



The Vision

A monthly journal started by HH Swami Ramdas in 1933
DEDICATED TO UNIVERSAL LOVE AND SERVICE

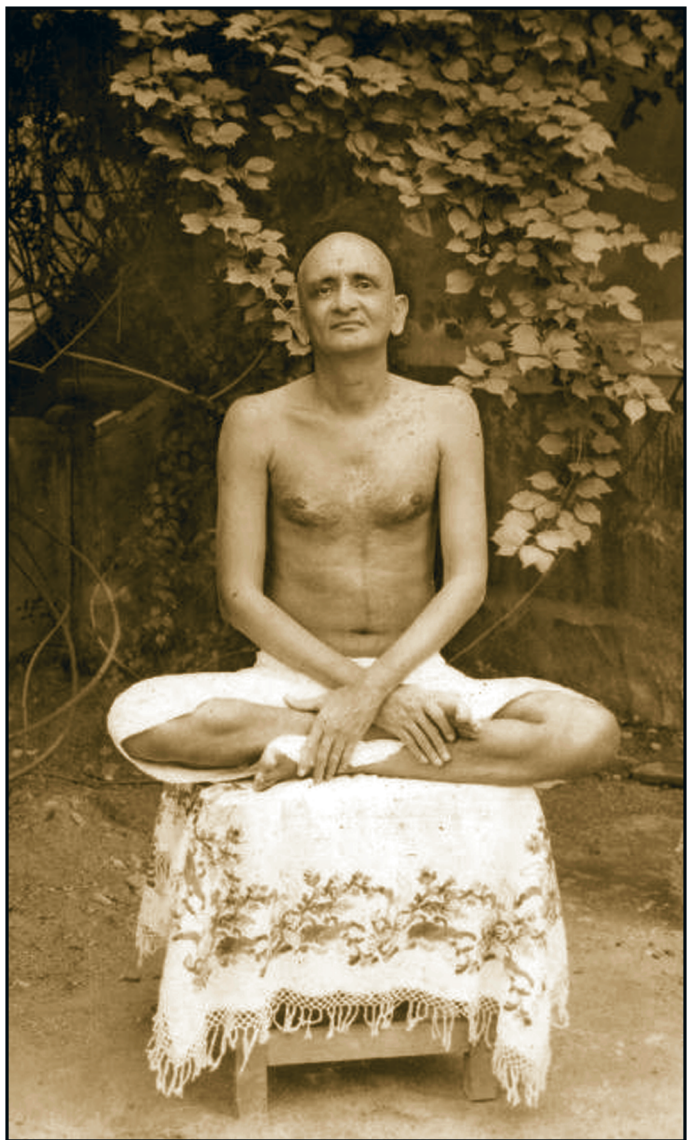
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Beloved Papa Swami Ramdas (1884-1963)

Om Sri Ram jai Ram jai jai Ram

ॐ श्री राम जय राम जय जय राम

Om Sri Ram jai Ram jai jai Ram

I AM THE TOOL

I am the willing tool
In the hands of my Lord.
In whatever field I serve

Whatever work I do

He sets me to it.

My life is His,

My body is His.

Dwelling within me

He guides and controls me —

My friend, comrade and protector. □

— **Swami Ramdas**



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FROM THE EDITOR

t the outset let us try to understand that the spiritual journey combines Jnana, Bhakti and Karma. Jnana is to Know Him, Bhakti is to love Him and Karma is to serve Him. Here ‘Him’ stands for the Creator as well as His creations. That is why Beloved says, “To love all is the true Bhakti of God and to serve all is the real worship of God.”

Very often, we do have Bhakti — devotion — which is merely limited to going to temples or Ashrams. When we return from these places of worship, the Deity is left in the temple and the Guru, in the Ashram. This form of Bhakti, though alright in the initial stage, does not help much in our journey to become aware of His presence within. However, if we, as spiritual children of Beloved Papa, want to get stabilised in God-thought, our thoughts, words and deeds must always bear the stamp of Love. This can be accomplished by integrating Jnana, Bhakti and Karma in all that we think, talk and do.

The amalgamation of Jnana, Bhakti and Karma is not a foreign concept to us. It is something that we do on a daily basis. For example, if we would like to prepare a cup of tea for someone we care about, the

first thing necessary is to know how to prepare tea; that denotes knowledge — Jnana; then we need to gather the required ingredients and actually prepare the tea, that is acting upon the knowledge we have acquired — Karma; and last but not least, when we prepare the tea with love, we will see to it that it is made to perfection, adding the fragrance of love to the knowledge and action — Bhakti.

