

॥ Shri Hari ॥

How to Attain Eternal Happiness

tvameva mātā ca pitā tvameva
 tvameva bandhuśca sakhā tvameva
 tvameva vidyā draviṇaṃ tvameva
 tvameva sarvaṃ mama devadeva

Hanumanprasad Poddar

Publisher's Note

This is a valuable collection of a few articles written by Nityalilalina Poojya Sri Hanumanprasadji Poddar, the founder-editor of the 'Kalyan'. The articles first appeared in the Kalyan and then were rendered into English by a devoted associate of Sri Poddarji, the late Pt. Sri Chimmanlalji Goswami, the editor of the 'Kalyan-Kalpataru', an english magazine published by the Gita Press.

Eternal happiness is a misnomer in worldly parlance. In fact the world itself and all that it comprises is ephemeral and transient. Rather, according to savants like the great Sankaracharya it is not only transient, but non-existent; its existence is only illusory.

God alone is eternal, who is described as Sachchidananda-swarupa—the embodiment of Sat (existence), Chit (Knowledge) and Ananda (Bliss). Bliss is happiness. In this wise eternal happiness is synonymous with Godhead. The attainment of eternal happiness is tantamount to God-realization.

Sri Poddarji was an achieved soul of the highest order. He attained eternal happiness and lived in it. He did not shut himself up with his enlightenment in an ivory-tower, but sought to shed the light of his attainment around him for the benefit of all.

We are confident that all seekers of real happiness and travellers on the path of true spirituality would find these writings immensely helpful and valuable.



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Shri Krishana photo

1. The summum bonum of human life

Remember : Everyone in this world is in the grip of want. A want is not supplied by securing a living being or object; the number of our wants, on the other hand, is increased thereby. Therefore, he who seeks to satisfy his wants by means of worldly objects and incessantly strives for their acquisition ever meets with frustration.

Remember : Matter is full of wants, the Supreme Spirit is all existence. Hence they who seek to realize the Supreme Spirit rather than seek to satisfy their worldly wants go on becoming rich in being and continue as a matter of course to be rid of the flame of wants.

Remember : He who suffers from total lack of worldly goods, who is wholly destitute of wealth, man-power, honour, dwelling and so on, but in whose mind dwells the Lord is ever full in every respect and supremely happy. He who, on the other hand, has enormous wealth, man-power and honour, is endowed with luxuries of this world and the next, has risen to the position of Indra, the ruler of gods, but who is forgetful of God, is ever in the grip of want and hence extremely miserable. Though richly endowed with all the pleasures of senses, he ever continues to burn. He can never have peace; for all that he has is deficient, transient and perishable.

Remember : The craving for living beings and objects of the world alone is mainly responsible for the disquietude, worry and misery of man as well as for the sins perpetrated by him. The root of this craving for sense-enjoyments lies in the fact that man erroneously seeks to be rid of the fire

of want through flames of luxuries. It is for this reason that he continues to spend his life in ever new endeavour, in ever new hankering for enjoyment and in getting together the wherewithals to satisfy such hankerings. It is for this reason that he falls a victim to greed and self-esteem on attaining his desired object and is overcome with anger and agitation on failing to secure that object. Consequently his life becomes full of suffering, violence and misery; and he breathes his last burning day and night in the fire of anxiety in this way. His human life is not only wasted thereby, but the accumulation of newer and newer sins renders his future miserable and gloomy. Hereafter he has to suffer the tortures of demoniac wombs and the infernal regions.

Remember : The human body is not meant for enjoyment. It has been vouchsafed to us for carrying on spiritual endeavour and for realizing God as a result of such endeavour. This is the sole, supreme and ultimate goal of human life. Those devilish men who, forgetting this aim, remain exclusively engaged in getting together and enjoying luxuries not only kill their soul but also encourage others by their example to commit such spiritual suicide, and push them into the infernal regions.

Remember : They alone are your well-wishers, kinsmen, your own, beloved of you and pre-eminent in the real sense, who direct your mind towards God, drawing it away from sense-enjoyments intensify your attachment to the feet of the Lord, ridding you of the lure of the pleasures of sense. People directing you to sense-enjoyments and stimulating your likes and dislikes—be they your own people or outsiders, be they leaders, officials, ministers, governors, preceptors, holy men, exalted souls, devotees or men calling themselves pre-eminently your own—are not your well-wishers in the

true sense, are not really your own. They are themselves astray and are leading you astray. Beware of them.

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Remember : Every moment of your life is priceless and serves as a golden opportunity for God-realization. If your mind remains fixed on God at the moment of your departure from this world you will be able to realize God. And you will go down to perdition if your mind is set on hell at the moment of death. Thought of sense-enjoyment coloured with a yearning for such enjoyments is surcharged with worries and agonies of various kinds, hence it is a veritable hell. Therefore try to think of God without interruption and cease to think of sense-enjoyments : who knows when death overtakes you. If you continue to think of God at the time of death you will surely realize God and God alone—your life will have achieved its object.

Remember : The speciality of human life lies in a man's being able to serve God while remaining engrossed in His thought. Thought of sense-enjoyments is common to all, including beasts and birds. He who thinks of sense-enjoyments rather than remain engrossed in the thought of God undergoes complete ruination—meets with a fall. And the fellow, though clothed with a human semblance, is really worse than a beast: for the death of a man devoted to sense-enjoyment repeatedly throws him into demoniacal wombs and the infernal regions; dissipating the stock of merits which had earned him a human body, he is heading towards degradation in consequence of his vile deeds.

Remember : The death of sub-human creatures such as beasts and birds is a precursor of their evolution. Reaping the fruit of their past evil deeds in the course of their life and having been disencumbered of them, such beasts and birds progress in the scale of evolution; while the soul clothed with a human body takes with him a load of sins by perpetrating


evil deeds, to reap suffering after being thrown into hellish wombs. In this way he heads towards degradation.

Remember : When you have assumed a human form vindicate your humanity, foster the human nature and, keeping the senses and mind under control, perform with them—in order to realize God, the *summum bonum* of human life, and in a spirit of service to the Lord—such actions alone whereby your human existence may be vindicated and attain its end.

Remember : You are not a slave of your mind and senses. You are the master of them all—immutable, desireless, all-powerful and the ruler of all. All these have been vouchsafed to you in order that they may minister to you—to your own Self, the Lord, and not that they may lord it over you and make a free draft on your service. Therefore, recognizing your own self, devote your mind and senses to pursuits leading to your spiritual welfare, to the service of God, rather than allow them to follow their own whims. Intent on God your mind and senses will conduce to your spiritual welfare; freely indulging in luxuries, on the other hand, they will lead to your degradation and complete ruination.

Remember : Human life is momentary, this life of yours is drifting every moment in the stream of death. There is no knowing when it will come to an end. Therefore, with great vigilance devote every moment of your life to the service of God. Do not allow it to be frittered away in wrong doing.

Remember : Your future lies in your hands alone. You are yourself the means of your spiritual well-being. Guarding against evil company, ever cultivate the fellowship of good men without interruption, accumulate that which is good, contemplate on the good, perform good deeds and attain the good alone. Truly speaking, God alone is 'good'. Everything other than God is evil.



2. Supreme consummation of human living

Remember : Body, mind and riches, power and strength, reason and critical acumen, position and authority—whatever has been vouchsafed to you has been granted for service to the Lord. This constitutes their best use. Use everything with scrupulous care to the best advantage. Here lies your own welfare and the utility of those objects. If you do not observe scrupulousness in the matter your possessions will be misused; if you do not devote your body to noble pursuits, it will take to evil one; if you do not harbour good thoughts in the mind it will take delight in evil thoughts; if you do not devote your wealth to the service of the needy and the poor, it will be spent in luxury.

Remember : If a thing is not put to the best use, it is either misused, which leads to newer and newer evils, thereby setting a new stage every time for sorrows and sufferings, or the thing perishes.

Remember : The most precious of all substances are time and the mind. Scrupulously keep both of these constantly engaged in the Lord's service, in spiritual endeavour, in elevating pursuits. Neither waste your time nor give yourself up to error. Time is wasted through indolence and procrastination and you give yourself up to error by spending it in pursuits which are not worth undertaking and by neglecting your duties. Similarly the energy of the mind is wasted by thinking of the world rather than the Lord or of good things or acts; and you give yourself up to error by indulging in sinful or evil thoughts. Keep every moment of your time employed

in noble pursuits by way of service to the Lord; and weaning your mind from idle and evil thoughts, keep it constantly engaged in pious thoughts and in the thought of the Lord. This is to make the best use of your time and mind.

Remember : A substance which has been put to the best use by being employed in the Lord's service has become yours. The wealth which has been spent in service has become yours; the part of your time that has been spent in thought of the Lord has become yours; whatever good work has been done with your body has been credited to your account. Otherwise all these substances are sure to perish. They cannot be preserved by being sparingly used and attended to with care; they are decaying every moment and will at long last altogether perish. They will have achieved their purpose in proportion as they are devoted to some useful purpose.

Remember : Every moment of human life is priceless; for when devoted to His remembrance and service it serves as a means to God-realization. Every moment that has elapsed does not return; therefore keep every moment of your time employed in the Lord's service. Let there be not a moment's respite in His remembrance and service. Let His remembrance and service continue uninterruptedly like respiration. Wherever you go, and whatever the external innocent form of your occupation, let God-remembrance never slip out of your mind and let the conviction that you are serving the omnipresent Lord through every action of yours continue its hold upon your mind. If you are able to do so, you will continue to behold the Lord everywhere at all times and will remain occupied with His worship all the day long. This will constitute the best use of your life.

Remember : Your face will be considered to have turned towards God completely and irretrievably only when your mind and reason get dedicated to God and remain constantly and exclusively devoted to Him. But so long as this does not happen, unremittingly continue to link your mind and reason with God. Go on contemplating and dwelling on the names, virtues and form of the Lord and investigating His truth. Abiding and real absence of attachment to sense-enjoyments and consummate and genuine attachment to the Lord constitute the main discipline.



3. Your supreme goal

Remember : It is as a reward of great religious merit and by unique grace of God that this human body has been obtained by you. This human body is like a comely and cosy bark to take you across the ocean of sorrow in the shape of mundane existence. Therefore, let this ocean of worldly existence be crossed before this bark dashes against some rock and meets with wreck, or, in other words, so long as this body is intact and is not overtaken by death.

Remember : This mundane existence consisting of birth and death is absolutely transient, full of shortcomings and hence the very ocean of misery. Even as high as well as low waves rise and disappear in the sea, so higher and lower forms of life appear and disappear in this world. Of all these forms the human is the only form tenanted which the soul can through spiritual endeavour cross the fearful ocean of misery in the shape of births and deaths. This human body, however, is most fragile. Just as a drop of water lying on a lotus petal rolls down at the touch of a slight breeze, so does this body fall in a trice. Hence success in one's spiritual endeavours should be achieved even before you drop this body.

Remember : You are not the body, you are the soul. The soul is an eternal reality free from birth and death. It has no origin nor end, neither joy nor sorrow. Birth and death, joy and sorrow have been ascribed to it due to its identification with Matter, its being tied down to a causal, astral and physical body.

Remember : The physical sheath, which is made up of the five elements, is inert. The consciousness appearing

in it is traceable to the astral body which indwells and animates it. In fact the astral body too—consisting as it does of seventeen or nineteen components (the five vital airs, the five senses of perception, the five organs of action, the mind and the intellect or the mind, understanding, intellect and ego)—is inert by nature; borrowing light from the conscious Self it gets animated and animates the physical body in its turn.

Remember : Ignorance consists in forgetting one's spiritual nature or falling down from one's sublime character as being a ray of God. It is this ignorance which constitutes the causal body. Even though the soul does not undergo birth and death nor does it experience joy and sorrow, it ignorantly misconceives itself as subject to birth and death and as the experiencer of joys and sorrows. This constitutes its Jīvahood. And as long as it continues to account itself a Jīva the cycle of birth and death or the stream of worldly existence will know no remission.

Remember : Having descended to the plane of Jīvahood, by ignorantly ascribing the properties of the body to itself, the soul regards the birth and death of the physical body as its own, the agonies of birth as its agonies, the pangs of death as its pangs, the inanity experienced by the vital airs as its hunger, considers itself impure from bodily impurity and looks upon bodily damage as its own damage and devises ways and means of avoiding or removing them. Though absolutely unattached, it undergoes suffering by subjecting itself to attachment and aversion and though blissful by nature, suffers from bodily suffering. Ignorance consists in this alone and it is due to this ignorance that the ocean of mundane existence continues.

Remember : What you have to accomplish in this life

is to get rid of this ignorance—to cross the ocean of mundane existence. It is to accomplish this purpose that you have been endowed with a human body. Therefore, turning your mind from worldly property—worldly gain and loss—you should purify your mind, realize your true nature through worship of God and, getting established in your own spiritual being, cross this unsubstantial yet terrible ocean of worldly existence. You are neither the world nor the body. You are not the mind, the intellect or the senses, nor do they belong to you. All these are other than you; for they are all objective, while you are the perceiver of them all. As a matter of fact there is no entity other than God or the Self. Realizing this truth, be accomplished of your purpose. Take it for certain that you are not the material and transient body; you are the Spirit consisting of Truth, Consciousness and Bliss.

Remember : The human body has been vouchsafed to us through the gratuitous grace of God. Even gods and demons possessed of the highest authority and wealth and commanding the greatest power and might long for a human body; for the human body is the supreme ladder to God-realization, the sole objective of embodied existence. God-realization is the supreme object of human pursuit and the human body has been bestowed on a Jīva journeying from time without beginning, with a passport for the attainment of this supreme end of human endeavour. Says Gosvāmī Tulasīdāsa—“Rarely does God, who loves the Jīva without any self-interest, graciously bestow on it a human form”*.

* कबहुँक करि करुना नर देही। देत ईस बिनु हेतु सनेही ॥

Remember : To make the most of the human body is to direct all the thoughts of the mind and the activities of the body to the sole end of God-realization. One should no longer have any attachment for one's pursuits nor for their fruit. Let God alone and not enjoyment be the goal of one's life and for the realization of this end let one lead a peaceful life embracing divine virtues and reposing one's faith in the benign dispensation of the Lord and therefore feeling happy under all circumstances; and let God-realization be achieved in the end.

Remember : Men who keep their body employed in the satisfaction of lust, anger and greed, gratifying their pride, arrogance and egotism, jealousy, animosity and bloodthirstiness with a view to securing transient delights and enjoying them undergo lifelong suffering here—remain beset with unending worries and, accumulating newer and newer sins, pass into wombs full of intense suffering. Such is the terrible consequence of perverting the human body.

Remember : The Lord permeates whatever living beings there are in the world; they are all the diverse endless manifestations of the Lord. Therefore, perceiving the Lord in all and harming none in the least and contemplating the good of all, continue to make headway on the path leading to God-realization; but remain constantly alive to the fact that they are mere co-travellers. The relationship you bear with them here is not real. Therefore deal with them innocently with an eye to their good—serve them to the best of your ability. Neither conceive an attachment for anyone anywhere nor hate anyone. Cherish a true spirit of service to God. Then every action of yours will turn into an act of

worship to the Lord and your life will be crowned with success.

Remember : The fruitfulness of human life does not lie in the acquisition of dominant authority, extensive fortune and affluence, boundless renown and fame and the highest worldly success. If all these circumstances and objects turn our face from God it is far better to turn our back on them or put an end to them as one would do in the case of a deadly poison agreeable to the taste or an enemy bent on treacherously taking our life by posing as a friend. True success of human life lies in every moment of it being dedicated to the service of God and in every breath of it remaining steeped in the remembrance of God.

Remember : Those living beings, objects and circumstances alone are really conducive to your good, from which you derive encouragement, energy, help, co-operation and light in striving for God-realization; they alone should be had recourse to and accumulated according to your needs. This is what goes by the name of Satsaṅga or association with the good. All the rest is Kusaṅga (association with the evil), which is worth giving up *in toto*, being harmful in every respect. Therefore keep your life scrupulously devoted to God and God alone. Really speaking, in this alone lies humanity. Here alone lies true development.



4. There exists nothing other than God

Remember : God is without beginning or end, eternally true and self-evident. Hence in order to prove the existence of God there is no need of a cognizer, an object to be cognized and a means of cognition. In fact it is from God alone that the concepts of an object to be cognized and the means of cognition etc., take their shape. God is eternal; it is not that He came into existence at a particular time or place. That is why He never ceases to be or disappears at any particular moment or place; He is everlasting. It is due to the impurity of our heart that He does not come to be realized by us. The moment the heart gets purified and the veil of ignorance is lifted the light of God automatically flashes on us even as the sun shines forth the moment the clouds disperse. The sun has been there already blazing, it did not come to light due to its being screened by the clouds. Similarly God does not come to light due to His being screened by the veil of ignorance, even though He is already existent.

Remember : God is uniform and integral. He is never liable to any change or growth. It cannot be conceived that God is in a lesser degree here and in a large measure there, integral at one place and partial at another. He is integral everywhere. His integrality is so peculiar that if the whole is taken out of it what remains is equally integral. The Self is integral in the elephant in the same way as it is integral in the ant. The Self does not vary in size according as the body tenanted by it is big or small. So does God ever remain integral in the entire cosmos and even beyond it—before creation, during the period of creation and even after its dissolution. Whether anyone knows Him or not, His integrality ever remains complete everywhere.

Remember : God is not limited by time and space; for He is self-evident everywhere at all times and for all. Rather all time, all space and all owe their existence to Him. Without God at the background there can be no cognition of time or space.

Remember : In God or His knowledge there is no distinction of knower and the knowable. Difference is perceived due to a limitation (Upādhi). The existence of the knowable as apart from knowledge cannot be proved and without the object to be known the concept of knowership too is out of the question. In this way the knowable and the knower are mutually dependent; but God or His realization being a self-evident truth, nothing is required to prove His existence. God is altogether beyond description. Knowledge, the knower and the object to be known are aspects of the same God conceived on account of the difference caused by limitations. In reality God is differenceless and ever consisting of His own essential character.

Remember : Though ever permeating all time and space, God is not perceived or realized because the veil of Avidyā (ignorance), even though unreal, has come to intervene. That is why your eternal character has fallen into oblivion and, regarding yourself as a 'Jīva' and attributing the properties of the unreal body to yourself, you, who are of the nature of Truth, have identified yourself with the body. Therefore, in order to realize God, your own Self, you have to do nothing beyond throwing aside curtain of Avidyā. In order to achieve this arrive at the firm and true conviction that you are the Self, the God is essentially identical with the Self, there exists nothing other than God and that God alone pervades everywhere at all times and in all places.



5. Wisdom lies in accepting the existence of God

Remember : The existence of God, who is all truth, cannot be wiped out by your refusing to recognize or accept it. Of course, you will be deprived of the supreme gain that you could have directly derived through His adoration and worship by accepting His existence on your side. Similarly by your denying through your own conceit or by a majority of votes of misguided people the other world and the fruit of your own doings (to be reaped hereafter or in this very life) neither will the other world be wiped out of existence nor will you be able to escape the consequences of your own doings. Therefore, wisdom lies in accepting God, the other world and the inevitable fruit of your actions.

Remember : Once you accept God you will perform good deeds in order to secure His help; on recognizing the other world and the fruit of your own actions you will abstain from sinful acts for fear of courting suffering as a consequence of such sins and engage in meritorious deeds. Even if God and the other world do not exist and one's own actions do not yield their fruit you will only stand to gain thereby; for you will attain good reputation and prestige through your noble deeds, any harm whatsoever being altogether out of the question. If, on the other hand, you do not recognize these you will be deprived even of this gain. And if God and the other world exist and one's actions yield their fruit you will turn out to be a libertine and evil-doer in consequence of your not recognizing these and thereby mar your prospects in this as well as in the other world and suffer a great loss.

Remember : The fact of the matter is that God and the other world do exist and one's actions too yield their fruit. By recognizing these and worshipping God and paying due honour to the other world and the fruits of your actions not only you will derive the highest gain but by your own conduct, life and example you will also be able to direct others towards that end, and by their exemplary conduct the latter will lead still others to that goal. In this way you will earn the merit and good fortune to become an effective instrument of propagating and spreading pure God-consciousness.

Remember : He who is himself engaged in the service of God and directs others to His service by his own example is highly fortunate and he alone is a true servant of the living creation.

Remember : If you give anyone a dish on partaking of which he falls ill and dies, you do harm to and inflict suffering on him rather than do a good turn or render service to him. Sense-enjoyments are not only bereft of joy but are further an abode of sorrow and a source of miseries (of the attributes 'असुखम्', 'दुःखालयम्' and 'दुःखयोनयः' used in the Gītā). Hence whatever individuals, objects and circumstances divert a man from God, who is an embodiment of supreme Bliss, and direct him towards sense-enjoyments prove to be instrumental in bringing about his downfall, inflicting terrible suffering on him, pushing him into hell and killing his soul, and thus play the role of an enemy to him. Therefore, if you turn anyone towards God, you do an act of greatest service to him; for thereby his future will be full of joy and good fortune, holy and exalted and he will attain the immortal state. If, on the other hand, you divert him from God and turn him towards enjoyments, you commit a

grave offence against him; for attachment to sense-enjoyments brings about one's downfall in every way. Nay, even if you divert your own mind from God and turn it towards sense-enjoyments, you play the role of an enemy to your own self; for thereby you lead yourself on the path of degradation and ruin. Therefore, scrupulously conjunct yourself in such a way that instead of indulging in sense-enjoyments you may advance on the godward path and direct others too towards God. There lies your good fortune and true service of the world too consists in this alone.

Remember : By accepting the true existence of God, the other world and the inevitable fruit of your own doings your mind will be able easily to dwell on God. Therefore, accepting these, derive benefit from them and bring your life to fruition.



6. Keep yourself established in the spirit

Remember : Honour and ignominy attach to the 'form' or 'body', while praise and obloquy relate to the 'name', And neither of these two, *viz.*, the 'form' and 'name' constitutes your self. The body is brought into existence in the mother's womb during the period of gestation, while a name is given only after birth. Names are changed as well. Hence the said form and name do not belong to the Spirit, while you are the Spirit. You existed as the Spirit even before this body was brought into existence and will survive even after death. None can do honour to the Spirit or subject it to ignominy nor can anyone applaud or denounce it. Hence do not exult on being honoured or applauded nor get perturbed over ignominy or obloquy. Treating them as alike, do not accept them.

Remember : Unkind treatment and ignominy as well as obloquy and abuse are as unpalatable as kind treatment and honour as well as applause and praise are palatable and partiality and prejudice are engendered accordingly. Partiality and prejudice result in the loss of the spiritual divine wealth and the augmentation of the material demoniacal wealth. Where the production and promotion of the demoniacal wealth begin to take place, immoral practices and evil thoughts, sins and suffering, afflictions and agony, disquietude and anguish inevitably appear and grow. In this way human life becomes an unending means to sorrows and hellish tortures. If you ponder a bit deeply you will come to perceive directly that you are neither the body nor the name and that

not only honour and ignominy or praise and obloquy but all other pairs of opposites such as gain and loss, victory and discomfiture, auspicious and inauspicious, agreeable and disagreeable, joy and sorrow, friend and foe, life and death relate only to the body and name or to the name and form alone. Take these pairs of opposites to be the Māyā (deluding potency) of the Lord or His divine drama and you will transcend this state of susceptibility to pairs of opposites.

Remember : This play of the pairs of opposites itself constitutes the world—Māyā, while the state which transcends the pairs of opposites or the state of equilibrium is Brahma (the Absolute). The pairs of opposites are changeable, perishable; while the equipoised Brahma is eternal and indestructible. This latter alone constitutes your being. Being your very self, it is easily realizable; nevertheless in the state of your being established in Matter the Truth remains veiled. Therefore at present endeavour in the aforesaid manner to remain free from infatuation for the pairs of opposites; neither exult over honour and applause nor feel troubled by ignominy and obloquy. Likewise strive to remain balanced in the midst of all pairs of opposites.

Remember : Even though in your dealings with the world (even as notwithstanding the diversity in the functions of the various limbs of the body no diversity exists in them from the point of view of their selfhood) diversity may appear on the surface according to the diversity of circumstances, yet inwardly no pair of opposites should react favourably or unfavourably on you.

Remember : The sense of possession and attachment expands and the feelings of agreeability and disagreeability

are engendered because of your identification with the body and the name, which is altogether false and unwarranted. Therefore, ever strive to look upon yourself established in the Spirit, as the Spirit itself, and, recognizing the false name and form to be utterly assumed, realize yourself to be wholly distinct from them.

Remember : All diversities relate to the name and form. The name and form are intended only for worldly dealings. The even nature of the Self, which is altogether free from diversity, does not change because of these. Remaining established in the equipoised Self, which constitutes your very being, deal according to the deserts of everyone in the phenomenal world. Diversity will persist in your dealings; but in your spiritual being you will ever remain free from pairs of opposites under all circumstances. The diversities in your dealings will not be able to create the least disturbance in your tranquil self; they will rather serve as an embellishment to the pacific ocean of your self.



7. Worship the Lord according to your own conception

Remember : God is one. But the ways of approach to Him are many. The end—the destination—is one, but the means of attaining it are infinite. Even though the end is one, the means are bound to be many, as for example the city of Vārāṇasī is one, although diverse are the routes leading to it. Men from every quarter—east, west, north and south—are sure to reach Vārāṇasī if they proceed towards it making it their destination. Of course each will commence his journey from his own quarter and follow his own route. Their experiences too about the route will be different. If anyone insists that a man coming from the east should follow the route taken by an individual coming from the west and that a man coming from the north should adopt the route taken by a traveller from the south, he is mistaken. Even so it is erroneous to believe that the means of attaining to God, our supreme destination, is the same for all. The means must vary according to the aptitude and understanding, the frame of mind, the relative strength of the three Guṇas or modes of Prakṛti manifesting themselves in the mind, the predisposition and environment of the individual. Therefore neither denounce any means to God-realization nor feel enamoured of any. Constantly keeping your eye on the goal continue to tread the path chosen by you. Not forgetting even for a moment that God alone is the highest objective of your life, remain constantly engaged in your endeavour to attain this end. Taking no notice of what others do or say, continue to advance carefully on your path without pause.

Remember : If the stock of divine virtues is gaining strength in your life, your mind is recoiling from the pleasures of sense, your attraction for God is developing, mental peace and joy are increasing—whether at a slow or swift pace, know that

you are steadily advancing in that measure. And if, on the other hand, the stock of demoniac propensities is increasing, your mind is feeling drawn towards the pleasures of sense and receding from God-remembrance, mental unrest and worry are developing at a slow or swift pace, you are moving backward, degenerating. Therefore go on carefully examining the inner state of your life. Your inner state alone reflects your real character.

