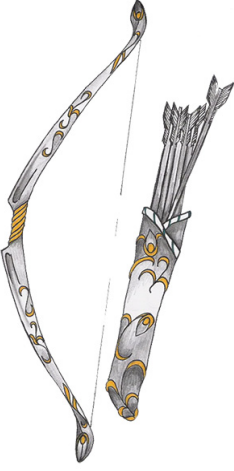


O Lord! All these Gifts are Thine



O Lord! All these gifts are Thine,
Of which I partake each day,
Let me see just Thee O Lord
In whosoever I witness on the way.

No matter what I partake in this world,
Let my union with Thee ever remain;
No matter where these eyes fall,
Let this vision Thy Image gain.

Let me see Thy beauteous form
In every object and being,
No matter what words leave these lips
May only Thy Name in them ever ring.

May every name I henceforth call
Reverberate with Thy Name Divine,
Of what avail these mantras when
I embody their essence in this life of mine?

My union with Thee shall ever remain
If I forget not Thy Name in my endeavours,
Hands folded Lord, I bow before Thee
And beg Thee for Thy favours.

TRANSLATED FROM PARAM PUJYA MA'S PRAYER GIVEN BELOW



भगवान यह सब कुछ तेरा है

भगवान् यह सब कुछ तेरा है, यही मान के भोग करूँ।
जिसको भी जहाँ देखूँ अब से, उसमें ही तुझे देखूँ॥

भोग में योग ही नित्य रहे, तव कृपा न गर भूलूँ।
जहाँ पे दृष्टि जाये पड़े, नयनों से तुझे छू लूँ॥

हर वस्तु हर रूप में भगवन्, तेरी छवि नित देखा करूँ।
जो भी लब अब वाक् कहे, बिना नाम कछु न कहूँ॥

हर नाम जो जब भी लूँ भगवन्, मैं तो तेरा नाम ही लूँ।
मंत्र पठन फिर कौन करे, मैं स्वयं ही मंत्र बनूँ॥

भोग में भी तब योग रहे, गर नाम न मैं भूलूँ।
नतमस्तक हो कर जोड़ी, इतनी मैं बिनती करूँ॥



*We are all visitors to this time, this place.
We are just passing through.
Our purpose here is to observe, to learn, to grow, to love...
And then we return home.*

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Of What Avail is Heaven?

FROM PARAM PUJYA MA'S ELUCIDATION OF THE SRIMAD BHAGAVAD GITA

PRAYER TRANSLATED BY ABHA BHANDARI

Of what avail is heaven Lord,
If in heaven I cannot attain Thee...
If even there this distance 'tween us remains,
and thereafter death grips me?

Better than this, let me experience sorrow...
At least then I will not forget Thee!
Through every breath of sorrowful distress
Let me call out to Thee constantly!

O fill my life with tribulations Lord
If with these tribulations I receive Thee!
Now no desire for even heaven remains
If in heaven I forget Thee.

Take away this wealth, take away this fame...
If in their absence I can attain Thee!
If in death I can meet Thee Lord,
Give me death repeatedly!



This was the spontaneous prayer that flowed forth from Param Pujya Ma's lips when she meditated on this *shloka* of the Gita... 9/20,21

In later years, when an ignorant child sought clarification of the Gita, She elaborated on the meaning of this *shloka* thus:

त्रैविद्या मां सोमपाः पूतपापा यज्ञैरिष्ट्वा स्वर्गतिं प्रार्थयन्ते ।
ते पुण्यमासाद्य सुरेन्द्रलोकम् अश्नन्ति दिव्यान् दिवि देवभोगान् ॥

ते तं भुक्त्वा स्वर्गलोकं विशालं क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यलोकं विशन्ति ।
एवं त्रयीधर्ममनुप्रपन्ना गतागतं कामकामा लभन्ते ॥

Srimadbhagavadgita Chapter 9, *Shlokas* 20, 21

Describing the fruits of *Upasana* performed with a motive, the Lord says:

Those who perform *Upasana* with motive, as described in the three Vedas, and drink the Som nectar as the sanctified remnant of *yagya*, those beings purged of sin and performers of virtuous deeds, worship Me through *yagya* to gain access to heaven. Such seekers achieve the abode of *Indra* as the fruit of their virtuous actions and enjoy the divine pleasures of the *Devtas*. Having enjoyed the extensive heavenly pleasures, and on account of the exhaustion of their merits, they re-attain the mortal world. Thus, attaining once more the three fold *dharma*, they again begin to crave desire gratification and attain birth and death.

The Lord clarifies here that even the most meritorious action performed with the motive of desire fulfilment can, at the most, lead to the attainment of heaven. Having enjoyed the pleasures that accrue through the performance of that meritorious deed, that individual is once more fettered in the cycle of birth and death.

Many people in this world, on account of the meritorious deeds performed in their previous births:

1. attain great wealth;
2. perform notable deeds in this life also and attain a great name;
3. give extensively in charity and are renowned as magnanimous souls;
4. attain the opportunity to dwell with saintly souls and eulogise them, yet do not want to become like them;
5. honour spiritual institutions;
6. possess peace of mind;
7. achieve fame in the world;
8. possess all happiness in their homes;
9. are the recipients of great respect;
10. gain success in their business;
11. are surrounded by favourable circumstances;
12. have no dearth of wealth and economic means;
13. dwell in heavenly bliss with its accompanying comforts.

Such people desire establishment in the *Brahmi Sthiti* (*Brahm's* state), but do not wish to strive for it. They do not wish to humble themselves and have no notion of what it means to give of oneself to another. Nor do they know how to give up their ego to elevate the other.

- a) They are attached to their goodness.
- b) They are proud of their ancestry.
- c) They do not wish to humble themselves for the other's establishment.

Such people are full of pride, which they successfully conceal under an artificial

display of humility. They constantly negate the Lord in their daily dealings in life. The Lord may manifest Himself before such a one in the guise of a servant, or conversely, in the garb of immense pride. Such people, on the one hand, will not pay even the slightest heed to their servants, and on the other hand, will not tolerate the proud or the arrogant – then how can they ever recognise the Lord? They want to purchase the Self with their wealth! They take great pride in their magnanimity.

Little one, in fact, those who enjoy such 'heavenly pleasures' are unfortunate indeed, because:

1. They are wealthy and happy.
2. Others are dependent on them and they consider themselves to be great since they provide sanctuary to the distressed.
3. They possess remarkable knowledge.
4. They worship the Lord in their own manner.
5. Such wealthy folk, who are renowned in the world and who give great charity, are unfortunate insofar as their pride grows unhindered and nobody has the audacity to prove them wrong. Even if anybody gathers the courage to tell them where they are wrong, they discard such 'upstarts'. Who can warn such unfortunate souls that the pleasures they are enjoying will end one day?
6. Who can show those unfortunate souls their arrogance and make them humble?
7. Who can ever cast any aspersions on them?
8. Who can tell them that their pride is sheer foolishness? Even if a knower of *Brahm*, or one who has faith in *Brahm*, or an *Atmavaan* who is completely indifferent to himself, tells those unfortunate souls, who are absorbed in enjoying their 'heavenly pleasures', they will not understand because their self-esteem will prevent them from doing so.

Little one, an example of this has been extensively described in the Ken Upanishad. The simile of the *Devtas*, proud of their godly status and their heavenly abode – in other words, very great souls – could not recognise the *Atmavaan* or the *Atma* itself when it manifested itself before them. Their pride proved to be their greatest hindrance. The Lord therefore says, that such 'meritorious souls', having partaken of the pleasures of heaven, and having exhausted their merits of previous births, fall back into the cycle of birth and death.