Whether we are aware of it or not, we are constantly applying this in each and every activity that we do. If we add the God-dimension — Bhakti dimension — to our actions by dedicating them to the Divine, there will not only be perfection in what we do, but there will be a sense of fulfillment in it too. Therefore, Beloved Papa said, “Do not divide Bhakti, Jnana and Karma as distinct limbs of Yoga or different Yogas. **Pure Bhakti is itself the fire of Jnana. The movement born of the equality of Bhakti and Jnana is itself Karma. The heart is rising in waves of Bhakti. Buddhi is enlightened with Jnana. The confluence of these two produces the blissful stream of Karma for the good of humanity.** Thus, the Yoga that is formed of Bhakti, Jnana and Karma is the perfect Prem-Yoga or Yoga of Love. Prem or Love does not mean the emotional ebullitions of the heart. It is the very form and being

of God Himself shining with the lustre of perfection in whom Bhakti, Jnana and Karma are equally embodied.” Let us heed these words of Beloved Papa on the integration of Jnana, Bhakti and Karma and try our level best to apply them in our day-to-day lives.

This month’s issue of THE VISION explores the theme of integrating Jnana, Bhakti and Karma in light of the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita. □

— *Editor*



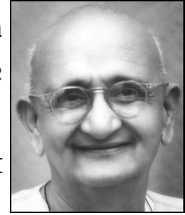
Y*ou see there are three functions — of the intellect, of the heart and of the body. Intellect thinks, heart feels and body acts. In the Bhagavad Gita, the great scripture of the Hindus, there are three Yogas described. They are Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Karma Yoga. The Bhagavad Gita teaches us that one attains union with God through knowledge, love and action. These three must develop together so that we can unite with God through the divinisation of intelligence, love and action. This is called Integral Yoga.*

— *Swami Ramdas*

SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION

By Swami Ramdas

The composition of a human being is made up of three dynamic elements, namely, intellect, heart and will. The intellect relates to the faculty of understanding, heart to emotion and will to action. The realisation of God or Truth is to dwell in the consciousness of that Supreme Source which infuses the spirit of movement into these three elements. Because, by the recognition of this Divine source the life of a human being, in all its aspects, attains perfect harmony and peace of the Eternal. So, in the struggle of the human soul for arriving at this Goal he should develop the intellect, heart and will simultaneously so that he can realise the Source from which these receive their movements. Any abnormality in the development of one of these faculties over the other results in disharmony and therefore in prolongation of the struggle.



In the language of the Indian mystics, these predominant faculties that form the life of an individual are called **Bhakti, Jnana and Karma.**

- Bhakti denotes the elevation of the heart towards

the great Reality through purified emotion or love.

- Jnana is the awakening of the intellect to the consciousness of the indwelling Truth through discrimination and dissociation.
- Karma is action performed in a spirit of selfless and spontaneous service.

These three processes must work in unison if the aspirant would attain the goal as speedily as possible.

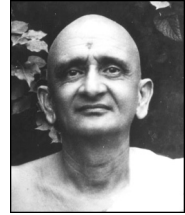
Reason and emotion should mutually aid and control each other, and from the balance of these two must proceed action. Thus, it is clear that to give undue importance to the cultivation of any one of these faculties is wrong.

Life's fulfilment lies only in the realisation of the Master Power or Truth who is at the basis of the varied gross and subtle manifestations in the universe. When once life has seen the source and end of it as one and the same, the intellect, heart and body are automatically attuned with each other in all their movements. Then the glory of life is revealed in all its magnificence because it is now filled with Divine light, ecstasy and peace. A soul who has reached this highest consummation of life lives and acts in the world as the very embodiment of the highest wisdom, universal love and blissful activity. □

WORDS OF BELOVED PAPA SWAMI RAMDAS

Devotee: Are there not techniques to join the intellect, heart and action?

Papa: They develop together. They are three parts of the same being. In meditation you identify yourself with



the Divine within you, your heart overflows with love towards all alike, and your actions are selfless and are done for the relief of the distress of others whether they are your relations or not. It is in the impure heart there is attachment, but when your heart becomes pure by constant remembrance of God, there is no more attachment in it and it overflows with pure love towards the entire humanity.

So, these three paths of Jnana, Bhakti and Karma go together. They are shown in the Bhagavad Gita not as different Yogas but as one synthetic approach to God, because God is not merely a silent and static Spirit, God is all love and sympathy for the suffering humanity and He is also God of Karma or action, and His power works through the body for the good of others. God is eternal wisdom; God is infinite love and God is almighty power. These three are the attributes of God.