Remember : The first and foremost thing to do is to determine one's goal—to arrive at the conclusion that God alone is the highest objective of one's life, and then to pursue every internal and external activity in life with this very end in view. If God is the definite goal of your life, you will have your face turned towards God and you will continue to advance towards Him at a slow or swift pace. For, all embodied souls are constantly journeying; the function of all embodied souls in the world is to revolve constantly with the wheel of Time. Of course it is open to them to travel in the direction of God with their face turned towards Him or in the direction of sense-delights with an eye towards them!

Remember : A man bound for the sacred region of the Himālayas is sure to get a cool air and a lonely atmosphere, come across pious and holy men who have renounced their all, and derive mental peace, joy and so on even as he advances towards that region; while the man proceeding in the direction of big cities in the hot plains, on the other hand, will have to encounter heat, a crowded atmosphere, voluptuous and sensually-minded men, thieves, swindlers and robbers, and suffer disquietude, worry and so on. Even so a man marching Godward is sure to develop divine virtues, get the company of holy men, develop aversion to the pleasures of sense, attain peace of mind, spiritual bliss, sinless conduct and so on; while a man heading towards sense-delights will acquire demoniac

traits, gather evil company, develop sensuality, develop the mistaken notion that there is joy in sense-delights, indulge in unholy sinful pursuits and suffer disquietude, constant agony and so on. Therefore, testing oneself on the crucible of the aforesaid characteristics, ascertain the direction in which you are progressing and know it for certain that if you are heading towards the painful and transient delights of sense you are sure to undergo suffering and degeneration even though you may be recognized or said to be a clever or enlightened man, a pious soul, a devotee, a saint, a leader, an officer, an affluent and happy man, or may claim to be such. Therefore, immediately turning your back on sense-delights, set your face towards God.

Remember : You have not been sent to this world in the form of a human being in order that you may remain engrossed in hankering after sense-delights and lead a sinful life and, enhancing the stock of your sins, die weeping and wailing. A human body has, on the other hand, been vouchsafed to you in order that you may take to a course of discipline for God-realization and, leading a virtuous life, actually realize God—getting rid of death, attain a transcendent and eternal divine life. Bear this in mind, and, embracing an innocent course of spiritual discipline conforming to your capacity and aptitude, follow it with a singleness of purpose and, realizing God, the supreme goal of your existence, bring your life to a successful conclusion.

[2]

Remember : Brahma, the Paramātmā and the Lord are the names of one and the same Supreme Reality. The selfsame Lord is at once devoid of attributes, both without and with attributes, with attributes, endowed with attributes as well as with a form, possessed of form, formless, with and without form, with and without form and attributes and everything else. His attributes constitute His very being, are identical with

Him. His form too constitutes His very being and is identical with Him. His gracious Body is neither a product of Karma nor attained through another's will, nor is it a product of Matter. It never comes into being nor does it ever perish. It is assumed for the sake of Play. His Form is eternal, It is a product of His own Will and is Truth, Consciousness and Bliss rolled into one.

Remember : The benign divine essence of the Lord is not perceived through Māyā (the deluding Potency of the Lord). That which is perceived through Māyā is non-existent; it is merely perceived, it has no existence. The Lord is eternally existent; no matter if He is perceived or not, His being is all the same eternally existent. It is perceived only through His grace. By way of sport It becomes manifest at one place and disappears at another. It is nonetheless eternal, real, beginningless and divinely spiritual.

Remember : Neither has the Lord any desire nor does He need acquire anything not possessed by Him; for in the first place there is nothing unattained by Him and, really speaking, nothing other than Him has any existence at all. His entire Play has Its source in Him and is enacted in Him and continues for Its own sake and of Itself. The Play is not different from the Player.

Remember : The Divine Energy is not different from the Lord. It constitutes His very being and ever inheres in Him alone as identical with Him. It appears to exist apart when It manifests Itself in the form of Play; it ceases to appear when His manifest Play ceases. Though ceasing to appear, It exists nonetheless in Him and even when appearing It does not exist apart from Him. The relation of eternal and invariable co-existence subsists between Energy and the Energizer. Where the Divine Energy is manifest the Lord is recognized as manifest and He is regarded as unmanifest where His Energy is unmanifest. These manifest and unmanifest states too, however,

do not imply any change of state in the Lord. He does not get transformed into any state whatsoever. Whatever appears in Him is, really speaking, nothing apart from His being.

Remember : The Lord never evolves nor does He not evolve. He is eternally established in His real and everlasting native glory, which constitutes His very being. In whatever state of being or aspect one sees Him or worships Him He comprises all those states or aspects and all worship is offered to Him alone. Appearing before His votary in a state of being corresponding to his concept and dispelling all the darkness of his ignorance, He imparts to him the knowledge of His real divine essence and he thereby achieves the purpose of his life.

Remember : The Lord comprises all as well as transcends all; He is endowed with all excellences and is at the same time devoid of attributes; He is the sustainer of all as well as beyond all. There is nothing other than Him; it is He who is manifest in the form of all. He is one, infinite and unbounded; the aforesaid oneness, infinitude and boundlessness are attributable to Him alone.

Remember : The Lord cannot be conceived of as partaking of a particular nature or not, that He is solely devoid of attributes and not endowed with attributes or that He is only endowed with attributes and not devoid of attributes, that He is invariably devoid of a distinctive character and never possessed of a distinctive character or that He is only possessed of a distinctive character and never devoid of such character. He is everything and no entity other than Him has any existence. It is He who is variously explained and reveals Himself in all these states of being—aspects. Therefore giving up all doubts and misconception, one should propitiate and worship the Lord according to one's own conception of the Lord.



8. Supremacy of God-love

Remember : The Lord is one. He alone is Brahma (the Absolute), He alone is Paramātmā (the Supreme Spirit), He alone is the Divine Person. Though They are identical in essence, the spiritual discipline leading to Their realization varies. Brahma is realized through knowledge of identity, Paramātmā through Yoga (setting at rest the vagaries of the mind) and the Lord through Bhakti (Devotion). For those, however, who seek to attain the Lord as the Dearest One, Love alone is the highest discipline.

Remember : In the discipline of knowledge, inquiry into the abiding and the fleeting, Dispassion, the sixfold endowment in the shape of Quietism (शम), Self-Control (दम), Endurance (तितिक्षा), Resignation (उपरति), Piety (श्रद्धा) and Composure (समाधान) and an intense longing for Liberation are essential requisites. Atonement with Brahma is attained by negating the world of matter through consciousness of Brahma born of hearing (श्रवण), cogitation (मनन) and constant musing (निदिध्यासन). For the realization of the Supreme Spirit practice of the eight limbs of yoga, viz., Yamas (self-restraint in the form of harmlessness, veracity, continence, non-stealing and non-acquisition of property) and Niyamas (the five religious vows of external and internal purity, contentment, askesis, study of the Vedas and self-surrender to God) is essential. For communing with the Divine Person the hearing and singing of the Lord's praises, dwelling on His immaculate exploits, muttering and chanting His holy Names, fellowship with saints and God-remembrance with the nine forms of Devotion and an intense and exclusive longing for

His blessed sight constitute the highest discipline; while for realizing Him as the highest object of Love, Love coupled with adoration etc., is the most essential requisite.

Remember : Self-denial is the foundation of Love. Love does not manifest itself without self-denial. It is not necessary to renounce any article, object, situation, stage in life or action. It is the seeking for one's own gratification that ought to be renounced. Even an iota of desire for the joy of Liberation, to say nothing of the luxuries of this world as well as the other world and the celestial worlds etc., is an obstacle in the path of Love, where the only natural desire and effort is to gratify the highest object of one's love and there is no thought even of a craving of any description whatsoever. In this way Love consists in harnessing all one's enjoyments and self-abnegation for the gratification of one's highest object of Love, purging oneself of all craving for the enjoyments of this world as well as of the next, nay, even for final beatitude. Such love pertains to the heart and is not for ostentation. It has no reference to virtue, is disinterested, abiding, uninterrupted, very subtle and of the nature of experience and grows from more to more every moment. In this ocean of Love an endless variety of waves in the form of most agreeable sentiments, both straight and oblique, continue to leap up. Gratification of one's dearest object of Love is the principal cause as well as the supreme end of all these waves.

Remember : This love is a supreme rarity, but by the grace of lovers of God it can be had very easily. Lovers of God are they who, having renounced the longing for both sense-enjoyment and Liberation and serving as a plaything in the hands of their most beloved

Lord, who is their manipulator, remain engaged in sport according to His desire and who have no consciousness left of their own identity for their own purpose. One ought to secure the grace of such lovers of God. Such grace is had by pursuing the path of Love followed by those lovers of God, a path full of supreme renunciation, highest emotion and supremely holy.

Remember : Even though identical with the Supreme Brahma, who is all truth, all consciousness and all bliss, the most beloved Lord of such a lover of God is in his eyes an eternally true mine of supreme joy, comeliness and sweetness, and a repository of endless self-contradictory divine excellences and properties which are beyond the ken of thought and speech, who ever incessantly remains engaged in enjoying and making His lover enjoy the sweetness of Love. While continuing to be the Supreme Ruler of all the worlds and independent in every way, He remains subservient to the love of His loving devotee and exalts His lover to the rank of His beloved.



9. The intrinsic beauty of unalloyed love

Remember : Where there is a longing to get something in return or as a reward, immaculate love is wanting. That is why a worldly man seeking enjoyment or Liberation cannot develop unalloyed love nor can unalloyed love be directed towards anyone other than the most beloved Lord.

Remember : The relation one has with another in the world, no matter whether it is of an individual or collective nature, is invariably governed by the principle of give and take, even though this may not be manifest, so much so that in the heart of even those who render service or do a good turn to others in a disinterested spirit lurks the feeling that through such service or act of benevolence they are setting up a great ideal of service before the world. Nay, if we dive very deep into their hearts a seeking for honour and worship or reputation and applause will be found lurking in them.

Remember : Even those who perform selfless acts like worship of gods and service of the people seek at least the purification of their mind through such acts. Nay, even in those who strive for Liberation alone and claim to be completely free from all desire cherish the longing to bring about the cessation of their worldly sufferings or to escape from the cycle of metempsychosis. That is why the craving for something else persists in some form or other so long as one does not come to recognize the Lord as the supreme object of love and the pleasure of the supremely beloved Lord does not become the sole purpose of one's life. So long as one seeks something else—so long as the craving for enjoyment and Liberation persists in any form whatsoever immaculate love is not there. Till then what goes by the

name of love is nothing more than a sort of business transaction, no matter whether it fetches a small gain in the shape of termination of an earthly calamity or acquisition of a worldly object or a big gain in the shape of cessation of suffering in the form of birth and death or the attainment of Liberation as a consummation of one's spiritual endeavour.

Remember : Subservient to the will of His loving devotee, the supremely beloved Lord enjoys the sweetness of the former's unalloyed love; and, ever perceiving the absence of love in himself the devotee continues to glorify the disposition of his supremely beloved Lord, nay, spurning enjoyment, Liberation and all and standing as a living embodiment of the happiness of his most beloved Lord, goes on advancing more and more towards the infinitude of unalloyed love. Such is the relation between a devotee endowed with unalloyed love with his supremely beloved Lord. Such a relation exists for the sake of Love alone and subsists only between the supremely beloved Lord and a devotee full of unalloyed love (love which is free from the least tinge of craving for enjoyment and Liberation).

Remember : Such a devotee endowed with such unalloyed love is really speaking as good as emancipated and actually attains supreme peace. Nay, Liberation and peace as a matter of course remain engaged in his service in order to make themselves blessed. Hence there is no bondage of any kind for him nor can any situation whatsoever interfere in the least with his tranquillity. Of course there is one bondage for him and that is the bondage of unalloyed love by which the Lord Himself remains bound with him and from this bondage he never seeks liberation. Here lies its intrinsic beauty.



10. Realize your true self and make human life fruitful

Remember : You are in no way better than a goat engaged in feeding on green grass and mating with a she-goat and shortly going to fall a victim to the butcher's knife. Employed as you are at the present moment in various activities like eating and drinking, enjoyment and merrymaking, looking after your children, maintaining your family and attending to the interests of your kith and kin, preserving and promoting your wealth and domination, elevating your position and authority, securing your advancement and exaltation, development and publicity, you are not finding time to examine your own self even for a moment. But know it for certain that without giving any notice to you and paying not the least consideration to your most urgent and momentous activity Death will overtake you all of a sudden and put a dead stop to all your activities.

Remember : The goat in a butcher's shambles is an animal. It does not understand that only a few moments back another goat, young and robust like itself, has yielded to the butcher's sharp-edged knife and that it is going to meet the same fate. While the goat is an ignorant brute, you are a human being. You at any rate ought to know that a relation of your own has just entered the fearful jaws of Death and that you too will have to meet the same fate and then all your relationship with all that is spoken of or recognized as your self or your own will be dissolved.

Remember : A wise man is he who knows that along with his birth his death too has come into being

and that he is continuing to die every moment, that the final touch of Death will surely put an end to him, so that he has to get ready for his next birth or take effective steps to secure riddance from the cycle of birth and death for all time to come.

Remember : Your present birth is only a chapter of the book of your long and dateless life. Your body is but a bead of the rosary of deaths. It is not your self. Your real self is eternally distinct from it. This material body alone, not the conscious spirit, is subject to birth, death, old age and disease. You are not the perishable body, you are the eternal conscious spirit, an eternal spark of the Supreme Spirit, who is all Truth, Consciousness and Bliss. It is because you have forgotten your essential nature as a spark of God or as a spiritual being that you have identified yourself with a body which is subject to birth and death and have got involved in the inevitable yet false cycle of birth and death.

Remember : A human body has been vouchsafed to you only in order that you may recognize that real spiritual self of yours—attain your eternal and true life, which constitutes your very nature. You are, however, so steeped in self-oblivion—so identified with and rooted in the objective Nature—that due it even the question of knowing and recognizing your true self never arises in your mind. You never pause to inquire as to who you are, where you have come from, in what relation you stand with the body and name, what connection there exists and how between you and the living beings and objects which you call your own and to which you are attached and the place to which you are destined to go after leaving the body and so on. How great is

your infatuation! Under the spell of this very infatuation you are employing all your reason and critical acumen—which distinguishes a human being from the brute—not only in attaining to the level of beasts but in developing the tendency to get transformed into a fiend and an ogre, and consider the object of your life accomplished thereby.

Remember : This deplorable state of yours is forging for your destiny which is terribly gloomy, bristling with endless infernal tortures, full of suffering and disquietude, and consisting of a series of deaths. Therefore wake up betimes. Employ your judgment in working your true evolution rather than in bringing about your ruin. Realize your true self, which is a spark of God, spiritual in essence, and make your human life fruitful.



11. Ultimate object of human endeavour is only to become happy

Remember : The rarest and the greatest enjoyments of the world cannot make a man happy if there is no peace in his mind. A man with a restless mind can never be happy and peace of mind is out of the question so long as the craving for enjoyments is there.

Remember : The craving for enjoyments does not cease so long as it is believed that there is happiness in enjoyments. And it is the nature of desire that the more it is gratified the more it grows. It is never sated.

Remember : The very discretion of a man whose mind is crowded with desires gets enfeebled and lost, his very judgment gets impaired. That is why he perpetrates ever new sins or prohibited acts for the gratification of his desires and consequently gets entangled more and more in a cobweb of miseries. Anger and greed invariably accompany desire. When a desire is crossed in the course of its gratification anger makes its appearance; while its gratification intensifies greed. And where these three combine sinful acts follow as a matter of course—nay, rather as something believed to be essential. Trials and tribulations increase and one has to undergo terrible tortures in hell.

Remember : Enjoyments, even if they are had, are sure to become extinct, they must leave you. Therefore wisdom lies in your ceasing to take delight in enjoyments, which are a positive source of misery, and loving the Lord—who is eternally true, supremely blissful and a

spontaneous and perennial source of bliss, nay, your greatest friend and well-wisher—taking to His remembrance and seeking Him alone. If you have got enjoyments and if they come to you, offer them as well to the Lord as materials for His worship and dedicate your very self to Him.

Remember : When you have dedicated yourself to the Lord and become His, the very seed of other cravings will be eradicated from your mind, which will become silent and you will experience unending joy as a matter of course.

Remember : The supreme and ultimate object of human existence is only to become happy through the bliss of God-realization. A human body has been vouchsafed to you for this noble purpose only. Therefore be alone who takes to this work is a man in the true sense. There is no greater fool than he who, though endowed with a human form, does not take to the remembrance of God but remains engaged in the pursuit of enjoyment alone; for he is wasting a golden opportunity secured by Him for a capital gain, doing harm to himself, mistaking his own loss for a gain.

Remember : The life of a sensual man turns into the life of a brute or that of a demon and his bestial and devilish acts not only deflect him from the path of duty but wholly mar his future. He remains mentally disturbed and miserable throughout his life, remains engaged in sinful pursuits all his life and after death he has to take repeated birth in demoniac wombs and suffer tortures in hell.

Remember : A wise man is he who does not fall into the snare of enjoyments, which cause (only) momentary delight, nor falls a prey to a longing for them nor fritters

away his life in their pursuit, realizing as he does that enjoyments are eventually a source of misery, and who devotes every single moment of his life to the all-blissful remembrance of God and does everything as an act of service—worship to the Lord.

Remember : A wise and fortunate man is he who has focussed all his sense of mine on the Lord or in other words who recognizes none else than the Lord as his own, nay, who has dedicated his entire ego to the service of the Lord and all whose attachment and desire stand fastened on the Lord alone.



12. Pathway to eternal happiness

Remember : Everyone in this world seeks happiness; but none secures consummate, undivided, lasting happiness. Life comes to an end in the pursuit of happiness, which recedes farther and farther. The reason is not far to seek. Consummate, undivided and lasting happiness does not, really speaking, inhere in the objects of nature from which man seeks to derive happiness. Therefore, if you desire happiness, worship God, who consists of consummate, undivided, lasting and true happiness.

Remember : One would get a thing from there alone where it exists. We shall only meet with frustration if we seek to extract oil from sands or churn ghee out of water; for there is no oil in sands nor ghee in water. Oil-seeds such as sesame and mustard will be needed for oil and milk for ghee. Even so, consummate, undivided and lasting happiness exists exclusively in God; He alone is the ocean of infinite joy. Therefore, if you seek happiness, worship Him.

Remember : What is meant by worship of God is that you should surrender yourself to God in the same way as you have given yourself up to sense-enjoyments due to a craving for self-gratification. Develop the same innate and spontaneous love for God as you have for sense-enjoyments.

Remember : There is no friend so unaccountably loving and disinterested, no compassionate being affording such asylum and protection under all circumstances—favourable or unfavourable—as God. In addition to His being a disinterested friend, God is all-powerful and all-knowing too. Having dedicated yourself to Him, you will

perceive His supreme benignity in every dispensation of His, will feel His divine touch and consequently all your sufferings will come to an end.

Remember : Joy and sorrow do not inhere in any particular situation, living being or inanimate object; they lie in the favourable or unfavourable attitude of our mind towards it. We grow unhappy when we are confronted with an adverse situation and feel happy when we meet with favourable circumstances. These joys and sorrows grow or diminish according as our feeling of agreeability or disagreeability grows or diminishes. They get reversed or disappear when our feeling of agreeability or disagreeability is changed or disappears. What appears painful to you today because of your feeling of disagreeability towards it will appear otherwise tomorrow if your feeling towards it changes.

Remember : On your dedicating yourself to God, His all-benign, all-blissful grace will be perceived by you everywhere; every dispensation of His—which comes to you as a consequence of your doings—will react agreeably on you because of its benignity. The feeling of disagreeability will exist nowhere and you will become happy—supremely happy under every circumstance.

Remember : The world consists of pairs of contraries. The world is nothing but a concept made up of pairs of opposites such as joy and sorrow, honour and ignominy, praise and reproach, gain and loss, agreeable and disagreeable, good and evil. God is one and the same everywhere, He alone pervades all pairs of opposites, all pairs of opposites are conceived in Him as the substratum; nay, it is He who stands manifested through them or in other words all pairs of opposites are His creations or play. He alone exists. Therefore, on dedicating

yourself to Him you will perceive God or His Play, which is identical with Him, in place of these pairs of opposites. Both joy and sorrow will altogether cease and you will attain that endless joy which is beyond all pairs of opposites and is the same as God. Your life will become blessed and will have achieved its end. Therefore, if you seek such consummate, undivided and lasting happiness, worship God alone with all your being.

[2]

Remember : Until God becomes the sole object of your life and until you turn your face towards God and adopt the means conducive to His realization and until you actually begin to practise those means you will never and in no case be able to catch a glimpse of peace, happiness and contentment.

Remember : Tranquillity and happiness never abide in any living being, object or situation of this imperfect, transitory and changing mundane existence. They are ever attended with the painful circumstances of imperfection, perishability and mutability. True happiness inheres in God alone, who is eternal, unsurpassed, the highest embodiment of perfection, imperishable and always and perpetually the same. Therefore, making Him alone the goal of your life and adopting the courses of discipline conducive to His realization mould your life accordingly.

Remember : For any man wishing to reach a certain destination three things are most essential—to keep the destination in mind, to take to that path alone which leads to that destination and to stick to it. If the destination itself is forgotten nothing in the way of attaining it can be achieved. No progress would be possible. Even if the destination is not lost sight of, and one takes to a wrong path, one would not be able to

reach the goal. Again, if one has chosen the right path but does not proceed on it and remains stationary, even then it will not be possible for him to reach the destination. Therefore, do not lose sight of the goal keep it constantly in mind, adopt a course of discipline that would enable you to reach it and pursue that discipline carefully to the best of your ability.

Remember : If only you turn your face towards God and commence treading on His path, the more you proceed on it, your capacity to walk on it will proportionately increase; nay, you will get more and more desirable and beloved companions ever-disposed to help and serve you, your path will be more and more convenient and easy, you will get more and more light and health, the divine endowment will be yours and real peace and true happiness will be added more and more to you. For, the path you are treading is such as is traversed only by those endowed with divine virtues and gets more and more marked with the interchange of god-like virtues even as you advance on it.

Remember : If, on the other hand, you turn your face away from God and, directing your eyes towards the world of enjoyment, set about treading on it, the more you advance on it the more you will lose your Sāttvika strength, the more you will have the company of the vile and the depraved, thieves and swindlers, robbers and scoundrels, who always molest and rob others. The road you will meet with will also be more and more rugged, full of gravels, stones, thorns and pits, interrupted by darkness and ailments, both mental and physical; nay, you will get addicted to all the vices, vicious thoughts and evil deeds forming part of the demoniac endowment and you will automatically turn

into a picture of limitless agitation and endless miseries. For, the path itself is such as is marked by a gradual expansion of the demoniac legacy and trodden by people endowed with such legacy and exchanging the same.

Remember : The divine endowment in the shape of divine virtue makes for Liberation, whereas the demoniac propensities lead to bondage. Tranquillity, righteous deeds and happiness are the constant companions of those endowed with divine virtues. Happily and peacefully engaged in righteous deeds in this life, they attain to God; whereas those possessing demoniac propensities are ever haunted by restlessness, sin and sorrow, Dragging a worried and agitated existence all their life, they remain engaged in evil deeds and ultimately go to hell. The divine endowment leads to God-realization, whereas the demoniac propensities pave the way to hell.

Remember : Demons can attain limitless power, abundant worldly riches, extensive authority, very high position, worldly fame and glory; but these can never bring real peace and true happiness. They keep burning all their life and remaining addicted to evil deeds, are eventually subjected to frightful tortures hurled into the hell-fire. Therefore make God, the embodiment of true bliss, the exclusive end of your life and with the sole object of realizing Him remain constantly and carefully engaged with single-minded devotion in course of discipline favourable to his realization.



13. Who is really beautiful and charming ?

Remember : Beauty does not lie in any outward appearance, complexion, costume and jewels, toilet and personal embellishment; beauty associated with these is only conceptual. At some places a fair complexion is looked upon as charming, while at others a dark complexion is regarded as a mark of beauty. Likewise the conception of comeliness in regard to costume and jewels too is different. People hold different notions in regard to the comeliness of limbs too. To a voluptuary the limbs that accentuate one's carnal appetite appear charming, while those very limbs appear most hideous to the eyes of those who are averse to the pleasures of sense.

Remember : Really speaking, he alone is charming who has a charming heart, whose heart is full of charming ideas, sentiments and virtues like aversion to the pleasures of sense, self-abnegation, harmlessness, love, tenderness, susceptibility to other's suffering, humility, compassion, modesty, forbearance, the spirit of service, self-control, saintliness, even-mindedness and serenity. The effulgence of these charming sentiments and virtues of the heart is reflected as a matter of course in the countenance, the eyes, nay, in every limb of the man or woman possessing such a charming heart and that effulgence unfolds these virtues in the heart of an on-looker according to the degree of intensity of his or her sentiments.

Remember : You get frightened at the sight of a particular individual, the sight of another rids you of all

fear; you get provoked to see a third individual, while the sight of a fourth engenders a spirit of forgiveness in you; you are smitten with darts of love too see yet another, while the sight of another naturally makes you inclined to practise self-control. All this happens because the countenance of the individual you come across reflects those sentiments which react on you.

Remember : The world is made up of the three constituents of Prakṛti, *viz.* Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. That is why the heart of every man is characterized more or less with the quality of Sattva as well as with that of Tamas—has the angel as well as the demon in him. By your Sāttvika or Tāmasika propensities, your divine or demoniac traits, you arouse the angel in some and the demon in others.

Remember : Charming is he whose very sight suppresses and disperses our sinful thoughts, and awakens, nay, fosters pious thoughts, awakens and activates the angel in us and suppresses and knocks down the devil.

Remember : He whose heart is full of evil thoughts, vicious propensities and evil traits like attachment and aversion, lust, anger, greed, animosity, violence, infatuation, vanity, pride, bias, sensuality and disquietude is not really charming even though outwardly good-looking and well-dressed and well-adorned, but is ghastly. He himself ever continues to be an abode of evils; for the devil in him is awake and active and, communicating his ghastly ideas and sentiments hidden under the cloak of his counterfeit comeliness to those who come into contact with him, he seeks to turn them into demons or ogres.

Remember : That comeliness alone is real, which is accompanied by unimpeachability of character, sublimity of sentiments and purity of conduct. All other comeliness

is actually like a glittering jar of gold full of venom. Guard yourself against such ghastly beauty and hence, making it a point not to fall a victim to the craze for external charms, costume and ornaments, toilet and embellishment, beautify your thoughts, sentiments and traits and according to them your actions. Thereby the health of your body, mind and intellect will be ensured and thereby you will be able to realize your healthy self.

Remember : Foul thoughts, undesirable sentiments, evil traits and evil deeds constitute a hell in themselves and lead to hell. They are fraught with impurity and ugliness from one end to another, even though they may appear tidy and charming externally in some cases.