A scene from the play 'Ken Upanishad' by Arpana

Little one, such people who enjoy those heavenly pleasures often perform many deeds of great merit. However:

1. They do not perform such deeds with a selfless attitude.
2. They perform such actions, steeped in the pride of doership.
3. Knowing themselves to be superior and knowing the other to be needy and disabled, they perform noble deeds to alleviate their need.

Little one,

- a) If they perform those same acts in the Lord's name, they could attain the Supreme Goal.
- b) If they perform those same selfless deeds without motive, they would be able to perform yagya.
- c) If they offer up those same actions to 'Narayan' or the Supreme Lord, regarding themselves as the needy ones, those very deeds would constitute worship of the Lord.
- d) If they perform those same actions, having relinquished the thought of doership, they would steadily transcend the body idea.
- e) If they perform those same deeds of merit, knowing that the Lord Himself is the Doer, they will surely attain the state of an *Atmavaan* one day.

What a simple method the Lord has shown!

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥

Shrimadbhagavadgita Chapter 9 Shloka 22

Those devotees, who are established in Me alone with one exclusive thought, who constantly think of Me and worship Me, I personally attend to the protection of the yoga of those souls who are thus ever united with Me.

Ananya (अनन्य)

One-pointed faith, one with a single focus of faith, absorbed in one, indivisible.

The Lord says, "I personally attend to the protection of yoga of those whose concentration is upon Me alone."

Little one, those who keep their mind focused incessantly on the *Atma*:

- a) They constantly offer all their deeds to the Lord.
- b) They therefore perform all actions devoid of any desire for their fruit.
- c) All their deeds are performed in complete selflessness and without motive.
- d) Their life becomes an unbroken sequence of yagya.
- e) They perform deeds that are for universal benefit and for the welfare of the

maximum number.

f) They use their body, mind and wealth for the good of others.

g) They do everything for the establishment of others.

Just consider, who looks after such people in their daily life? How does such a one go about the task of self-sustenance?

The Lord clarifies, "I personally attend to the *yogakshema* (योगक्षेम) of such a noble soul." This can have two meanings, both of which are correct, because it is indeed the Lord who attends to both the tasks.

Yogakshema of sadhana or spiritual practice

The Lord Himself protects the *sadhana* and the bliss derived thereof of such devotees who dwell incessantly in thoughts of Him. He gives them complete satiation. It could be said that such devotees gain indifference towards their personal selves as a consequence of their constant devotion. They abide in unalloyed bliss. The Lord Himself ensures their *yogakshema*.

Little one, the protection of yoga of a spiritual seeker would be ensured only if he receives such opportunities in which he could strengthen his practice of yoga.

Ordinarily, divine attributes are nourished by adversity and divine qualities can be practised in unfavourable circumstances. So one can say that the Lord gives adversity to the spiritual aspirant in order to grant him the opportunity to ensure his yoga.

You must not however deduce from this that *sadhana* is not possible in favourable circumstances. Actually *sadhana* can progress only in a positive atmosphere and with a joyous heart. One who is unaffected by adversity is truly happy and can advance in spiritual practice.

A devotee dances with joy upon receiving this assurance from the Lord.

Those who are ever absorbed in selfless deeds for the welfare of mankind are assured of the protection of their yoga by the Lord Himself.

The Yogakshema of one's worldly interests

The Lord also ensures the *yogakshema* of the devotees' worldly needs. He looks after their every requirement, for they themselves are oblivious to their own bodily needs. The Lord organises every aspect of their journey of life.

Little one, the Lord's devotee never goes hungry; the Lord's devotee never experiences sorrow. The motiveless *yagya*, undertaken by one who lives only for the Lord's Name, will ultimately always bear fruit.

Even if the devotee is defeated time and again, his ultimate victory is ensured. The proud and the arrogant keep winning, but ultimately meet with defeat. Who spares the life of one established in selfless deeds and one who has renounced all action for personal benefit?

1. Little one, selfish people who use such a one for personal gain will never give him anything.
2. Those who use him to establish their reputation will give him nothing.
3. Those who seek material gain from him will naturally give him nothing.
4. Those who expect him to grant them Self realisation will always be annoyed with him.
5. Those who seek self-establishment through him will not give him anything in return.

Then consider, how shall such a one subsist? Who will sustain such a one? He gives every moment of his day for the fulfilment of others' tasks. He is prepared to risk his name and reputation for the establishment of the other. Then how shall such a one obtain his means of livelihood?

The Lord proclaims, "It is I who ensures the protection of his yoga!"

The Lord instils in the other a desire to help such a one incognito. It is He who inspires generosity in another's heart towards that selfless being. If the Lord seemingly takes away his all, He also dons another garb to protect His devotee too.

Little one, a little while ago the Lord proclaimed, "I Myself am all the meritorious qualities," and "I am yagya also." It is as if He is donning this form in order to protect His devotee who is established in yoga. Thus disguised, the Lord Himself:

1. ensures the gross protection of the egoless *Atmavaan's* material possessions;
2. ensures the protection of that egoless *Atmavaan's* subtle realms;
3. ensures the protection of that egoless *Atmavaan's* knowledge.

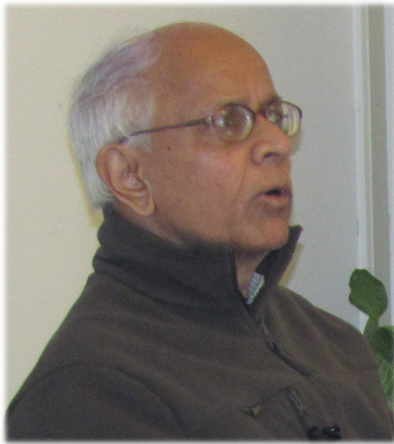
Little one, now the Lord Himself has given you His assurance. Why do you not believe His Word and renounce the body idea? This body will perish and leave you one day. The true test would be if you could renounce the body whilst still alive!



An engineer by profession, Mr T.S. Ananthu worked in the US and in the computer software industry in India before joining the Gandhi Peace Foundation in 1977. He later started an NGO, Navadarshanam, near Bangalore, with his wife, where he applied his knowledge to a variety of domains, including restoration of degraded forest and agricultural land, organic farming, propagation of alternative energy systems and training of village communities.

Currently he is living at Beas, where he is researching the fascinating interconnections between science and spirituality.

A couple of months ago, he shared his thoughts on Thinking, Creativity and the Creator at the Arpana Centre in Vasant Vihar.



Thinking, Creativity and Spirituality :

Potentials embedded in the Human Brain

In today's society, thinking and analysis are stressed a lot. For instance, IBM's logo is 'Think' written in multiple languages, and Wipro's is 'Applying Thought'. Modern education is focused almost exclusively on developing the child's ability to think and analyze. The result is that other faculties of our brain get neglected.

Thinking is no doubt a wonderful capacity we possess, but it is only one aspect of the human brain/mind. While we all need to learn to think, we also need to know when and how to stop thinking. The relationship of thinking to our mind is analogous to that of food to our body. All human beings need to eat in order to sustain the body. But, as we all know, eating too much can harm the body grievously, as can eating the wrong kind of food. Similarly, all human beings need to think in order to keep the mind healthy. But too much thinking – or the wrong kind of thinking – can lead to worry, stress, paranoia, depression, mental paralysis etc., just as too much food or the wrong kind of food can lead to obesity, blood pressure, diabetes, liver malfunction etc. So, just as in the case of food we need to know where to draw the line and refuse

to eat beyond a certain point, similarly, when using our brains we need to draw a line and refuse to think beyond a certain point.

The advantage gained by curbing, when needed, our thinking ability is not that difficult to recognize – we often see it in our day-to-day functioning. If we have forgotten a person's name or where we have misplaced something, we know that beyond a point our trying to think does not help. So, instead of fretting and fuming, it is better to switch off, to cease thinking about it, and – almost invariably – the answer suddenly appears in our mind.

