

You!

The Precious Gem



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ब्रज.....जन जन को अपनी स्नेहिल छाँव में लेनेको समर्पित.....आँचल



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Shri Radhe

You! The Precious Gem

It was a sultry summer night. A man residing at Juhu beach in Mumbai, was restless all night. Finally in the early hours of the morning he decided to get up and take a stroll on the beach. He wandered for some time and then stopped to sit ashore. It was pre-dawn and the visibility was poor. He sat there watching the waves. Engrossed in his thoughts, he began to play with the sand. Suddenly he happened to come across, what seemed to be a collection of pebbles. One by one he began to pick up these pebbles and started throwing them into the sea. He threw almost all of them, into the sea watching the ripples they caused, until the last one remained. As he lifted his hand to throw it, a hand suddenly clutched his arm and stopped

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him. The man turned around to see who it was? There was a sage who said, "Oh! What a foolish thing to do. Just look! at what you have done? It was dawn by then. The rising rays of the sun fell on the hand holding the pebble making it shine. The man looked at the stone and saw it was no ordinary stone. It was a precious Gem. He was startled and said, Oh! What have I done? The sage said, Due to His causeless mercy, God graced you and gave you a heap of gems, but without realizing its worth, you threw them all away.

Fortunate was the man, for at least someone helped him realize, what he was throwing away and helped him to save the last jewel.

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्यवराग्निबोधत ।

क्षरस्यधारा निषिता दुरत्यया दुर्ग पथस्तकवयो वदन्ति ॥
वेदमन्त्र, कठोपनिषद्

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Our Sages says: Arise! Awake! Lift yourself from the lower planes of sense-attachments, upto the higher seats of consciousness. Learn to differentiate clearly between body and soul. Sense pleasures are not considered pleasures at all, since they produce only the illusion of happiness and ultimately end in sorrow. Man can be truly happy only from within his soul's nature of bliss.

Since time immemorial, we have met innumerable sages and enlightened souls, who have grabed our hand and stopped us from throwing away the precious stones, (human lives) but we have not heeded to them. So many holy masters trying to awaken us. Even though we have gone to them, listened to them, we have never paid attention to what they said, nor followed the path they prescribed.

At least the man in the above incident was a wise man, who heeded to the sage and thus saved his last jewel.(human life) So what then is the precious jewel which we all possess, you may inquire?

Jagadguru Shankaracharya was once asked by his disciple,

Disciple - What is the rare thing to obtain in this world?

Master - "Manushyatwam" (The human body)

Disciple - Is there anything rarer?

Master - "Mumukswatwam"(a longing to gain liberation)

Disciple - Rarest?

Master - "Mahapurush Sanshrayah" (surrendering to an enlightened master)

नृदेहमाद्यं सुलभं सुदुर्लभं प्लवं सुकल्पं गुरुकर्ण धारम् ।
भयानुकूलेन नभस्वतेरितं पुमान् भवाब्धिं न तरेत् सआत्महाः ॥
श्री मद्भागवत महापुराण 11/20-17

Similarly in the Uttarkand of 'Ramcharit Manas' there is a dialogue between Garuda Ji and Kakbhushandji

गरुड़जी-प्रथमहि कहहु नाथ मतिधीरा ।
सबते दुर्लभ कवन सरीरा ॥

Out of the 8400000 species on this planet, which is the best form to be blessed with?

काकभुषुण्डिजी : नरतन सम नहिं कवनिउ देही ।
जीव चराचर जाचत तेही ॥

Out of all the species that live in the sky, water, space, earth, etc, whether they belong to the kingdom of Semi - Gods ; devas, Gandharvas, kinnars, or yakshas all yearn for the human form. Isn't it strange that those demi-Gods we worship desire to attain our

human form? The fruit of Upasana (Upa-asana sitting close to) is to attain the powers, abode and attributes of those whom we worship. We pray to them and they in turn, desire to be in human form. Why? Once Garuda Ji asked the same question to Kakbhushand Ji, What is the significance of this human form?

नरक स्वर्ग अपवर्ग निसेनी ।
ग्यान विराग भगति सुभ देनी ॥

Kakbhushandji replied - The human form is a ladder gifted to us. We can use it either to descend or to ascend. Where to? We may climb upto the heavens or walk down to hell, or to any of the other lokas we wish to. We may attain wisdom, detachment (vairagya) liberation (moksha) and above all Bhakti (selfless love and devotion for the Lord) You may wonder, as we just discussed that the human body is the rarest to obtain and Kakbhushand Ji said that it can also take us to

hell? Surely if it is that precious, it could not lead us to somewhere so dreadful? Well let's look at it a little deeper, and understand.