Devotee: Should we take the six Darshanas as representing five different views, another one as the synthesis of the whole, the last one being Vedanta? I am struck by the fact that Sankhya is being quoted very often which, being a Darshana, is one of the forms of error.

Papa: In the Bhagavad Gita we find a synthesis of all the Yogas — Sankhya, Vedanta and Tantra — of Jnana, Bhakti and Karma. Gita holds before us an integral Yoga in which all the Yogas are combined. Kapila first expounded the Sankhya, in which it is said there are innumerable Purushas and one Prakriti. But Krishna changed it into his own Sankhya in which there is only one Purusha and one Prakriti. Universal manifestation is Prakriti and the all-pervading Spirit is the Purusha. You will find so many Jivas who have ultimately to realise the Purusha aspect and having realised it, witness the Prakriti standing apart from it. This is what is said in the Bhagavad Gita about Sankhya. Vedanta relates to the seeing of the Divine everywhere in the universe and worshipping that Universal Lord with all your love. This love aspect of the Divine relates to the heart and so this is called Bhakti Yoga. Karma Yoga is to do all actions of the mind, senses and body in a spirit of dedication to

the Divine Shakti. All these actions, you realise, are not done by you but by the Universal Power, Shakti, according to the Tantra. The Power that makes the plant grow, the wind blow, the sun shine, is the same Power that makes every other thing active and is also responsible for your own activity — physical and mental. When you know this, your ego-sense is dissolved and you realise your oneness with Shiva — the static, calm, silent Brahman. Even after realising your identity with Shiva, you are active in the world. You are active not in the sense of an individual as such but as an instrument of the Cosmic Power. So these three — Sankhya, Vedanta and Tantra — together form the integral Yoga. In other words, Sankhya, Vedanta and Tantra are interrelated to each other.

Bhagavad Gita wants you to believe and realise that you are not merely a human being but an all-comprehensive and all-inclusive embodiment of the Divine. The Atman or Purusha of the Sankhya, Brahman of the Vedanta and the Shiva of the Tantra are one and the same. In order to realise the Godhead in His entirety a person must practise Sankhya Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Karma Yoga simultaneously. Sankhya Yoga is the practice for realising the Purusha, by identifying oneself with the

Purusha in meditation. By Vedanta or Bhakti Yoga you offer yourself completely to God, out of one-pointed love and adoration. That means through love and devotion you find union with God and realise His Brahman aspect which is the same as Purusha aspect. By dedication of all your actions to the Divine, realising that by the Divine Power alone you are doing everything, you eliminate the ego-sense completely and surrender to the Divine. These three Yogas are linked together. They belong to the three aspects of our being — intellectual, emotional and physical.



Papa: The ‘Gita’ is like a diamond. It has several facets. Jnana, Bhakti, Karma — these are all taught in the ‘Gita’. Sri Aurobindo calls it ‘Triune Yoga’ — all combined, not different. Karma relates to the body, Bhakti to the heart, and Jnana to the intellect. You must be a Jnani, you must be a Bhakta and you must be a Karma Yogi: all put together — head, heart and will. This is the end. ‘Will’ means the Power which works through the body selflessly for the good of the world. The work is done spontaneously. Why? Because the ego-sense is absent in you. Your actions bear fruit for the good of humanity. □

WORDS OF PUJYA MATAJI KRISHNABAI

In the beginning, Papa gave me the Name and told me to chant it aloud and incessantly so that its sound should fall on my ears. Then, my mind started running in different directions. Till then, I was not even aware that my mind used to run in different directions but as I started chanting Ram Nam, I became aware of my mind's wanderings. When I told Papa that my mind was wandering, Papa told me not to worry but to consider that whatever I saw, whatever I heard and whatever I felt was Him and Him alone. So, whatever I did was His service. All were His forms and whatever service I rendered, to whomsoever I rendered, was in fact service to Papa's form.



Papa told me to make my mind dwell on His Divine attributes — 'Papa, Thou art Nirguna, Nirakara, Nirvikara; Papa, Thou art eternal, infinite, all-pervading: Thou hast become everything and Thou art beyond everything; such a Papa is seated in my heart'. Thus, Papa made me do Bhakti Yoga (taking His Name incessantly, Jnana Yoga

(contemplating on His attributes) and Karma Yoga (serving all as His forms) simultaneously.



When you read any book of Beloved Papa's, you perform all the three Yogas together. You do Karma Yoga through your act of picking up the book and reading it. When you imbibe what you have read and it records in your mind, that becomes Jnana Yoga. And, the feeling of devotion that wells up in your heart when you pick up and read Papa's book becomes Bhakti Yoga.