How does this happen? The information was always there, stored in our memory – what was lacking was our ability to access the information. Our mind could not get to it. But once we disassociated our mind from the thinking function, the answer automatically appeared. Therefore, our 'I' is much more than our thinking process. For this reason, we need to carefully scrutinize the validity of Descartes' famous dictum "I think, therefore, I exist", which forms the basis of modern education.

In order to utilize the full potential of our 'I', we need to recognize and then develop faculties that take us beyond the ability to think. These faculties are latent in our brain/mind. Unfortunately, the techniques employed by biologists to study the human brain cannot easily reveal these latent faculties. The very first experiment most of us perform in a biology class is to knock a frog unconscious, and then dissect it in order to study the functioning of its body – and reach inferences about human anatomy this way. The flaw in this process is that in order to study life, we are first knocking out life. We are thus making the assumption that a study of the physical and chemical characterizes of the components that constitute our body will reveal all that we need to know about the functioning of a living being.

The greater part of modern scientific knowledge about the human body has been acquired through the above process. However, it is very difficult to extend this process to a study of the human brain because of its uniqueness. The thing that stands out most in the human brain is the nature of its forehead – the size of what is called the 'cerebral cortex'. These constitute the thick sheet of cells on the outside of the brain, which is so expanded in humans that it has to be folded in on itself in order to fit inside the skull. This cortex is the seat of our higher brain functions. No other animal has such a brain, and so studying the brains of rats, mice etc. do not reveal much about how a human brain operates. For this reason, the Harvard Medical School has constituted a Brain Bank to persuade humans to donate their brain at the time of death.

One of the prominent researchers at this school is Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor. She was a very good guitar player, apart from being an accomplished neuroscientist. She used

to go around the USA strumming the following song on her guitar to try and persuade Americans to donate their brain to Harvard at the time of their death:

*So, you always wanted to go to Harvard
[here is your chance]
Oh, I am a brain banker
Banking brains is what I do.
I am a brain banker
Asking for a deposit from you.
Don't worry,
I am in no hurry.
Have you considered the contribution you can make
When you are heaven bound,
Your brain can hang around.
To help humanity
Find the key to...*

Then, suddenly, at the young age of 37, this prominent brain researcher had a totally unexpected but really huge haemorrhage in the left hemisphere of her brain, leading to what is called a 'near death experience' or NDE for short. As a result, she could not walk, talk, read, write, or recall anything. Amazingly, she has recovered fully. This has enabled her to communicate with others, including her co-professionals, the insights that she received during the time when her brain was supposed to be dysfunctional. Hers is one of those inputs which have persuaded brain researchers to reach a very important conclusion. Prof. Steven Laureys at the University of Liege in Belgium states it in simple terms:

"We should abandon the idea that a flat EEG proves zero neuronal activity."

In the earlier days, doctors would conclude that a flat ECG meant the patient was dead – and therefore, life was linked to the functioning of the heart. This was later abandoned in favour of 'brain death' as the end of human life. But now, doctors are beginning to recognize that even a flat EEG does not indicate death. This is the scientific explanation behind millions of recently recorded cases of Near Death Experiences. We are therefore on the verge of shifting to an entirely new way of looking at life – that consciousness is primary, matter is secondary. Therefore, in cases like Dr. Taylor's, the patient might seem 'dead' to the world, but is actually super-conscious. This is the result of consciousness becoming resident entirely in the upper part of the brain, which present-day EEG instruments cannot detect.

Confirming this, Dr. Taylor has pointed out that her consciousness level increased dramatically during this period. Rather than being incapacitated, she experienced a huge enhancement of the life-force operating within her. She has given full details of

her remarkable experiences in a book which she has appropriately titled 'My Stroke of Insight'. Among the magnificent latent capacities of the brain that got revealed to her during this experience was an ability to focus on the 'now':

"You lose memory connection to your old self, and the richness of this moment, right here, right now, captivates your perception. Everything, including the life force you are, radiates pure energy. With childlike curiosity, your heart soars in peace and your mind explores new ways of swimming in a sea of euphoria... From my perspective, I felt that every present moment was rich with experience and existed in absolute isolation."

When we experience a zone of timelessness as described above, we enter a very special state of the mind wherein thoughts do not rule us the way they do in our 'normal' state. Gandhi's definition of '*swaraj*' was based upon such a state – wherein we rule our mind, rather than the mind ruling us. It is actually the literal meaning of the word '*swa+raj*', and Gandhi's aim was an India in which the importance of such a *swaraj* would be highlighted. As Jill Taylor has stated, it leads to a different way of thinking:

"It wasn't that I could not think any more, I just didn't think in the same way..."

Dr. Taylor then goes on to describe what she means by the above by looking at the word 'responsibility' in a very interesting way. Like Gandhi did with '*swaraj*', she breaks up this word too into its components – response + ability. She explains the response mechanism of the brain in neurological terms and points out the special capacity of the human brain. Our brain has a portion in common with animals – the lower part, what is called the 'limbic' or 'reptilian' section of it. The higher part is the cortex, and allows humans the choice of responding differently to the inputs the brain's CPU receives. We can thus make use of our cortex to increase our sense of responsibility:

"I define responsibility (response-ability) as the ability to choose how we respond to stimulation coming in through our sensory systems at any moment in time. Although there are certain limbic system (emotional) programs that can be triggered automatically, it takes 90 seconds for one of these programs to be triggered, surge through our body, and then be completely flushed out of our blood streams... If [for instance] I remain angry after these 90 seconds have passed, then it is because I have chosen to let that circuit continue to run. Moment by moment, I make the choice to either hook into my neuro-circuitry or move back into the present moment."

Another well-known neurologist, Dr. Viktor Frankl ((1905-1997), had explained the same point in the following words:

"Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom."

***I define responsibility
(response-ability) as the ability to
choose how we respond
to stimulation coming in
through our sensory systems
at any moment in time.***

The above freedom is what Gandhi had in mind when titling his seminal book 'Hind Swaraj'. Development of this latent capacity of the human brain leads, he said, to real civilization – where humans behave in a truly civilized way with each other. This is accomplished because, in such a state, human beings increase their capacity for 'out of the box thinking' – and thereby open the doors to the creativity resident within each one of us. Instead of merely reacting to situations based upon our preconceived notions, we change the 'paradigm' through which we view the situation – and this enables us to solve what seem unsolvable problems. To take two examples of current problems that seem 'unsolvable':

1. The Kashmir problem has bogged us for 70 years now, but was almost 'solved' in 2007 using what Musharraf described as 'out of the box thinking'. The solution did not fit into the standard format of possible answers. Was it based on Kashmir becoming part of Pakistan? No. Was it going to be part of India? Of course not. Then, was it going to be independent? Not even that. It transcended all these standard classifications, in line with the '*neti, neti*' of our Upanishads. Or, for the scientifically minded, it corresponded to the answer physicists have arrived at with respect to the electron – it is a particle, and, simultaneously, is not a particle. Niels Bohr called such solutions as emanating from Great Truths. He distinguished a small truth from a Great Truth in the following way: the opposite of a small truth is a falsehood, but the opposite of a Great Truth is another Great Truth! Development of the creative potential of our brain gives us access to these Great Truths.

2. The Cauvery problem between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu seems unsolvable – it has been a source of strife for well over a century. But an assembly of farmers from both sides of the border once proposed a simple, viable solution. It was based upon the recognition that the water of the Cauvery River belongs to the Goddess of the river, and not to any individual or group of human beings. Their solution involved treating the water as sacred, and therefore minimizing its usage. But this in turn demanded a very different type of farming from that currently practised. In this alternative method of farming, each farmer would exercise his creative ability to grow crops in line with nature, rather than try to conquer nature as modern agriculture is trying to do. It was such a lovely, beautiful solution – but obviously unacceptable to politicians using the

‘Karnataka versus Tamil Nadu’ approach to garner votes.