The good and the bad action, though they are the offsprings of the same consciousness manifest different results.

पुण्येन पुण्यलोकं नयति पापेन पाप लोकं नयति
उभाभ्यामेव मनुष्य लोकं ।।

The scriptures say that if we perform good actions with the intention of bearing the fruit of that action, or with a desire it is called 'Sakam-Bhavana' (सकाम भावना)

इष्टापूर्तं मन्यमाना वरिष्ठं
नान्यच्छ्रेयो वेदयन्ते प्रमूढाः ।
नाकस्य पृष्ठे ते सुकृतेऽनु भूत्वेमं
लोकं हीनतरं वा विशन्ति ।।
वेद मंत्र मण्डुकोपनिशद

action if performed as a sacrifice or out of sheer joy and love, it is known as "Nishkam - Bhavana" (निष्काम भावना) for e.g. If I build a hospital to get a big name and not caring to help the society, the action is 'Sakam' ;but if the same act is done, only to help mankind, the act is called 'Nishkaam'. The Sakam will attain heavens for its good deeds and having enjoyed its merits when exhausted, will again enter the world-of-the-mortals, its happiness is shortlived. The Lord calls such unintelligent people who repeatedly come and go into this world as fools. We may be shocked to hear this, because so far, we thought going to heaven was bliss. We often read in the obituary when a soul departs, "Mr. So & So has attained the heavens" because of our ignorance.

Adi Guru Shankaracharya says,

'पुण्यं च पापं च पापे'

"sins and merits both are sins for both do bind the soul with chains of iron or of gold", It's very confusing. isn't it? So far we thought sins are bondages, but here the sage says merits are also bondages? when done with a selfish motive gain heaven for us which is compared to chains of gold and sins done with a selfish motive take us to hell (chains of iron) both are binding because both are chains. You cannot walk with either of them tied to your feet. People have a wrong notion that once a human body is obtained it will always be with us, no matter what blunders we may commit, Do not be illusioned. Several times we have reached the realms of Brahma (the highest seat of the demi-gods) Indra-lok, and also the other various demi- Gods, and also to the lowest of hell, as cats, dogs, etc. It all depends on how we utilize our faculties. Act, we must, from birth to death, no living creature endowed with a mind and intellect can remain, even for a fraction of his wakeful conscious existence

without doing some work or the other. In our inborn ignorance, we act motivated by our ego entertaining sensuous desires, seeking joy and earning for ourselves fleeting happiness, endless sorrows, and inexhaustible mental impressions (vasanas)

Remember upto the realm of Brahmaji, we all are subject to rebirth, it is the field of 'Maya', and where ever Maya exist it is temporal. So what could we aim at? What is the goal of our life?

Shri Krishna says

“मामुपेत्यतु कौन्तेय पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते”

गीता-8/16

The Lord says that after attaining my abode there is no return. So the Lord says to aim for the Ultimate, we may call it 'Vaikunth, Saket, Kailash, Golok dham, all are synonymous. So we could perform God-dedicated selfless actions in a spirit of devotion

and self- surrender. Only this can lead us out of the vicious circle of ego- motivated actions. These souls are considered intelligent ones. Hence we conclude that whatever we want to achieve be it heaven, hell, wisdom, celestial lokas, renunciation or liberation all can be achieved only through this human form and no other. Let us also remember that this divine Gift (human form) is allotted to us for a fixed time. We will not be given even a moment extra even if we plead for it. The saints focused on:-

क्षण भंगुर जीवन की कालिका,
कल प्रातः को जाने खिली न खिली ।
मलया चल की शुचि सुन्दर मंद,
सुगन्ध समीर मिली न मिली ॥
कलिकाल कुठार लिए फिरता,
तन नम्र पे चोट झिली न झिली ।
कह ले हरि नाम अरी रसना,
फिर अंत समय में हिली न हिली ॥

Life and death are the two sides of the same coin.

प्रति श्वासं सविश्वासं रामं भज दिने दिने ।
को विश्वासः पुनः श्वासः आगमि व्यतिवानवा ॥

We believe ourselves to be the body, and so put all our efforts only to comfort and provide luxury to our body, without ever giving a thought to our real self (Jivatma) The Vedas advice us to recite the name of the Lord with every breath, for we never know when our breath will deceive us, and fly off. We often hear of so many of our near and dear ones departing but never for a moment we think that we are also going to depart one day. We know we will but not now. Why? How can you trust your breath?