Remember : Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is charming though dark-brown of complexion. Though not having a fair complexion outwardly, His loveliness captivates all—only because transcendent divinity whose charm is ever fresh and which is supremely benign in character is ever manifest in Him inside as well as outside in every fibre of His being. If you get merged in this dark-brown effulgence you will become supremely lovely inside as well as outside—

“One gets immaculate more and more even as one gets drowned in the dark-brown effulgence.”*



* ज्यों-ज्यों डूबै स्याम रँग त्यों-त्यों उज्ज्वल होय।

14. Ideal life : a fount of happiness

Remember : Money, house and holdings do not constitute real wealth. The true wealth of man consists in an ideal life full of goodness and goodness alone. Such a truly rich man—who is rich in the wealth of character—does not vocally admonish anybody. His conduct itself urges all to mould their lives after the pattern of his life. His teachings are not based on any particular book: they radiate through his own mode of living.

Remember : Everyone is ever benefited as a matter of course by such men leading an ideal life; for they have no evil in their life, which they may transmit to others. A sweet tongue, humility, truthfulness, service, beneficence, forgiveness, self-denial, peace and joy—these are the inherent and intrinsic virtues of their life.

Remember : Men leading such an ideal life never fall a prey to attachment for sensual pleasures, carnal appetites, despair, fear, melancholy, grief, sorrow or unrest. They ever remain tranquil and happy and, dispelling the fear and grief of others by their own conduct and good behaviour, communicate their happiness and tranquillity to them too.

Remember : Men leading such an ideal life remain cheerful and firm in their truthful conduct under every circumstance. Even in the face of a grave crisis they never deviate from truth. They neither get unnerved nor grow restless nor do they wish ill of anybody. They are exceedingly calm, unmoved and naturally beneficent to all under every circumstance.

Remember : Men leading such an ideal life have full faith in the Lord and His grace, His magnanimity and goodwill. They never get angry at anyone—not even at those who slander and insult them, do an ill turn to them or harm them—nor do

they ever wish ill of them. Far from wreaking vengeance on them, they ever remain automatically engaged in respectfully rendering good offices to all, as if nothing had happened.

Remember : Men leading such an ideal life know that he who seeks to afflict another, nay, insults, abuses and harms others, is a veritable fool; for, he cannot harm another unless the latter is destined to be so harmed and thus the former only injures himself thereby. They show compassion to such a fool who harms himself in this way. They who seek to avenge themselves play the fool in a like manner. Noble souls never commit such a folly.

Remember : The mind of men leading such an ideal life is fully established in the soul or their own Self. Maladies like lust, anger, greed, infatuation, arrogance, jealousy, fear, worry etc., can never vitiate their mind. Their mind is ever replete with good ideas. They always perceive themselves in all and all in themselves. Hence they never regard another as alien to them. Under such circumstances it is never possible for them to harm or do an ill turn to another. Naturally radiating their pure thoughts they ever go on purifying all about them.

Remember : Men leading such an ideal life are an ocean of peace, an inexhaustible storehouse of love and an immeasurable fount of happiness. Even he who comes into contact with them attains peace and happiness, and develops love.

Remember : If you follow in the footsteps of such ideal men, looking upon their life as your model of excellence, you too will grow to be an ideal person and will be able to do good to yourself as well as to other numberless beings.

[2]

Remember : The body is frail and perishable. That which is born will surely die; and that which has come to be will definitely be dissolved. But if one meets with death in the

service of God, his death has yielded its fruit. If, on the other hand, one dies a victim of sense-enjoyments, his life has ended in failure. His life alone is fruitful, who dedicates it to the service of God.

Remember : He whose body meets its end after remaining employed in doing good to others, relieving the distress of the poor, removing the afflictions of the afflicted, serving others, discharging its duties in a selfless spirit, serving the parents and other elders, vindicating virtue, protecting the pious, strongly defending and promoting the growth of one's country, serving humanity at large and the entire living creation, waging a righteous war, pursuing noble sentiments like self-abnegation, forgiveness, compassion, modesty, non-violence and love, worshipping gods, adoring and contemplating on God and practising blissful devotion to God, reaches a happy state after death and the highest goal in the shape of God-realization if he does all these in a disinterested spirit. Those men alone whose life is thus dedicated to the service of God are human beings in the true sense of the term. They alone are godlike men and they alone do real good to the world by their ideal existence.

Remember : He whose body meets its end after remaining employed in harming others, oppressing the poor, aggravating the miseries of others, selfishly robbing others of their wealth, carnally gratifying their senses, insulting the elders, subverting religion, tormenting holy men, doing harm to the country and exposing it to foreign invasion, jeopardizing the interests of mankind and other living beings, waging unrighteous and selfish war, indulging in evil practices under the sway of ignoble sentiments like concupiscence, anger, greed, arrogance, cruelty, violence, ill-will, animosity etc., worshipping demons—men swayed by demoniacal sentiments, indulging in devilish sense-enjoyments, revolving in one's mind on—indulging in

sense-enjoyments and devoutly pursuing the baneful enjoyments of the senses—enjoyments which bring misery in their wake, is consumed by the fire of worry, sorrow, despair, sin and anguish of body and mind during his lifetime and meets after death with an evil destiny, is consigned to demoniacal wombs and hurled into frightful hells etc. Men whose life is thus frittered away in unholy pursuits are beasts, fiends or ogres in human garb. They alone are demoniac men and the world suffers much by their birth and existence. They not only die the death of a dog, hog or ass but carry with them the seed of a rich harvest of suffering. This constitutes the greatest failure of a human life.

Remember : Real manhood of a man commences when the river of life takes a turn towards God—when he begins to practise virtue imbued with self-abnegation and asceticism in a spirit of service to God. That alone which is ultimately conducive to the supreme good not only of one's own but also of others is virtue. The human body has been vouchsafed only for practising such virtue.

Remember : The right of man is to act only. The human body is not only the medium of reaping the consequences of one's past deeds but also the medium of action. Through his actions he can carve for himself a future full of extreme anguish or full of happiness and even realize God—the Self, which is the highest goal of life, by taking to the right types of discipline.

Remember : He alone who, having grasped this principle, turns to account his right to act is wise. Therefore, completely abandon sins—evil deeds, pursue virtues—pious deeds and that too with the sacred motive of worshipping God—serving and pleasing Him. If you act in this way, your life will have completely achieved its end.



15. You are, what you think

Remember : The kind of thoughts you harbour, the type of ideas you foster in your mind, they alone will grow to be your ideal and you will automatically continue to be moulded accordingly. Now, if you just arrive at the conclusion, ever cherish the thought that “God is omnipotent, He is my greatest well-wisher, I am His own, so that as an outcome of His spontaneous goodwill propensities of self-abnegation, love, cheerfulness, virtue, self-fulfilment, compassion, commiseration and rendering service to all, perceiving God in all, will always be alive in me. My life is being moulded accordingly and will grow to be such. Wherever I stay I shall be disseminating such noble ideas in the atmosphere of that place. I shall be naturally helpful in developing such a lofty consciousness in men;” you will really turn out to be such and will help others too in attaining this consummation.

Remember : Wherever light travels it spreads illumination. Wherever the moon goes she rains nectar. A fragrant flower spreads its fragrance everywhere. In the same way you too, by your life, can diffuse light, nectar and fragrance everywhere. At your very sight people’s darkness will begin to melt, position will begin to be counteracted and foul smell will begin to disappear and, receiving light, sweet nectar and sweet fragrance instead, they will feel enraptured and thrilled with joy.

Remember : You are an eternal spark of God and so all His divine virtues can develop and shine forth through you. Only contemplate on those virtues, awaken and foster them after assimilating them. Getting enriched

by His excellences, the divine endowment, your life will grow to be extremely charming, most sacred, supremely happy and exceedingly sweet and attractive. Then these divine virtues alone will be disseminated and propagated by you.

Remember : If you always harbour Sāttvika and divine thoughts all the time, your behaviour will automatically conform to them. With others you will behave in the same manner. The result will be that in return you too will meet with the same Sāttvika and divine behaviour from the whole world. This will propagate mutual love and joy and you will be able to contribute your priceless mite towards turning the impure and agitated atmosphere of the world into a pure and peaceful one in a natural way. This too will constitute a very great service done to the Lord by you. You will not only be supremely benefited yourself but you will be able to set others too on the road to blessedness weaning them from the evil path.

Remember : The greatest service consists in awakening and fostering noble ideas, thoughts of God in God's creation, in turning them towards God. This is accomplished not so much through precept as through example. If your life is enriched with holy thoughts about God, people of the world will be automatically able to receive true instruction and initiation in God-consciousness. If, on the other hand, you go on instilling, awakening and fostering demoniac ideas and propensities in the people of the world through your impure ideas steeped in attachment to pleasures of sense, you will be doing a very great disservice to yourself as well as to the world. Consequently you will naturally have to incur the divine displeasures under the indignant dispensation of God as arranged by

that all-merciful and benign Lord, even as a bitter pill is administered by a kind-hearted physician for the eradication of a malady.

Remember : If you succeed in arousing and perceiving the God within you, nay, in dedicating yourself in Him and following His commandments and in unfolding and developing His divine virtues in you, your human existence will have realized its supreme object. You will not only be blessed in the world but turn out to be the redeemer of the fallen. God is always there within you and along with Him are present His divine excellences and divine sentiments too. Perceive them, bring them to light and be blessed by assimilating them in your everyday life.



16. True purpose of your belongings

Remember : Every gift of God to you is intended for being used to the best advantage. Hence make the most of every possession and every situation of yours and make capital out of it. When death overtakes you, not a moment's extension will be allowed if asked for. Hence employ every single moment of your life to the best advantage. Devote every breath of yours to some blessed pursuit. The best use of time is to perform every duty in a spirit of worship or service to God, shedding sloth and error and remaining engaged in His blissful remembrance. To fritter away one's time in reading harmful and useless books, in seeing cinema pictures, playing at cards and taking part in other such games, and indulging in excessive sleep and idle gossip and so on is to misuse it. To devote one's time to sinful pursuits is not only to misuse it but to antagonize it and court self-ruination.

Remember : Mind has been vouchsafed to you so as to enable you to think of God and to contemplate good to yourself and others by indulging in salutary thoughts. To do this is to make the most of your mind and here lies the key to the success of your life. If, however, you allow it to give way to melancholy, fear, anxiety, animosity, violence, idle thought, lascivious thought and thoughts of sensuality; if you keep it engrossed in impure thoughts rather than in sublime thoughts; if you allow it to wander in wanton and pernicious thoughts instead of keeping it under control, you are misusing it.

Remember : You have been gifted with speech so as to enable you to chant the names and sing the praises of God, to practise study of the Vedas and other sacred books, to utter wholesome, agreeable and truthful words, words which are conducive to your own good as well as to the good of others and which when diffused in the atmosphere may continue to set holy vibrations in the air. To do all this is to make the most of your speech. If, on the other hand, you utter with your tongue words which are untrue, harmful, annoying, pungent and unpalatable, if you employ your speech in reviling others' discussing others' affairs, discussing others' losses, indulging in self-praise, vilification of good people or idle gossip, commenting on others and replying to others' comments and in false chatter, you misuse your speech.

Remember : You have been endowed with movable and immovable property, with various possessions, so as to enable you to employ them in the service of God. Wherever there is want, the Lord in the guise of those afflicted with want seeks such wealth and possessions from you. If you do not recognize these possessions as your own and, appropriating the bare minimum for your own use, utilize all the rest in the service of God by respectfully giving them away to those in want, you are using them to the best advantage and your wealth and possessions are serving their true purpose. Besides deriving self-satisfaction you will thereby earn the grace of God to boot. If on the other hand, you recognize these possessions as your own and press them into service as a means to your own enjoyment, or if you simply accumulate them and die engrossed in care to preserve them, you will be doing a great disservice to yourself. For, claiming as your own the things belonging to God,

you commit theft and you will have to suffer punishment for it. If you fritter away your wealth in indulging your palate and foppery, your love of luxury and fashion, in drinking and adultery, immorality and irreligious conduct, eating and drinking prohibited dishes and drinks or in animosity and violence, you are wantonly misusing it and sowing the seeds of perdition consisting of endless tortures for you. Therefore, be forewarned. For from expending your wealth and possessions in sinful pursuits, spend them sparingly even on subsistence, leading a most simple life. Instead of wearing fine and costly apparel put on simple clothes of small value and, saving money, provide clothing with that money to those in want. Observe simplicity in your diet and utilize your savings in the service of God in the form of afflicted and suffering humanity—in providing food to them. Herein lies their proper use.

Remember : Even so make the most of the sense-organs with which you have been endowed, viz., the senses of hearing, smell, sight, taste and touch, by linking them with God and rendering service through them. When confronted with suffering, calumny, ignominy and distress, turn them to account by comforting yourselves with the thought that all these are the fruit of your own evil actions, and by making up your mind not to indulge in evil acts in any form in future and always to practise virtuous deeds alone.



17. Dispassion leads to happiness

Remember : So long as there lurks in your mind the false conception of happiness inhering in the objects of worldly enjoyment, and consequently so long as you cherish a feeling of mineness and attachment towards the living beings and inanimate objects of this world, neither true devotion nor spiritual enlightenment can be had nor can success be attained in the discipline of Yoga. The practice of disinterested action too is out of the question without aversion to the pleasures of sense.

Remember : Attachment resides in the mind and it is by the mind alone that it can be renounced. Therefore, attachment to the pleasures of sense can neither be shaken off by putting on the label of a Vairāgī (one who has turned his mind away from the pleasures of sense) or Vītarāga (one who is entirely free from passion) nor by external renunciation. To assume such a title, but to have no real inclination for aversion to the pleasures of sense is nothing short of hypocrisy. So long as there is an attraction in your mind for the pleasures of sense, so long as you imagine happiness to inhere in them and so long as there is a craving for such pleasures, “Vairāgya” or dispassion is out of the question.

Remember : So long as you falsely conceive happiness to lie in the objects of enjoyment and so long as a craving for them lurks in your mind, you will be seized with a longing to possess them the moment you come face to face with them or even recall them, even though you may have externally renounced them. Such a longing would impel even him who has outwardly

renounced them to indulge in luxuries and thereby bring about his downfall.

Remember : There is no joy in the delights of senses; on the other hand, they are full of sorrow and sorrow alone. Food and drink, clothing and apparel, house and dwelling in this world are meant only for maintaining one's existence; while this human life is intended for striving towards God-realization or Self-realization after developing aversion for the pleasures of sense. These things are to be accepted only for maintaining one's life; life is not to be lived for them. Hence the voluptuous man who eats for the gratification of his palate and clothes himself for the sake of smartness is totally devoid of dispassion and must remain tied to the world.

Remember : Even as the objects of enjoyment are meant only for the sustenance of the body, this body too is intended only to serve as a fit abode for the soul. It is not your own self. The soul, which cognizes the states of childhood, youth and old age through which the body has to pass, ever remains the same. You say "I was a child in the former days, when I used to play in such and such a way. In my youthful days my body was full of great vigour and now in my old age I have become a decrepit." This proves that you, who make such observations, are the soul distinct from the body. Realizing this give up attachment and the feeling of mineness with regard to the body; and, undergoing the pleasurable and painful experiences that come to you, with an equipoised mind, so long as the body continues to exist use it as an instrument helpful in your march along the path of God-realization.

Remember : When love for God appears in you

or you get established in the Self, you will automatically give up the pleasures of sense like a poison or a dream. But try to give up attachment for them even beforehand by repeatedly finding fault with them and visualizing them as attended with sorrow and regarding them as the supreme factor conducive to bondage.

Remember : True renunciation lies in giving up attachment of the mind for luxuries, and that alone is real dispassion. But indulge in luxuries as sparingly as possible; accept them only when necessary, giving up all charm for them and ceasing to look upon them as delightful. Possession and accumulation of objects of enjoyment also fosters attachment for them. Do not cast your gaze on men attached to or surrounded by the pleasures of sense, but on exalted souls who have taken to a life of renunciation and have turned their mind away from luxuries. Commune with the lives and teachings of those exalted souls who have lost all charm for the objects of enjoyment so that, losing all faith in and charm for the pleasures of sense, which are no better than sweet poison, your mind may develop real aversion for them.

Remember : A person given to the gratification of his senses will ever remain entangled in the snare of fear and despondency—fear of the loss of enjoyments already available and great dejection and grief over their loss or on his failure to obtain them. But he who has no attachment for the objects of enjoyment will ever remain free from fear and grief and steeped in supreme bliss. No circumstance can make a man of dispassion unhappy.



18. Beatitude lies in self-abnegation

Remember : The consummation of human life lies in God-realization, not in securing enjoyment. Man seeks endless, unlimited joy unmixed with sorrow; he naturally hankers after supreme liberty and craves for lasting immortality of life. All these three are lacking in luxuries.

Remember : Not only there is no joy in luxuries, they are on the other hand a source of suffering; the joy that appears to abide in luxuries is only a creation of infatuation and is a precursor of sorrow. Enjoyments are ever dependent on others and make us dependent. They are not only transient and perishable themselves, but they also bring transience and death in their wake. God, on the other hand, knows no end or limit, He is all truth, all consciousness and all bliss. He is supremely free and, ridding the Ātmā of all bondage, manifests its eternal free nature. He is not only immortal Himself but also spontaneously bestows immortality on others.

Remember : A man engaged in procuring, accumulating and enjoying luxuries ever remains engrossed in worries, restless, stricken with fear and engaged in sinful pursuits. His misfortunes and agonies go on increasing day by day and, leading a frustrated life full of agony here, he dies a painful death and repeatedly goes through the lowest states of existence like tortures in hell and demoniac wombs. Therefore, withdrawing attachment from enjoyments, fix your mind on God.

Remember : Enjoyments are not so bad as attachment to them. Such attachment alone gives rise to a hankering

for enjoyment, which in its turn leads to all sorts of sin and suffering. Therefore, if you are blessed with luxuries, continue to devote them to the service of the Lord. Their utility lies only in devoting them to the service of God and then only they will have served their purpose. Therefore, whatever objects of enjoyment you have in your possession, look upon them as meant for the service of the Lord, rather than for your own enjoyment and continue to employ them unstintedly and unceasingly in the service of the Lord with a cheerful mind free from pride where and when necessary according to the exigencies of the moment, and thereby account yourself as well as those luxuries blessed.

Remember : Happiness lies in peace of mind. A man with a restless mind can never be happy, while luxuries not offered to the Lord give rise to ever new forms of restlessness. You hanker after peace but seek it from luxuries which are most restless, exceedingly fleeting, perishable and imperfect in so many respects. This desire of yours is as preposterous as the desire of a man to get coolness from fire. Fire cannot but burn. Even so enjoyments must bring restlessness and agony in their wake.

Remember : The supreme rarity and utility of human life lies in this fact alone that it is the only instrument of God-realization. The priceless moments of this human life are slipping away in vain—not only in vain but in suicidal pursuits. The fact that under pressure of attachment to enjoyment you are engaged in the unfruitful attempt to accumulate luxuries alone for yourself as well as for all and, resorting to passion, lust, hatred, anger, bickering, warfare, animosity and violence, are accounting your life successful and blessed constitutes perversity—an act of

madness on your part. Through these endeavours you are not rendering any service to your own self, much less to the public, country, the world at large, the human race or to the living creation. Perversity drives a man to wrong action and the fruit of wrong actions is also adverse.

Remember : Far from bringing happiness, the aspirations and actions through which you seek to make the world happy will on the other hand only tend to aggravate misery; instead of ushering an era of peace they will only intensify disquietude; far from propagating love, they will promote hatred; and in place of development only destruction will follow.

Remember : In the name of service you are erroneously heading towards destruction and in the name of development you are erroneously heading towards ruination; nay, regarding it the mission of your life you are zealously striving towards this end: this is all the more deplorable on your part. The mischief wrought by him who mistakes evil for good will continue to be aggravated. Therefore wake up and bestow deep thought on the real character of Self and God and realize the truth that beatitude lies in self-abnegation—not in wealth, position, authority or luxury in the shape of any living being, object or circumstance; that the goal of life is God and not enjoyment; and that your duty is to offer in a spirit of self-denial your entire body, mind and resources, nay, every living being, object and circumstance at your disposal in the service of God and not to devote them to enjoyment.



19. Cultivate contentment : An effective source of supreme happiness

Remember : A major weakness with man is his lasting discontent. Through this alone he remains ever unhappy. There is no limit to covetousness; the more one gets the more does covetousness grow. Covetousness does not cease with the attainment of objects of enjoyment; on the other hand, the range of covetousness goes on widening the more one is able to get objects of enjoyment. The capacity to enjoy luxuries may come to an end, but covetousness does not cease. It ever keeps the wealthiest man as well as a man owning the most extensive dominion indigent. Covetousness never grows old, it enjoys perpetual youth.

Remember : He alone is supremely happy, whose mind remains contented under all circumstances. In fact contentment alone constitutes that supreme wealth on getting which a man remains ever rich. No situation can make him miserable or impoverished. The exalted state which is attained through contentment is higher and more exalted even than the position of the greatest emperor.

Remember : He alone who is richly endowed with contentment is a really pious soul. He who does not feel contented even on renouncing his hearth and home can never be a pious soul. He for his part remains burning in the fire of discontent day and night. Contentment alone is that supremely soothing substance which serves as a balm to a burning life. Contentment alone illumines those phases of life which are sombre through gloom.

Remember : The mind of a man who is not contented can never get concentrated. It ever remains distracted and restless. Discontent converts a man into a thief, a cheat, a dacoit and a demon usurping others' rights. Discontent alone fosters ill-will, anger, animosity and violence. Virtues like amiability, tranquillity, love and a spirit of service never appear in the life of a discontented man. Even if any of these does appear for a few moments it gets blasted by the fire of discontent.

Remember : Contentment follows from the conviction that the world is transient, full of suffering and unreal, or from faith in the benign dispensation of the Lord. Every worldly situation is, really speaking, either a mere illusion, a nonentity, or a pastime of the Lord, in which various Rasas or emotions come into play. If it is an illusion, there is no room whatsoever for discontent. If, on the other hand, it is a pastime, every pastime is full of supreme joy following from the sweet and benign vision of the Lord. The mind gets absorbed into it.

Remember : They alone who continue to burn in the fire of discontent, kindle the fire of discontent in the heart of others and inflame them. They allege that progress is out of the question without discontent. A man seeking progress must remain discontented. This is, however, a distorted picture presented to their perverted judgment by their discontented mind. When a man's intellect gets clouded by ignorance and his judgment perverted, he comes to recognize everything as the reverse of what it is. Hence taking evil to be good, he not only chooses the evil but also seeks to represent it as good and communicate it to others.

Remember : A wave of joy continuously flowing as a matter of course from the inner being of a man

who is contented of mind affects those living about him and gives them a share of it. A contented man alone can maintain his equipoise with regard to pairs of opposites like a friend and foe, joy and sorrow, obloquy and praise, and turn out to be a devotee of God; and he alone can offer true worship to the Lord through his peaceful life.

Remember : Contentment does not consist in indolence, sloth, negligence and so on. A contented man alone can really perform good deeds with a settled mind; for his mind remains tranquil and his intellect is unsullied, discriminating and capable of correct judgment.

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Remember : The best means of attaining supreme happiness is "Contentment". A discontented man will be ever unhappy, whatever object of whatever description and whatever situation he may be able to attain. Contentment, however, in the matter of God-remembrance or God-love is a great hindrance. Contentment is helpful in the domain of worldly luxuries and an obstacle in the way of God-remembrance. Therefore, never be contented with God-remembrance. The target can never be reached in God-remembrance. Spiritual effort will ever be inadequate and love for God can never reach the highest limit.

Remember : A sensual man, on the other hand, feels ever discontented in the matter of sense-gratification. He invariably finds everything he gets deficient and longs to have more. He seeks to do more, much more than what he actually does towards that end. With this feeling of discontent he continues to extend his sphere of activity, with the consequence that, fastening himself on all sides he gets irrevocably enmeshed and is beset day

and night by worry, fear and melancholy. Under no circumstance does he enjoy peace. So far, however, as spiritual discipline and God-remembrance are concerned, he feels ever contented. In the first instance he feels no necessity for them; if at all he does anything, he does a very little in a limited quantity and for a short while, and assumes that he is doing a lot. That is why spiritual discipline or God-remembrance is not possible for him and the result is that true happiness and real peace are withheld from him.

Remember : If, out of the twenty-four hours comprising a full day, one spends a few minutes in God-remembrance and devotes more than twenty-three hours to the enjoyment of luxuries and to endeavours for procuring them, his mind naturally cleaves to luxuries and does not get focussed on God. Failure of the mind to get focussed on God constitutes the wastage of human life and is a grievous error.

Remember : Attachment to luxuries and the craving for them make one's life sensual. Sensuality deprives a man of his judgment and a man who has lost his reason starts doing things which ought not to be done by him and which he has been personally deprecating and denouncing. Addiction to sinful pursuits takes away his disgust for them in the first instance and then he begins to look upon them as justified. Nay, he begins to feel the necessity for them and then to glory in sinful acts, so that his life gets steeped in sin and the result is that he departs from the world with an endless stock of sins. In this way not only is his human life wasted—not only does he miss the supreme and ultimate goal of human existence in the shape of God-realization—but as a result of his sin he is compelled to descend birth after birth

into demoniac wombs such as those of a dog and swine, a fiend and ogre and worms and insects, and to suffer dreadful tortures in hell. Hence his human life is not only frittered away, but also proves to be a source of rank mischief. Therefore, always embrace contentment in the field of sense-gratification—remain contented with whatever may be got to you; but never feel contented with your spiritual endeavour. Go on intensifying it.

Remember : True wealth consists in God-remembrance alone; that alone is the highest riches. Lack of God-remembrance alone is abject penury and a dire calamity. In God-remembrance alone lies your supreme wisdom and good fortune; lack of God-remembrance alone is an appalling sin. Therefore, practise God-remembrance day and night. Indulge in the thought of God with your mind, chant the names and praises of God with your speech and render service and offer worship to God through every benignant activity carried on with your body. Remaining engaged in God-remembrance as aforesaid day and night, steep your life in God-remembrance. Then alone is human life worth the name and there lies its utility.



20. Avert your face from luxuries to secure real happiness

Remember : The man who comes to know that the house in which he lives is charged, both above and below as well as on all the four sides, with dynamite that can explode any moment, can such a one stay complacently in that house even for a second? Will his attachment for that house continue any longer? Similarly when a man comes to know that a strong dose of arsenic has been mixed with the dish served to him, will he care to eat it? Will he not feel inclined to leave it at once? In the same way, when one gets convinced without doubt through discretion, through a critical sense of what is good and what is bad, that the enjoyments of this world are all evanescent, burning with the flames of sorrow and destructive in the end like poison, will he ever remain attached to them any longer? Realize this fact with a discerning mind and reckoning all worldly enjoyments as destructive like poison remain unattached to them.