While Dr. Taylor’s ‘stroke of insight’ was accidental, it is possible to have the same or similar insights through a systematic educational process based on the ancient techniques of yoga and meditation, but with moral development an essential prerequisite to the pursuit of such education. In fact, the term Dr. Taylor has used to describe her experience is the Buddhist word for enlightenment, *nirvana*:

“I’m no authority, but I think the Buddhists would say I entered the mode of existence they call *Nirvana*. In the absence of my left hemisphere’s analytical judgment, I was completely entranced by the feelings of tranquility, safety, blessedness, euphoria, and omniscience.”

Such an experience – which enhances our creativity as well as spirituality – is possible for any human being willing to tap into the hidden potentials of our brain. Like any other education, it involves hard work and commitment – especially to the moral values that form the foundation of spiritual growth. ❖

Once Sri Ravi Shankar was asked how we can develop our personality. He replied: To develop your personality, you have to spend five days to have these five experiences to really blossom in your life. You have to sincerely play these five roles:

1. One day be a School Teacher

To teach lessons to children who are not learning, you need a lot of patience. Being a nursery or primary school teacher, even for one day, you will see how you have to increase your patience.

2. Be a Gardener or spend a day with a Farmer

If you are sowing seeds, if you are watering plants, you will know how you must care for water, earth and the environment. You will value food and not waste it.

3. Spend a day in the Mental Hospital

If patients in the mental hospital scold you, blame you, curse you, will you mind? You don’t mind because you are aware that this person is mentally sick. In life you come across people who blame you for nothing, who are jealous or angry, who say things that make no sense. Then you will have the patience to deal with them with a smile.

4. One day you must go to a Prison

Visit a prison and spend a little time with the prisoners. You will understand what compassion is, what helplessness is. Those people did a mistake without awareness.

5. A day with terminally ill people in the hospital

One day with them, and you will realize how precious life is. And you will start valuing health. You will eat better, you will exercise. You will do all that is needed to be more vibrant in your life.

Infinite Thy Manifestations!

ADAPTED FROM PARAM PUJYA MA'S ORIGINAL ELUCIDATION OF THE JAPUJI SAHIB
BY ARUNA DAYAL

धरम खंडका एहो धरमु ।
गिआन खंड का आखरहु करमु ।
केते पवण पाणी वैसंतर केते काह्न महेस ।
केते बरमे घाइति घड़ीअहि रूप रंग के वेस ।
केतीआ करम भूमि मेर केते केते धू उपदेस ।
केते इंद चंद सूर केते केते मंडल देस ।
केते सिध बुध नाथ केते केते देवी वेस ।
केते देव दानव मुनि केते केते रतन समुंद ।
केतीआ खाणी केतीआ बाणी केते पात नरिंद ।
केतीआ सुरती सेवक केते नानक अंतु न अंतु ।।

पौड़ी ३५

So far, the norms of the arena of Dharma were elucidated by the Guru. Now the Guru says He will tell us of the duties in the realm of Knowledge.

There are infinite swathes of winds blowing, fires raging and waters flowing. In the process of Creation, a diversity of worlds came into being, wherein there is a vast divergence of arenas of action. All exist with their unique form, shapes and features. Many Mount Sumerus pierce the skies and innumerable sages pass on their wisdom and tenets of dharma. How many are the suns and moons that illumine space! How great is the multitude of Indra Devs! How wide ranging and numerous are the continents scattered across vast oceans. There are infinite numbers of wise men, realized souls and sages. How dazzling are the array of goddesses! Various and diverse are the Gods and saints and rishis; the countless hosts of demons and devils! Infinite are the seas and oceans, resplendent with jewels and precious stones of all colours! There are varied and endless births of men as they travel the cycles of birth and death. Languages are spoken in infinite tongues and mighty are the innumerable kingdoms and dynasties of rulers. The Vedas and the ancient tradition of preserving wisdom are many, as are the servitors of such legacies of wisdom. O Nanak! there is no end to the One who is infinite, who is eternal and timeless, who transcends every boundary and has no limits.

Param Pujya embraces the Guru's words in Her heart, and in sublime song she reiterates the Divine splendors and glories of the Supreme Lord.

The Guru has revealed to us the paths of *Dharma* and now unfolds the mysteries of knowledge. He tells us of the infinite forms of the five elements. He enumerates the countless living manifestations of water and wind and fire.

He tells us that the human embodiments of the Divine are without number. The Divinity of Shiva Shankar manifests in multiple ways. Brahma appears in countless avtaars. The eternal essence of Truth comes forth in a multitude of forms.

*Infinite are the number of wise men,
Many are the Lords who nurture and govern
those who have naught:
Beyond number are the Gods and Goddesses,
the sages, saints, ascetics; and many the demons
with darkness fraught;
Endless are luminous oceans, that enfold
the splendor of jewels, in their heaving troughs!
There are countless seekers of wisdom, servitors
of knowledge; there are infinite forms of the Supreme Lord –
But there is One Indivisible Truth,
One Supreme Eternal Essence!*

Pujya Ma addresses Nanak, the Adi Guru –

*O Guru divine, these words of knowledge I hear,
This knowledge I have learned,
All is Thee, each form is Thine
Infinite Thy manifestations, O Master mine!
Yet Indivisible art Thee, my Lord:
Thou art the one Omkar,
Non Dual, the one Essence, each name and form
Is Thee, my Lord: This is the Truth
Which Thou has lived and preached,
The Truth which Thou dost teach!
This self is also of Thy lineage:
Of Thee, I am a part, from Thee I cannot be apart!
There is no place for selfhood, for 'me' or mine':
For all is Thee and all is Thine
Thou my Sovereign for all time!*

Param Puja Ma, on behalf of the seeker, delves into the profound depths of the Guru's word, seeking to reveal its hidden Truth:

"O Lord, Thou dost talk of deeds and actions, knowledge which eludes me! All I know, Divine Guru, is that in all this cosmic play, through the whirling space of infinity, Thy Will, alone, prevails! Thy Word ordains the pattern of Creation and the powers of the elements. May I walk in obedience to Thy Will: May I not trespass against Thee, Lord. May I sit at Thy Feet and lose myself in Thy Name, O Nanak!"

Prayers well up and flow in a current of devotional ecstasy:

*In every act O Lord, may I chant Thy Name
May every pulse of blood, beat to the rhythm of Thy Name:
All is Thee, may I see Thee in all things,
In all forms, may I perceive Thee, O King of Kings!
Without beginning, without end, art Thee!
Indivisible, one whole, art Thee.....
May I see Thee Lord, everywhere
Thy ordinance, Thy Will, may I ever perceive.
This is my prayer O Lord, this my only plea:
I pray for Thy Mercy.
What can I offer Lord to Thee?
All is Thine, how can I offer Thee that which is Thine?
Bless me with self forgetfulness;
Let this self, mere dust, lie at Thy Lotus Feet.
The glories of Thy Name glimmer in the air,
May I see Thy splendors in all Thy forms, everywhere!
This 'I' craves not for anything, nor seeks boons from Thee,
Grant that this 'I' dissolves and all that remains, is Thy Divinity.
This egoity, in its arrogance, sought to dethrone Thee,
Its self obsessed pride was driven to contest Thee:
Yet O Lord Supreme, I beg for Thy clemency.
O Nanak, a suppliant, I stand at Thy door
I plead for refuge in Thee,
May I rest at Thy Feet, evermore.*

Devi Behen asked Puja Ma: 'Is this a description of Viraat Roop?'

