



16. Discussion on Questions Raised (67-71)

यस्त्वयाद्य कृतः प्रश्नो वरीयाञ्छास्त्रविन्मतः ।
सूत्रप्रायो निगूढार्थो ज्ञातव्यश्च मुमुक्षुभिः ॥ ६७ ॥

*yastvayādyā kṛtaḥ praśno varīyāñchāstravinmataḥ,
sūtraprāyo nigūḍhārtho jñātavyaśca mumukṣubhiḥ. (67)*

67. The questions which you raised today are excellent, accepted by those well versed in the śāstras, aphoristic, full of hidden meaning and such that they are fit to be known by all seekers.

When the student asked his questions (as stated in verse – 49), the Teacher, instead of replying directly and immediately, indulged in a long and exhaustive discourse upon the futility of mere discussion if it were not accompanied by an all out enthusiastic effort at straightening oneself from one's inner deformities. This was no idle digression on the part of the Teacher but it expressed his deep concern that his disciple should not misunderstand and misuse the freedom given to him to ask questions to get his doubts cleared. There are always in society, a set of wise looking foolish disciples who misuse the freedom given to them and abuse the privilege of discussing with their Teacher.

They, poor folk, have so fallen in love with their own questions, that they repeat them with a passion amounting to sheer lunacy. To ensure that the student does not fall into this intellectual ditch and obstruct his own evolution, Śaṅkara with ten explicit verses warns the world of seekers. After concluding the digression, he now pointedly answers all seven questions raised by the disciple.

In this verse, the Master once again, compliments the student on the intelligence of his questions and the beauty and precision that graces the very form in which they are framed. The glories that are enumerated here by the Guru are the perfections that come about, when a chiselled thought is packed in appropriate language and offered at the feet of true wisdom. When a true disciple reaches his Master's feet, he feels so choked with admiration, reverence, devotion and love for him that he dares not disturb the divine atmosphere of tranquillity around the Teacher with thoughtless blabbering and empty talk.

A fit student has got his ideas crystallised and after logical self-analysis, has come across certain insurmountable obstacles for the removal of which he has approached the Teacher. Since the doubt was really felt and thoroughly digested by him, the student could present it in the fewest number of words, indicating at once the logic of his thought.

If on a dark night you fall into a wayside well, indeed, your condition is unenviable. You are extremely anxious to extricate yourself from the situation. At this moment, you hear approaching footsteps and you cry out for help. The benevolent person reaches the well. Would you then, from the bottom of the well, begin the narration of the entire story of how you came upon the well at that late hour, how you fell, what thoughts kept you company in the sandy bottom of the well and so on, besides giving him details of your name, details of your family, position, status and so on? No. At such critical moments you will only cry, 'I am here in the well. Save me, O! please save me. Help me, save me, save me.' Any other cry will be unnatural. Similarly, when a student who has understood that in the darkness of ignorance he has fallen into a dry well of limitations and sorrows, when he sees the Master, he will have no stories to tell, no idle discussion to indulge in. His one heart-rending cry is 'Save me, O Master! save me'.

Śaṅkara, through his compliments to the disciple, is advising generations of seekers not to be too wordy when they approach a