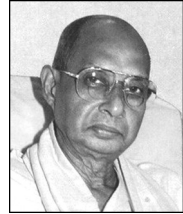


For some people, their chosen path is Dhyana and Dhyana only and, going by this path, they gain everything that is to be gained on the spiritual path. For some, it is Bhakti and for some it is Seva. But, in my case, Beloved Papa taught me to do all the three and that is what, in turn, I am telling you all to do. Papa taught me to consider every thought that came into my mind as His Dhyana, every act I did as His Seva and whatever I spoke as His Name. Thus, Papa granted me the supreme experience of all the three paths, until there was nothing that was not encompassed by these three paths. □

SPIRITUAL ENDEAVOURS TO RAISE OURSELVES

By Swami Satchidananda

By blessing man with intellect and the capacity to raise himself from the animal to human and from human to Divine, God has given him the choice either to sink low or



to rise higher and higher to become Divine. When the aspiration to raise himself gets strong in him, he strives more for the knowledge of the Truth of his Real Being than for the pleasures of the senses. This is the great turning point in his life. By his efforts to experience more, he will also be able to accept that there is a Higher Power that is causing this universe to appear, exist and disappear and if he prays to that Power, he can also raise himself to higher levels of consciousness.

Here begins the real effort to raise himself to higher levels of consciousness. He is in frantic search of someone who lives in that highest consciousness. Fortunately for humanity, there are a few such, only rarely do we see them living here and there in this vast world. They have realised their oneness with that Absolute Power and Existence and are enjoying

the peace and bliss Eternal, unaffected by the pain and sorrows of the world to which an ordinary man is bound miserably. Taking blessings and guidance from such a great one, the seeker tries to follow one of the many paths, namely, devotion, knowledge, selfless work, or Yoga. The more intense his aspiration to realise the Truth, the faster will be his progress.

It is necessary to know at least whether one aspires to realise God or to lead worldly life. Without such a knowledge, one is prone to seek only material gains and enjoyment of the senses at any cost. But a little knowledge of the Truth and the contact of a saintly soul will definitely make a great change in his life and ambitions and the ways he adopts to fulfil them. He will be self-sacrificing, loving and serviceable to others, honest in his dealings, kind and compassionate, understanding and sympathetic and thus prove himself to be a blessing to humanity.

To help a person to lead such a pure and contented life, chanting of God's Name as a special practice is advised by great saints and sages. The Name, besides transforming a person who is a votary of it, from animal to human, is also powerful enough to make him Divine and lead him to the supreme goal of God-realization. □

SHLOKAS FROM THE BHAGAVAD GITA

Jord Krishna has brought out the different facets of Jnana, Bhakti and Karma in Srimad Bhagavad Gita. A few Shlokas from the book on each of these subjects are quoted below to get a glimpse into these words of wisdom:

JNANA

Chapter 2, Shloka 49:

दूरेण ह्यवरं कर्म बुद्धियोगाद्धनञ्जय ।
बुद्धौ शरणमन्विच्छ कृपणाः फलहेतवः ॥ 2:49॥

*dūreṇa hy-avaram karma buddhi-yogād dhanañjaya
buddhau śharaṇam anvichchha kṛpaṇāḥ phala-hetavaḥ*

Translation: Seek refuge in Divine knowledge and insight, O Arjun, and discard reward-seeking actions that are certainly inferior to works **performed with the intellect established in Divine knowledge.** Miserly are those who seek to enjoy the fruits of their works.

Chapter 4, Shloka 10:

वीतरागभयक्रोधा मन्मया मामुपाश्रिताः ।
बहवो ज्ञानतपसा पूता मद्भावमागताः ॥4:10॥

*vīta-rāga-bhaya-krodhā man-mayā mām upāśhritāḥ
bahavo jñāna-tapasā pūtā mad-bhāvam āgatāḥ*

Translation: Being free from attachment, fear, and anger, becoming fully absorbed in Me, and taking refuge in Me, **many persons in the past became purified by knowledge of Me**, and thus attained My Divine love.

Chapter 4, Shloka 37:

यथैधांसि समिद्धोऽग्निर्भस्मसात्कुरुतेऽर्जुन ।
ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुरुते तथा ॥4:37॥

yathaidhānsi samiddho 'gnir bhasma-sāt kurute 'rjuna
jñānāgniḥ sarva-karmāṇi bhasma-sāt kurute tathā

Translation: As a kindled fire reduces wood to ashes, O Arjun, **so does the fire of knowledge burn to ashes all reactions from material activities.**

Chapter 4, Shloka 38:

न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते ।
तत्स्वयं योगसंसिद्धः कालेनात्मनि विन्दति ॥4:38॥

na hi jñānena sadṛśhaṁ pavitramiha vidyate
tatsvayaṁ yogasansiddhaḥ kālenātmani vindati

Translation: **In this world, there is nothing as purifying as Divine knowledge.** One who has attained purity of mind through prolonged practice of Yoga, receives such knowledge within the heart, in due course of time.