Param Puja Ma: When the Lord has said that all is He, then why should we keep questioning His Word? Why do we interpret further, redefine further, elaborate further on His Words?

The Lord has said that He is the One, perfect indivisible Eternal Whole. As His devotees we need only to wholly accept His word. 'Lord, Thy Word is all Truth, may we submit and accept it in totality.' We need to bow our heads in submission and

acceptance, saying. 'This intellect is Thine, accept this self at Thy Feet!'

Ma further explains that there is no further purpose in exploring how many divinities or demons there are, or how many are the numbers of sages and saints. The Lord has told us definitively that the He is all.

In a prayerful attitude, Pujya Ma continues, 'O Master, I am nothing. It is Thy Grace whereby the veil of egoity, which obscures the Truth, may be removed. Removing this veil of self pride and untruth, Thou dost reveal to me how I, as this ego, deny Thee. This clever, treacherous, 'I' betrays Thee, O Lord. Coming into Thy Presence, I yet dare to assert this selfhood! O Lord, now the only entreaty I make unto Thee is that I become nothing. May realization of the nonbeing of this self become a fact. Only by Thy Grace can this occur. O Master, Thy Word is my command – and in obedience, I offer Thee all that I claim as mine –this name, this home, this form, all are rendered to Thee, for all is Thine, O Lord!

Ma explains to Devi Behen, that accumulating knowledge will not yield any fruit. Every fresh acquisition in the realm of study is empty and will not yield new understanding. Ma tells us that we must realize the one inviolable truth that lies in the Guru's Words: This name and form of ours is naught. These have no substance, for all creation is He, and all things are His.

*O Nanak, in all Thy Words, one truth abides:
This name, form, this self, are naught,
Vain and false, this ego and pride.
This earth is an inn for pilgrims.
No abode for this 'self', therein:
This 'I' is a bubble, ephemeral;
This bubble of water, is born,
Naught but water is its form!
Just so, for fleeting moments this 'I' appears
'Tis just a glimpse in eternity
A passing acquaintance, then a parting,
Into the Light of infinity
But this meeting and separation of ways
Is an illusion wrought by the Lord's Will and Grace
O Lord Thou hast told me that this 'I' is
of no substance. May I submit to, and accept Thy Word:
O Lord all is Thee, apart from Thee, there is no
Creation or Cosmos or universe.
Glory to Thee and all
Obeisance to Thee O Master!*





Param Pujya Ma

Arpana

Newsletter

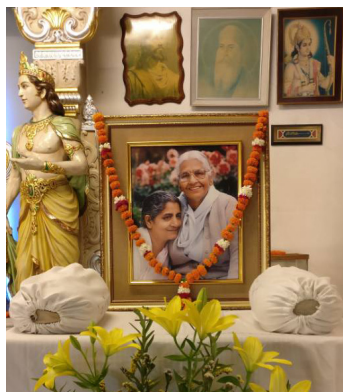
ARPANA TRUST, Madhuban,
Karnal, Haryana, India
June 2017

Arpana News

Knowledge of Life Preserved for Dissemination

Param Pujya Ma's discourses on video, containing the most precious knowledge of life and living, which had been preserved over the years on now almost defunct media, has been carefully and painstakingly recovered on digital media for viewing and dissemination over the past 4 years. Today, seekers' gatherings at Madhuban, in Defence Colony, Delhi, and even on the website are invigorated through beautifully clear videos of Param Pujya Ma's words and songs, called 'Urvashi'.

We are deeply grateful to Tom and Barbara Sargent, USA, for providing the support necessary for this mammoth project and to Arpana members who dedicated themselves to actualize it!



Sadhana Divas, Maha Samadhi Divas & Remembering Chhote Ma

Sadhana Divas, anniversary of the beginning of Param Pujya Ma's *sadhana*, celebrated on 9th March, was followed by Ma's Maha Samadhi Divas on 16th April and Chhote Ma's Samadhi anniversary on 10th May. At each of these functions, the Arpana family reaffirmed their gratitude to their Beloved Mother and committed themselves to a lifelong practice of the values She embodied and taught.

Award for Excellence in Human Endeavour

Arpana has been awarded the 20th Mahaveer Award for Excellence in Human Endeavour in the field of Community & Social Service by Bhagwan Mahaveer Foundation, which carries a cash component, a memento and a citation.

Aruna Dayal, who heads the Rural Development Team, said, "This is a celebration of Beloved Ma's legacy of Love and Service. Ma inspired this service to enable our disadvantaged and underserved communities, to create opportunities for better lives, greater dignity and respect. Our humble and grateful obeisance at Her Feet...

Himachal Activities

Best Women's SHG in the State – Arti Mahila Bachat Samooh



Arpana's group in village Chattar was recognized by NABARD as the best self help group in Himachal and presented an award on 11th Feb 2017. These women have shown an exemplary sense of enterprise. Their group has taken Rs. 20 lakhs in loans over the decade and returned all loans on time. They invested in building up home dairies and now supply about 2 quintals of milk daily to happy customers in Mangla & Chamba!

2nd Best Farmers' Club in the State – Jyoti Kisan Club of Village Kakela

The farmers, with Arpana's constant support, have shifted to vegetable crops and have devised collective marketing of their produce. Their returns have greatly enhanced their incomes, going up to 1,50,000/- per annum per farmer, from Rs. 10,000 per annum a few years ago. NABARD has recognized their success with an award as the 2nd best Farmers' Club.



PC Kapur, Director, Arpana Gajnoi Centre, presenting the award to Jyoti Kisan Club

Arpana is deeply grateful to IDRF, Tom Sargent and the Tides Foundation, USA, for their support of programs in Haryana and Himachal Pradesh

In Memoriam



Dr. J. Chakrabarti left his earthly abode in Noida, UP, in May 2017 after a prolonged illness.

A seed of service, planted by Param Pujya Ma, became an inspiring journey of dedication for Dr. Chakrabarti. Arpana is ever grateful for his dedicated service

to Arpana's Health Services in Himachal Pradesh, which he headed from 1993-2012.

He held daily free OPD clinics, outreach camps in remote villages and helped organize free Medical & Surgical Camps in 1996-2005, winning the hearts of hill folk and officers alike. His work was so much appreciated that the Himotkarsh National Integration Award was twice presented to Arpana in 2000 and 2001.

Delhi Programs

Arpana's Vasant Vihar Educational Program – They've Got Talent!

About 160 disadvantaged children in classes 1 & 2 enthusiastically sang and acted out favourite songs and stories at Sarvodya School for delighted parents and teachers on 28th April. Arpana's tuition support program is being held after regular school classes at this government school. Arpana's Community Centre in Vasant Vihar holds free computer classes for older kids.



Vocal Magic Creates Devotional Atmosphere

Shrimati Aastha Goswami captivated hearts with her unique style of *Padavali Gaayan*, by her devotional rendering at Rejoice, Arpana's Community Centre in Vasant Vihar, New Delhi, on 29th April. This experience, creating memories of special moments enriching the soul, was a bond of togetherness and love.

Arpana's Students at Molar Bund – Wooed by Retail Sector Company

5 members from Westside, Lajpat Nagar, visited the Arpana Center in April. The Store manager, HR officer and 3 employees (Arpana ex-students) explained about rising opportunities in the retail sector. Priyanka has already been promoted as an officer. Students were eager to hear them.



Haryana Rural Empowerment

"Inform, perform, transform!" The Prime Minister's phrase is apt for Arpana enabled rural womens' groups who, **informed** about demonetization, learnt cashless transactions; **performed** as 70% of interloaning in Arpana's SHGs was through NEFT or by cheque! For women recently learning about banking, a **transformative** step forward!