नौ द्वारे के पिंजड़े में पंछी है पौन ।
रहने का है बड़ा अचम्भा जाने का अचरज कौन ?

The cage in which the eternal bird (soul) resides has nine doors opening out. Isn't it surprising that the bird is still in the cage? We are shocked if it soars. Whenever we hear of a person dying, we are shocked and immediately ask, Died? Who? What? When? Why? Where? The saints warn us, saying: -

दोऊन को न बिसारिए, जो चाहत कल्याण ।
नारायण इक मौत को, दूजे श्री भगवान् ॥

If we desire to be happy, we must always remember the Lord and also our death.

There is an incident in the life of Eknathji Maharaj. One of his devotee indulged in all sorts of vices. The saint always warned him of the consequences, but to no avail. One day when he went to the saint he noticed that the saint was serious and looked concerned. The devotee inquired into the cause, and to his amazement he was told that he had only seven days left to indulge in his vices. The Saint said,

"I can see your death arriving Go home now and come back after seven days." This greatly disturbed the devotee and when he returned home, he could neither sleep, rest, eat, drink, or enjoy, any of his family, friends nor any of his vices. He only thought of his impending death. The countdown had begun. He was aware of his every thought and move. This man who was very greedy and possessive started sharing, helping and also praying. As told by his guru, he returned after a lapse of seven days and fell at his Guru's feet, asking for pardon for all the sins he had committed so far. The merciful Guruji disclosed the secret of his happiness to his devotee saying, "Son! Always remember the Lord and your death if you want to lead a happy life. Slowly you will move away from the world of objects and get closer to the Lord, If you abstain from undesirable and unethical deeds, naturally the attachments of the world will not bind you

and you will develop devotion for the Lord."
The saint further explained: -

जो न तरे भवसागर, नर समाज अस पाई ।
सो कृत निंदक मंदमति, आत्माहन गति जाई ॥
सो परत्त दुख पावइ सिर धुनि धुनि पछताइ ।
कालहि कर्महि ईस्वरहि मिथ्या दोष लगाई ॥
उत्तरकाण्ड रामचरित मानस, दो. 43-44

Saint Tulsidas in the Ramcharit Manas says: - Being born in India. (a land of Rishis) and also having so many great masters to aspire us, enlighten us, awaken and guide us, still if we do not aspire or arise above our sensuous satisfaction, it is as though we are committing the sin of killing. Whom? Our own self, because we have not allowed it to soar.

Remember Life is a gift from God. What we do with it, is our gift to God.

While fishing in the rivers, there are three types of fish caught in the net.

1.Those who are aware that they are caught up in the net, but do not care to be free.

2.Those who are aware, struggle to free, and eventually give up, feeling incapable.

3.Those who are aware, struggle with all their strength, have faith in themselves, and finally manage to free themselves.

Similarly, human beings are also of three types: -

1.Those who are ignorant of this human life. Who am I? What is my goal? Why have I come into this world? They are ignorant and just eat, drink, work, earn money, get married, procreate, grow old and die.

2.Those who have met spiritual masters, who have guided them with their teachings, realized the value of this human body, but eventually get caught up in the worldly attachments.

3. Those who have been lucky to be guided, inspired and also have the will power to tread on the spiritual path, forgoing their material enjoyments and finally achieving their goal of infinite and everlasting happiness.

The call of our Masters "Awake! Arise! and attain everlasting bliss.

बिगड़ी जनम अनेक की, अबही सुधेर आज ॥

We have wasted this opportunity several times. Now we must make the best use of this chance and strife for the highest, because

कबहुँक करि करुना नर देहि ।
देत ईस बिनु हेतु सनेही ॥

We are not sure whether we will get another chance again,

इह चेदसकद् बोद्धं प्राकशरीरस्य विस्त्रसः ।
ततः सर्गेषु लोकेषु शरीरत्वाय कल्पते ॥
वेद मन्त्र, कथोपनिषद कणे

The Vedas repeatedly warn us to achieve our goal before our life ebbs out. We must strive to know, understand recognize and accept God.