BHAKTI

Chapter 5, Shloka 17:

तद्बुद्धयस्तदात्मानस्तन्निष्ठास्तत्परायणाः ।
गच्छन्त्यपुनरावृत्तिं ज्ञाननिर्धूतकल्मषाः ॥5:17॥

tad-buddhayas tad-ātmānas tan-niṣṭhās tat-parāyaṇāḥ
gachchhantypunar-āvṛittim jñāna-nirdhūta-kalmaṣhāḥ

Translation: Those whose intellect is fixed in God, **who are completely absorbed in God, with firm faith in Him as the supreme goal**, such persons quickly reach the state from which there is no return, their sins having been dispelled by the light of knowledge.

Chapter 7, Shloka 17:

तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिर्विशिष्यते ।
प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः ॥7:17॥

teṣhām jñānī nitya-yukta eka-bhaktir viśhiṣhyate
priyo hi jñānino 'tyartham ahaṁ sa cha mama priyaḥ

Translation: Amongst these, I consider them to be the highest, **who worship Me with knowledge, and are steadfastly and exclusively devoted to Me.** I am very dear to them and they are very dear to Me.

Chapter 12, Shloka 8:

मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धिं निवेशय ।
निवसिष्यसि मय्येव अत ऊर्ध्वं न संशयः ॥12:8॥

mayy eva mana ādhatsva mayi buddhiṁ niveśhaya
nivasishyasi mayy eva ata ūrdhvaṁ na sanśhayaḥ

Translation: Fix your mind on Me alone and surrender your intellect to Me. There upon, you will always live in Me. Of this, there is no doubt.

Chapter 12, Shloka 9:

मय्यावेश्य मनो ये मां नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ।
श्रद्धया परयोपेतास्ते मे युक्ततमा मताः ॥8:2॥

mayy āveśhya mano ye mām nitya-yuktā upāsate
śhraddhayā parayopetās te me yuktatamā matāḥ

Translation: Those who fix their minds on Me and always engage in My devotion with steadfast faith, I consider them to be the best Yogis.

KARMA**Chapter 2, Shloka 50:**

बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीह उभे सुकृतदुष्कृते ।
तस्माद्योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् ॥2:50॥

Bbuddhi-yukto jahātīha ubhe sukṛita-duṣhkṛite
tasmād yogāya yujyasva yogaḥ karmasu kauśhalam

Translation: One who prudently practices the science of work without attachment can get rid of both good and bad reactions in this life itself. Therefore, **strive for Yoga, which is the art of working skillfully (in proper consciousness).**

Chapter 4, Shloka 23:

गतसङ्गस्य मुक्तस्य ज्ञानावस्थितचेतसः ।
यज्ञायाचरतः कर्म समग्रं प्रविलीयते ॥4:23॥

gata-saṅgasya muktasya jñānāvasthita-chetasah
yajñāyācharataḥ karma samagraṁ pravilīyate

Translation: They are released from the bondage of material attachments and their intellect is established in Divine knowledge. Since **they perform all actions as a sacrifice (to God), they are freed from all Karmic reactions.**

Chapter 4, Shloka 41:

योगसंन्यस्तकर्माणं ज्ञानसञ्छिन्नसंशयम् ।
आत्मवन्तं न कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनञ्जय ॥4:41॥

yoga-sannyasta-karmāṇaṁ jñāna-sañchhinna-saṁśhayam
ātmavantam na karmāṇi nibadhnanti dhanañjaya

Translation: O Arjun, **actions do not bind those who have renounced Karma in the fire of Yoga,** whose doubts have been dispelled by knowledge, and who are situated in knowledge of the Self.

Chapter 5, Shloka 10:

ब्रह्मण्याधाय कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा करोति यः ।
लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाम्भसा ॥5:10॥

brahmaṇyādhāya karmāṇi saṅgaṁ tyaktvā karoti yaḥ
lipyate na sa pāpena padma-patram ivāmbhasā

Translation: Those who dedicate their actions to God, abandoning all attachment, remain untouched by sin, just as a lotus leaf is untouched by water.