Arpana's Women Empowerment Program was recognized with an award presented by Mrs. Kiran Chopra, wife of Mr. Ashwini Chopra (MP) under the aegis of 'Jai Bharat Yuva Mandal' & 'Varisth Nagrik Kesari Club' on women's empowerment day in Karnal District.

Arpana Hospital

Remembering Papaji

Our beloved Dr. J.K. Mehta, Papaji to everyone, was the epitome of all a physician should be. His caring attitude and soothing demeanor attracted crowds of patients and his clinical acumen ensured speedy recovery.



Memorial ICU Inauguration

This year, to celebrate Sadhana Diwas on 9th March, we felt the best tribute to him would be to augment and strengthen the work that he started. The new 12 bedded Intensive Care Unit (ICU & HDU) was inaugurated in Arpana Hospital and dedicated to his memory. He was the first physician of Arpana and founder of Arpana's Rural Medical Service.

Honoring Dr. J.K. Mehta – Memorial Camp at Budhakhera Dispensary



A Medical and Eye camp was held at Budhakhera Dispensary, a facility given to Arpana by Sardar Teja Singh, due to his admiration for Papaji. His family also attended. 280 patients attended the Camp, with Dr. Ela Anand, FRCOG, personally conducting the Gynae & Obstetrics OPD in memory of Dr. Mehta. Eye patients were screened for cataract.

We, at Arpana, depend on your support for our programs

Arpana Trust and Arpana Research & Charities Trust are both approved under Section 80G of the Income Tax Act, 1961, giving 50% tax relief for donors in India.

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Send contributions in USA to:

Mr. Vinod Prakash, President, IDRF, 5821 Mossrock Drive, North Bethesda, MD 20852

Mr. Jagjit Singh, AID for Indian Development, 84 Stuart Court, Los Altos, CA 94022-2249

Send contributions to Arpana Canada:

c/o Mrs. Sue Bhanot, 7 Scarlett Drive, Brampton, Ontario L6Y 3S9, Canada

Please let us know by email or telephone, whenever you transfer funds to Arpana.

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The Cause of Creation

TRANSLATED FROM PARAM PUJYA MA'S ORIGINAL ELUCIDATION OF THE MUNDAK UPANISHAD
BY ABHA BHANDARI



From where does Creation spring? How does That Supreme One bring forth this entirety? This shloka is an answer to this eternal question. Through 3 allegories, the learned Rishis of yore have explained from whence this entirety arises and how it is reabsorbed again. That Supreme One Who is the substratum of all that exists, is the quiescent Creator of all... as also nucleus of its culmination.

In one of Her heartfelt prayers to the Lord, Ma sang out...

"Lord! This is my greatest fortune... that I am born of Thy Intent!"

This shloka also helps us to focus on our insignificant entity in this colossal Creation of the Lord and brings to mind the triviality of this ego which we flaunt ever so often!

In the elucidation of this shloka, Param Pujya Ma goes through every facet of Creation that this shloka brings forth, but in the end, places its devotional essence in the following words:

"O mind! Let all this be...

Let me know only that all is HE...

'Tis He who creates every form

And unto Himself reemerges each form!"

यथोर्णनाभिः सृजते गृह्णते च यथा पृथिव्यामोषधयः सम्भवन्ति ।

यथा सतः पुरुषात्केशलोमानि तथाक्षरात्सम्भवतीह विश्व ॥७॥

As the spider sends forth and draws in its thread, as plants grow on the earth, as hair grows on the head and the body of a living man, so does everything in the universe arise from the Imperishable.

Mundak Upanishad, shloka 7



Param Pujya Ma elucidates:

One Truth is explained through examples three...
From whence does this Creation spring?
How does it emerge spontaneously
This quintessence this *shloka* does bring.

Brahm needs no other support
Without any other He creates...
He Himself, within Himself,
With His own support He creates.

Through the first example, Creation springs from Him
And reunites with Him at dissolution...
The second demonstrates that whatsoever emerges,
Remains sustained by Him alone.

The third example clarifies that all Creation
That rises from Him is inert and remains inert...
Through these three paradigms 'tis clarified
How Creation from That One does surge.

In no way does That One alter
In no way does That One diminish...
He does all, He is all,
Yet That One never changes.

As the spider spurts forth its silken thread
And creates its maze,
The thread emerges from within
To create the web outside.

Then again, it absorbs that web
And digests its net within...
Similarly, this entirety
Emerges and absorbs in That Supreme Deity..

As plants and herbs grow from the soil
And re-merge into that same soil





That same soil adopts many a form
Yet each form is reclaimed by the soil...

In that self same way
This Universe is born of That Essence
In this variety of forms one seems to see
Remains that One Supreme Presence.

Maya flings out its golden mesh
And seems to be infinitely diverse
Yet when all this merges back to That One
That One is infinitely vast!

As each pore in a live body
Grows follicles that emerge spontaneously
They emerge, grow, and then recede
As lifeless hair they decline.

With these myriad examples they explain
The creation of this Universe...
How does That Unmanifest become manifest..
They try to thus symbolize.

As the web exudes from the spider,
'Tis in fact a form of that spider!
That spider is the essence of the web...
The web too is absorbed by that spider!

So also, the quintessence of this Universe
Is That Eternal Supreme...
That Supreme *Atma*
Is the One Essential Essence !

The thread of Creation emanates from Him
And is wrought by His own Self
And whenever He so wishes,
He reabsorbs that thread within Himself!





This entire Creation is wrought
By Him through His own satiation
Without any desire, without any aspiration
He wrought this entire Creation.

Therefore they proffer another explanation
Another allegory emerges...
Just as this earth provides the substratum
For all vegetation, so also this Creation emerges.

Devoid of desire, devoid of attachment,
Devoid of self purpose, That Creator created...
As vegetation continually rises from the substratum of the earth
So That Creator selflessly created.

As a seed falls to the ground and germinates
And the earth gives it that self same shape...
The earth seeks naught, the earth needs naught...
Without self purpose, it aids the seed to take shape.

So also, the seeds of *karma* sprout
Supported by the Creator's substratum
They sprout from attachment to this world
And attain many a form and dimension.

That One needs to make no effort
These seeds of *Karma* sprout on their own...
Containing the strains of the previous seeds,
They regeminate where they are grown.

As the conscious element of the body
Causes hair to erupt from its pores,
And without any pre determination
This hair grows forth from the pores...

Spontaneously this hair erupts
As though from its own self...





Without the slightest effort or endeavour
It grows forth from the live bodyself.

In the self same way this Cosmos emerges
From That Supreme Dimension...
Without any purpose, without any endeavour,
It attains growth and expansion.

Without purpose, without desire
The seeds of *karma* take form
Devoid of maneuverings, devoid of intention,
They themselves spontaneously take form.

That Supreme One is the Cause of this entirety
The Cause of all Creation is He...
He Creates Himself so to say
And the mainstay of all is He.

The inert, the conscious, this entire Creation
They state here, all is He
That Eternal Essence dons many a form
Yet That One Truth is He.

They speak here of the Non Dual Essence
Which in Creation seems to be divided...
These manifestations seem to be varied
Yet That Non Dual One remains One... undivided.

They speak again of the dream allegory
O mind! Understand this Truth once again
As in the dream, One is divided into many
But on waking the many become One again...

That Supreme Consciousness is also One
Never can That One be divided...
That Indivisible Being is One
That Supreme Truth cannot be divided.





As in the knowledge of *Apara* 'tis explained
Through the simile of the dream,
They speak of the thoughts and *karmas* that lead
To a new vista – a new dream.