Philosophers say that "**this world is like an echo. You get what you give. Be it hatred or love**", for e.g. once a child was passing through a jungle. There was silence all around. The child was a bit scared. The surroundings were such that there was an echo produced with the softest sound. Sensing a sound, the scared child called out, who is it? The sound rebounded, who is it? The child screamed, "I will hit you". The echo replied. The child was terrified, and ran home and fainted in his mother's lap. When the child gained consciousness he related the incident to his mother. The wise mother understood the case. The next day the mother taught the child, "Today you go and call out, "I am your friend, I want to play with you". The child did, as was

taught by the mother. The echo rebounded. The child was very happy. So we see that **Love begets love, and hatred begets hatred.**

Similarly, In a class, a teacher conducted an experiment. He asked his students to write down the names of all the boys in the class whom they despised. After a minute he collected the papers, and found that the children who wrote the maximum names, even their names were written by many of the boys they disliked. Those who did not write any name, their name was also not written by anyone. So **whatever you want to receive in life, you have to learn to give first. That is the law of Nature, or the law of giving. You get back only what you give in life.**

Normally in life, we avoid people who criticize us, but our saints tell us.

निंदक नियरे राखिये, अंगना कुटी छ्वाय ।
बिनु पानी साबुन बिना, निर्मल करत सुभाय ॥

Such people are the ones who help us in life. They are our greatest friends, and we should keep them in our courtyard. They cleanse the dirt from our minds, What is the dirt? The ego, the pride is the dirt collected by our mind, and those who envy us, carry it in turn on their minds. This is the power of the mind. The more you put your thoughts on, the more you attract it - You think big, you become big. You think small, you become small. Check your mind, check your thoughts, where it goes, and divert it to what you want in your life. Do not allow it to ruin you.

Repulsion (Dwesh), Attachment (Raga), Ego (Avidya), Kama (Lust), Krodha (Anger), Greed (Lobha), Delusion (Moha), Pride (Mada), Envy (Matsarya) are all warriors of evil forces.

यह सब माया कर परिवारा ।
प्रबल अमिति को बरने पारा ॥

व्यापि रहेउ संसार महुँ माया कटक प्रचंड ।
सेनापति कामादि भट दंभ कपट पाखंड ।।

श्रीरामचरितमानस, उत्तरकाण्ड

This is the family of 'Maya' which prevails the universe As long as we are in Avidya (ignorance) we are under the influence of 'Maya' or we are called "Agya". And when we surrender to the almighty and attain wisdom, we are called 'gya' or 'Mayateet' means those who have crossed the influence of Maya. And the master of all is called 'Sarvagya' or 'Param Purush'. He notes all our thoughts, words and deeds and gives us the fruit of all our actions. That is why we have to be very careful, because not a single thought, word or deed goes unnoticed. Saint Tulsidasji in the Manas says: -

मन क्रम वचन छांडि चतुराई ।
भजतहिं कृपा करत रघुराई ।।

Drop all cunningness of thought, word & deep and surrender to the Lord as a child to its mother Cleanse your mind of all desires and fears. Drop all ego of false vanity, pride, possessions, intelligence, beauty, knowledge, health, wealth, power, name, fame, family, friends, relatives, etc and surrender, to receive the grace of the Lord. The day you realize the futility of your efforts, and rely on the Lord's grace only and drop all doing and then you surrender whole - heartedly, naturally the Lord will shower his grace on you.

"Drop all doing" means what? No effort is required to be happy means what? Surrender means what? Does it mean that we have to go and dwell in the temples? Do we stop going to office or stop looking after our families? Or go and live in Brindavan, Ayodhya or in the Himalayas. Saint Kabir says:-

माला फेरत जग मुआ, मिटा न मन का फेर।
कर का मनका डार दे, मन का मनका फेर।।

Throw away the rosary which you have been turning all your life. You seem to be chanting the holy name with the lips only, but the mind, which is the cause of our bondage has been wandering around indulging in the paltry pleasures of the world, at times thinking of wife or husband, at times about the name and fame, or wealth, wine and women. Though the body is physically involved in spiritual practices, but not mentally, therefore it receives the fruit of its bondage to the senses. Saint Kabir says the Lord does not need our body, it needs only a pure mind. The lord is so compassionate that He has laid no conditions for His Grace. He says, "**I need not your body, nor your wealth, just one thing, I ask of you, that is your clean, pure mind**". Had He asked for any part of this physical body, so many of us would have disagreed. But the Lord has

asked for our mind, which no one can deny or say, "I don't possess it". He has blessed us all with a body-mind-intellect.

In the sixth chapter (Bhagvad Gita-verse 34). Arjun says to Lord Shri Krishna, "I do have a mind, but it is not stable, it is ever turbulent, strong and unyielding".

