-failing seed. Even Indra and other gods are impelled by this desire. They carry out its instructions day and night. If there is no desire, you cannot experience any pleasure. Such mixture of happiness and misery is enjoyed even by the insects, worms, dogs. Do you think that man's happiness is greater than this? The happiness of the insects is superior to that of man. Because desire is not mixed in their pleasures; it is unalloyed. Whereas in man a little pleasure is found in the midst of thousands of ungratified desires. This cannot be called happiness. Man feels happy by embracing his wife, but by pressing her limbs too much she feels uneasy. After sporting they are exhausted. What happiness have you in these sensual perishable objects. Kindly explain. O Prince! This sort of happiness is enjoyed even by dogs, donkeys and pigs. But if you say that you are happy by looking at my physical beauty, this happiness is imaginary and illusory like the embracing of a lady in dream."

A certain beautiful Prince had a very handsome wife. He was very much attached to her. She on the contrary was in love with the Prince's servant. She was cheating the Prince by foul means. The servant would give some intoxicating drugs in the wine to the Prince. Then he would send an

ugly servant-maid to the Prince. He himself would sport with the Prince's wife. The Prince under intoxication was thinking 'I am very fortunate. I have got the most beautiful lady in the world.' Many days passed thus. One day the servant forgot to mix the narcotic in the wine. The Prince also did not drink much that day. He joined the ugly woman when he fell victim to passion. He now found out that she was the servant-maid. He asked her where his dear wife was?

She kept silent at first. Then Prince drew the sword and threatened to kill her if she did not reveal the whole truth. She told him everything and showed the place where his beautiful wife was with the servant. The Prince said "What a fool am I? I have degraded myself by drinking. Whoever places too much love on woman, becomes despicable. Just as a bird is not fixed to any one tree, so also woman is not fixed to one man. She has a fickle, unsteady mind. I have become a beast. I have lost my power of discrimination. I regarded my wife more valuable than my very life itself. A man who is attached to a woman and who yields to a woman is a veritable donkey indeed. Woman's beauty is evanescent like the autumnal sky. I did not know woman's nature till now. She goes to the dirty servant and she has left me who am ever attached to her, and who is faithful to her. She pretended to show love to me like a dramatic actress. I am cheated. The servant is ugly in all his limbs. What beauty does she find in him? The Prince became disgusted with everything. He left the kingdom and went to a forest."

Hemalekha continued: "Therefore O Prince: beauty is a mental creation only. Beauty is mind born. Beauty is the result of mental conception. Just as you behold beauty in me, others find even better charm in an ugly woman. On seeing a woman her reflection is formed in the mirror of his mind if a man thinks of this beauty constantly, desire is stimulated in that part of the body which is subject to impulse. That man in whom the desire is thus stimulated enjoys sensual pleasure, whereas he whose desire is not stimulated does not care to see even the most handsome girl. The cause for this is the constant meditation on beauty or woman. Children and ascetics do not meditate or think this. Therefore they do not have any desire for sensuous pleasures. Those who find pleasure in the company of a particular woman create in their minds beauty according to their ideas, whether the woman is ugly or most beautiful. They project their ideas of beauty in the woman. If you ask how beauty is found in an ugly woman and how there can be joy without beauty I can only say that passionate man in his infatuation is blind. Cupid is painted blind. The passionate man finds the beauty of *Rambha* in the ugliest woman. There can be no beauty without desire. If beauty be natural like sourness, sweetness, bitterness in substances, then why is it not found in children and small babies? Therefore beauty is created by the mind only."

"People think beautiful this physical body which is composed of flesh; filled with blood, built of nerves, covered with skin, a cage of bones, over-grown with hair, full of bile, phlegm, a box of excreta and urine, created out of blood and semen, born through the urinary passage! How can those persons, who find pleasure in this, be superior to worms born in filth? O Prince, you find my physical body to be handsome. Just analyze this body part by part and think over each part. Think over every part of sweet and delicious things. All things we eat are changed into abdominal dirt. When such is the case what is lovable and delighting?"