In that dream, all is attained
Within the time frame that the 'dreamer' dreams...
But when the knowledge of *Para* is pursued,
That 'dreamer' transcends the dream.

Then only Bliss Itself remains
That non divisible Essence remains notwithstanding
The one who 'understands' no longer remains
For he transcends all understanding.

Take the example of the 'participant bird'...
When that one is merged with the Supreme,
Then the gross material world falls away
With the Spirit it finds affinity.

It then knows this entirety
It knows the cause of Creation
That one who knows Silence Itself
Becomes an embodiment of that Silence.

They state here that the sole cause of the universe
Is That Brahman Himself...
He is the essence of this Creation...
This entirety that we perceive.

O *Sadhak*, know also this truth,
He is all, yet He is naught...
Why are you thus engaged in this dream?
When its meaning is naught?

'Tis memories and unfulfilled desires
Which cause every new dream
Which bring forth several new offerings
In that renewed dream.



What is this dream state?
What is there in it to gain?
Where does this 'world' disappear
When wakefulness is regained?



So also, this entire Creation
Is a play... 'tis one such dream...
He who awakens knows this Truth
That this is a 'play' of ignorance.

That shape-less one... That thought-less one
That one without form is YOU...
Your essence is That Supreme quintessence of Truth
That Indivisible spirit is YOU.

Just as the actor in the dream
Is naught without the one who dreams,
So also, naught in this world
Exists devoid of That Supreme.

In many a way, 'tis explained here
Naught exists without That Supreme.
This Creation too is so called His
But naught is 'created' by That Supreme.

What to speak of this 'illusionary' world
What to say about this illusionary play?
What to say about those 'players' who meet
In this illusionary play?

They speak here of this 'illusion'
Why does this illusion happen?
As the *jiva* mistakenly perceives
A rope as a snake?

O mind! Let all this be...
Let me know only that all is HE...
'Tis He who creates every form
And unto Himself reemerges each form!



The Inner War

ADAPTED FROM PARAM PUJYA MA'S ELUCIDATION OF THE SRIMAD BHAGAVAD GITA

BY DR. ELA ANAND



Param Pujya Ma has clearly demonstrated the battle going on in Arjuna's mind. He had come to the battlefield having made all his preparations for war. He knew that his was the cause of dharma and Lord Krishna had given the Pandavas his full support. The five brothers had tried to maintain a relationship with their uncle Dhritrashtra and his sons. But the hearts of the Kauravas had not melted on seeing their humility and sacrifice. Having exhausted all possible avenues for reconciliation, they decided on fighting for their rights, which was also the path of dharma. Hastinapur had ever lead the kings of Aryavrata in righteousness and truth. They were sliding into adharma because of the nature of the Kauravas. The Lord comes to uphold and maintain dharma and to remove sin from the minds of good people. In supporting the Pandavas, and Arjuna in particular, Lord Krishna was fulfilling His role as the protector of dharma.

When Arjuna was actually faced with his revered elders in the opposite camp on the battlefield, the reality of the situation dawned on him. He had spent his life at the feet of his revered grandsire and Dronacharya. He idolized them. He was now faced with the enormity of the task, which was to kill his beloved elders to achieve victory.

The second thread was the realization that the enemy army was far superior to their own. These two trains of thought brought about the conflict in his mind which led to the weakening of his resolve to fight. It is these different elements which have made the Mahabharat near an immortal epic: to teach us different lessons when we, too, are faced with contentious situations in our lives. This forms the perfect background for the Gita – the celestial message which issued from the lips of Lord Krishna – which has been made alive for us through the divine elucidation of Param Pujya Ma.

Arjuna's state

- a) Arjuna was extremely knowledgeable.
- b) He had studied all the Scriptures.
- c) He had already acquired knowledge from great sages.
- d) He was extremely dutiful and conscientious.
- e) He worshipped his mother and his brothers and had given proof of his devotion towards them.
- f) He was a great warrior and immensely brave.
- g) He was just.
- h) He protected even his enemies.
- i) He adhered to *dharma* in life.
- j) At his elder brother's behest, he even accepted the injustice meted out to him and consequently had to live in exile in the forest.
- k) He was replete with divine attributes and respected his elders.

Seeing all this, it would be wrong on our part to consider Arjuna to be an ordinary person.

Arjuna's Dilemma

1. Arjuna did not want to kill his *Guru*, his illustrious grandfather, his brothers, their sons and grandsons and other kith and kin.
2. He was not prepared to destroy innumerable homes to gain pleasure for himself.
3. He was against taking the life of his elders to gain what was rightfully his.
4. He was ready to annihilate himself rather than kill others.

But remember little one, Arjuna had fought many battles before without any such considerations. His dilemma arose upon seeing his own kith and kin in the enemy lines.

This is the state of a *sadhak* established in *sattva* and one who is attached to the attribute of *sattva*, when he:

- a) finds himself unable to act contrary to his established concepts and basic beliefs;
- b) is attached to his own intellect;
- c) begins to become attached to his own image of godliness.

Then such a one finds it extremely difficult to renounce his attributes and would

rather die than forgo those qualities which he has hitherto upheld and practised.

He who is attached to the attribute of *sattva*, is indeed veiled by it. It becomes a veritable fetter. He may be noble and of saintly qualities, but he begins to take pride in those attributes and nurtures his ego. He takes credit for those traits and thus becomes bound by them instead of transcending them.

Where is the lacuna?

Such a one has not yet risen above his body sense, sense of doership, and pride in his individualism.

Arjuna thus:

- a) tried to escape from the war;
- b) took shelter under his attachment to the quality of *sattva* which was predominant in him, in order to escape from his duty;
- c) began to think that it was against the principles of *dharma* to fight this war.

He therefore took the support of his feelings, of his *bhavana*, to justify his decision and to absolve himself of any blame. He thus sought to prove himself to be just and to demonstrate even his wrong knowledge to be in keeping with *dharma*. He also tried to justify his *moha* or emotional attachments in this manner.

This is the work of *bhavana*. It changes the meanings of knowledge in order to cloak imagination with the garb of reality. Arjuna, too, is attempting to justify his attachment to his 'goodness' through the tenets of spiritual or scriptural knowledge.

Little one, mark the irony! Before him stood Lord Krishna Himself – the Embodiment of Knowledge – Love Itself, luminous Spirituality in physical form – He who was Pure *Atma* manifest, stood before Arjuna. Even then, Arjuna could not understand the

essence of this Being due to his attachment with his own attribute of *sattva*. He actually began to prove himself right to the One who was *Dharma* Himself and tried to show Him the path of knowledge!



Had Arjuna actually believed himself to be right, he would not have shown any mental or physical signs of nervousness. He would not have been so overwrought or anxious, nor would the *Gandiva* have slipped from his

hands. It was his *moha* which confused him and now constituted the knowledge which guided his attitudes. It provided him with a false sense of confidence on the one hand and filled him with doubts and aberrations on the other.

Arjuna's plight often befalls many a seeker. Such seekers tend to escape from normal behaviour and don new modes of unnatural action due to their '*moha*' or blind attachment to themselves.

The consequences of *moha*

When *moha* arises, such doubts are inevitable.

1. The individual then forgets his very nature and misinterprets knowledge.
2. He misjudges his duty and fails to discern between the noble and the dishonourable path.
3. Truth and falsehood become questionable for him and he cannot distinguish between *dharma* and *adharma*.

Thus *moha* is the root of the individual's downfall and timely realisation of this can prevent the destruction of the individual.

Injunctions for a *sadhak*

1. A *sadhak* must relinquish his attachment with 'I' and 'mine'.
2. He must detach himself from all intellectual preconceptions also.
3. He must interpret the Scriptures from the Lord's point of view.
4. He must not treat the Gita as mere knowledge, but as the Lord's injunction.
5. True followers of '*Arisudana*' will destroy the demons of the earth; they will not flee from their duty howsoever unpleasant it may be.