चंचलं हि मनः कृष्ण प्रमाथि बलवद्दृढम्।
तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम्।।

गीता 6/34

Turbulence shows the speed in the flow of thoughts, and restlessness and agitation cause waves on the surface. Not only fast and rough, but powerfully attached to some sense-object or the other, difficult to arrest have to pull it back from its plight and persuade it to the chosen point. By the simile given here, "as the wind". Arjuna says-it is difficult to control the mind, but we see in our day-to-day experience, it is not so. For example when a

child goes to school and his mother places a coin in his pocket for him to spend it, he buys a candy daily. One day his mother forgets to place the coin in her child's pocket, when he wanted to eat a candy, he put his hand in his pocket as usual, and saw that his mother had forgotten to give him the coin, he does not insist on buying the candy. He suppresses his desire. The child has control on his mind. Similarly, with all of us. How does Arjuna say thus. Let us understand the working of our mind.

Our Vedas say:

आत्मान् रथिनं विद्धि शरीरं रथमेवतु ।
बुद्धि तु सारथिं विद्धि मनः प्रगहमेव च ॥
इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुर्विषयां स्तेषु गोचरान् ।
आत्मेन्द्रिय मनोयुक्तं भोक्ते व्याहुर्मनिषिणः ॥
(वेदमंत्र, कठोपनिषद्)

God has blessed all of us with a chariot in human form. The five sense organs are

compared to the five horses of this chariot. Mind is compared to the reins of the chariot. Intellect to the driver of the chariot. The driver holds the reins of the chariot and guides the horses to its destination. The reins are inert, they are pulled by the driver. The reins are not capable of guiding the horses. Now think if there is an accident who is to be blamed? The horses? The reins? Or the driver? Obviously the problem lies in the intellect (driver), which is eclipsed by greed and attachments and follows its outward wanton inclinations in seeking gratification, Hence there is a decay of human personality. The Lord who is the destroyer of ignorance, helps his distraught devotee Arjuna and says:

असंशयं महाबाहो मनोदुर्निग्रहम् चलम् ।
अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते ॥

– श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता 6/35

The great philosopher, Shri Krishna with the very first word in his reply tickles Arjuna's

vanity, "No doubt, O! Mighty-armed. The mind is turbulent strong, unyielding and restless, very difficult to control. Arjuna is flattered and brought to a restful peace but Oh! Son of Kunti the mind can be brought under control through practice and renunciation, and ultimately to a perfect halt.

The two main causes for the agitation of mind are:

1. Attachments to our near and dear ones and to the objects of the world.
2. Expectations which is root of all sorrow.

By practice (abhyasa) Arjuna asks the Lord How to control the mind? The Lord says, "It is a constant repetition of an idea regarding one and the same object of thought." Abhyasa strengthens renunciation (sannyasa) which generates detachment (vairagya). The moment we start becoming aware of our lives, we are in the realms of "practice". Thus when the

attachments and expectations drop-off, on its own accord. The mind comes under our control.

करत करत अभ्यास के जड़मति होत सुजान ।
रसरी आवत जात के सिल पर परत निशान ॥
(श्रीराम चरित मानस)

Saint Tulsidasji says, By practice you can achieve your goal of everlasting happiness".

Our life is a paradox. We are the soul made in the image of God (divine spirit). The soul can be satisfied only with divine pleasures, yet bodily incarnate We are familiar only with sensory experiences. The senses appear friendly because they promise us a temporary intoxicating pleasure in the flesh. Continuously catering to the demands of our body creates evergrowing dissatisfaction. Placed between material and spiritual (body and soul) We must use our discrimination to distinguish between the real and the false.

When our soul is identified with God, it feels the joy of eternal bliss but when our soul acts as the ego, limits itself to a particular body, it is pitifully cribbed, confined and caged. Only by deep contemplation we can understand this. Finally the sages explain how to distinguish between the real and the unreal.

सुर नर मुनि सबके यह रीति ।

स्वार्थ लागि करहि सब प्रीति ॥

(श्रीरामचरित मानस)

Tulasidasji says that all you see around you in the world is not love. It is only deception. The demi-Gods, and also all the humans around us are all deceiving each other by showing their love, infact, they are trying to achieve their goals. Love as we understand is not love. **Love is a very divine gift where there is not the slightest expectation of receiving in return.** All the relations of this world are selfish, it may be husband-wife, or

father and son etc. Only the Lord is the treasurer of Divine Love and He blesses his evolved souls with love. Those who are realized and enlightened and have transgressed all bodily attachments are the blessed ones. God and his Saints (messengers) come to this earth only to Love Mankind. They need nothing in return. They come to wake us up, to guide us to inspire and to enlighten us. Their motto in life is only to **GIVE, GIVE and GIVE.**

Let us all learn this art from our Great Masters and make our lives joyous and spread this joy to the lives of those around us.

Jai Jai Shri Radhey