Remember : Aversion for the pleasures of sense is sure to follow in the wake of discernment. Once it is thoroughly understood that worldly enjoyments are burning with the flame of sorrow and poisonous, a man would cease to have any attraction for them. Nay, he would give them up immediately. He will then feel afraid of living in their midst. He would get impatient to be rid of them at the earliest moment. It is this desire to be rid of the world of enjoyments that goes by the name of Mumukṣa or longing for Liberation. He who is possessed of this Mumukṣa is known as a Mumukṣu (a seeker of Liberation). This is also known as the desire for God-realization. On this desire being kindled and whetted Liberation or God-realization is immediately attained. God-realization is being delayed for the very reason that the longing for it has

not yet been fully awakened in us, much less grown intense and undivided.

Remember : So long as luxuries appear delightful, so long as you believe that they are so, so long as your mind feels attracted towards them, so long as you praise and envy the lot of others who roll in luxuries and so long as your mind pants for similar enjoyments, the real nature of enjoyments has not been revealed to you through discernment. Sure enough you have not realized that they are confectioneries mixed with poison. It is immaterial whether you are called a devotee, a Mahātmā, a saint, an exalted soul, a man of renunciation and dispassion or a Karmayogī. The truth is that so long as you recognize happiness to lie in enjoyments and cherish a longing for them, you are no other than a slave of luxuries. In other words, you will continue till then to struggle and plunge in a bottomless sea of sorrow.

Remember : If you seek to fulfil your human existence to secure real peace and happiness, avert your face from luxuries and turn it towards God. Then if luxuries remain with you they will be at your service and follow you. You will no longer cast an avid look towards them. Your eyes will be focussed on God, your legs would proceed in the direction of God and your mind too will cling to God.

Remember : Under such circumstances even the luxuries that will follow you will be blessed by serving as a means of God-worship. The enjoyments to which a man feels attached and in which man indulges are a picture of hell themselves and lead those who enjoy them, to hell and burn them in the fire of misery. If developing aversion towards luxuries you get attached to God, not only will your life have achieved its purpose, but luxuries too, if any stay with you, will get purified and accomplished of their purpose.



21. Greed of wealth : A curse to human life

Remember : That alone is true wealth, which is conducive to your highest interest, which may prove to be the means of God-realization, the ultimate and supreme consummation of human existence. That which is subservient, on the other hand, to mundane life, worldly enjoyments, is useless (व्यर्थ); while that which begets sin is, of course, a positive evil (अनर्थ).

Remember : Wealth which is neither earned through pious means pleasing to God nor is employed in the service of God is positively useless and an unmixed evil. That is why it has been spoken of as an evil misnamed as wealth (Artha).

Remember : By its very nature wealth is a fertile soil for the following fifteen evils:—(1) thieving, (2) violence, (3) mendacity, (4) hypocrisy, (5) vanity, (6) sexual appetite, (7) anger, (8) pride, (9) discord, (10) animosity, (11) rivalry, (12) lewdness, (13) distrust, (14) gambling and (15) drinking. The means of securing this evil misnamed wealth, its acquisition, augmentation, preservation, consumption and loss invariably entail utmost exertion, fear, anxiety, delusion and grief.

Remember : Craze for this wealth sows seeds of dissension and animosity with one's parents; brothers, relations and friends (whose life should always be steeped in mutual love), alienates them from one another. As a result of this people bound by ties of affinity from time immemorial get agitated and enraged and, forgetting all goodwill, kinship and affection, turn enemies of each other, flying at each other's throat.

Remember : Quarrelling and litigating with one another and seething with terrible unrest, losing all peace in life from greed of wealth, people depart from this world proving human life to be a curse.

Remember : Blinded with thirst for wealth alone people court the sin of taking the life of innocent human beings by adulterating foodstuffs, medicines and other things essential in life and causing imitations to pass off as genuine, and thereby pave the way for hell.

Remember : Not even an iota of the worldly riches and property follows you beyond death. Burning uselessly in the fire of solicitude for wealth all his life man turns to be an embodiment of evil. Therefore, giving up the avidity for wealth, devote whatever wealth has fallen to your lot in the service of God in various ways, thus making it helpful in achieving your highest interest. And if you have no money, feel the direct touch of Divine Grace and, remaining contented with the means of your livelihood, devote your life to the service of God.

Remember : If you happen to possess abundant riches and, regarding it as your own, fail to employ them in the service of God—wherever they are needed, you are a thief and you will have to reap the evil consequence of this dishonesty of yours.

Remember : You perpetrate a major sin if through greed, through imagined need for more wealth you earn or amass wealth by usurping or encroaching upon others' rights, persecuting the poor and the helpless. Such wealth is a positive evil. It will keep you burning even in this world, even though under the intoxication of pride you may not feel it for a few days: whereas your needs must reap its dire consequences in the world beyond. Therefore, taking care not to fall a prey to greed, make the best use of the wealth already in your possession. Ever keep aloof from the means of unlawfully acquiring what has not been acquired.



22. Cultivate genuine meekness: An abode of serenity

Remember : The lower scale of a balance is the heavier. In the same way he alone is really great, who is meek by disposition and relinquishes honour, though treating others with honour; nay, who is polite in his dealings, reckoning himself as the humblest of all, and bows his head to all and serves all, visualizing God as manifested in all. In the realm of spirituality he alone who is lowly, is exalted and he who is perched on the summit of empty pride is low.

Remember : Everyone remains pleased with the meek. All derive gratification from him who is disposed to serve; any, all love him from the core of their heart and look upon him as their own. God's supreme grace descends upon him as a matter of course; for God never recedes even for a moment from the presence of the man who sees Him in all. When he perceives God in all at every place and time, God too keeps His eyes fixed on him.

Remember : Friends gather round the meek while the haughty gather enemies about them. People rush to lift up the meek in the event of their sustaining a fall, whereas the haughty meet with pushes and kicks. The meek never feel insulted or humiliated, because they refuse to take notice of effrontery or disrespect; whereas the haughty feel hurt by ignominy and effrontery every now and then. Any natural gesture, gait or word would touch them to the quick. All these tribulations of the proud are self-invited and constantly remain with them, their kindred and stock ever growing. The meek, on the

other hand, are fortified by an impregnable citadel of divine virtues, into which these sufferings can never penetrate.

Remember : The meek alone are capable of rendering service to or reforming anybody. The proud remain ever unbent with pride; nay, swayed by it, they even insult their elders. Thus they remain deprived of the latter's goodwill and blessings. Pride proves to be a very great obstacle even in the way of their learning things; for a haughty man considers it below his dignity to seek enlightenment from anyone. He never stoops to regard anyone as superior to himself in any province whatsoever. Due to his pride he remains cut off even from God. He offers indignity even to saints. That is why, like a truly well-meaning physician, God too assumes the role of an enemy towards a haughty man in order to do away with his pride; whereas the humility of the meek prompts the Lord to play a loving role towards them.

Remember : Serenity constantly abides in the heart of the meek, whereas the proud man's heart ever continues to burn. He cannot bear to hear about anyone's exaltation, advancement, uplift, prosperity and renown and the fire of hatred in his heart fiercely bursts into flames the moment he hears of these. Nay, in order to assuage that burning sensation he goes the length of perpetrating misdeeds that turn the fire burning in his heart into a blazing fire of agony and the fire of damnation and thereby aggravate his burning to a violent and appalling degree.

Remember : He alone who is meek is truly learned and wise. Meekness is the invariable outcome of learning; and moral worth and prosperity too immediately follow in the wake of meekness. He alone is wise, who

acquires moral worth and prosperity, which bring happiness and peace of mind.

Remember : Fruit-bearing trees bend low and gratify all and sundry with their nectarine fruits; whereas fruitless trees keep standing erect and are ignored by all. In meekness alone inhere all kinds of choicest gains. Hence you too should turn meek and thereby make everybody your own.

Remember : Meekness should be genuine and not showy. Sham meekness is a kind of camouflage which deceives one's own self. Therefore, eschewing sham meekness, cultivate and practice genuine and ideal meekness.



23. Let your words be flowers not thorns

Remember : Speech is a manifestation of Mother Saraswatī (the goddess of speech and learning). Speech is a mighty force by turning which to account man can bring all under his sway and by abusing which he can make enemies of all. To speak words which cause annoyance to none, nay, which are truthful, agreeable and wholesome, and at other times to read good books and to sing, repeat loudly and mutter the Lord's blessed names, stories and praises is to make the best use of one's speech.

Remember : The best use of one's speech consists in speaking words which bring joy and delight to the mind of the hearer as soon as they reach his or her ears, and which people may long to hear with love and eagerness, which are imbued with respect, honour, humility and politeness, which are sweet and salutary, which inspire and stimulate wholesome courage and intrepidity, which promote reverence and respect for morality, righteousness, scriptures, saints and devotees, men of renunciation and a chaste woman and so on, which encourage worship and remembrance of God, which are calculated to propagate magnanimity, self-abnegation and love and which are uttered with a cheerful heart and a smiling face.

Remember : With proper use the purity and power of speech grows. Whatever escapes from the lips of a man who never tells a lie and always speaks the truth begins to come out true. Propagating love and joy among all living beings everywhere, suave and wholesome

speech evokes love and joy in an immense degree. Salutory speech which is imbued with humility, modesty, honour and respect draws forth respect, service, honour and blessedness in a very large measure in return; while speech engaged in loudly uttering or muttering the blessed names, stories and praises of the Lord helps men in ridding them of the threefold suffering by disseminating divinity, sanctity and spirituality in the world, and renders their life fruitful and blessed by easily bringing them face to face with Divine Grace.

Remember : To tell lies, to expose others' faults, to vilify others, to bear tales, to speak harsh words and words lacking in suavity, to pronounce a curse, to use abusive language, to make fun of others, to use sarcastic and taunting words, to call a maimed or deformed person as such, to use insulting, derogatory or harmful words, to give a false assurance, to revile God, the scriptures, saints, devotees and others, to utter words which dishearten a man, encourage pusillanimity and give rise to fear and dejection, to give false evidence, to utter words which turn one from the right path and lead him to the wrong one, to speak words expressive of pride, rigidity and self-esteem, to make false promises and utter words fomenting discord and hatred, to indulge in gossip and idle talk and to speak excessively—this is misuse, abuse of speech and is absolutely undesirable.

Remember : Those who utter with their tongue harsh and impolite words that pierce like a shaft, use sarcastic language with reference to others and ridicule can mock them pointing out their defects, speak insulting and harmful words, abuse or curse them and utter words that mar others' interests automatically engender hatred and animosity, affliction and discord, suffering and

agony, anger and violence and so on, invite disquiet, cheerlessness, fear and misgiving sorrow, misfortune, grief and dejection for themselves as well as for others and accordingly keep themselves burning day and night and cause others too to burn. Their judgment gets vitiated, inciting them to newer and newer sins resulting in their complete ruination. This is the result of misuse of speech.

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Remember : The man who speaks sweet, salutary, truthful, auspicious, extremely polite and needful words does good to himself as well as to all. Force, authority, effectiveness and the power of truth begin to grow in his speech and whatever is uttered by his tongue begins to turn out true. Therefore, instead of being unbridled in your speech, speak only as much as is essential for the occasion and make sure before you speak that whatever you speak is true and wholesome for the man whom you are speaking to.

Remember : Even truthful and salutary words should be propitious, sweet and extremely polite. Otherwise people will be nonchalant in receiving them; nay, in some cases your words will evoke a spirit of revolt and their effect will be as good as nullified.

Remember : If you utter words which are unpropitious, full of pride, indifference, self-praise, calumny of and insult to others and vain obstinacy, and which are of the nature of meaningless jargon, they will not only prove harmful to you but also have a baneful effect on those who hear them. Therefore, speak as little as possible only when necessary and guarding your speech against the aforesaid evils.

Remember : While suavity and politeness of speech

are essential, dissimulation, sycophancy and duplicity should be guarded against. Your words should be artless and not idle either. Speak only such words as are calculated to promote love, confidence, spirit of serving and gratifying one another, self denial and affinity. At the same time take care not to utter words which are likely to engender likes and dislikes by creating a feeling of unnecessary meum.

Take care never to interrupt two persons talking to each other. Even if it is necessary to do so in their interest, do so with modesty after taking their leave. Never controvert the statement of another. If the views of a man are erroneous, first try to win him over by applauding his virtues and then politely point out to him the error in his views for his consideration. Then he will be able even to rid himself of that error. Otherwise, taking you to be his opponent, he will clasp that error to his life all the more.

Remember : Humour which is innocent and enhances delight besides bringing out excellences is even essential in life; but never indulge in a jest, which pricks one's heart, which casts an aspersion on and is harmful to another and which betrays one's own folly.

Remember : Speech which is not only wholesome and sweet but also propitious and profound, is held in great esteem; even good thinkers give thought to it. On the other hand, speech which has a tinge of shallowness about it and which consists of unpropitious and useless words falls flat on the hearers and is dismissed as nonsense. Such speech goes in vain. Therefore, say that you have got to say seriously in a few pregnant and propitious words.

Remember : Speech can scatter poison and speech

alone can spread nectar everywhere. Scatter nectar all round by your speech. That speech alone will spread nectar which is truthful, heightens enthusiasm and joy, is guileless, sweet and wholesome, which releases a sacred stream of nectar in the shape of divine virtues and the holy names and praises of the Lord. Therefore, speak truthful, sweet, wholesome, extremely polite and auspicious words, be chary of speech and, restraining your speech from uttering harmful and useless words, constantly keep it engaged in muttering and chanting the divine Names and singing the Lord's praises. Here lies the utility of your tongue and such speech alone proves helpful in leading one's life on the road to true success.

Remember : There lies a great strength in silence; therefore observe silence regularly for some time every day. Observe silence for a day every week or every month and devote the period of silence to noble thoughts, contemplation on the Self or contemplation on God.



24. To think of harming anyone is to harm ourselves

Remember : No evil can come to another as a result of our contemplating or doing harm to him or her. An evil consequence is reaped as a result of our past actions. Under such circumstances if we contemplate or do harm to anyone we harm ourselves. When our mind harbours ill-will towards another, such ill-will reacts on our own life. We continue to mould ourselves according to the Pattern of our thought.

Remember : There are numerous blessings in the kingdom of God and the Lord has also endowed us with a wonderful faculty of entertaining blessed thoughts. If we turn this faculty to account, not only will our joy and happiness be enhanced but we shall also prove instrumental in enhancing the joy and happiness of others.

Remember : When we contemplate or do good to others we do good to our own self. The continued practice of contemplating good promotes our tendency to do good. Then it becomes our nature to do good, and our doing good to others reacts most favourably on others; they too begin to contemplate and do good to us in return. In this way all are benefited as a matter of course by contemplating and doing good to one another. We earn the good fortune of performing the meritorious act of propagating and extending good.

Remember : The capacity of those who make unstinted and timely use of the God-given faculty of doing good develops further; while those who do not make the most of their capacity in time have to repent. Growing feebler and feebler the capacity disappears. Therefore, do not lose an opportunity in hand, do not put off a benevolent act for the morrow. Do it immediately and whole-heartedly as far as

possible and expending your full energy in the proper channel. The Lord's grace will descend on you. Your capacity will grow and you will be able to make yourself blessed by serving as a mighty instrument in the hands of the Lord, the benefactor of the world.

Remember : We ever seek and expect from others that all may do a good turn to us, gratify us and do a friendly act to us, that none may do an ill turn to us, that none may persecute us, that none may do us harm. Start doing unto others what you would have them do unto you. The good turn done by you will revert to you in an infinite measure in the same way as a few handfuls of grain sown in a field by a cultivator return to him in an infinite degree.

Remember : He who seeks his own gratification, welfare and good but does not wish well of others, nay, who persecutes others, wishes ill of them and wishes harm to them cannot attain happiness, blessedness and good luck. He may at one time deludedly account himself happy, but he can never be happy. To wish harm to others is to harm one's own self. This is an established conclusion, a really unailing proposition.

Remember : You have not at all come to this earth for contemplating harm to anyone. The Lord has vouchsafed to you a human body in order that you may achieve your salvation even while contemplating and doing good to all, all the time, and in the end attain the blessed goal of realizing the supremely blessed Divinity. This is the object of your life as a human being and to move carefully towards this great objective and to continue to make headway towards it is your only paramount duty. Keep this great objective in mind and continue to discharge your duty.



25. Convert a foe into a friend by your goodwill

Remember : When you presume about someone that he is your adversary, your prejudice against him, even if his heart is free from the least tinge of antagonism to you, will lead him to sense in your behaviour antagonism and ill-will towards him, which will be clearly perceived by him. Discerning animosity and antagonism towards himself in your behaviour his mind too will automatically conceive animosity and antagonism towards you. This will in its turn lead you to discern animosity and antagonism in his behaviour towards you.

Remember : Once you begin to perceive animosity and antagonism in his behaviour your bias against him will get rooted and you will positively come to regard him as your real enemy and the evil treatment you accorded to him as quite justified. Coming to recognize him as your enemy in this way, you will naturally begin to harm him and he too will start paying you in your own coin. Your enmity with him will get deep-rooted and in due course develop into a full-grown venomous tree.

Remember : Previously neither he was your enemy nor there existed in his behaviour any animosity or antagonism towards you. It was you who converted him into your enemy through your wrong notion, and in this way you alone proved to be instrumental in doing an ill turn to him as well as to your own self.

Remember : Even if you really have an enemy, he is incapable of inflicting any injury upon you unless you are destined to suffer. On the other hand, by nursing

ill-will towards you he is simply harming himself. Therefore, what you should do is to wish well of him rather than harbour antagonistic feeling towards him. If you do so, your behaviour will naturally bear the stamp of good will towards him and will be marked with an endeavour to do good to him. As a result of this he will be able to perceive his error and, giving up his antagonism, will turn into your friend and thus be able to save himself from a grave injury. You will surely be a gainer yourself.

Remember : By your mistaken notion and ill-will you turn others into your enemies and by your goodwill you convert even an enemy into a friend. He who bears a friendly attitude towards all is not only a friend of all, but continues to get comfort and amenities as well as help and co-operation from all by making them his friends without much effort. On the other hand, he who incessantly harbours suspicion or antagonistic feelings towards others renders their life as well as his own an abode of fear, misgiving, apprehension and unhappiness by easily turning even friends into foes.

Remember : No one is your enemy. Your wanton senses, your unsubdued mind and your perverted reason alone are your enemies.



26. Eschew pride: Cherish humility

Remember : Not only does he who does not wish to become good but is keen to be called good practise self-deception, but even he who having become good to some extent prides himself on it undoubtedly suffers thereby.

Remember : A man should incessantly strive to become good in every sphere, but he should never pride himself on his goodness. Many an evil crops up as soon as pride makes its appearance. Pride offers indignity and insult to others. Looking for his weak points people seek to cure the pride of a haughty man; this gives rise to bickering and hatred and the endeavour of a man to become good turns into a bid for hating one another.

Remember : Constant pursuit of truth is highly commendable and must be undertaken. But one should not boast that one never tells a lie, that one has never told a lie. Introspection would reveal that even the statement that one has never told a lie is untrue. Despite all vigilance a lie escapes one's lips at times through error. Observing truthfulness by grace of God one should give credit to Divine Grace alone.

Remember : A man who boasts that he never errs commits egregious blunders. He who brags that he is never agitated gets agitated very soon. Praying for strength from God to cure one's weaknesses one should remain on one's guard to see that one's mind does not get agitated.

Remember : Those who have few critics and more admirers get agitated very soon; for they are not at all used to hearing their criticism. Under such circumstances,

in the heat of agitation they utter words which they do not approve when they turn their thought to them and then, in order to hide their weakness, they have to fall back upon lying by inventing new excuses.

Remember : The senses of a man have an outgoing tendency, his mind is seized with infatuation for the world of matter; even those who are constantly vigilant lapse into error. A man should not therefore complacently believe that all weaknesses and evil thoughts have altogether disappeared from his life nor should he ever give way to pride. Ever remaining meek in the presence of the Lord he should repent for the least fault of his and hold himself guilty. The more does a believer in God recognize himself to be imbecile through weaknesses and lacking in resources the more he gets the shelter of the Lord and in the same measure do his weaknesses come to an end.

Remember : The Lord Himself deals with the proud man as though He hates him and seeks to render his life pure by curbing his pride. It is for this reason that meekness is dear to the Lord.

Remember : A follower of the Lord, His lover and the believer in Him are always humble and free from pride. They find themselves entirely weak and, falling back on His limitless and boundless strength, succeed in eradicating all their weaknesses by recourse to that strength.

Remember : Pride removes one to a distance from the Lord, while meekness takes one to the feet of the Lord.



27. Success woos him alone who depends on Divine grace

Remember : So long as a man depends on his petty ego-sense, rather than on God, His unaccountable grace, and seeks to achieve success by dint of his personal effort, he has to meet with failure at every step through his egotism to suffer despondency, dejection and grief. Success woos him alone who depends on God, on His grace. Divine grace steers him clear of all major obstacles; Divine grace enables him to achieve supreme success.

Remember : Dependence on God does not mean sitting idle, falling a prey to sloth and laches—lying indolent under the fond belief that God will do every thing for him, that he has to do nothing.

Remember : He who depends on God is free from egotism; he does not worry about success and failure, does not seek the reward of his actions. Remaining unswayed by success or failure, he continues to perform uninterruptedly with firmness and vigour in a spirit of service to God actions conformable to the will of God. He does not commit the least blunder in the discharge of his duty, remains devoted to good actions with his entire body and mind for the pleasure of God. He recognizes himself to be an instrument of God; and, since this feeling enhances the element of sattva in him, his capacity for work also grows; for he remains altogether unconcerned about the agreeability or otherwise of the fruit, so that he neither gives way to despair nor experiences a false excitement of joy caused by the attainment of enjoyments.

Remember : A striver depending on God is never swayed by the element of Tamas; hence he is never actionless. He seeks nothing from his beloved Lord beyond the consummation that his trustful resignation may never suffer the least diminution, that his devotion full of resignation may grow from more to more, that the Lord may not have to feel the least worried on his account at any time, that he may ever constantly behave like an instrument conformably to the will of the operator with a heart full of spontaneous vigour and joy, that he may never conceive even the egotistic feeling that his actions are intended for the pleasure of the Lord and that he has resigned himself to the will of the Lord. Really speaking no ego-inspired action is possible on the part of a man who has resigned himself to the will of the Lord. His resignation is spontaneous and each and every action of his spontaneous like that of a puppet.

Remember : He who is resigned to the will of God is never discontented. Discontent is rooted in the feeling of want and in the desire to supply a want. He who is resigned to the will of God experiences no want at all; hence he never seeks to have his want supplied either. He remains conscious of the Lord, who is an eternal Reality; and acts of the nature of service to the Lord continue to be performed by him.

Remember : When a man becomes a property of the Lord, trustfully delivers himself unconditionally into His hands, the spirit of resignation automatically appears in him. He is neither conscious of his effort nor of the relaxation of his body and mind; His resignation is unconditional. He takes to the service of the Lord, giving up all cares and anxieties. Every action of his directed towards the Lord, is of the nature of service to the Lord;

He never feels the necessity of acquiring anything for himself, much less does he seek to acquire anything.

Remember : Truly speaking, all the activities of the infinite universe are carried on by the Divine Energy. In the case of a devotee who is resigned to the Lord, however, the responsibility of all his concerns from the smallest to the biggest is shouldered by the Lord Himself. The Lord keeps Himself posted up with what he needs when, and He alone supplies that need too. He takes the entire responsibility for supplying his wants and for the security of what is vouchsafed to him. And truly speaking the Lord Himself knows what is truly needed by him and wherein lies his true safety. He alone determines the nature of his needs and safety and He alone attends to them. How fortunate is that individual, who has resigned himself to the will of the Lord.



28. Expectation : The cause of distress

Remember : You are not the mutable and perishable frail material inert body. You are the eternal pure enlightened Spirit, which is Truth, Consciousness and Bliss combined. Changes like birth and death inhere in the body—not in you, the Spirit. The objective existence in the form of the phenomenal world is unreal and, even though it appears as real due to Māyā (illusion), its transitoriness—perishability is patent. You are real and ever immortal. Realize your true nature and ever continue to be blissful and beyond the pairs of opposites of the world such as joy and sorrow, gain and loss.

Remember : Even as the living beings and inanimate objects seen, and the joys and sorrows experienced, in a dream are truly speaking unreal, so all these living beings and inanimate objects as well as the joys and sorrows of our waking life too are unreal. All these are the unreal products of our ignorance. You, who are the Spirit, have nothing to do with them nor do you gain or lose anything through their coming and going—appearance and disappearance.

Remember : In the experience of a devotee all these are the diverse—gentle and riotous—waves of the ocean of pastimes of the playful Lord. The Lord Himself stands manifested in the form of His pastimes. Therefore always enjoy the blissful sight of the Lord through them and, perceiving the All-sportful Lord incessantly manifest in them in the form of pastimes, continue to enjoy the bliss of His supremely blissful pastimes.

Remember : All pairs of contraries such as birth

and death, friend and foe, day and night, cold and heat, are an illusion or the diverse phases of the Lord's pastimes only. Therefore, either overlook them or, looking on them, continue to dive into the ocean of Supreme Bliss by enjoying the sight of the ever-blooming lotus-like countenance of the supremely beloved and All-sportful Lord, lit up with an eternally sweet and gentle smile hidden behind them.

Remember : When you realize in this way the presence of the most beloved Lord in all living beings and inanimate objects, natural phenomena, ideas and thoughts, the very form of the world will be changed for you. While at present you rejoice and feel unhappy due to the feeling of mineness and attachment at the sight of transient and perishable living beings and inanimate objects possessing contradictory traits, you will then behold the one eternal real imperishable God manifest in the form of the diverse plays and players, the Self of your self, who is all Truth, all Consciousness and all Bliss. Your personality will no longer remain perishable, full of fears and despondency and tormented with grief and infatuation. It will be wholly transformed into a blissful actor in the sportful drama enacted by the imperishable, fearless, all-blissful, eternally real, eternally agreeable Lord, ever endowed with a fresh charm.

Remember : Even if one does not recognize this world to be unreal, at least nothing in this transitory and changeable world is eternal and abiding. Under such circumstances if anyone here aspires for an eternal and abiding object or situation he will ever meet with frustration. Expectancy in this world is most distressing. No expectation of anyone here has ever been fully realized nor can it ever be realized. If you entertain one

hope, thousands of hopes will sprout from that one hope and you will yourself be bound by those hopes so tightly that you will find it most difficult to get unloosed. This is what is happening even today. Bound by the cords of thousands of hopes and aspirations a man gives himself over to lust and anger, losing the balance of his judgment, and, falling back upon unfair—unrighteous means for attaining the aspired situation, is adding more and more to the load of his miseries. Therefore, altogether give up the hope for fictitious transitory delights. Realize the unsubstantial and woeful nature, transitoriness and unreality of the world. Be established in your real, blissful and conscious being or, becoming an actor in the sportful drama enacted by the Lord, attain the bliss of divinity.



