

at once understands the Teacher. It is for this reason that Śaṅkara is compelled to declare that as a result of Guru upāsanā, the disciple becomes capable of liberating himself from his limitations.



श्रोत्रियोऽवृजिनोऽकामहतो यो ब्रह्मवित्तमः ।
 ब्रह्मण्युपरतः शान्तो निरिन्धन इवानलः ।
 अहेतुकदयासिन्धुर्बन्धुरानमतां सताम् ॥ ३३ ॥

*śrotriyo'vrjino'kāmahato yo brahmavittamaḥ,
 brahmaṇyuparataḥ śānto nirindhana ivānalaḥ,
 ahetukadayāsindhurbandhurānamatām satām. (33)*

33. He who is well versed in the scriptures, sinless, unafflicted by desires, a full knower of the Supreme, who has retired into the Supreme, who is as calm as the fire that has burnt up its fuel, who is a boundless ocean of mercy that needs no cause for its expression and who is an intimate friend of those who have surrendered unto him.

Śaṅkara exhausts his list of adjectives in enumerating the qualities of the true Guru to supplement his declaration that the Master should be well-established in the supreme Consciousness. He adds here certain qualities which, on a closer observation reveal that every Man of Realisation and Wisdom cannot aspire to and become an efficient Teacher of spirituality. To guide and instruct a deluded soul and help him to unwind himself and unravel the knotty traits in him, one must have something more than a perfect experience. The Teacher must, no doubt have full realisation but he must also have a complete grasp of the great scriptures. Without the study of the scriptures even the Self-realised Master will not have the language or the technique of expression to convey his profound knowledge to his disciples.

Apart from spiritual knowledge and erudition, the Guru must also have great self-control and the immense riches of a

well-developed heart. He must have an irresistible flow of mercy which demands no special cause for its manifestation, especially when it descends upon those who have surrendered themselves to him, having reached his feet as spiritual refugees.

It is well-known that in all constitutions, laws are prescribed for both the governors and the governed. Since this is a text laying down the rules for spiritual progress, Śaṅkara is as vehement in prescribing specifications for a true and honest Teacher as he is in describing the prerequisites for a spiritual aspirant.



तमाराध्य गुरुं भक्त्या प्रह्वप्रश्रयसेवनैः ।
प्रसन्नं तमनुप्राप्य पृच्छेज्ज्ञातव्यमात्मनः ॥ ३४ ॥

*tamārādhya gurum bhaktyā prahvapraśrayasevanaiḥ,
prasannam tamanuprāpya pṛcchejjñātavyamātmanah. (34)*

34. *Worshipping that Guru with deep devotion, when he is pleased with your surrender, humility and service, approach him and ask him to explain what you must know.*

It is clear that no amount of enquiring into or discussing with a Teacher is of any avail unless the student has taken enough time to tune himself up to the Teacher. The essence of satsaṅga lies in perfect attunement (at-one-ment).

Spirituality is not something that we can start discussing and arguing among ourselves to while away an idle hour. It is to be understood in an atmosphere of peace and tranquillity, for, this understanding is an attempt at comprehending the deep experiences of the Master, expressed not so much through his words as perhaps, through the ring of sincerity that the words carry when they come from his heart throbbing with his own niṣṭhā. Therefore, Śaṅkara here explains how a seeker should approach the Teacher and learn first of all, to love him, trust him and later on, through