Hemachuda heard the nectar-like instructions of Hemalekha with great attention and interest. He developed strong Vairagya and Viveka, meditated on the all pure, immortal Atman and became liberated. Manichuda also learnt the truth from his brother; Muktachuda from his son and

his wife from her daughter-in-law. The ministers and citizens of that town became wise. Even birds were uttering words of wisdom in that town. Sages Vamadeva and others noticed that all in that town, including animals and birds were learned and wise, and called the city as Vidyanagara, or the town of Wisdom.

APPENDIX

PRASNOTTARI of Sri Sankaracharya

Q. 1. Who is really enslaved?

A. One who is attached to the objects of the senses.

Q. 2. What is freedom (or liberation)?

A. Non-attachment to worldly objects.

Q. 3. What is the most horrible hell?

A. Your own body.

Q. 4. What is the path to heaven?

A. The total annihilation of all desires.

Q. 5. What is the gate to hell?

A. Woman.

Q. 6. What leads to heaven?

A. Non-violence or harmlessness to all creatures.

Q. 7. Who are the enemies?

A. Our own Indriyas. They are our friends when subjugated.

Q. 8. Who is really poor?

A. One who has many desires.

Q. 9. Who is rich?

A. He who has full contentment.

Q. 10. What is nectar?

A. Delightful desirelessness.

Q. 11. What is the real betters?

A. Egoistic sense of “mineness” and “thineness.”

Q. 12. What is that which intoxicates as if it were wine?

A. A woman.

Q. 13. Who is the most blind?

A. One actuated by lust.

Q. 14. What is the deadliest of all poisons?

A. All sensual enjoyments.

Q. 15. Who is miserable for ever?

A. He who is attached to worldly enjoyments.

Q. 16. What is beyond the reach of everybody's knowledge?

A. A woman's heart and her doings.

Q. 17. Who is a beast?

A. One without knowledge.

Q. 18. Whose company should we shun off?

A. The company of the fools, the mean minded, the wicked and the sinful.

Q. 19. What is at the root of degradation?

A. Begging.

Q. 20. What is at the root of becoming great?

A. Never to beg.

Q. 21. Who is really born?

A. He who has no birth again.

Q. 22. Who is really dead?

A. One who is not to die again.

Q. 23. Who is the greatest of all enemies?

A. Kama (desire), anger, untruth, greed and craving.

Q. 24. Who is not gratified by (all) objects of (enjoyment)?

A. Desire (lust).

Q. 25. What is at the root of all miseries?

A. The sense of "mineness" or I-ness."

Q. 26. Who are the real dacoits?

A. Evil desires.

Q. 27. Who is the beast of all beasts?

A. One who does not fulfil his duties and has no knowledge of the Self.

Q. 28. What is fleeting like-lightning?

A. Wealth, youth and life.

Q. 29. What should be constantly thought of?

A. The illusory nature of the universe and the existence of Brahman.

Q. 30. What is real action?

A. That which is pleasing to Lord Krishna.

Lord Buddha's Advice

Lord Buddha describes the amount of suffering which men endure. “The transmigration (Samsara) of beings, O mendicants”, he says “has its beginning in eternity. The opening cannot be found from which, having come forth, being led astray through ignorance, bound by the thirst for existence, stray and wander. What do ye think, O mendicants, which of the two is more, the water which is in the four great oceans, or the tears which have poured from you and have been shed for you, while ye wandered and went astray in this long transmigration, and sorrowed and wept, because that which ye hated was your portion, and that which ye loved was not your portion? A mother’s death, a father’s death, a brother’s death, a sister’s death, a son’s death, a daughter’s death, the loss of relations, the loss of property, all this ye have experienced through long ages. And while ye experienced this through long ages, more tears have poured from you and have been shed from you, while ye strayed and wandered on this long pilgrimage, and sorrowed and wept because that which ye hated was your portion and that which ye loved was not your portion, than all the water which is in the Four Great Oceans”.