Chapter 8, Shloka 7:

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युध्य च ।
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्मामेवैष्यस्यसंशयम् ॥8:7॥

Tasmat Sarveshu Kaleshu Mam Anusmara Yudhya Cha
Mayyarpita-Mano-Buddhir Mam Evaishyasyasanshayam

Translation: Therefore, always remember Me and also do your duty of fighting the war. With mind and intellect surrendered to Me, you will definitely attain Me; of this, there is no doubt. □

Source: www.holy-bhagavad-gita.org

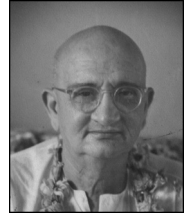


SECRET OF THE 'GITA'

By Swami Ramdas



ita was preached by Bhagawan Sri Krishna to Arjuna at a most crucial and critical moment in Arjuna's life. His mind was confused with misgivings and heart surcharged with sorrow. This fact makes clear to us that we can understand the right value of 'Gita's' message only when we are similarly situated — mentally and emotionally — as Arjuna was.



There is a time in every man's life when the problems of life and death, after-existence and God, confront him demanding his immediate and closest attention. He cannot shelve them, for they beat insistently on the portals of his mind. He knows then that everything to which he was attached and which he so long held as his own by giving it a gloss of reality, is after all slipping away from his hands: that he is caught in a world of shadows to which he has been clinging with an insensate folly. His mind tries to go beyond itself and his heart longs for that which is beyond. But the barrier that shuts him from the vision of the Reality baffles him. Hence the confusion

and deep sorrow. Sri Krishna comes to the rescue of such a soul — in the grip of a keenly painful struggle.

He enunciates a three-fold discipline by which the aspirant can break through the barrier and attain the Supreme Reality, which would mean for him perfect liberation and bliss. The three-fold discipline is of Bhakti, Jnana and Karma. Bhakti is an intense longing and love for God which enables the aspirant to keep up a constant remembrance of Him, thus purifying his emotions and elevating his thought to the consciousness of the Reality. Bhakti is the adoration of God, who dwells in his own heart and fills the universe, and surrenders all his actions to Him. Here a fit of renunciation seizes him — a mental recoil from the unrealities of life that had so long enthralled him. Through the exercise of an awakened intellect, he now begins to discriminate the real from the unreal — the Eternal from the non-eternal.

Bhakti, renunciation and discrimination turn his mind inward which now flows in a continuous stream to the glorious Truth of his being, until he merges in and identifies himself with the immortal, unchanging and all-pervading Essence of his existence. This is the Divine illumination or Jnana which grants

him a Universal Vision — a perception of God, as an indwelling Spirit, permeating and filling all the manifested worlds.

Karma continues based upon an equal vision with a heart replete with love and mind enlightened with wisdom. Karma now becomes a spontaneous outflow of Divine energy acting through him for the uplift of humanity or Lokasangraha. The aspirant, having realised the supreme Godhead, is still an instrument in His hands, doing actions in utter self-dedication, i.e., God's Divine Shakti working through him for the fulfilment of His purpose. His attachment to the perishable external objects of the world is destroyed. He rises above the Dwandwas and Gunas belonging to the lower and ignorant human nature. He is now ever in union with God in himself, and in all creatures and things around him. He beholds the entire universe as the expression of an immutable, invisible, omnipresent God. God for him is both immanent and transcendent, in whom he becomes conscious that he is entirely lost, having attained perfect freedom, peace and bliss.

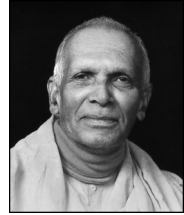
This is the goal of life held out by the 'Gita'. □



INTEGRATED YOGA OF THE GITA

By Swami Ranganathananda

In Chapter 10, Shloka 8, Sri Krishna says, “I am the Origin of everything in this universe.



Whatever you see in a tree — leaves, twigs, branches, then flowers and fruits

— all of them originate from the seed. So, from Me emanate all things knowing thus, wise people worship Me with this knowledge.” What kind of wise people? People with loving consciousness. Bhava means emotion, love, Bhakti; this is the nature of Bhakti. You can also have a non-Bhakti consciousness and also worship. But, in this path of Bhakti, this kind of loving consciousness is essential. It makes you rich with feeling. This is the difference between an austere philosophy and Bhakti. Comparing these two, Sri Ramakrishna used to give an illustration. You can take that illustration and make your own meaning out of it. He said, ‘In the temple of Dakshineswar, they play music. One man takes a pipe and simply goes on making a sound; the drone as we call it in musical language. Just the drone, the background music. The other man has another musical instrument with seven