If we cannot understand Arjuna's dilemma, we will not be able to understand our present problems, nor the mistakes we make.

Little one, you must have noticed that many people, who endured severe hardships in the service of the nation, become leaders and suffer the same fate. They start protecting their own kith and kin out of *moha*, and when their desires become uppermost in their lives, their downfall begins. They break the very laws that they make for others, in their own homes. They use legalities to protect the unrighteous. They are enmeshed in their craving for wealth, fame, position, power etc. and wish to keep others in their fist.

If any amongst them are righteous, they will also face Arjuna's dilemma. At that moment, they will not be sold to material gain – instead they will ensure that they and their kindred follow the path of justice and a principled code of conduct. If their near and dear ones do not comply with the law of the land, they will fight them and deliver them to the law enforcing authorities. To protect those who sin is sheer cowardice.

Even if the sinner be a close relative, a *sadhak*'s duty lies towards righteousness and not towards persons. This is the mark of greatness and in this attitude lies true devotion to the Lord.

It is on this account that Arjuna lost his bearings and now fell at the feet of Lord Krishna, seeking guidance.

By calling it a '*Dharma Yudh*' (a war of righteousness) the Lord is implying that the Kauravas are treading the path of untruth and the Pandavas have chosen the path of Truth. A war between the two is desirable so that Truth may once again prevail.

- a) Therefore followers of the Truth must wage war against the untrue;
- b) Those on the path of untruth must be vanquished;
- c) Those who must fight this war will have to renounce their lifelong concepts and vanquish the foe even if the latter happens to be a friend or a relative.

The Lord is not repeating the knowledge that Arjuna already possessed – the knowledge of the Truth. With the help of that knowledge, he had conquered both *tamas* and *rajas* and now abided in *sattva*. The Lord now urges Arjuna towards the state of a *gunatit*. Arjuna had already learned to be unaffected by the qualities of others, now the Lord leads him towards transcendence of his own qualities. As long as his attachment with the attribute of *sattva* remained, Arjuna could not have fought this war, nor proceeded towards spiritual upliftment. ❖



Life goes on...

PURNIMA



The day my aunt died, my nephew had a daughter and a relative got married... Same day: some mourn, others celebrate... Some leave behind memories, some memories are created...

With the passage of time, the sting of pain is lessened as is the surge of joy, the thrill of newness. And life goes on!

As children our world revolves around our parents and our physical needs; in our middle years it is our career, friends and emotional needs that are of utmost importance; and in later years, we come to value family and seek to advance spiritually. Life takes a full circle when children look after parents in their old age as their faculties decline. Parents pass on... and those who were once children become parents and grandparents themselves... and life goes on!

People who were so important in our lives, without whom it was inconceivable to carry on... our elders and mentors who gave us our values, shaped our thoughts and nurtured our abilities, are nowhere around now – to guide us, support us, comfort us

in time of need... we may remember them with love or we may cry and lament... nevertheless life goes on!

We all live as if we are always going to be there. So we remain involved in our little day to day activities. Our relations, our possessions, our concerns occupy center stage. As soon as one milestone is reached, we plan for the next one. Life becomes a series of little incidents in succession. And years go by...

Is there a purpose to our life? That is the quintessential question. There are hundreds of galaxies, each having its own planets and suns and stars. So many forms of life... in different stages of development! We consider ourselves intelligent beings... having so many scientific accomplishments to our credit. We have devised machines to make our work easier in every sphere... thereby making a blueprint for our own downfall. But the world strides on...

In our race to do things faster with minimum effort, we are upsetting the whole eco system. The cost of industrialization is depleting green cover and resultant rising temperatures. In effect, advancement is leading to a more polluted, parched earth... where Nature and natural produce is being tweaked to create wealth at the cost of health. Yet life struggles on...

Along with napkins and cutlery, our lives are becoming disposable too. Plane crashes, natural disasters, terrorist attacks... people are dying in great numbers and many more are being born to replace them... diminishing resources and increasing numbers to feed and sustain... a recipe for future disaster?!

So what can we do? Take affirmative action at our own level, and according to our capacity, or sit back and watch as life limps along...

Instead of bemoaning the state of the world, let us contribute in our small way... plant one seed, educate one child, take one extra step, gladden one heart!

And maybe, maybe life will not pass us by...



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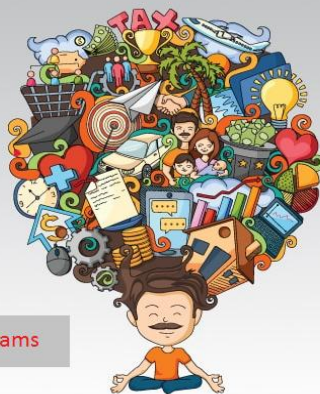
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- ### The Power OF SIP (Assumed rate of return: 12%)

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	Maturity Value	1.65 Lakhs	4.65 lakhs	10.09 Lakhs	19.98 Lakhs	37.95 Lakhs
5000	Investment	3.00 Lakhs	6.00 Lakhs	9.00 Lakhs	12.00 Lakhs	15.00 Lakhs
	Maturity Value	4.12 Lakhs	11.62 Lakhs	25.23 lakhs	49.96 Lakhs	94.88 Lakhs
10000	Investment	6.00 Lakhs	12.00 Lakhs	18.00 Lakhs	24.00 Lakhs	30.00 Lakhs
	Maturity Value	8.25 lakhs	23.23 Lakhs	50.46 lakhs	99.91 Lakhs	1.90 Crore.

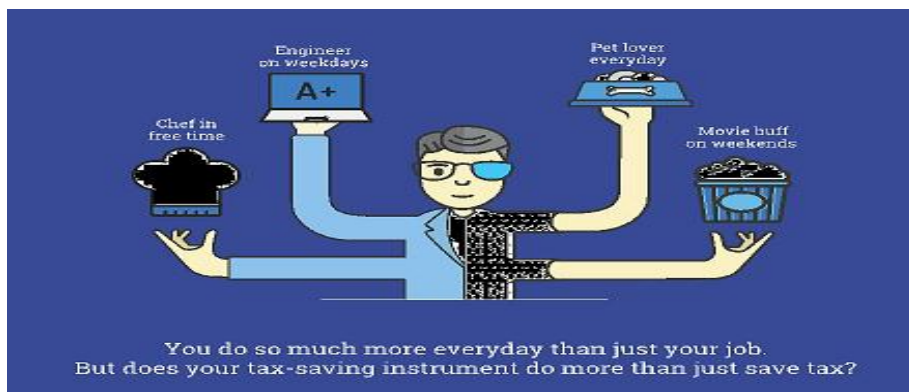
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Lock in	3 years	15 years*	6 years	5 years
Gains	Tax Free	Tax Free	Taxable	Taxable
Dividends	Tax Free	No Dividends	No Dividends	No Dividends
Market Linked Returns*	Yes	No	No	No
SIP Facility	Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available

Returns of Equity Linked Savings Scheme (u/s 80C)				
Fund	1-Year Return	3-Year Return	5-Year Return	10-Year Return
Birla Sun Life Tax Relief 96	12.58	25.22	18.58	11.57
DSP BlackRock Tax Saver Fund	19.37	25.14	19.51	-
ICICI Prudential Long Term Equity Fund	12.36	22.55	17.61	12.43
Reliance Tax Saver Fund	13.63	29.72	20.32	13.82
Tata India Tax Savings Fund	15.55	24.40	17.63	12.21

Dated : 8th November 2016,

All returns are shown as Compounded Annualised.

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