“A wise man should avoid unchastity as if it were a burning pit of live coals; one who is not able to live in a state of celibacy, should not commit adultery”.

“Never associate with loved or with unloved objects;

Not to see the loved and to see the unloved is pain.

Therefore hold nothing dear, for the loss of the loved is evil;

No bonds have they to whom nothing is loved or unloved.

From what is loved is born grief, from the loved is born fear;

To the man freed from loving anything there is no grief, much less fear.

From affection is born grief, from affection is born fear;

To the man freed from affection there is no grief, much less fear.

From pleasure is born grief, from pleasure is born fear;
To the man freed from pleasure there is no grief, much less fear.”

From desire is born grief, from desire is born fear;
To the man freed from desire there is no grief, much less fear.

“What laughter, what joy is there, since there is always the burning?

Enveloped in darkness, seek ye not a lamp?

Behold the varicoloured figure, the accumulated mass of wounds.

Afflicted full of wishes, to which there is no firmness, no stability.

This form (body) is decrepit, a nest of diseases, decaying:

The putrid body is breaking up, for life ends in death.

These grayish bones, which are cast away gourds in autumn,—

Having seen them, what pleasure remains?

The preoccupied man while in the act of gathering flowers,

Does death seize and carry off, as a great flood the sleeping village.

The preoccupied man while in the act of gathering flowers,

Does the God of Death get into his power, when unstated with lusts”.

—*Dhammapada*

Selections From Viveka-Chudamani of Sri Sankaracharya

1. The man who having with difficulties acquired a human birth with a male body and knowledge of the scriptures through delusion does not exert for liberation commits suicide, for he destroys himself by clinging to unreal objects.
2. What greater fool is there than the man who having obtained a rare human birth and a male body too, neglects to attain the goal of his life?
3. Vairagya is the desire to abandon all the transitory enjoyments from the physical body up to Brahma, the creator, having already known their defects and shortcomings from observation, hearing, etc.
4. Those fools who are tied to these sense objects by the thick cord of attachment, so very difficult to be broken are forcibly carried along by the messenger, their own Karma, to heaven, earth and hell.
5. The deer, elephant, moth, fish and black bee—these five meet with their death, being bound to one or other of the five senses, viz., sound, etc., through attachment. What then of man who is bound by all the senses jointly.
6. In point of virulence sense-objects are more fatal than the poison of cobra even. Poison kills one who drinks it, but sensuous objects can kill one who even looks at them through the eye's.
7. He who is free from the terrible bondage of the hankering of the sense objects so very difficult to get rid of is alone fit for liberation; none else even though he is well versed in the six systems of philosophy.
8. Those seekers after liberation who are endowed with only an apparent dispassion (Vairagya) and are endeavouring to cross the ocean of Samsara or conditioned existence are seized by the stark of hankering; being caught by the neck and forcibly dragged into the middle and drowned.
9. He who has slain the stark of desire with the sword of supreme or mature dispassion, crosses the ocean of Samsara without obstacles.
10. Know that death rapidly overtakes that stupid man who treads along the dreadful path of sensual pleasure; but whoever treads the right path under the instruction of a Guru who looks after his spiritual welfare, also his own reasoning attains his end—know this to be true.
11. If thou hast really an yearning for liberation, abandon sense-objects from a good distance as if they were poison and always develop carefully the nectar-like virtues of contentment, compassion, forgiveness, sincerity, tranquillity and self-control.

12. Whoever passionately attends to the feeding of his own body which is an object for jackals, fishes and vultures, to enjoy, and ignores what should always be attempted viz., liberation from the bondage of ignorance without beginning commits suicide thereby.

13. Whoever tries to realize the Self by nourishing his body is like one who crosses a river by catching hold of a crocodile, thinking it to be a log of wood.

14. For one desirous of liberation the infatuation over things like the body is dire death. He who is free from such infatuation is alone fit for liberation.