holes. And he produces certain notes out of it. The former produces only one note; this man produces seven notes. Which is sweeter? The seven-note is sweeter; you don't like to hear the drone for a long time; for a short time, it is okay. So here you have this Bhakti as the fulfilment of Jnana, manifesting in action. You get that complete human life here. There is joy in it. There is variety in it. That is why Sri Ramakrishna compares it with the Sapta-Svara instrument. The other is an Eka-Svara instrument called the drone. So, a Jnani, as usually understood in our Vedantic tradition, is of that nature; very dry, and can't feel any joy for anything. If such a person looks at a baby's face, he or she will say, it is all Maya. He or she does not find anything worthwhile in it. Such a one will say, 'I can't enjoy the smile of a child, the beauty of the sun, or the beauty of the earth. Why? All these things are delusions. The one transcendental Reality alone is real.' There you will find this kind of drone music. The other is Sapta-Svara, beautiful music, rich and fine. The best Bhakti of India and the best Bhakti of all religions belong to this category.

Richness, diversity and intense humanity — that is the religion the Gita expounds; intensely human.

Sri Krishna himself was such a person. He had a very rich heart, rich human feelings, responding to human situations.

Today, Sri Ramakrishna, full of joy, conveys a religion of joy. You cannot go near an austere person; you are afraid of him. The whole of the Gita is based upon that kind of outlook: intensely human. And we can dig affection in others and make others dig affection in us. This is the type of Bhakti Sri Krishna is preaching, and yet it is based on the highest Jnana, the supremely Divine principle behind this universe. And so, Jnana, Bhakti and Karma, all combined together — that is the integrated Yoga of the Gita. Sri Krishna had referred to this: Jnanam Vijnana Sahitam, 'Jnana along with Vijnana.' Vijnana means experience, day-to-day experience. □

Source: Universal Message of the Bhagavad Gita



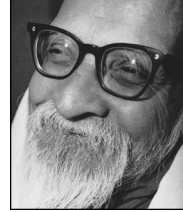
Jnana equalizes the vision, Bhakti fills compassion in the heart which overflows in loving acts of service.

— Swami Ramdas

BHAKTI MAKES THE EFFORT EASIER

By Acharya Vinoba Bhave

I cannot cut up life into pieces. I just cannot conceive that Karma, Jnana and Bhakti are disconnected from each other; and they are really not so. Let us take the example of cooking in this jail. Some of us do this job. If a man does not know cooking, he would make a mess of it; food will either be undercooked or burnt. But even if a man knows cooking, he would still not be fit for the job if he has no love or devotion for the work; if he does not feel, "This food is meant for my brothers, that is, for the Lord Himself. I should prepare it as best as I can. This is the service of the Lord Himself." Thus, cooking needs knowledge as well as love. Food would not be tasty unless there is Bhakti in the heart while cooking. That is why nobody can cook better than the mother. Who else can do it with equal love and care? Cooking needs hard work or penance as well. It is thus clear that love, knowledge and effort, all three are needed for any job. All the activities in life are supported on this tripod. If one of the legs of the tripod is broken, it cannot stand. All the three legs are necessary. The



very term 'tripod' conveys this meaning. The same is true of life. Jnana, Bhakti and Karma — that is, ceaseless effort — are three legs of the tripod of life. Life should be built on these three pillars. Logically, you may take Jnana, Bhakti and Karma as different things, but they cannot be separated from each other in practice. The three together make one great entity.

Even though this is true, it does not mean that Bhakti has no special merit of its own. If Bhakti enters into any work, that work appears easy. Not that it ceases to involve toil, but that toil does not then appear to be toil; it becomes a labour of love. To say that the way of Bhakti is easy means that work does not appear burdensome because of Bhakti. Work loses its strenuousness. No matter how much work we do, we feel as if we have done nothing. In short, we should be so full of Bhakti that we do not feel any hardship. It is not difficult to row a boat in a river, but how difficult it would be to drag it over rocky land! The boat of our life should also have the water of Bhakti beneath it, so that we can sail happily. If there is rocky and uneven terrain, then it would be extremely difficult to drag the boat of life. Bhakti, like water, makes the voyage of our life easy. ◻

Source: Talks On The Gita

JNANA, BHAKTI, AND KARMA — A MEANS TO RISE ABOVE THE 'I'

By Swami Vivekananda

We find the vast majority of people in every country believing that there will be a time when this world will become perfect, when there will be no disease, nor death, nor unhappiness, nor wickedness. That is a very good idea, a very good motive power to inspire and uplift the ignorant; but if we think for a moment, we shall find on the very face of it that it cannot be so. How can it be, seeing that good and evil are the obverse and reverse of the same coin? How can you have good without evil at the same time? What is meant by perfection? A perfect life is a contradiction in terms. Life itself is a state of continuous struggle between ourselves and everything outside. Every moment we are fighting actually with external nature, and if we are defeated, our life has to go. It is, for instance, a continuous struggle for food and air. If food or air fails, we die. Life is not a simple and smoothly flowing thing, but it is a compound effect. This complex struggle between something inside and




the external world is what we call life. So it is clear that when this struggle ceases, there will be an end of life.