29. Glorifying in your opulence before the destitute is a crime

Remember : Your body and riches, learning and intellect, power and strength, position and authority and everything else belongs to God, you owe them to Him and all exist for His service alone. The usefulness of all lies in their being utilized in His service, and the fulfilment of your life too lies in this.

Remember : Wherever a thing possessed by you is needed by another, know that the real owner of the thing, viz., God Himself seeks it from you. Therefore respectfully surrender to Him with great humility the object belonging to Him and deem it your good fortune to have done so.

Remember : Never regard anything as belonging to you nor pride yourself on it. Take to yourself that much which is barely necessary for you as a boon from God and continue to devote all the rest to His service alone.

Remember : The Lord resides in all at all times and every moment, rather the Lord Himself stands manifested in the endless heterogeneous forms of all. Realizing this honour all, love all, respectfully do good to all. Do not seek the destitute with an air of kind-heartedness, but as a destitute only and, experiencing their misery as your own, try to rid them of it.

Remember : Compassion is only another name for the mellowness of heart occasioned by a feeling of inborn sympathy at the sight of another's suffering and a selfless inclination to relieve it. Compassion makes no distinction between one's own and another. Compassion precludes pride. Compassion makes one rejoice in service

and self-abnegation, brings humility in its train and does not allow a feeling of inferiority to appear in the heart of the individual to whom service has been rendered by you, rather it makes him or her realize the mercy of God. Such compassion—the softest propensity of the heart to treat the suffering of another as one's own, accompanied by a natural endeavour with one's body, mind and money to relieve it—is a most welcome trait. Cherish it by all means; but never glory in your kind-heartedness, never consider yourself superior.

Remember : To assume an air of opulence before the destitute is a crime. Live in the midst of the destitute as a destitute only. Lifting them up as much as you can, raise your standard of living too to their level. All the same never advertise your opulence nor insult another while glorying in your possessions. Exalt yourself only through humility— through meekness—by serving all to the best of your ability.

Remember : To deal roughly and harshly with a destitute by using haughty words in his presence is an offence against God; for it is the Lord Himself who stands manifested in the form of that destitute. Therefore behaving meekly speak sweet words to all, release a stream of cool and sweet nectar everywhere by your polite and mellifluous speech; pouring nectar in hearts burning with the venom of suffering make them venomless, cool, tranquil and sweet. And do all this for the sake of service to the Lord and recognizing everything as being done through His energy and inspiration and every material as His possession. The Lord will feel highly pleased by your unassuming and selfless service and His pleasure will crown your life with the greatest success.



30. Craving for sense-enjoyment engenders hapless life

Remember : The life that has been vouchsafed to you, the body and mind which you have been blessed with in life as also the materials that have been supplied to you have been given to you for being utilized in the service of the Lord. The utility of all these lies in devoting them exclusively to the service of the Lord and he alone who devotes them to His service is a truly wise man.

Remember : On your devoting them to the service of the Lord you will be rewarded with uninterrupted, endless, imperishable, transcendent and spiritual divine joy; whereas on devoting them to luxuries you will derive transient joy and will eventually meet with a fall and undergo suffering, meet with ruination and suffer tortures in hell without end or limit. Knowing this to be inevitable and certain, a man should devote every moment of his life and every possession of his exclusively to the service of the Lord.

Remember : Comfort of body and publicity of name—all these are comprised in luxuries alone, although neither the body nor the name constitutes the self, your own being. The body is brought into being in the mother's womb through fertilization of her ovum by the father's generative fluid, and a name of one's fancy is given to the foetus after it is born. The body continues even after death and the name of the body too persists; but you, the spirit, depart from the body. Consciousness enters the body with you and the moment you leave it the body becomes unconscious and dead. But through

infatuation you come to look upon the body and the name given to it as the self—your own being. Hence you remain ever worried, struggling and active for ensuring comfort to the body and perpetuating its name. It is to this end that you make new scientific discoveries, expand your activities, popularize various arts and crafts, extend factories for manufacturing ever new luxuries and put forth endeavours of various kinds and grow happy and unhappy day and night on meeting with successes and reverses—can never be rid of dualities and suffering.

Remember : Obsessed as you are with a craving for sense-enjoyment, you remain restless, worried and confused in mind all your life—in the midst of success as well as of failure.

Remember : The craving for sense-gratification is an inexhaustible mine of evil. It is for the satisfaction of this craving that you pursue the objects of the five senses, *viz.*, sound, touch, colour, taste and smell, make a scramble for office or power and continue to put forth unremitting efforts, both justifiable and unjustifiable, for money, and resort to bickering, friction and destruction in launching schemes of individual and collective development, putting forth efforts for the construction of railways and roadways, installation of telegraphs, erection of buildings and manufacturing conveyances. The craving for sense-gratification leads to numberless sins. That is why for the satisfaction of your craving for sensuous enjoyment you perpetrate with your body evil deeds resulting in sin, harbour egotism, self-conceit, the sense of possession, likes and dislikes, concupiscence, anger, greed, animosity, violence etc, in the mind, utter with your tongue untruthful, unpalatable, unkind, indecent, arrogant and useless words and words which are harmful

to yourself as well as to others and indulge in violence, adultery and immoral practices, partake of prohibited foods and drinks, behave arrogantly, practise inequity and perpetrate impious acts with your body. The root of all these evil practices lies in your false identification with the body and its name and your ever-growing desire to ensure comfort of body and publicity of its name.

Remember : You breathe your last while engaged in thus making plans and rejecting them—in a woeful plight of mental unrest. Instead of getting an opportunity of being devoted to the service of the Lord, your life is frittered away in useless, nay, evil pursuits. Therefore, waking up this very day, this very instant, fulfil your life and make it fruitful by devoting every moment of it and every activity of your body, speech and mind to the service of the Lord alone.



31. Faith and reverence make a man's life ever hopeful and cheerful

Remember : God is eternally true, all-blissful, all-powerful, all-knowing, the Ruler and the disinterested Friend of all. All these adjuncts do not pertain to Him as so many attributes existing apart from Him. They constitute His very being, His essential character. Therefore, while bearing all these essential attributes, God is unaccountably benevolent to all living beings; for benevolence constitutes His very nature. Therefore His unaccountable Grace is eternally and uninterruptedly raining on you in an endless shower.

Remember : A course of destiny is ordained for every living being under the control of that Ruler of the universe and by His power. No dispensation of that disinterested Friend can be fraught with the least harm or evil to us. He is never liable to misconception or error nor does His power ever suffer any diminution; and this rules out the possibility of any error or flaw in His decision laying down a course of destiny for us or in its conducting to our welfare.

Remember : The fact that the benign dispensation of the Lord, who is your greatest friend and is unaccountably gracious by nature, appears unwelcome to you and makes you unhappy is mainly attributable to your ignorance, your misapprehension and the perversity of your intellect that determines what is conducive to your best interests and beatitude. His dispensation for you and every single experience that you have to undergo as a result of it is

really conducive to your supreme good; for it is ordained by Him alone who, besides being eternally true, all-blissful, all-powerful and all-knowing, is friendly to you by nature.

Remember : It is due to lack of faith alone that doubting the benignity of His dispensation you remain ever unhappy and not only feel worried but resolve and endeavour to replace it with a scheme of your own, which lands you in despair, disquietude and sorrow rather than give you peace of mind and happiness, which ever remain out of sight.

Remember : If you put faith in the natural goodwill of the omnipotent Lord, you will at once derive consolation and peace of mind, which will put an end to all your miseries once for all and make you naturally happy. Then in every dispensation of the most beloved Lord, nay, in every situation created by Him, you will continue to feel His most benignant, sweet and delightful touch. In every circumstance you will behold His most gracious, sweet and soul-ravishing smile with your unperplexed and joyful eyes. In every situation you will perceive His most benign, sweet, enchanting and transcendent mind, which naturally seeks your highest good; and you will be merged for ever in the ocean of divine joy.

As soon as faith appears the following will be the result. The entire gloom of disquietude and sorrow will begin to disappear in the same way as the darkness of night totally melts away even before sunrise. Therefore, the only thing you should constantly do is to cast your eyes towards His sweet and soul-captivating benevolent disposition, to focus your thought on it and incessantly persuade your mind that the all-benignant, omnipotent and omniscient Lord is unaccountably benevolent to you,

so that no sin or affliction, no misconception or fear, no disquietude or sorrow can ever cross your shadow, can ever approach you.

[2]

Remember : A work which is done with reverence is characterized by enthusiasm and vivacity and is attended with success. Faith springs up from reverence and engenders reverence in its turn. Both are interdependent. But where there are faith and reverence success stands in front of the striver.

Remember : Due to faith and reverence a man's life remains ever hopeful and cheerful. The store of energy is ever fresh in him and he continues to be inspired by a consciousness of facility in work and is conscious of success at every step.

Remember : Faith and reverence generate a unique energy in the atmosphere, which continues to give strength to the striver and by virtue of that strength he easily attains his goal. Through a clay image of Droṇācārya, a teacher of archery, and by dint of faith and reverence, Ekalavya, a Bhīl youth, acquired proficiency in archery which caused wonder to Arjuna, nay, to Droṇa himself.

Remember : He alone can attain God, who has faith in the existence and attainment of God. No true discipline can even commence without reverence. How can the mind of a sceptic apply to that pursuit? A man with a doubting mind is doomed only to fall or perish.

Remember : Without reverence earnestness with regard to Sādhanā does not come and without earnestness one's mind and senses continue to wander between diverse pursuits and sense-objects, control of one's senses is out of the question and without sense-control success cannot be achieved.

Remember : Where there is meagre strength the latter is converted into a major strength and where there is no energy at all energy crops forth. Reverence and faith lead one to put

forth unstinted effort and that brings even the impossible into the range of possibility.

Remember : There is no room for misgiving or reasoning in genuine faith and reverence. The preceptor said, “All is Brahma, there is nothing but Brahma.” The reverence and faith of the disciple accepted this as a gospel truth and engaging in the hearing of this truth, cogitation and contemplation as advised by the preceptor, the striving disciple succeeded in realizing Brahma (the Absolute). Had he been swayed by misgiving and guided by reasoning, he would not have accepted the foregoing conclusion, much less endeavoured to realize it.

Remember : Without reverence and faith a man labours under an inferiority complex and cannot avail himself of the grace of God. Therefore, develop self-confidence and repose faith in the unaccountable Grace of the omnipotent Lord, your natural and disinterested friend. As a sequel to self-confidence your faith in the grace of God as well will grow and your spiritual endeavour will be crowned with success as a matter of course through grace of God.

Remember : Faith and reverence constitute that immaculate and constant light and that great spiritual lustre kindling hope and fervour, which guide a striver through the most trying circumstances and, dispelling the gloom of all pessimistic thoughts and adverse circumstances, pushes him with a quick pace along the path of consummate success.

Remember : Faith and reverence constitute life, while irreverence and unbelief are death—a painful death which does not take its victim by surprise but gnaws his vitals slowly. Therefore always and at all times take recourse to faith and reverence.



32. Realize the indubitable fact which ends your miseries

Remember : Bondage consists in recognizing the living beings and possessions of the world as one's own, and complete absence of such a feeling of ownness is Liberation. Absence of ownness means non-recognition at any time of any object, circumstance or living being whatsoever of the world as one's own. He alone who has nothing to call his own, who is absolutely without any possession is free from the ties of ownness and is emancipated.

Remember : The Lord Himself regards as His own the individual rid of the sense of *meum* with regard to worldly objects and living beings. He is extremely dear to the Lord. That God-lover alone worships Him as a matter of course. Those who regard pedigree, power, learning, family ties, wealth, talent and creed etc., as their own only foster their identification with the body and name through their medium. They cannot take to worship of God exclusively.

Remember : Those destitute persons alone are able to worship God in that real sense of the word, who no longer retain the faintest trace of ownness with regard to any living being, object or circumstance; for God constitutes the exclusive possession of those alone who have nothing to call their own and is attained by them only. It is therefore that He has been spoken of as perceptible by the destitute (अकिंचनगोचर).

Remember : The sense of possession is the root of miseries. You do not feel the least sorry for the loss or death of an object or living being that you do not

consider as your own, however valuable or dear it may be in the eyes of another. In the case of an object or living being, on the other hand, that you regard as your own, the least injury to it, nay, the very possibility of its destruction makes you miserable. And it is an indubitable fact that no worldly object or living being belongs to you. You have falsely assumed things to be your own. When you die, no object or living being which you call your own will remain in your possession. The tie of ownness with all will be forcibly broken. But you will feel extremely miserable when these ties are broken.

Remember : If, however, you get rid of attachment by breaking the ties of affinity with all objects and living beings in advance, all possibility of unhappiness will be eradicated in your case. Then you will neither feel miserable while giving up the ghost nor after death.

Remember : He who no longer regards any object or living being in the world as his own and who owns nothing is accepted as His own by the Lord, who engenders affinity in his heart to His own self. Full of affinity for the Lord he begins to regard Him alone as his own. The Lord is ever existent and ageless; He is all truth, consciousness and bliss. He never ceases to be. On One's developing affinity to the Lord one attains unceasing proximity to Him. All the divine virtues of the Lord automatically appear in him and, becoming His own for all time to come, he attains the goal of his life.

Remember : You really belong to God. By His very nature He ever regards you as His own. You, however, do not consider yourself as His and keep yourself yoked to the slavery of sense-enjoyments, which are perishable

and a perennial source of misery. That is why you are kept away from God, who is always yours and the sole object of your affinity. Take it for certain that the Lord is yours. He is, truly speaking, the only object of your affinity. You have naturally a claim on Him and you always exclusively belong to Him and are the object of His affinity alone. No one else ever has any claim on you. You are His sole monopoly. The moment you realize this all your affinity will be centered in Him: and He for His part already regards you as His own. In this way you will have realized the object of your life.



33. Good company yields happy living

Remember : The real character of an individual cannot be judged by his external garb but by his thought-content and conduct. One's thought content and doings show what one is. Therefore constantly examine your thoughts and conduct.

Remember : You will be able to distinguish between your good and evil thoughts and conduct only so long as your critical faculty is awake. When a man's judgment is obscured his faculty of distinguishing good from evil gets lost. Nay, if through a vicious atmosphere and evil thought he begins to mistake evil for good, he falls an easy prey to degradation; for then on perpetrating a sinful deed he erroneously feels that he is doing a virtuous act and on succeeding in a sinful design he glories in his achievement and accounts himself successful in life. Therefore, to the best of your ability keep your critical faculty awake through the unimpeachable fellowship of saints and study of purely sacred literature.

Remember : Uplift is not so easy and quick as degradation. The world is full of many a slippery ground. Be vigilant, always guard against a fall and constantly go on striving vigorously to rise or advance on the right path.

Remember : Vicious company is mainly responsible for the fall of a man that follows in the wake of his loss of judgment. Vicious company does not consist in the fellowship of a depraved person alone. Every object of every sense-organ can serve as evil company. Every living being or object, contact with which through the visual, auditory, olfactory or tactile sense or the sense of taste leads one to

mistake sin for virtue and evil for good and arouses an undue banking for luxuries constitutes evil company. Literature, scenes, men, food and drink, wearing apparel and ornaments, locality and chit-chat—all these can serve as evil company. Therefore ever be on your guard against evil company. Always cultivate good company.

Remember : Satsaṅga (good company) is not the name of any particular living being, locality or object. ‘Sat’ denotes God, ‘Sat’ stands for right conduct and ‘Sat’ comprises noble thoughts. Satsaṅga is that company which intensifies love for God, helps good conduct and awakens noble thoughts as a matter of course. Reckon Satsaṅga as invaluable riches; no wealth, fortune or virtue can compare with Satsaṅga. Satsaṅga completely rid a man of all sin and suffering and turns him into an embodiment of transcendental virtues and bliss. Satsaṅga is an incomparable wealth.

Remember : The contact of the sensual world appears delightful at first sight and appears so due to the outgoing tendency—the pleasure-seeking nature of the senses. But the contact of the sensual world is akin to sweet poison. It is ignorance of its true nature and inwardness that lends it a blissful and delightful colour. Those whose eyes of wisdom are open are able to perceive directly its inner and true character, which is ghastly, as well as the terrible and disastrous consequences to which it leads. Therefore, as far as possible diligently turn your mind and senses inward, keep them devoted to ‘Sat’ try to keep them ever and constantly linked with God. Then alone will human life be fulfilled and the woeful stream of mundane existence get dried.



34. Adhere to noble pursuits for happy life

Remember : Human life is a state of existence meant for action. Action is the nature of man. Hence he cannot help indulging in actions. If he fails to do systematic good action he is bound to indulge in unsystematic evil deeds, in vain pursuits rooted in sloth and error, which will prove exceedingly harmful and distressing to him in consequence. Hence he should always and at every moment remain engaged in noble pursuits.

Remember : Man lapses into error only because he has no burden of any responsible work on his shoulders. Therefore, keep yourself engaged in some work entailing responsibility so that you may have no respite to think of or indulge in error. Error consists in failing to do that which ought to be done and in doing that which ought not to be done. Once a man gets addicted to error he is sure to sink into the lowest depths of sin in no time. Error is worse than death. Therefore ever be on your guard against error.

Remember : Until you keep your whole time engaged in noble pursuits worth undertaking you will continue to run the risk of falling into error. A noble pursuit is that which conduces to the purity of your heart, ennobles and sublimates your mental outlook, eventually does good to you as well as to others, promotes your mental peace and happiness and systematically maintains in you a zealous and spontaneous urge to noble pursuits.

Remember : Remaining engaged in noble pursuits

does not mean that a man should be forced to remain too much engrossed in outside activities to find no time to ponder, to decide what he should do and what he should not, to consult the Śāstras and rightminded persons about his duty, to maintain and develop his moral uprightness, to practise God-remembrance and his daily devotions and worship, to behave properly with his own people and do his duty by them. Such an overbusy life becomes rigid like a machine and one is bound eventually to get steeped in error and meet with a fall.

Remember : By 'actions' are meant all those righteous actions—virtuous actions which are accomplished through the instrumentality of your senses, mind and intellect, nay, which go to satisfy all your legitimate needs and preserve what has been achieved by you and contribute to the success of your human life. Hence one should attend to all one's obligatory duties in every sphere of life. It is never advisable to remain engrossed in a particular work and neglect all other duties disowning one's responsibility towards them. One-sided activity no longer remains righteous. Of course, every activity of a human being should aim at God-realization or the attainment of God-Love, the sole purpose of human life. And every action of his should be motivated by the noble desire to attain God-realization or God-Love.

Remember : The goal of human life is God, not sensuous enjoyment. Sensuous enjoyment is not lost sight of; but you have to accept it after making it helpful for God-realization, not as a counter-goal in place of God. If God is the goal of your life, your actions will automatically become righteous—the divine heritage (in the form of moral virtues) will become a habit of your life; and if your goal is sensuous enjoyment, your

righteous actions too will be converted into vices and the demoniac propensities will become a habit of your life. The reward of the divine propensities is a peaceful and happy life untainted by sin and freedom from all bondage; while the demoniac propensities make for a life of unrest, fear and dejection, and ultimately lead to bondage and the tortures of hell. Therefore, making God the sole objective of your life, remain ever engaged in noble pursuits.



35. Gratify all and be happy

Remember : God, who is absolutely free from faults, is equally present in all. All failings and foibles are extraneous, they do not form part of one's nature. If you are prone to perceive failings, failings will come to your view; and if you are inclined to see God, He will meet your eye. There is no objection to your dealing with others according to their external character; but do this for the sake of dealing alone. Bring home to your mind and intellect that God alone is manifest in those forms.

Remember : Even if any weaknesses appear to exist in any individual one cannot be sure that they really exist in him or her. May be they are conjured up by your censorious eye alone. And even if they do exist, never believe that they will endure for ever. That which is adventitious will as well depart.

Remember : If you perceive faults alone in any individual, and if you are convinced that they are going to abide in him or her for ever, you are doing a disservice to yourself as well as to that individual. By assuming weaknesses in that individual you help in substantializing those weaknesses by virtue of your strong assumption; you render help in perpetuating the weaknesses in him or her by your firm conviction and, bearing ill-will to him or her because of such weaknesses appearing in that individual you continue to burn and also make that individual burn. Your ill-will towards that individual arouses ill-will towards you in that individual also. In this way you weave a complicated web of malice about you and, getting involved in it, you remain

unhappy forever. Or planting a large tree of poison you continue to be worn out thereby.

Remember : If you love anyone because you do not discover any weakness in him or her or because you find any virtue in that individual, if you always extend your sweet nectarine good-will to him or her, you automatically do a good turn both to that individual and to yourself. Your loving eye for excellences gives birth to virtues in that individual, develops them and, perpetuating them, helps in rendering his or her life full of nectarine virtues. When you render good offices to that individual in this way, that individual too naturally wishes well of you and renders good offices to you. Know it for certain that whatever you give to others will return to you in an infinite measure. Sow ill-will and you will reap ill-will; sow suffering and you will reap suffering; sow love and you will reap love; sow gratification and you will reap gratification.

Remember : No one is your enemy in reality: the spirit of animosity that exists in your mind is your only enemy. Even if somebody really bears enmity to you—although in more cases than one when anyone appears to bear enmity to you, it is the spirit of animosity existing in your own mind that gives you that impression—there is no certainty that that individual really bears enmity to you. On the other hand, mistaking that individual for an enemy, you arouse animosity in him or her and make him or her your enemy. Contrary to this, bestowing love even on your enemy actively hostile to you, and gratifying him or her in the natural course and rendering good offices to that individual unegoistically and secretly you can turn him into a friend. If you seek your own welfare, if you seek happiness, if you wish

to secure nectar for yourself, go on rendering loving good offices to all, go on lovingly gratifying all, and ever go on showering nectar on all.

Remember : Your unwelcome opinion about anyone will have an evil effect on that individual and prove definitely harmful to you as well as to that individual and good opinion about him or her will prove conducive to the good of that individual. Therefore perceive the most benign and most blessed Lord in all, awaken and worship the Lord indwelling in all at all times and, manifesting and unfolding Him, bless all those who come into contact with you as well as yourself.



36. Make work worship

Remember : You cannot alter the benign dispensation of the Lord, the controller and disinterested friend of all, the paramount ruler of all the worlds. May be due to your short-sightedness the benign nature of that dispensation is not visible to you. Your duty lies only in exerting to the best of your ability and intelligence to execute the work which appears to you through God's grace as worth accomplishing at a particular juncture considering the consequences according to your angle of vision.

Remember : In discharging your duty you should depend on the grace of God and should be guided by an unsullied intellect free from likes and dislikes and wishing the ultimate good of all. If at any time partiality and prejudice enter your mind, if it ever harbours the thought of harming anyone, the aforesaid duty will not be discharged aright. A man's judgment gets lost the moment attraction and aversion and the thought of harming another enter his mind. Then he begins to entertain a good notion about every living being, object or situation which is liked by him, while his mind gets prejudiced against every living being, object or situation repugnant to him. Nay, his desire to harm another gets stimulated and diverts even his noble undertakings to nefarious ends. In this way even virtuous acts get converted into sins. Therefore remain on your guard.

Remember : Your duty should be to undertake only righteous acts intended to win the pleasure of the Lord—acts of worship to the Lord. You should have no attachment to the consummation of an act nor to the agreeable consequences following from it. Actions which

are marked by attachment to them or by attachment to their fruit get positively vitiated by attachment.

Remember : He alone who works with a view to pleasing the Lord can discharge his duties aright; his intellect is free from partiality and prejudice, unsullied, one-pointed— rather than diffused—and established in God. Whatever he contemplates or does he does for the pleasure of the Lord, as an act of worship to the Lord. Whether the work gets completed or not and whether its result is favourable or unfavourable are not his concern. What concerns him is his unalloyed devotion to duty. He is scrupulously alert to see that his mind does not fall a victim to partiality or prejudice, that it does not get swayed by narrow self-interest, that he has not become a votary of ‘I’ and ‘mine’ and that worship of God has not slipped out of his mind; for this alone constitutes his degradation.

Remember : Far from harming—doing an evil turn to anyone at any time, a man engaged in discharging his duties in the form of his sacred obligations for pleasing the Lord and as an act of worship to the Lord can never harbour even a thought of doing harm to anyone. This indeed is the test of an act of unalloyed service to the Lord.



37. Noble propensities entail blessed life

Remember : God-remembrance itself is an act of supreme merit, the highest blessing, unequalled wisdom, an ideal virtue, a divine endowment and the mother of all noble propensities; while forgetting God is a gross sin, a terrible misfortune, an egregious folly, an abominable vice, a dire calamity and the origin of all evil propensities.

Remember : It is forgetfulness about God that leads to the preponderance of Rajoguṇa and Tamoguṇa and swelling egotism, pride, hatred, anger, violence, hypocrisy etc., makes a man's life miserable both here and hereafter. If you are keen to guard against these vices, depravities and evil propensities take to constant remembrance of God. The moment you begin to discharge all your legitimate duties in a spirit of service to God, thinking of Him all the time, all your evil propensities will disappear; nay, you will constantly be able to perceive God in all created beings and every act of yours will turn into worship of God.

Remember : God indwells every living being; nay, every living being is an embodiment of God or in other words, it is God alone who is manifest in the form of every living being. Armed with this conviction treat every living being with respect, gratify everyone and do good to all. Do not look down upon anyone, do not entertain a low opinion about anyone. If you feel inclined to assign a low, humble and degraded position to anyone, you must attribute these to your ownself and the truth also lies that way.

Remember : Divine grace descends on him alone who ever remains bent low before God, entertaining a low and humble opinion about himself. God loves humility and

loathes pride. He curbs pride and hugs the humble. He alone is highly fortunate and a man of good moral character in reality, who is accepted by God as His own. He, however, who is a slave to enjoyment, who is under the sway of fleeting pleasures of sense, which are a source of affliction, is most unfortunate and lives in sin. He begets and undergoes suffering alone both here and hereafter.

Remember : He alone really serves all, perceiving God in all, who shows respect to others though free from pride himself, who meets to the best of his ability the wishes of others, though free from hankering himself, nay, who while ignoring his own sufferings, courts all sorts of sufferings in order to make others happy, and who protects the rights of others, waiving his own—not he who merely repeats the utterance ‘God exists in all’.