15. Conquer the infatuation over the objects like the body, wife, children, and so on. Having conquered it the sages attain that supreme state of Vishnu.

16. This gross body is to be condemned for it is made up of skin, flesh, blood, arteries, veins, fat, marrow and bones and is filled with filth.

17. The physical body has got various restrictions regarding caste and order of life. It is subject to various diseases. It is worshipped and honoured sometimes. It is censured and insulted at other times.

The Mysterious Palace of Brahman

The mason builds a house out of stones, small bricks, lime and cement. He keeps big pieces of stones in the construction of the main walls and puts small bricks and pebbles to fill up the crevices in the wall, plasters the wall with lime and eventually puts a layer of cement. He polishes the wall with finishing touches and gives a colouring in the end to attract the eyes. Even so, the Divine Architect, God, has constructed this human body with the help of Prakriti. The bones represent the big stones; the muscles represent the pebbles; the fat the bricks; dermis or white skin the lime; the skin or epidermis the cement; the pigment of the skin the colouring matter. Look at the marvellous skill of the Divine Engineer, Engineer of all engineers. The muscles are fixed to the bones by means of tendons. The joints are kept intact by ligaments. Deposition of fat gives good shape to the limbs, trunk and abdomen and gives beauty. The pigment in the skin attracts the eyes of the out lookers and people are deluded by false beauty of the perishable body. They cling to this body and through this clinging they are caught up in the round of births and deaths.

The body is a mysterious moving palace. His Divine Majesty Brahman dwells here. Brahman is the Immortal soul or Atma. Buddhi or intellect is His Prime Minister. Mind is the commander. The ten Indriyas are the soldiers or servants. The eyes are the marvellous windows of the palace. Mouth is the way out. Eyes and ears are the way in. The Devatas who preside over the Indriyas, eyes ears, nose, etc., are the gatekeepers.

The nerves are the wires. Brain is the receivers It receives all messages. It contains a wonderful switch-board also. Prana is the electricity. The bones are the mountains. The veins are the rivers. The bladder is the ocean. The bowels and urethra are the sewers. The heart is the

water-works. The arteries are the pipes. The astral heart is the garden of Vrindavan, Susbuma is the Kunjgalli of Vrindavan. Jiva is sweet Radha who wants to unite with Lord Krishna, or Brahman, through Yoga Samadhi. Sahasrara, or the crown of the head, is the place where Radha and Krishna, the individual soul and Brahman, unite. The different Chakras are the resting places with Kadamba tree.

The body is made up of five elements. Bone is nothing but earth or clay. Blood or flesh is nothing but water. The shining in the skin and the eyes is nothing but fire. The Prana that moves in the nostrils and lungs is nothing but air. This air rests on ether. Ether is the support for all the other four elements. Air, fire, water and earth have emanated from ether. When the body is buried, the bones become one with the earth. They go back to their source. Through the practice of Laya-Chintan if you reduce the earth into water, water into fire, fire into air, and air into ether, the body does not really exist. It dwindles into airy nothing. Through jugglery of Maya you perceive this body. In reality the imperishable soul which is the support for this body and mind really exists.

The body is inert and insentient. It remains as a log of wood as soon as the Prana leaves the body. It appears to be sentient through contact with Prana, mind and reflected intelligence, just as a ball of iron appears to be a ball of fire through contact with fire. The reflected intelligence, or *Chaitanya*, galvanizes the inert intellect first, as it is very subtle, and as the intellect is in close contact with it, and through intellect this inert body also is galvanized. So the body moves, feels and does various sorts of actions. After all, mortal flesh is clay, bone is only a modification of earth. O Man: Do not cling to this body of flesh and network of bones. Give up infatuation for this body. Destroy ignorance. Realize the Immortal Self and be free.

The Lord is hiding himself in the inner chambers of this mysterious palace. He is playing the game of 'hide and seek' with you. Find Him out. Search Him out. Search Him in the chambers of your heart by withdrawing the mind and the Indriyas from the external objects and practicing concentration and meditation.