Remember : He alone actually turns out to be highly virtuous, supremely lucky, truly wise, rich in all good qualities, ever affluent and a storehouse of all noble propensities, who does everything for the sake of serving God, perceiving God in all and ceaselessly remembering Him at every time. Through every phase of his life and through every gesture of his he continues to propagate divine virtues, divine sentiments, nay, Divinity Itself throughout the world every moment. He alone has achieved the end of his life, his life alone is blessed.

Remember : Such an ideal person is not only blessed himself but exalts by his very birth and existence his country, faith, race and his parents too; and for aeons together he stands out as a beacon-light to the coming generations and makes for their moral and spiritual uplift.



38. Sorrow : A certitude of self-centredness

Remember : Ego-centredness is the root of all evils. Ego-sense alone gives rise to the sense of mineness as well as to attachment and aversion. When the feeling of 'I' is present, the sense of 'mine' is also there and when there is 'mine', it naturally follows that what is 'mine' should not only remain intact but should also flourish and grow. And a man naturally feels attracted towards that which is his and is repelled by that which does not belong to him. Nay, our likes and dislikes alone are the main factors giving rise to lust, anger, greed and infatuation.

Remember : If there is no sense of identification with the body and the name by which one is called, why should one feel happy or miserable over the survival or death of the body or over one's being extolled or maligned? It is the name alone which is extolled or maligned. When a man looks upon praise as his gain and censure as his loss and feels happy or miserable over them, it should be taken for granted that he is dominated by the ego-sense and is not in touch with his real self.

Remember : It is due to this ego-centredness that even the so-called wise—those who expound the true nature of the Self through their speech—lapse into ignorance and begin to wrangle with one another to exalt their own doctrine. It is through ignorance born of this ego-sense that they seek adoration for their physical body and the exaltation of their name. There can be no such hankering in the spirit that people should keep its photo

or statue and offer homage and worship to it or that its name should be immortalized in history. Such ignorance is brought into play only through the ego-sense. Even wise men feel inclined to write or make others write their biography in terms of praise. Even wise men receive addresses dwelling on their excellences and lavishing praise on them. Even wise men propagate their ideas in the name of public good and even wise men long to make money and earn reputation and bodily comfort through it under cover of beneficence. This is no index of real wisdom. This is only a picture of perverted intellect clouded with Tamas. He who is endowed with such an intellect is not wise in the real sense of the term. This is really ignorance pure and simple from the point of view of Self-realization. All this is an inevitable consequence of self-centredness.

Remember : Until this self-centredness is curbed there can be no renunciation nor will it be possible to attain peace or to root out ignorance. The following are the three principal ways of eradicating the ego-sense:—

(1) Pondering on the nature of the Self as well as of the world one should obtain insight into one's own wretched state, powerlessness and helplessness and acknowledge them and, taking refuge in the omnipotent, all-powerful, all-knowing and unaccountably kind-hearted Lord, get united with Him once for all. Genuine humility on one's part is the only remedy capable of eradicating the ego-sense, and it is through this humility that one is enabled to throw himself at the mercy of the Lord.

(2) Withdrawing one's identification with the body and the name by which it is called, one should fasten it upon the all-perceiving Self. A man should feel that he is neither the body nor the name by which he is

called, that he is the unconcerned Self that ever witnesses all the activities of the body and all other objective existences during the waking and dream states as well as in deep slumber, that the gains and losses of the body and its appellation are not his gains and losses; that the all-witnessing Self is a mere concept and that in reality there is nothing else than one divine entity.

(3) It is God Himself who stands manifested for the sake of His sport and by His own will in the form of the cosmos and all cosmic activities. He alone is eternally sporting by Himself and within Himself. Creation and Destruction, Genesis and Dissolution—all constitute the sport of that all-sportful Lord. There are only two entities here—the all-sportful Lord and His divine Sport. The two are one; for the all-sportful Lord Himself is manifest as the Divine Play. You are a plaything brought into existence by Him alone. In reality He alone exists.

Remember : Effort should be made to eradicate the ego-sense by adopting any one of these three methods. The ego-sense alone is bondage and Mukti consists in eradicating it.



39. Accept the inevitable and rid yourself of all worries

Remember : God is all-propitious and gratuitous is His love; His mercy is spontaneous and ubiquitous; He is all-powerful, all-knowing and eternally undeluded. Whatever is ordained for you is brought about by His all-benign disinterested will; hence His will alone is ever and eternally propitious for you.

Remember : You are neither omniscient nor far-sighted, nor do you know in reality and unmistakably where your good lies and how to achieve it. Therefore it is not certain that whatever you contemplate with regard to yourself, whatever you determine as conducive to your welfare is precisely such. You are liable to error. It is possible that, mistaking through your short-sighted vision vitiated by partiality and prejudice the evil for what is good, the unpropitious for the propitious, the unsalutary for the salutary and the false for what is true and seeking it, you harm yourself by yourself or start doing so.


Remember : You are liable to error but not so the Lord; you can erroneously contemplate or do harm to yourself; but God can never contemplate or do harm to you. Even if you regard something as conducive to your interests you may not be able to achieve it, your capacity being limited. The Lord, however, who is endowed with unlimited power, can easily accomplish anything and everything. Your will can change; the all-benign will of the Lord, however, is eternal. Therefore, the proper course for you is to throw yourself at the mercy of the Lord, who is your greatest well-wisher, entirely, in every way, in all affairs, and rid yourself of all worry.

Remember : If, instead of throwing yourself at the mercy of the Lord, you desire the Lord to work as a tool of your independent will, this proves that you have no faith in the omniscience, benevolence and benignity of the Lord; and by exercising your own independent will you tamper with the most benign result which awaited you under the all-propitious dispensation of the Lord, and harm yourself by yourself.

Remember : If, putting faith in the gratuitous grace, love, goodwill and omniscience of the Lord, you set aside your own independent will and throw yourself at the mercy of the Lord, you automatically work your own salvation. Therefore, always wish that the Lord's will be done. Remain armed with the belief that the result awaiting you under the dispensation of the Lord is bound to be supremely benign to you.

Remember : Whatever comes to you gratuitously or through the will of another comes to you under the benign dispensation of the Lord. Never wish otherwise, never feel dissatisfied with it. Rather welcome it as a gracious boon from the Lord. If ever you feel inclined to ask anything of the Lord, if it is necessary to seek anything from Him, you should only address the following prayer, express the following wish:—"My benign Lord, let Your will be done. Let my will never cross Your will; and if it ever crosses Your will, never accomplish it."

Remember : Act in a spirit of service to the Lord according to the best light received from Him at a particular moment and leave the result exclusively to His will. Thereby you will not only derive peace and joy but you will also be blessed with love for the Lord through His grace. Your life will be fulfilled.



40. Realize the true nature of sensuous enjoyment

Remember : Happiness does not inhere in the gratification of senses any more than ghee in water, oil in sands, water in a mirage and coolness in fire. Hence whosoever expects happiness from the gratification of senses is ever bound to meet with despair. Nevertheless, falling a prey to infatuation and expecting happiness to lie in the gratification of senses, man remains engaged in procuring and enjoying luxuries and in consequence continues to burn with sorrows—afflictions in ever new forms.

Remember : Craving for enjoyment robs a man of his judgment. Hence unmindful of his bright or gloomy future he tries by any means whatsoever—be it altogether forbidden and destructive of all good fortune—to secure his coveted enjoyments and in consequence gets embroiled afresh in newer troubles and in order to avoid them embarks on newer undertakings of an undesirable character. In this way the vicious circle of misfortunes, sinful deeds and suffering never comes to an end.

Remember : When a man with a craving for sensuous enjoyment secures some coveted enjoyment, it goes to enhance his avidity all the more. Nay, elated with his success, he begins to insult all. Avidity and pride both repeatedly drive him into vicious deeds and lead him to degradation.

Remember : A man with a craving for sensuous enjoyment ever remains worried. He feels troubled in mind not only when his coveted enjoyment is not secured by him but his worry is enhanced all the more

when he secures it; for, even as his craving for enjoyment gets satisfied the craving is further stimulated just as a fire blazes forth when oblations of ghee are poured into it. Along with this his worry too is increased with the result that his mental suffering gets intensified. Besides being consumed by that fire of agony himself, he burns even those around him through malice, ill-will, anger, animosity and violence, which grow and prosper side by side with desire.

Remember : The bigger a fire the farther does its heat reach. Even so, the bigger one's desire the more it burns the man who cherishes it and those who come into contact with him. Nay, even those who are in no way connected with it sometimes feel greatly tormented by it. This fire of desire does not get quenched through gratification of the senses. Sands in the shape of dispassion and an unbroken stream of the nectar-like love of God are the only means of quenching it. That dispassion will appear only when luxuries will come to be realized as fraught with suffering. Sensuous enjoyments are devoid of happiness, a store-house of suffering and a source of misery. But through delusion and error they are considered to be a seat of happiness. And even as a man hard drunk with wine professes himself happy even though fallen in a gutter, so does a man lolling in luxuries falsely experiences joy in luxuries. His professions are like the ravings of a sot. For ending this infatuation and intoxication it is essential to realize the true nature of sensuous enjoyments, which is possible only through the utterances of holy men by the grace of God. On realizing the true nature of sensuous enjoyments one cannot help developing aversion for them. Then alone will the mind feel drawn towards the

truly blissful God. Therefore try to secure the fellowship of holy men.

Remember : In the event of the fellowship of holy men not being available, another means of dispelling ignorance—which is had sooner or later in the natural course—is an attack of terrible calamities. According to the benign dispensation of God Nature itself accomplishes this. This serves an eye-opener to man, who then endeavours to take to God.



41. Be a true actor

Remember : Your relationship in this world with your body as well as with the living beings and objects connected with it is akin to that which an actor on the stage bears with his assumed role and name as well as with the other actors playing their respective parts on the same stage under varied names and costumes as also with the activities pertaining to the stage.

Remember : While on the stage the actor in question names himself according to the part that has been allotted to him. Nay, he calls someone his father, another his mother, a third his son, a fourth his friend, nay, someone his own and another as a rival and deals with them accordingly. In that capacity he may attain sovereignty on the one hand and lose a son on the other. Now he weeps and now he laughs. He gives expression to various sentiments according to the part he has to play. He, however, does not at any time recognize as really true anything pertaining to the stage, any living being or object figuring there, any action, nay, not even his own name and personality. He knows in his heart of hearts that, assuming a particular name and garb, he plays with other similar actors. You too are an actor of the same type. Your present name and personality have been given to you for the sake of play alone; they do not constitute your real self.

Remember : The joys and sorrows, gain and loss, honour and ignominy, acquisition and loss of fortune, the birth and death of a son, victory and defeat, agreeable and disagreeable experiences, success and failure, friend and foe and so on met with on the stage

are mere play. Recognizing himself as entirely beyond these pairs of opposites and these contrary experiences as mere play, the aforesaid actor remains inwardly untouched by them. He neither feels attached to them nor disgusted with them; he neither claims them as his own nor does his mind revolt against them; he neither craves for them nor does he feel inwardly attracted towards them. While duly playing his part in a most efficient manner according to the role allotted to him, he remains unconcerned. Similarly, recognizing everything in this world as connected with the body and name alone, remain free from desire, unattached-untainted, even while discharging all your duties efficiently like an actor.

Remember : If an actor actually seeks to appropriate or calls his own an article of wearing apparel, ornament etc., put on by him while on the stage, or those who play the part of a son, wife and so on to him, he is accounted a mad man or an offender and is duly admonished or brought to book. The object or the individual claimed by him as his own never turns out to be his; for it never belonged to him. It was placed at his disposal only for the sake of play. Similarly he who seeks to lord it over the living beings and objects of this world, treating them as his own, is not only not able to get them but is held punishable and undergoes suffering.

Remember : Just as the actor had existed in his own being till he appeared on the stage in a garb appropriate to his role, he exists in his own being even after he has made his appearance on the stage in his theatrical attire to play his allotted part. Assuming another name and exterior, he has appeared on the stage merely in order to play the part allotted to him by his master. Taking your present name and form, you too have

likewise made your appearance in this world in order to play your part for the pleasure of your Master. Bearing this in mind, go on playing your part in accordance with your allotted role for the pleasure of the Lord. Ever maintain the attitude of a servant carrying out the behest of his master. Continue to discharge your duties according to your role so long as He desires you to work in the world with a distinct name and form. But ever continue to realize firmly in your heart that you have really nothing to do with this work or with those with whom you have to deal so far as this work is concerned. Your concern is with the Lord alone. He is your extremely noble eternal Master and you are His eternal servant following His pleasure.

Remember : He alone is a servant of the Lord, who is mastered by none—no other living being, object or circumstance and who does not claim as his own any living being, object or circumstance other than the service of the Lord. Only such an exclusive servant of the Lord is His true servant and the Lord too is an exclusive master of such a servant alone.

[2]

Remember : He who sees God alone projected everywhere at all times and views every smallest and biggest event taking place in the world as a sportive gesture or manifestation of God is never swayed by the pairs of opposites in the world. The joys and sorrows, gains and losses, triumphs and discomfitures, honour and ignominy, the agreeable and the disagreeable, good and evil, praise and reproach etc., do not react favourably or unfavourably on him, nor does he feel attracted or repelled by them. He ever uniformly senses the presence of God alone everywhere at all times.

Remember : God is one, infinite, great. He is projected everywhere at all times. All these (appearances) are His manifestations alone; in fact He and He alone exists everywhere at all times. No entity other than Him has any existence. This knowledge alone is real knowledge and he who comes to know this is established firmly in this supreme truth; he ever remains free from delusion, fear and gloom.

Remember : God alone, who is ever tranquil, equable, everlasting and real, stands manifested in the form of this changeable, transient and unreal world of great turmoil. Even as the endless waves of an ocean are the same as the extremely quiet ocean, all this is identical with God. To rise and get dissolved is the very nature of the waves; this neither interferes with the calmness of the ocean nor does it affect its nature in any way. In the same way this changeable universe appearing in God does not affect in any way the existence, consciousness, blissful nature, equability and unity of God. Knowledge of the true nature of God consists in realizing this truth alone.

Remember : He who comes to know this nature of God himself becomes one with God; for in that state no entity other than God can even be conceived of.

Remember : Even though all sorts of actions appear to take place during the period of activity of a man who has thus come to know the truth about God and is established in God, the man remains ever free from joy and perturbation. All sorts of actions appear to take place through his agency in the practical world or the existence of passion and the sense of mine is also conceived in his dealings; but he is absolutely free from passion and the sense of mine. The actions that appear to take place

through his agency are also free from passion and the sense of mine. Like the performance of an actor in a drama all sorts of actions take place through his agency as they should. All sorts of sentiments find expression in him when the time for it comes; but all that is his pastime, a mere sport; and that pastime, the entire play is an expression of that player—that sporting actor. Really speaking, the player himself comes to be the play. The spectators get afraid, taken aback, delighted, agitated, quietened and disquietened to see his acting; but he remains ever established in his self, unaffected. Similarly that knower of the truth about God, who is established in God, also remains ever established in his self and tranquil.

Remember : If a knower of God moves in the practical world of activity, various activities are seen taking place through his agency. All those activities are, however, naturally conducive to universal good, the welfare of all. No harm ever comes to anyone through him any more than anyone dies through nectar.

Remember : The existence in the practical world of such an exalted soul is conducive to the supreme welfare of the world—of all living beings in the world; playing the role of a guide to all, he helps all in realizing the true nature of God. Being liberated himself, he becomes instrumental in liberating many others.



42. Turn towards God to become supremely happy

Remember : So long as your face is turned towards sense-enjoyments every forward stride you take takes you in the direction of enjoyment alone, and not in the direction of God. If a man intends to reach Badrīnātha in the northern part of India but has his face turned towards Madras in the South, he will continue to advance in the direction opposite to Badrīnātha, until he turns his face towards the North, and will recede farther and farther from Badrīnātha. Similarly the life of a man moving with his face turned towards sense-enjoyments recedes farther and farther still from God.

Remember : The mistaken notion that joy inheres in sense-enjoyments and the resulting attachment to sense-enjoyments does not allow you to turn Godward. You feel inclined to turn towards Him and even try to turn your face slightly towards Him; but the aforesaid attachment to sense-enjoyments catches hold of your turning face and forthwith turns it towards sense-enjoyments and your face is consequently unable to turn towards God.

Remember : Living in seclusion and residence in a sacred place and so on are no doubt helpful to your cause; but the main thing is absolute unattachment to sense-enjoyments, which is predominantly helpful in turning Godward. When your face turns completely towards God, every forward step that you take will lead you Godward and the more you advance towards God your zeal, your keenness and your capacity to advance will proportionately grow. Godliness, tranquillity, even-mindedness, dispassion, love and the welcome fellowship of saints, which naturally adorn the road leading to God, will continue to fall to your share. Wonderful progress will be made

by you on the Godward path. Relieved of sufferings caused by pairs of opposites and rid of despair, worry, fear, melancholy, desire, craving and so on, you will become supremely happy.

Remember : So long as you trudge along with your back turned on God and your face turned towards sense-enjoyments, joy and peace will never be attained by you. The more you advance on the path of sense-enjoyments the more you will naturally find yourself encompassed with despair, fear, melancholy, worry, attachment and aversion, animosity, disquietude, ill-will, hypocrisy, proneness to accumulate riches, violence, desire, craving, the possessive instinct and other evil propensities and evil thoughts, that infest the path of sense-enjoyments, spring from the soil of enjoyments and are the natural outcome of enjoyments, and will ever remain plunged in an ocean of misery. Whithersoever you turn in the hope of attaining joy you will find yourself faced with a terrible heap of sorrows; for it is these alone that figure in the realm of enjoyment. A man stuck in the realm of enjoyment can never enjoy peace or happiness, however glibly he may talk of peace, joy, dispassion and disinterestedness. Disquietude and sorrow will remain his constant companions. Hence make it a point to turn towards God, however it may be. Do it even forcibly.

Remember : Your face will be considered to have turned towards God completely and irretrievably only when your mind and reason get dedicated to God and remain constantly and exclusively devoted to Him. But so long as this does not happen, unremittingly continue to link your mind and reason with God. Go on contemplating and dwelling on the names, virtues and form of the Lord and investigating His truth. Abiding and real absence of attachment to sense-enjoyments and consummate and genuine attachment to the Lord constitute the main discipline.



43. All bestowing Lord stands by you

Remember : The Almighty Lord, the Ruler of all, is your greatest friend; He is always personally ready to be your succour everywhere. Whenever you feel despondent at heart, whenever you begin to feel that you are helpless, without support, ignored by all, and alone, invoke the aforesaid Lord of yours with faith. He will at once come and stand by your side for your succour.

Remember : Neither any living being nor any work is great or small in the eyes of the Lord. He is the nearest of kin to all. He feels no shame or demur in playing the humblest role and rendering any humble service nor is He incapable of accomplishing a task which is impossible for others, which is of greatest magnitude and most arduous. Throw yourself at His mercy and His mercy alone; He will supply all your wants or completely rid you of your feeling of want. You will become supremely happy.

Remember : Nothing is impossible for the Lord. He is capable of becoming whatever He likes and can do, undo and alter anything. Throw yourself at His mercy in every respect with unwavering and full faith. All the hurdles in your way will be cleared away, all obstacles of greatest magnitude will disappear, all the citadels of difficulties will be demolished without exertion. You will find an excellent road with provisions for the journey and a beloved companion and you will cheerfully reach your goal without exertion and with ease.

Remember : God is your natural helper in every circumstance and at the time of every real need of yours.

If you turn your eyes towards His benevolence, giving up all other supports, and come to regard Him as all your gain and security—if you can really do so, you will find that your heart has become animated and elevated all of a sudden, that your despondency has disappeared, that you have begun to derive perceptible help, that an unflinching and never-parting friend has come to stand by you, that you are not neglected, but are being looked after with great love and high regard and that a benedictory hand is ever granting protection to you.

Remember : You do not fully depend on God with faith, do not repose firm faith in His eternal affinity with you. You do not turn your eyes towards His spontaneous, nectarean and potent grace. That is why you find yourself helpless, without support and despondent; that is why you remain encompassed with clouds of fear, worry and dejection. Rid yourself of this doubting and wavering state of mind; then you will find that the all-bestowing Lord stands by you as your helper at the time of every genuine need of yours.

Remember : The Lord is yours and you are the Lord's. You are being lashed by the waves of newer and newer sufferings in the ocean of doubt. This is a perverted state of mind. Have faith, full faith in God. This sham ocean of doubt will dry at once and you will find yourself in the real and ever-cosy arms of God.



44. Always experience the grace of God

Remember : The Lord exists, the Lord exists everywhere at all times; the Lord belongs to all, He is as well yours—as much yours as of any of the most eminent saints or exalted souls. Ever repose firm and unwavering faith in the Lord; rest assured that His unmotivated grace is incessantly raining on you every moment.

Remember : The existence of God, His omnipotence, His omniscience, His natural affection for all created beings, His friendliness towards the poor and the afflicted are abiding, genuine, beginningless, unbroken and poundless. Never harbour the least doubt about it. On the other hand repose firm faith in it.

Remember : These virtues of the Lord, which constitute His very being, are ever operating for you: the more you believe it the more you will realize that, ever keeping by your side—remaining with you He is doing the highest good to you by His inconceivable, inexplicable, infinite power, omniscience, goodwill and friendliness towards the poor and the distressed.

Remember : When you come to have faith in Him and in His virtues, which constitute His very essence, you will experience the highest peace and supreme happiness even in the most distressing, painful and agonizing circumstances. You will ever find that, ridding you of your infatuation for your body and mind, which have been falsely assumed by you as your own, He is making the benign arrangements to keep you nearest to Himself in order to confer the highest blessing on you.

Remember : Every dispensation of the Lord is directed towards your decided good; therefore never give way to despair, never be afraid, never feel dejected. Repose faith in the abiding, motiveless grace of the Lord; expecting nothing from the living beings and inanimate objects of the world, repose full faith in the Lord for your real good and be definitely optimistic about it. Remain constantly hopeful and enjoy the highest bliss under all circumstances.

Remember : Really speaking, you have been sent to this world solely for the purpose of serving the Lord. Recognizing every possession, every thought, every power and potency, nay, every activity of yours to be the Lord's, you have to remain exclusively engaged in His service all the time without pause. If, instead of this, you deem yourself as having come to this world for any other purpose or if, claiming the living beings, inanimate objects and circumstances of this world as your own, you seek to use them for your own gratification, you are grievously mistaken; you are not only mistaken but you are committing a crime, accumulating sin, the consequences of which you will have bitterly to reap.

Remember : Whatever good thoughts you entertain or virtuous acts you perform, you do so under the prompting of the Lord and with the energy lent to you by the Lord. Never pride yourself in the least on any good thought or noble deed, claiming the thought or deed to be yours. On the other hand, feel grateful to the Lord on the ground that the Lord employed you as an instrument in accomplishing a noble deed, and remain engaged in His service with added zeal.

Remember : The benign and gracious dispensation of the Lord has been shaped according to His

all-comprehending vision. How that dispensation will operate and how and in what form it will bear fruit stands predetermined. Therefore never feel bored, never get nervous, never be impatient, never let your optimism receive any set-back and never harbour in any case the least doubt about its benign and divine nature. Promptitude and delay both are decidedly conducive to your highest good according to the benign dispensation of the Lord. What you have to do is that, constantly looking forward to His grace every day, and perceiving His grace everywhere under all circumstances, remain engaged in His worship—in His all-round service.



45. Identify with the omnipresent and bring happiness to all

Remember : Realizing that the Lord is fully present in all the animate and inanimate existences in the world, that all are manifestations of the self-same Lord or that all are one's own selves, you should offer worship to or gratify whatever living beings come into contact with you, by bestowing gifts on and treating them with respect with your mind, speech and body with due regard to their form and external character. While contemplating any action and performing it you should fully make sure that the action would not prove harmful to any living being in any way and should also consider whether or not it will do good not only to you but to others as well.

Remember : In proportion as your conception of 'self' is cabined and cramped, your self-interest too is harmful and impure, nay, conducive to disquietude and suffering in consequence. Your self-interest, on the other hand, is pure, nay, conducive to your welfare, peace and happiness in consequence in proportion as your conception of 'self' is broad-extensive. He who contemplates and pursues his own individual good only or at the most the good of his own family—considers his self-interest to lie in this alone, forgets even his own country, his eye being fixed on his individual gain, thought of the animate and inanimate creation and humanity at large being out of the question. Descending to the low level of narrow self-interest, his devotion to God, love for his country and service of mankind take the form even of hostility towards God, hostility towards his own country

and persecution of mankind. The so-called 'devotee of God', 'lover of his country' and 'servant of mankind' of the aforesaid type is really far more dangerous than an ordinary human being to the society, country and universe. For by his conduct imbued with abject self-interest he tarnishes the holy name of God, country and service, degrades them in the estimation of the people and undermines the ideal.

Remember : He alone deserves the rank of a servant of society, lover of his country and devotee of God, whose conception of 'self' emerges from narrow limits and, assuming a wider and wider limit, finally merges in the Infinite. He alone whose 'self' comprises the entire living creation can become a true servant; he alone whose 'self' gets merged in the identity of his country and awakens in him a feeling of oneness with his country, is a lover of his country; and he alone is a devotee of God, whose 'self' has got identified with the infinite and boundless Divinity, the Soul of all, and who has thus become one with all, nay, who ever sees the all-benign Lord in each and every animate and inanimate being. Growing from more to more in the life of such men, the spirit of self-abnegation ever continues to step up towards the Infinite. In proportion as the spirit of self-abnegation grows the conception of 'self' expands and 'self-interest' gets sublimated.

Remember : He who is given over to sensuous enjoyment, he who seeks the false gratification of name and form, he who seeks the reward of every action in terms of material enjoyment can never practise true self-abnegation. If the spirit of self-abnegation ever manifests itself in him it will really appear in the form of a means to enjoyment. Pure self-abnegation will never appear in

him and without self-abnegation there can be no true service, no devotion, no love.

Remember : Thoughts and actions which aim at one's own gratification in the form of sensuous enjoyment have not only no consideration for others' well-being or gratification, but one's judgment getting clouded with ignorance and perverted through disregard of others' interests and base selfishness, gestures and efforts even for inflicting pain on and harming others also begin to manifest themselves and it is certain that an act which eventually brings sorrow and harm to others can never ultimately do good to us. Hence it is incumbent upon a wise man seeking his own gratification and welfare to widen his connotation of 'self' rather than keep it cabined and to indulge in such thoughts and actions alone as may ultimately prove conducive to the happiness and welfare of all living beings in the world.



46. Play your role to please the Lord

Remember : You are neither a Brāhmaṇa nor a Kṣatriya nor a Vaiśya nor again a Śūdra: you are neither an Indian nor a European nor do you belong to any other part of the world; you are neither a Hindu nor one embracing any other religion or creed. You are an eternal fragment of God, you are identical with the Supreme Spirit. Like you, not only the human beings but all living beings of the whole universe are eternal fragments of God or one with the same Spirit. That you are manifest in the form of this body is a Māyā (enchantment) of the Lord or His Play. Recognizing this body as well as all its activities to be a pastime of the Lord, witnessing His play uniformly everywhere and playing the role of an actor in His Play according to His pleasure. Offer worship to the Lord by behaving according to the part assigned to you. Let the pleasure of the Lord be the sole motive of each dealing of yours everywhere in an equal degree. Let your behaviour vary but not your recognition of equality. This constitutes skill in action.

Remember : Never bring your likes and dislikes into play anywhere. Just as the notion of one's own and other than one's own for the sake of play as well as one's behaviour in accordance with this notion exist only at the time of play, till the play is over and by way of play alone, nay, they exist only for the successful conduct of the play, there is not the least notion of one's own and other than one's own in reality nor are there any likes and dislikes at play at any time anywhere, in

the same way worship the Lord by doing your duty in the proper way, unswayed by likes and dislikes.

Remember : If, taking a fancy for any living being, object or situation and recognizing anyone as your own at any place, you hate another, you will not only burn with hatred and perpetrate sin in the form of anger and violence; but, if at the moment of death the thought of any object of hatred is predominant in your mind, you will be reborn in that very country to which the object of your hatred belonged and will begin to hate that very individual for whom you conceived a liking and cherished a feeling of mine, hating another. For example, suppose you belong to a country named A and hate another country. Now, if you die with the thought of that other country foremost in your mind, you will be born in that very country and in the same way as you cherish a liking for this country and a dislike for the other land, you will then begin to cherish a liking for the other country and a dislike for this country. Therefore do not conceive a liking or dislike for anyone or anything anywhere. Maintaining an outlook of equality at all times in every respect, worship the Lord—serve Him through the performance of your duty.

Remember : Whatever exists in this world is meant for some use. This is a matter-of-fact world of usage. All these disparities belong to the matter-of-fact world and are essential. Really speaking, however, their nature is not what it appears to be. In reality—in essence of course God alone is sporting everywhere. Constantly go on perceiving His pastimes; through different sentiments continue to enjoy the one great sentiment that He is and go on propitiating the all-sportful Lord by turning every activity proceeding from you into a part of His Play.

Remember : The all-sportful Lord and His pastimes are essentially the same, though appearing different. Appearing in endless forms through sport while remaining one, He continues to enact an endless variety of plays.

Remember : So long as you are not able to perceive the all-sportful Lord and His Play your bondage will not come to an end nor will your impurity disappear nor will your fear and despondency cease nor will you find peace or happiness, Therefore perceive the Lord and His Play everywhere at all times in a uniform degree.



47. You are very dear to Him indeed

Just see, what your condition is—the body is afflicted with illness, the mind is fickle and impure, the intellect is fickle in its pursuits and as such, life has become the abode of miseries, and so weeping and wailing you are drifting all the time towards death.

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The dreadful waves of the worldly ocean are beating you, leaping again and again. You are not able to think out at all as to how you will get rid of them. If at any time you do try to steady some idea, just then, a new wave arises, gives you a violent jerk and carries your idea away, goodness knows where.

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In this way, nobody knows since what a long period you have been diving in this ocean of sorrow—you are neither able to see any means of escape anywhere nor able to see its beginning or end anywhere.

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Only one thing can end this misery of yours. That expedient is—“To take refuge in the Lord and call on Him”. The Lord has said, “Those who fix their mind on Me, I rescue them very speedily from the ocean of birth and death”. Call upon Him if you wish to escape the terrible waves of worldly existence. Tell Him, ‘O Lord, I fell wherever I went because so far I did not find any body who knows no fall. You are infallible. Feeling mean and miserable today, I have sought refuge in you. Pray, save me from this terrible fear!’

Take it for certain—If your call is sincere, He will

surely save you. He will not see—who you are, what kind of a man you are, how you act and think or whether you are virtuous or sinful. He will only see whether or not you have faith in Him or in His grace; and how sincere is your invocation.

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Remember : The Lord is the refuge of the refugeless, friend of the destitute and redeemer of the fallen. If you will look towards Him considering yourself really refugeless, destitute and fallen and call on Him to make you His own, then making you His own and purifying you, He will surely take you in his lap just as an affectionate mother, lifting her dear son full of filth into her lap, embraces him after washing his filth away with her own hands.

Be sure:—No one is as dear to you as your very own, as the very breath of your being, as the life of your life and the soul of your soul as the Lord Himself you are very dear to Him indeed. Dear one! Just call on Him at least once with love! You will see, how soon and what an endearing love of His you get in return.



48. See God's hand in every action and be happy

Remember : The Lord is all Consciousness and all Bliss, He is supreme Joy personified and remains with you day and night—all the twenty-four hours—whether you are asleep or awake, eating or drinking, moving or seated—at all times and in all states. You are oblivious of Him; that is why you suffer. You do not feel His presence; that is why you remain full of apprehension and despondency. Feel that the Lord is with you every moment of your life, that the Lord is with you in every activity of your life.

Remember : Really speaking, the Lord alone is manifest in the form of the whole world. The Lord is the only reality. He is Bliss personified. Whatever is happening in this world—no matter if it is attractive to the sight or ghastly—is the all-blissful sport of that embodiment of Bliss. Realize this and become ever happy.

Remember : The world which is conceived as destitute of God is altogether unreal and where it has an assumed existence it is transitory, imperfect and ever full of extreme misery. Ever new flames of suffering alone appear and continue to blaze forth in it everywhere; if you seek shelter from it, ever perceive everywhere the same all-blissful and all-playful Lord on whom it stands superimposed as well as His all-blissful pastimes alone.

Remember : You too are flowing as a wave of that very ocean of sport in the nectarean current of the all-blissful sport of the all-blissful Lord. When you are a wave of that ocean of Bliss, you are nothing else than the ocean of Bliss yourself.

Remember : Whatever is taking place in the world is His all-blissful sport; and whatever exists is the all-blissful Lord Himself. Therefore perceive His play in all that is happening in the world and the all-blissful Lord Himself in every object of the world. It is the all-playful Lord Himself who makes His appearance in the form of every fruit—now as a malady, at other times as sound health, now as creation and again as dissolution, now as honour and at other times as ignominy, now as happiness and at other times as misery, now as a gain and at other times as a loss. Ever perceive Him in all these.

Remember : The aforesaid Lord alone comprises everything. Make Him your own, treating Him as your mother, father, teacher, husband, brother, friend or whatever you like, conceiving any relationship whatsoever with Him. He is prepared to become your own and make you His own in that very relationship.

Remember : He alone is reliable who is real, eternal; anyone relying on that which is unreal and transient meets with frustration, is only deceived. Whatever there is other than the Lord is all unreal, assumed and is visibly transient even to look at. That is why it will be foolish on your part if you rely and depend on anyone other than the Lord; for you will thereby be deceived.

Remember : If, relying on the Lord recognizing Him alone as your own, you seek to advance towards Him, that natural and motiveless friend of yours will easily draw you towards Himself. All obstacles and impediments in your way will automatically disappear. Your path will become easy, happy and smooth. Nay, when you begin to move towards Him, He will according to His vow

of reciprocity start moving towards you. His movement will be governed by His own speed. His speed is such as takes Him to His destination the moment He makes up His mind to undertake the journey. That is why the Lord will arrive in your presence immediately and you will have achieved your purpose on obtaining His gracious, holy and most rare sight and touch. After that you will continue incessantly to enjoy His sight in every atom every moment, and your life will become blessed.



49. Adversity: An indication of God's supreme benevolence

Remember : The Lord is one. The entire cosmos exists in Him alone. He is the disinterested friend of every living being. He desires that we should meet Him, that we should win His love; but we are so unfortunate that we are not keen to meet Him even though He would have us meet Him.

Remember : He is keen to meet us even though we are reluctant to meet Him, and He desires to meet us when we are all alone. Now He appears in the form of ignominy, with the result that the entire crowd of honour recedes. At other times He comes in the form of calumny with the result that the whole hubbub of applause dies away. Now He appears in the form of penury with the result that the multitudes of selfish men hovering about withdraw. At other times He comes in the form of failure with the result that the entire body of votaries of success disperses. Again He appears in the form of terrible pain with the result that no consciousness other than that of the pain remains. Coming thus in the shape of diverse repulsive forms He strips you of all other company and then meets you when you are all alone.

Remember : In whatever form the Lord comes to you, when He does not allow anyone else to stay by your side, naturally He meets you when you are all by yourself. If you happen to recognize Him in that solitary union of yours with Him you will have achieved the purpose of your life. You will have nothing more to do and nothing more to achieve. But so long as you

fail to recognize Him your wandering and burning will not cease.

Remember : It is very difficult to recognize Him in the crowd of congeniality. At that time there is such a hubbub all round you that you lose yourself in it. In order to disclose His identity to you after ridding you of this hubbub the supremely benevolent Lord appears in the form of diverse adverse circumstances. Crowd and hubbub disappear in adversity. Identification gets expedited. All these adverse circumstances are really an indication of His supreme benevolence.

Remember : When there is terrible headache or stomachache no consciousness other than that of the aforesaid pain persists, in the form of that pain the Lord alone remains and recognizing Him when you are left all alone you can meet Him in private. No disturbing element remains in that state. Recognizing Him in this way in every terrible adversity you can easily enjoy the bliss of solitary union. He alone comes in adversity and comes to give you the joy of solitary union.

Remember : The moment you recognize the most beloved Lord the whole sting of adversity will disappear and you will directly perceive that the Lord has by His infinite and unaccountable grace assumed the form of adversity and that He has come to bless you by allowing you to enjoy the transcendent experience of solitary union with Him. Recognize Him, hail Him and become blessed by getting united with Him.



50. Serve Him with whatever you have

Remember : What leads to bondage is the sense of mine and not love; the binding factor is enjoyment and not renunciation. Therefore, do not conceive the sense of mineness with respect to any living being, object or situation. Do not have any contact or forge any relationship with any living being, object or situation with a craving for enjoyment. Nevertheless extend your love to all, make sacrifices for the sake of all in their interest, with a view to gratifying them and in order to safeguard their rights. In fact love is rooted in self-denial alone and not in self-indulgence.

Remember : You complain that so and so does not love you, or in other words, that he does not make any sacrifice for your good or gratification. But look to yourself and see whether you love that man in the real sense of the word—whether you really make any sacrifice for his gratification or good. If you do not, how do you expect such behaviour from him and why do you blame him for not doing so. Take the initiative yourself, practise self-denial for his good and gratification. Then you will see to what extent he loves you.

Remember : God is fully present everywhere—everything is permeated by God. Hence all are worthy of adoration for you, all are worth revering, all are worth serving, nay, all are your own. If you are able to persuade yourself that God ever exists in the form of all and if your faith grows stronger, you will surely begin to perceive God in all. Just try this and see what happens. Until you reach this stage put faith in the words of those who are trustworthy in your eyes and, visualizing the presence of God in all, receive all with

modesty, humility and respect; cherish the desire and make an effort to gratify all. Scrupulously beware that not the least harm is deliberately wrought by you to anyone that not the least damage is done by you to the interest and legitimate rights of any individual whatsoever.

Remember : God exists in all, at all times and everywhere. But wherever there is poverty, misery, privation, anguish, disease, deflection from the path of virtue, fear, dejection and helplessness, it seems as if God expects you in those forms and under those circumstances to serve Him according to the merits of each case with His own materials handed over to you begs of you His own things for His own purpose, bestowing on you the proud position of a donor and a generous soul. Therefore under such circumstances serve Him unstintingly according to merit and earn the loving benediction of God.

Remember : Whatever exists in your possession belongs to God and that too exists for His service and adoration. You are entitled only to take that much of it which remains after devoting it to His service and in fact this alone constitutes your greatest fortune. Recognizing His things as ever belonging to Him, serve Him by means of those things and be sated by enjoying the holy and nectarean remnants of what is offered to Him. You have only two obligations towards those things— carefully to preserve and add to them and to derive supreme joy by ever devoting them with a cheerful heart to His service.

Remember : It is not necessary that service to Him can be rendered by means of a particular substance alone. Serve Him with whatever you have—your mind, body, intellect, wealth, learning, energy and so on. Serve Him with such materials alone in your possession as may be sought by Him in so many garbs. The real thing, however, is that you

should recognize those materials to be His and employ them to the best advantage in His service. This is what goes by the name of Love, that will immediately cut all your bonds asunder and will compel the Lord to remain bound with you for ever.

[2]

Remember : Your entire life is a pastime of the Lord, while your egotism and yourself are His playground. Your joys and sorrows, gain and loss, gaiety and depression, sound health and illness, honour and ignominy, praise and calumny, what is your own and what is alien to you, whatever is agreeable and disagreeable, good and evil to you, nay, your very life and death—all these constitute His recreation, His sport. Mistaking yourself to be the doer and enjoyer and ascribing to yourself in vain the pastimes of the Lord, nay, recognizing as your own the creatures of God and objects belonging to Him, conceiving attachment to them and craving for them, you, who are His sports ground, court disquietude, agitation, sorrow and sin etc., and fall a victim to them. Shaking off this infatuation-error, realize your true character and, snapping all these false ties forged by yourself, allow the Lord to sport at will independently and without any let or hindrance.

Remember : You are nothing but His playground. But if you are unable to visualize yourself as His sports ground, at least continue to play the role assigned to you for the pleasure of the Lord, your sole master, according to His rules and witness all His other games—His other pastimes—no matter whether they are amatory or excite terror, are full of pathos or provoke anger, excite laughter or disgust and remain ever enraptured by the deftness at play of that unique Player, the sportive Lord.

Remember : There are only two entities in the whole

of this infinite cosmos. All that exists is none other than the Lord and whatever is taking place is His Līlā or pastime. The Lord and His Play are not essentially distinct from each other. Really speaking, the Lord alone is the Play as well as the accessories of Play. The Lord is the independent and suzerian Lord of all the worlds and enacts ever new sports; yet all the pastime of that omniscient and omnipotent Lord are known beforehand, systematic, undeluded and supremely blissful. This Līlā of the Lord is marked by everlasting, uninterrupted and limitless joy and joy alone; for this Divine Play is a manifestation of the said Lord alone, who is infinite and supreme Bliss personified. The said sportive Lord alone is manifest in the form of His Play.

If in this Līlā of the Lord you perceive or fancy to perceive anywhere dark and dreadful shadows of sorrow, anguish, despair, melancholy, fear, grief etc., it means that you have not yet duly realized and perceived that the supremely blissful Lord alone pervades this endless universe and that His all-blissful Play alone is uninterruptedly going on in it. Creation and destruction represent two sides of that Play. Joy and joy alone is experienced everywhere at all times in every way on realizing and perceiving this secret.

Remember : The Lord alone is the material as well as the efficient cause of all these pastimes. He alone enacts these sports, He alone witnesses them and if at all there is any conception of enjoyment, He alone enjoys Himself in Himself in the form of diverse queer Playthings as well as in the form of the Play. You too are a plaything, a sports-ground or sport. Realize this and become all-blissful for ever.



51. Dedicate your all to God's service

Remember : Whatever you have in the shape of wealth and property, living beings and inanimate objects, body and health, energy and power, ability and utility, all belongs to God and is meant for His service alone. Their utility lies only in their being devoted to His service. Deeming you honest and devoted to your duty, all these have been entrusted to you for this very purpose. If, however, you fail to devote them to the service of the Lord even on getting an opportunity to do so, and, regarding them as your own, utilize them for your own enjoyment, or simply lay them by, you not only commit a blunder but also swerve from your duty and play the thief. As a consequence of this you will not only be deprived of these possessions, which are never yours, but you will also be held punishable for this offence.

Remember : If you recognize all these possessions of God as belonging to Him and devote them to His service at the proper time according to the worth of His manifestation, the Lord—who is naturally possessed of an ideal disposition and amiability—feels beholden to you, taking them as a gift from you, even though they are His own possessions, and in return bestows on you the boon of Love, which is most difficult to obtain, or even His own self.

Remember : While dedicating or after dedicating a possession of God to His service never believe that the thing belonged to you and that you have dedicated it to the service of God. It is, really speaking, your good

fortune that a possession of God has been employed in His service through you, that you have been blessed with an opportunity to devote the object to a purpose for which it was entrusted to you.

Remember : When you are offering to God only that which belongs to Him, where lies the occasion for you to pride on this offering? Therefore, having employed anything in the service of God, never take the least pride in this act, never seek any return or recompense for it nor treat the man on whom you have bestowed the thing as under any obligation to you. Whenever you offer anything as an act of service do it without feeling any pride with the utmost humility and reverence. On the other hand feel grateful to him inasmuch as in the form of that individual it is the Lord alone who has accepted your gift.

Remember : Dishonesty lies in the very act of owning any worldly possession—treating it as one's own; nay, it is the root of all evil, sin and bondage. The object which you call your own is not yours nor will it remain yours. It has, on the other hand, been granted to you by the Lord only to make you devoted to your duty, to make you devoted to service and as an easy means of securing the boon of His Love or oneness with Him by serving Him through its gift. If, however, you treat it as your own, you not only remain deprived of this supreme consummation of human existence but you also pave the way for your downfall and damnation by perpetrating sinful deeds as a sequel to your treating the worldly objects as your own.

Remember : If you possess a thing which is needed by another at a particular place or time, take it that in the form of that individual or situation the Lord is asking

of you that possession of His at the aforesaid place and time and seeks to bless you by accepting it. Therefore, deem yourself lucky by humbly bestowing His possession on Him with the utmost delight. Be an instrument only in dedicating a possession of the Lord to His service, and not the doer. If you can do so, it would be something most desirable.

Remember : What belongs to you, really speaking, is your own self or the Lord's holy lotus-feet, resorted to by gods and sages. Withdrawing all your sense of possession from all other things, fasten it solely on His feet. Regard Him alone as your own. He is yours, will ever remain yours and on realizing Him you will attain even-mindedness in the world for ever. Having got rid of all fetters and achieved your end you will become Supreme Bliss personified.

[2]

Remember : This human life of yours is certainly not for gathering a crop of sin, nay, not even for being frittered away in vain. Every single moment of it is a blessed opportunity for God-realization, and therefore invaluable and for this very reason every moment should be employed in an endeavour for God-realization. Worldly enjoyments of sense can be had in all states of existence, while endeavour for God-realization is possible only with the human body. Hence devote it to this work alone.

Remember : If you continue to fritter away your life in idle pursuits, predispositions of an akin nature will collect in your mind and in conformity with them you will be put in mind of vain pursuits alone. God-remembrance will cease and in case you breathe your last in a moment bereft of God-remembrance, this very

life of yours, which is a supreme means to God-realization, will be wasted. This will constitute a major loss which it will not be possible to retrieve. Therefore, remembering God, perform every small and big work of your life as an offering to God by way of service to Him for His pleasure. By this very means your mind will constantly remain absorbed in His thought. After that, whenever death comes to you, you will be found engaged in His remembrance and in consequence you will surely attain God-realization, which alone is the supreme and ultimate end of human existence.

Remember : A moment that has passed never returns. If, forgetting the pricelessness of human life, you keep it employed in vain and harmful pursuits, there will be no greater fool than you; for you are wasting the time of supreme gain vouchsafed to you and are indulging in pursuits which will result not only in the wastage of this precious time and the loss of a golden opportunity but also in your being hurled into demoniac wombs from birth to birth and in undergoing terrible tortures in hell. No amount of weeping and wailing will then avail. Therefore wake up this very moment and fulfil your life by spending every moment of it in an endeavour for God-realization.

Remember : You are in possession mainly of three instruments with which you operate—the body, mind and speech. With these three alone you are able to perform good and evil deeds. Therefore, withdrawing them from evil pursuits, you should keep them constantly engaged in noble deeds. The noblest and the only supremely holy pursuit is service to God. Therefore keep all these three engaged in the service of God. Feeling the touch of God in all that you do with your body, do everything in a

spirit of service to God. When actions begin to be performed with your body for the sake of service to God alone all evils will automatically disappear and your actions will turn out to be supremely holy acts. Completely eschewing Tāmasika thoughts, think of God. Contemplate and reflect on noble ideas in the form of virtues like veracity, non-violence, compassion, love, selflessness and service for the sake of service to God alone; nay, think of your pure spiritual nature or of the divine essence, the comeliness, sweetness and the ideal pastimes and excellences of the Lord, and with your tongue utter words comprising the names and praises of the Lord alone. Do not tell a lie nor speak impolite or pungent words; neither slander or backbite another nor indulge in self-praise; neither indulge in idle gossip nor utter anything harmful to another; ever speak the truth; speak words which are agreeable and wholesome and at the same time truthful and speak solely with a view to the gratification of the Lord. In this way when your body, mind and speech continue to render service to the Lord alone every moment, remaining ever united with Him, your life will be fulfilled and having attained your highest objective you will become sated.



52. Ethics of service and a true servant

Remember : All that you have belongs to God and is to be utilized in His service. To devote it to one's own enjoyment, regarding it as one's own, is dishonesty. Guard against this dishonesty and harness all your resources in the service of God.

Remember : God indwells all. He alone stands manifested in the form of every living being. Therefore, whenever any manifestation whatsoever of His falls in need of anything which you happen to possess, humbly offer it to that particular manifestation of God without any feeling of pride with the consciousness that you are offering to God that which belongs to Him.

Remember : A true servant sees God in all at every time everywhere. Service is ingrained in his very nature. He does not differentiate between the high and the low, his own and those alien to him, a friend and a foe. He deems it his fortune to get an opportunity to serve.

Remember : True service is neither advertised nor made a commodity of. Service constitutes the innate disposition of a servant. Service implies the consciousness that whatever resources in the shape of one's body and money, learning and intelligence and whatever capacity one has are all intended for service, as also the will to employ them humbly in service in a disinterested spirit.

Remember : A servant should have the following seven characteristics:— (1) faith in service, (2) purity of service, (3) esteem for service, (4) self-restraint in service, (5) zeal for service, (6) love for service and (7) modesty.

Remember : To lend assistance or co-operation in the perpetration of a sin is not service. Service does not consist in abetting those who oppress others, shed blood, commit robbery, indulge in adultery and usurp others' rights, in their evil deeds. Such deeds as a matter of fact bring great harm to the doer. And it is no service to assist one in harming oneself. It is abetting the perpetration of a sin.

Remember : Self-abnegation and modesty are imperative in a servant. Service is not possible without self-denial, and lack of modesty begets pride. A servant lacking in modesty begins to look down upon the person whom he serves and to regard himself as superior. In the absence of self-denial and freedom from pride evils like a hankering for return, expectation of gratitude, and in the event of the person served not feeling grateful or not being able to return his services, getting displeased with the latter and regarding him or her as ungrateful and bearing malice towards him appear in the servant and mar the very purity of his service.

Remember : A servant neither looks into the antecedents of the person whom he serves nor does he concern himself with the future behaviour of the person served. He directs his attention only towards the latter's present innocent need and serves him or her in a simple and unaffected manner according to his resources and capacity.

Remember : A true servant claims service as his only possession; his sole ambition is to see his capacity to serve increased, his egotism is transformed into humility and he looks upon his object of service as God Himself and considers his own self as His perpetual servant.

Remember : A servant neither seeks honour or applause, nor does he want to lord it over others, nor does he cherish love or hatred for people, considering them his own or otherwise, nor does he regard others as ignorant, foolish or inferior to himself, nor does he vilify or carry tales against others nor does he ever expect from anybody comfort, dainty dishes or service.

Remember : A real servant is naturally fired with the spirit of serving all living beings. He is kind, pure-hearted, firm, tactful, industrious, reverent, ever engaged in noble deeds, a man of character, self-controlled and most humble and sustains life only in the interest of others. As far as possible he wants to keep his service hidden from public view. Service is the very essence of his life.

Remember : Spirit of service is an exceedingly pure and sweet gift of God appearing in a desireless and humble mind. It is no barter nor is it a base attempt inspired by pride to humiliate others.

“And he alone, O Hanumān, is exclusively devoted to Me, who is steadfast in his conviction that he is the servant and that the Lord manifested in the form of the whole animate and inanimate creation is his master.”



53. Shun showiness and secure the pleasure of the Lord

Remember : Whatever gift you make, whatever help you give to another, whatever effort you make by way of God-remembrance and meditation on God will remain free from blemish only when you are no longer actuated in the least by the motive of displaying it or giving publicity to it.

Remember : A gift should be made for the benefit of the individual whom you seek to benefit and for your own satisfaction; help should be given to relieve the distress of the distressed as well as for your own satisfaction. Even so remembrance of and meditation on God too should be carried on for earning His pleasure as well as for securing your highest good. If, however, the idea of making a public show of these activities of yours ever crosses your mind, you deviate from your goal. Then you fail to achieve real success or see the real fruition of your efforts.

Remember : Display and publicity alone become the goal of an activity which is carried on with the object of showing or making it known to others. When others fail to see or know what you are doing, you relax those activities of yours and later on even give them up. Hence such activities of yours cease to be free from taint.

Remember : It is very essential to remain honest to one's own self. God can never be deceived. It is you who remain deprived of the true reward of your activity or spiritual endeavour by practising self-deception. Therefore what is desirable is that even the recipient of your gift is not allowed to know that the gift received

by him is from you; or at least no one else should come to know of it. Bear this in mind even while giving help to anyone; while the idea of showing or making known to others what you do by way of worship of and meditation on God should not be entertained on any account. These constitute your inner wealth and should be constantly earned and accumulated within your heart. They should be known to you and to your Deity alone; none else should have anything to do with them.

Remember : Even while contributing to some public relief fund, take care to refrain as far as possible from divulging your name. Even if you make your contribution through some institution let not your name be given publicity as far as possible. This will raise the value of your gift and render it extremely pure.

Remember : Whatever you give belongs to the Lord alone and the recipient of your gift too is none other than a manifestation of the Lord. Therefore deem it your good fortune to be able to offer unegoistically to the Lord what belongs to Him and make the gift only in a spirit of offering to the Lord.

Remember : Gifts and relief should be given and worship of God and meditation on Him practised only to secure the pleasure of the Lord. They are conducive to your good even if undertaken to attract others' notice or from any other good motive; but their real and faultless character is brought out and their true reward in the shape of God-realization ensured only when they are practised secret and only for earning the pleasure of the Lord.



54. Be a devotee, not a slave of worldly enjoyments

Remember : A devotee is he who has become a man of God, who has dedicated his all to God. Such a devotee alone is a truly emancipated soul. For, so long as ignorance persists a man, far from being a man of God, continues to be a man of the world, a slave of worldly enjoyments, and is certainly not liberated. And such a man can never dedicate his all to God and become a man of God. Hence he who is a devotee is rid of nescience—devoid of ignorance—and knows the reality about the greatness of God.

Remember : Devotion is necessary even for true knowledge of the reality about God's greatness; for, without very close intimacy nobody can know the real character, the intrinsic nature, of anyone. Hence he alone knows the true essence, the secret of God, who loves Him intimately. It is this intimate love which they call Parā Bhakti (Supreme Devotion) and it is in the context of this intimate love that true knowledge is attained. Hence it is this intimate love which has been referred to as the "Highest consummation of the Path of knowledge."

Remember : Even for intimate love or supreme devotion, Knowledge is prerequisite; how can one love anybody without knowing something about him or her? Therefore, knowledge or cognition leads to supreme devotion, and through supreme devotion knowledge of the real character or essence of God becomes possible and the moment this knowledge is attained one finds access to His Divine Pastimes.

Remember : Knowledge of God, therefore, aids Devotion and *vice versa*. In integral knowledge and consummate Devotion both, nescience is completely got rid of through real knowledge of God. And he alone is liberated whose nescience has been completely wiped out. Hence a devotee is an emancipated soul.

Remember : In spite of his being thus freed from nescience, a devotee is ever devoted to the service of God. He is rid of nescience of worldly bondage, but he is not relieved from the service of the beloved Lord; nor does he ever seek such Liberation as may wean him from that service to the Lord. On the other hand, he does not accept, even when offered to him, that emancipation which deprives him of service to his Lord.

Remember : When a devotee does not crave even for emancipation, much less will he hanker for enjoyments either of this world or of the other. He is neither perturbed by any sorrow nor does he hanker for any pleasure. The well-known four objects of human endeavour are of no value mere trash in his eyes. He does not care even to look at them. Of course, the fourfold object of human pursuit in its turn is eager to serve him.

Remember : A devotee shuns emancipation only because—(1) he has become God's, he has no longer any independent desire of his own; (2) also because emancipation deprives him of service to God and (3) further because selfishness is ingrained in the very idea of Mukti; it presupposes the desire to rid oneself of bondage of woes, and not the desire to serve God. And craving for one's own happiness is what constitutes Kāma (the desire for self-gratification)— selfishness.

Remember : Such Devotion itself is the supreme and ultimate object of human pursuit. Securing participation

in the Pastimes of God, such a devotee is ensouled by God's mind, inspired by His vitality and directed by His promptings. He becomes completely divinized. His desire is God's desire, His actions are God's actions and his speech is God's speech.

Remember : Doing everything in the world, he does nothing; living in the midst of all, he remains aloof from all; conversing with all, he talks with none. For, it is God who does His work through him; he ever lives and moves in God and is always and constantly communing with Him.



55. Who is a real saint?

Remember : It is not necessary that a saint or exalted soul should come into limelight and should be called or recognized as such. On the other hand, of those celebrated saints who are called and recognized as such real saints are few and far between. Real saints or exalted souls are they who see God everywhere and who perceive everything and every living being to be no other than God.

Remember : Real saints or exalted souls cannot be recognized through outward characteristics. They cannot be weighed on the scales of mundane intellect ridden by ignorance any more than a diamond on the scales used for weighing huge logs of wood or blocks of stone. Nevertheless it is perfectly true that getting attuned with God, the mind, intellect and senses of a saint or exalted soul are completely sublimated. Hence a saint or exalted soul has no attachment nor hankering for sense-enjoyment nor does he claim anything in the world of senses as his own. Service to God alone, the holiest of the holy, continues to be performed as a matter of course by his mind, intellect and senses.

Remember : In the eyes of a saint or exalted soul the world of matter does not exist in the form we see it. Hence he remains established for ever in the absolute divine essence, which completely transcends the dualities of the world. He is never moved by any worldly gain or loss, joy or sorrow. He never gets perturbed nor delighted; he never feels worried nor does he hanker after anything. He remains ever equipoised and is ever unaffected in the natural course. His heart is nonetheless

naturally very tender; though harder than adamant in the midst of the greatest calamity appearing to befall his own self, he is softer than a flower in others' distress. He melts under stress or the slightest agony experienced by another and sets about relieving his or her distress like one attached.

Remember : Honour and ignominy are of little account in the eyes of a saint or exalted soul. He neither seeks honour nor does he fear ignominy. Remaining free from pride as a matter of course, he nevertheless bestows honour on others. Though risen wholly above the concepts of good and evil, he remains spontaneously engaged in doing good to others. He is incapable of doing an ill turn to another in the same way as nectar is incapable of killing anyone; nay he conduces to the good of all in the same way as all get light and heat from the sun.

Remember : A saint or exalted soul imparts instruction to the world, not by his speech but by his very life. Every movement of his or her naturally serves as a means of relieving the sufferings of the world; weaning the world from evil ways it puts men on the right track and is helpful in attaining blessedness, the great goal of our life. Even lakhs of artistic speeches delivered by men who are attached to the world are not so effective as the silent speech of an exalted soul. In fact there can be no comparison between a mere lip sermon and a sermon crystallized in one's very life.

Remember : It is exceedingly difficult to get hold of a saint or exalted soul. Even if we meet one it is most difficult to recognize him or her. Yet even such a casual meeting does not go in vain. Even as fire burns no matter whether it is touched consciously or

unconsciously, and even as contact with nectar brings a dead body back to life, whether it is made consciously or unconsciously, so does one's meeting with a saint or exalted soul, whether it is brought about consciously or unconsciously, burns away one's sins and affliction and confers immortality in the shape of final beatitude. Although it is not easy to recognize a saint or exalted soul, you should understand that for your purposes indeed a saint or exalted soul is he whose fellowship reduces your attachment to sense-enjoyment and enhances your love for God, eradicates your demoniac propensities and implants divine virtues in you and, weaning your mind and intellect from sense-enjoyment, turns them towards God.

Remember : An exalted soul neither proclaims nor advertises his sainthood. His very existence is naturally conducive to the good of the entire living creation. No matter whether he comes into limelight or not, whether people come to know him or not, divine virtues and God-consciousness emanate from him in the same way as fragrance naturally emanates from a garden of fragrant flowers.



56. Why fear death?

Remember : Even as a living body passes through the stages of boyhood, youth and old age, death too in reality is no more than a phase of the body. It is the parting of this body and the soul which is known by the name of death. Really speaking death is no bugbear, it is a mere change of body. Even as a man puts on a new garment, changing the old, the Jīvātmā (the soul seated in Prakṛti) seeks another body casting off the former. In fact the soul remains unchanged in substance.

Remember : You are afraid of death simply because you regard the physical body as your own self. The body is material, it is brought into being in the mother's womb. And that which ever comes to be will surely perish. Like its creation its dissolution too is quite natural and normal. Your real self, however, which is spiritual in essence, is eternal, it is free from boyhood, youth, old age, disease, death and so on. Hence you have no cause for fear of death. Such fear is sheer ignorance.

Remember : This death of the body too takes place only so long as the soul remains seated in and falsely identified with the mutable and transient evolutes of Prakṛti and continues to recognize them as its own self. The moment it flashes on the soul, the moment he comes to know that all these changes are nothing but transformations of Prakṛti, that he is only their witness ever unaffected by them, you will be freed from the shackles of birth and death—shackles which do not exist in reality but are fancied.

Remember : This Prakṛti (matter) and its evolutes too do not really exist in the form you perceive them. They are all Māyā (illusion) or a mere sport of the Lord. Taking the form of the play, the playthings and the player He Himself is carrying on this play. Birth too is a form of the Lord

assumed for sport and so too is death. He alone appears in the form of death. If, knowing this fact and recognizing the most beloved Lord arrived in the form of death, you embrace Him, all the horror of death will be transmuted into supreme bliss. Meeting the Lord you will become highly blessed and eternally happy. Therefore do not fear death, see God concealed behind it. You will have Him the moment you see Him. So long as you gaze on outward charm He remains concealed from your view, though open to view. Once you recognize Him He is ever visible, He alone exists-everywhere, at all times, in all forms, in all circumstances and in all names and forms.

Remember : The fulfilment of human life too lies in this alone. Human life has been vouchsafed to us for this very purpose that in this the soul may be freed from the false bondage of matter, that, realizing its true nature, it may rise from Jīvahood to the state of eternal Spirit. The eternal Self, it ever is; it is the role of a Jīva assumed by it that is withholding from it the realization of its true self. It is for this reason that, though ever existing in its own eternal nature, in its own true self, it does not get established in its own self.

Remember : He alone is out of sorts, who is Prakṛtistha—established in Prakṛti; while he alone is healthy who is established in the Self. The criterion of health is to see God, to discover God alone equally at all times in all living beings, objects and circumstances, to obtain the uniform touch of the eternal God alone even in spite of diversity in dealings on divers occasions of such dealings. This state of being established in the Self is the goal of human existence and true Sādhanā or spiritual discipline consists in thoughts and actions leading to this goal alone.



57. It is not yet too late!

Remember : You are not the body; you are not a Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya or Śūdra, nor a father, son, husband, teacher, wife, mother and so on in the real sense of the term. You are the Spirit, consisting of truth, consciousness and bliss, or an eternal particle of God.

Remember : This body as well as the names denoting relationships with it are all assumed and only showy or work-aday-adopted in the work-aday world only for practical purposes, They neither constitute your essential character nor stand in any relation with you.

Remember : It is due to your identification with the body and the names denoting relationships with it that you have begun to look upon the body as your own self and living beings and inanimate objects connected with it as your own and conceived as attachment for them and, entangled in desire or craving for them, are feeling miserable without any cause. And, so long as you remain identified with the body and the names denoting relationships with it, this suffering of yours will not cease, no matter what your external status comes to be.

Remember : It is due to this misconception that, falling a victim to the feeling of mineness, attachment and desire, you find yourself held tight by endless ties of expectation of various kinds. It is because of these ties that, given over to concupiscence, anger and greed, you are perpetrating newer and newer sins of diverse kinds. And that is why you will keep burning till the last breath of your life in the flames of ever-new anxieties appearing in myriads of forms. In consequence you get three things: (1) An ever-burning flame of anxiety, (2) a rich stock of sins perpetrated for the

gratification of desire and (3) the failure of human life, which keeps you tied to the cycle of births and deaths.

Remember : You were not endowed with a human body in order to abuse your reason and thereby prolong the cycle of births and deaths, tighten the grip of ignorance, and confirm the prospect of your passing through demoniac wombs and undergoing tortures in terribly tormenting hells. You were blessed with this human body in order to enable you to escape from the cycle of births and deaths and realize your true and eternal nature, which is essentially spiritual and blissful, or to realize God, to cut asunder all your bonds for good and to get established in God once for all.

Remember : It is not yet too late, things can be mended even now by waking up and returning to the path of virtue. Human life can still be made a success. Realize and accept the above truth this very day, nay, this very moment and give up your false identification with the body and the names denoting relationships with it. And recognize yourself to be the eternal spirit, which is truth and consciousness crystallized, or an exclusively devoted servant of God participating in His divine play as such. You will no longer conceive any feeling of mineness or attachment for living beings and inanimate objects of this world nor will you entertain any hope or desire for them. All your activities in the work-a-day world will now be carried on as through in a dream or as a holy service to God.

Remember : The moment such a consummation is reached all your anxieties will melt away, no thought of sin will ever touch the fringe of your mind and, getting firmly established in your spiritual essence or in the life Divine even here, you will have achieved the ultimate and supreme end of life.



58. Undaunted march ahead

Remember : The joy of God-realization is far greater than the greatest enjoyments of the world and has no parallel. Never let your endeavour for God-realization be interrupted in the least for the sake of any worldly enjoyment. Do not let the discipline followed by you for God-realization get slack on any account whatsoever, nor should you mind what others say or do. The course of discipline followed by you should be genuine and free from blemish.

Remember : He who abandons his faultless discipline or noble pursuit through fear, misgiving opposition from the people and other causes goes down in the scale of spiritual evolution. Your pursuit should be innocent and of the right type in the eyes of God—in the eyes of your own self (Ātmā). Then you should not feel worried, whatever others may say, and should steadily and unflinchingly remain engaged in that noble pursuit with reverence and faith.

Remember : Obstacles may come in the way of your Sādhanā, and you may be faced with unfavourable circumstances of a formidable type and terrible calamities; but do not get unnerved by them. Pinning your faith in God with a guileless mind persevere in your Sādhanā and pray to God that He may remove all the obstacles by His grace. God will surely do so. He has proclaimed in the Gītā that His grace enables those who devote their mind to Him to surmount all obstacles and difficulties and head towards their goal.

Remember : The goodwill of the world, popular esteem, respect and applause too sometimes prove very great obstacles in our Sādhanā. They divert our mind from real spiritual Sādhanā and lead us to engage in an endeavour to exalt and adore our name and personality. The aspirant then takes to

the pursuit of pleasing the world instead of God and devotes himself to forbidden practices favoured by the world and meets with a fall. Similarly bodily comforts, sense-enjoyments too, made available by those possessed of reverence, constitute a great impediment in one's Sādhanā. Inclination for the gratification of senses brings one's spiritual Sādhanā to an end very soon. Therefore don't be afraid of suffering, adversity, unfavourable circumstances and censure nor fall into the snare of honour, prestige, adoration, luxury and so on. Guarding against both these types of impediments remain constantly engaged with supreme devotion in an innocent spiritual discipline.

Mind you: There should be no ostentation in your Sādhanā. Outward show of Sādhanā is a sheer humbug. Remain inwardly devoted to spiritual discipline. Purging your heart of lust, anger, greed, violence, animosity, hypocrisy, arrogance and all other impurities, keep it ever immaculate and pure. If people, judging you from your outward appearance, do not call you a Sādhaka, it will be supreme gain to you, your wealth of spiritual discipline will grow from more to more. If, on the other hand, people outside speak ill of you, account yourself particularly lucky and a favourite of the Lord; for in that case your purity will be enhanced, your immaculacy will grow and your attachment to the world will be abraded. Your mind will not fall a prey to any allurements.

Mind you: Your Sādhanā must always be attended with reverence and faith, vigilance, assiduity and activity. Irreverence, carelessness, sloth and indolence make one delinquent. Remain constantly devoted to your Sādhanā with zeal, faith and joy.

Mind you: Never get bored in your Sādhanā, never

get impatient; prosecute it with patience. Only go on pursuing it. Believe it, you will undoubtedly succeed. If some delay is taking place, it is only because you are being rendered fit, by being purged of all dross, to meet the most beloved Lord without any let or hindrance—because you are being adorned for meeting the Beloved.



59. How To Attain Eternal Joy and Peace

Remember : Joy and peace do not inhere in the living beings and inanimate objects in which you seek for them; they themselves suffer from want and deficiency. While you are deprived of joy and peace in their absence, the more they come to you the keener will be your want and deficiency; and joy and peace will stand remoter from you to the same degree. Joy and peace reign where there is all-sufficiency and permanency and where want is completely absent. God alone is such an entity. One should try to realize God. Without Him the world is full of wants. All wants will cease the moment you realize Him and eternal, genuine and infinite joy and peace will be attained by you.

Remember : The realization of the aforesaid all-sufficient God is the true goal of your life. It is for this alone that human life has been vouchsafed to you, so that, giving up the infatuation for living beings and inanimate objects that are deficient and suffering from want, you may engage yourself in an endeavour to realize God and fulfil your life by realizing Him. Falling away from the goal of human existence, if you fail to do so, you will engage in actions which will not only result in the failure of your human life but will also mar your future. Descending into demoniac states of existence and the darkest hells you will become unhappy.

Remember : The number of times you have to breathe in this life is pre-ordained. The body will cease to function the moment the number is completed; and the act of respiration is interruptedly. Therefore engage yourself quickly in the endeavour for attaining your true goal. Do

not give way to error and sloth. Neither engage in idle and harmful pursuits not worth undertaking nor put off the endeavour for the realization of your end for the morrow. Engage this very moment with an undivided mind in the endeavour for the attainment of your goal. There is no knowing when death overtakes you. You must reach the goal before it comes.

Remember : No inanimate object, living being or circumstance belongs to you nor is it intimately related to you nor again will you gain or lose anything as a matter of fact if these objects or living beings or circumstances are united with or disunited from you, if they come to you or leave you. In vain have you forged a tie of affinity with them and have consequently not only fallen into the quagmire of misery and bondage but continue to perpetrate newer and newer sins by conceiving likes and dislikes. God alone is your own, and He is ever with you. Conceive full relationship with Him. Neither develop attachment for the living beings and inanimate objects of this world by conceiving relationship with them nor hate them regarding them as alien to you. Remain equipoised in getting or not getting them and, perceiving God as uniformly present in all of them at all times and under all circumstances, remain absorbed in God-Consciousness.

Remember : Integral transcendent perennial unending joy abides in God alone; it is His very essence. When God flashes to you through the whole world everywhere at all times, the world itself would turn out to be joy incarnate in everyway at all times in your eyes and you too will become joy personified. But until and unless you are able to see God in the world the world would remain an 'abode of suffering' and a 'fountain of misery'.



60. Upāsanā in True Sense

Remember : Recognizing that all living beings comprised in the whole universe are so many manifestations of the Lord, salute them all with joined palms compatibly with your external position or mentally bow down to them with devotion. Never harbour ill-will towards any living being whatsoever nor speak bitter words to anyone nor pain anyone's heart; but treat everyone with respect, love and civility. This constitutes a form of Upāsanā (sitting by the side of the Lord).

Remember : All that you have in the form of learning and intellect, food-grains and wealth, plenty and prosperity, has been vouchsafed to you for being devoted to the service of the Lord. Minister by means of it to all—the destitute and the distressed, the oppressed and ailing, Sādhus and the Brāhmaṇas, widows and alumni, human beings and animals, birds and ants seized with terror and despondency, knowing them to be so many manifestations of God, without feeling proud of it and respectfully offering to them what (really) belongs to them. This constitutes another form of Upāsanā (sitting by the side of the Lord).

Remember : A tongue has been vouchsafed to you as a means of singing and loudly uttering the divine and sweet names and praises of the Lord, and a pair of ears as an instrument of hearing the names and praises of God being sung or loudly uttered. Therefore, holding your tongue back from condemnation and applause, disputation and controversy, uttering falsehoods and bitter words, harmful and idle talk, keep it engaged in constantly singing or loudly uttering the names and

praises of the Lord and continue at all times to drink with your ears with great eagerness and joy the names and praises of the Lord being sung or loudly uttered. This too constitutes a form of Upāsana (sitting by the side of the Lord).

Remember : A mind has been vouchsafed to you as a means of getting disentangled from the trap of all hankerings and cravings, banishing all thoughts of the world and contemplating on the form and excellences of and the truth relating to the Lord; and reason has been vouchsafed to you to enable you to make it determinate and devote it to God. This is what is meant by offering your mind and reason to God. This is what the Lord expects of you. Therefore, with an undivided mind constantly think of God and, making your reason one-pointed and steady, keep it devoted to God. This too constitutes a form of Upāsana (sitting by the side of the Lord).

Remember : A corporeal frame has been vouchsafed to you as a means of ministering respectfully to your elders, the ailing and the helpless, as so many manifestations of God, of worshipping gods, the Brāhmaṇas and the wise, of protecting the oppressed and gratifying all. Therefore, keeping your body under control, continue with your body to accomplish the work of ministering, rendering bodily service to and protecting all according to their needs. This too constitutes a form of Upāsana (sitting by the side of the Lord).

Remember : Human life has been vouchsafed to you as a means of realizing the truth relating to God, securing God-vision or developing love for the Lord, which is difficult to develop. This constitutes the supreme goal of human existence and to make an all-out effort

to the best of one's ability for the attainment of this goal, remaining constantly on the alert, constitutes the paramount duty of man. True Upāsanā consists in remaining scrupulously engaged in discharging this obligation. Contrary to this, all endeavour made in the vain hope of acquiring enjoyments or pleasures, counting on them and craving for them, constitutes an error and is tantamount to suicide. Therefore, completely giving up the false hope of and longing for enjoyment or sense-gratification, keep your human life constantly devoted in everyway to the means of God-realization—to any type of Upāsanā in the form of Self-Knowledge, action for the sake of God and worship of God according to your circumstances and liking. This constitutes the best use of human life and in this lies the fruition of human existence. This is true Upāsanā or sitting by the side of the Lord.



61. Tread the Path of God-realization

Remember : The truth that God-realization is the sole end of human existence is reiterated as well as drummed into one's ears hundreds and thousands of times; but very few people tread the path of God-realization with unfaltering steps. In imitation of those who refuse to tread the aforesaid path themselves and simply talk and hear of it, others too learn how to talk and hear of it rather than to walk on it. Hence God-realization remains a mere charming expression.

Remember : Society is only another name for a collection of individuals. If, comprehending and keeping in view the end of one's existence, every individual constituting a society begins to tread the path of God-realization without waiting for others, the society will automatically begin to tread that path. Therefore, ceasing to talk and hear of God-realization, one should personally be up and doing.

Remember : A man begins to do a thing the moment he makes up his mind to do it. Therefore, instead of putting off the work for the morrow, make up your mind this very day to start treading the path of God-realization. First of all arrive at the conclusion that God-realization is the goal of your life. To arrive at this conclusion is to turn the face of your life towards the Lord. At present our life has its face turned away from the Lord and directed towards luxuries. We have to turn it towards God; when this has been done, even one step forward will be in the direction of the Lord.

Remember : Turning our face towards the Lord, we have not to stand idle but to walk constantly and

carefully on the path towards God-realization. This is what goes by the name of 'Sādhana'. In our endeavour for God-realization all our actions of body, mind and speech have to be done for the pleasure of God and only such actions are intended for the pleasure of God as are to His liking. Hence we have to make our actions conformable to the will of God. Actions which run counter to His will will be given up as a matter of course.

Remember : The principal feature of actions which are conformable to the will of God is an eye to the pleasure of God in every action. And such actions are to protect all, to gratify all, to do good to all, rather than kill others, inflict pain on others or harm others; to utter words which are conducive to the good of others, which pay a genuine tribute to the excellences of others, and are true, faultless and called for, or constantly to repeat any name or names of the Lord and read hymns of praises to the Lord, remaining silent otherwise, rather than pronounce a curse on others or abuse others—slander and bear tales against others, tell lies and indulge in idle gossip; to contemplate good to all, to remain cheerful at heart, to seek self-abnegation, to bear a gentle—compassionate disposition and remain constantly engaged in the thought of the Lord, to practise Japa or Kīrtana (chanting) of any particular name or names of the Lord, adoration and meditation, to cultivate the fellowship of saints, to render service to the forlorn, afflicted and oppressed, indulge in noble thoughts, study sacred texts and offer worship to one's elders, rather than think evil of others, give way to grief and despondency, seek the pleasures of sense; and to give up cruelty and thought of sense-objects. If pursued with a view to the

pleasure of the Lord rather than with a craving for enjoyment, these disciplines prove directly conducive to God-realization. Their prosecution gives rise to love for right conduct, disinclination for enjoyment, purity of mind, a leaning towards divine properties, the dawn of knowledge relating to the truth about God and appearance of love for God. This alone constitutes the approved and sure way to God-realization.

Remember : Even if you have come to know the way to God-realization, your end will be achieved only by following it. Therefore, let one commence treading it this very day. One should not allow laziness or negligence to come in the way.

Remember : Life is constantly ebbing away—death is approaching. If life passes in error, in lust for enjoyment and in thought of the pleasures of sense, human existence will have ended in failure. No alternative will then be left to us except to repent. Therefore, not the least delay should be allowed to mar our undertaking.



62. Animate or Inanimate—All is God

Remember : The entire universe consisting of animate and inanimate beings is a manifestation of one and the same God. The selfsame God stands revealed in the form of all these beings and the same Spirit ever indwells them all. Even as the same organism consists of a number of limbs and organs having diverse names and functions, although the Spirit indwelling them is the same, nay, the pleasure and pain caused to those limbs and organs is experienced by the same soul, all the animate and inanimate beings comprised in the entire universe are the limbs and organs—the eternal parts identical in essence with the whole—of the same Cosmic Being or God. Realizing this, gratify all, do good to all and let all remain happily engaged in their respective functions.

Remember : When you come to treat all as your own self—to identify yourself with all, your ego-sense and the sense of possession (the feelings of ‘I’ and ‘mine’) will not remain cramped and cabined. Consequently you will as a matter of course be rid of body-consciousness. For the sake of this limited ‘I’ and ‘mine’ you will no longer wish harm to others nor seek to persecute them taking them to be other than you. On the other hand, recognizing their good and happiness to be your own good and happiness, you will contemplate only that which is conducive to the good and happiness of all and also do the same. A narrow desire will no longer exist in you nor will there linger in you attachment for any object, much less fear of your own loss. Nor will anger born of the frustration of your desire ever appear in you. “Completely rid of attachment, fear and anger,” you will get merged in the Divine Essence. In fact, he alone

who has been “completely rid of attachment, fear and anger” is ‘stable of mind’ (स्थित प्रज्ञ) and he alone who is “entirely free from desire, fear and anger” is ever ‘liberated’ (मुक्त).

Remember : Attachment, desire, fear and anger appear only when you keep yourself confined within the narrow limits of ‘I’ and ‘mine’. It is then only that, considering yourself as apart from all, cabining your ‘self’ within a small compass and confining your “self-interest” within narrow limits, you begin to regard all others as alien, as other than yourself. Then your self-identification with finite objects such as a particular body, country, community, class, creed, region, language, honour and prestige, comforts and amenities gradually confines you to narrower and still narrower limits and fills you with fear. Imagining, for the preservation of the aforesaid objects and circumstances, with which you stand identified, that others will put an end to them, you begin to look upon all with suspicion and feel apprehensive with regard to them; nay, reduced to similar circumstances, others too in their turn begin to look on you with suspicion and feel apprehensive with regard to you. The result is that a feeling of distrust grows between them and you; nay, the outlook on both sides being changed, mutual faults begin to come to view and jealousy, hatred, disgust and animosity grow. Manifesting themselves in the form of violence, these latter incite one to such undesirable misdeeds as lead to the huge destruction not only of yourselves and your adversaries but even of numberless innocent creatures unknown to you. This not only hampers the success of your human life, but you have also to depart from this world suffering disquietude, affliction and agony caused by want throughout your life and burning in the fire of terrible anxiety till your last breath; and after death you

are cast into demoniac species full of suffering and affliction or consigned to hells subjecting one to horrible tortures.

Remember : No living being can escape the consequences of his or her doings. Therefore, perceiving the same Lord or the same Spirit in all, do good to all, gratify all, treat all with honour, bestow love on all, rid everyone of fear from your side. Let no one be subjected to ignominy at your hands or oppressed by you; let no one have fear from you, let no one feel perturbed on account of you and let no one be harmed in anyway by you. Keep your thoughts, dealings and actions full of humility, sweetness, love, truth and benevolence. You will be blessed, others will be blessed, the universe will be blessed; for it is in this way that the Lord, who is the Soul of the universe, will be truly adored.



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