What is meant by ideal happiness is the cessation of this struggle. But then life will cease, for the struggle can only cease when life itself has ceased. We have already seen that in helping the world we help ourselves. The main effect of work done for others is to purify ourselves. By means of the constant effort to do good to others we are trying to forget ourselves; this forgetfulness of self is the one great lesson we have to learn in life. Man thinks foolishly that he can make himself happy, and after years of struggle finds out at last that true happiness consists in killing selfishness and that no one can make him happy except himself. Every act of charity, every thought of sympathy, every action of help, every good deed, is taking so much of self-importance away from our little selves and making us think of ourselves as the lowest and the least, and, therefore, it is all good. Here we find that Jnana, Bhakti, and Karma — all come to one point. The highest ideal is eternal and entire self-abnegation, where there is no “I,” but all is “Thou;” and whether he is conscious or unconscious of it, Karma-Yoga leads man to that end. □

Source: Complete Works Of Swami Vivekananda, Vol. 1

YOGA OF SYNTHESIS

By Swami Ramdas

he Bhagavad Gita is all-comprehensive, because it is the essence of all the Hindu scriptures like Vedas, Upanishads, Srutis, Smritis, Puranas and Itihasas.

The Bhagavad Gita teaches us the synthesis of three Yogas: Jnana, Bhakti and Karma. God has been presented to us in the Bhagavad Gita as an all-comprehensive Being, as the supreme Purushottama, who is at once the omniscient existence, infinite love and almighty power. The three Yogas relate to our approach to the Divine by means of these three attributes.

Omniscient existence of God can be gained only when we attune our intellect to the infinite, all-pervading, static Brahman, which is our real existence. After this experience, we have to behold the whole universe as the expression of that Brahman, and to love all beings and creatures in it equally. As a result of that devotion, we have to surrender ourselves completely to the Divine Power active in this manifestation, so that our ego-sense may be completely eliminated both by the knowledge we have gained through self-

realisation, and by dedicating ourselves to Him in our active dynamic life.

Three Sections Of The Gita

Before we can realise God in all His comprehensiveness, we have to realise the basic Spirit underlying the manifest life. The human body, as it is seen, is not everything. There is a substratum for this manifest life. That is the Supreme Spirit, eternal, calm, silent, nameless and formless. We have to realise that Self first, through purification of the mind, concentration and meditation. Then alone we can proceed further to know God in His integral form, expression and being. So in the first section (of the Bhagavad Gita), Jnana Yoga has been taught as the first step towards realisation of God. Thereafter we shall be able to develop a state in which the whole universe will be seen as the expression of the Self. This you will find in the second section, where the Universal Vision has been described. It is taught here that you have to realise the infinite love dwelling in your heart and give it to the entire creation. This is said to be devotion. The third section teaches that by surrendering ourselves to the Divine Mother and eliminating the ego-sense completely we get the experience of the Karma Yoga, the realisation of the supremacy of the Divine Shakti in the manifestation that we see before us. □

DEAR CHILDREN

God Is His Own Devotee

In the Bhagavad Gita, it is said that a devotee who has attained Jnana or liberation is verily God Himself. Lord Krishna showed the world how He venerated those who had reached this blessed state. His humble devotee, Sudama, went to have His Darshan in Dwaraka. As soon as He saw Sudama, He received him, placed him on His throne and worshipped him.

On another occasion, when Narada went for the Darshan of Krishna in Dwaraka, he was told, at the entrance of the palace of Krishna, that Krishna was not then available for Darshan. When asked for the reason, Narada was told that the Lord was engaged in His usual worship. Narada was surprised to hear this and wondered whom Krishna worshipped, He Himself being the Supreme God. So he went inside quietly and peeped into the room where Krishna was sitting for worship. He saw Krishna busy worshipping the images of Prahlada, Ambarisha, Draupadi, Valmiki, Narada and others. Narada went inside and asked Krishna what He was doing. Then Krishna said, "I am worshipping these devotees who are the images of my God." □

Source: Stories As Told By Swami Ramadas

EPISTLES OF SWAMI RAMDAS

Beloved Ram,
 ...Without any external change of activity, or of the situation in which God has chosen to place us, we can realise the highest state of bliss and liberation. The important thing is that we purge the mind of its prejudices, favours and attachments, and then lift ourselves above the working of the ego and live in Divine Consciousness.

...Knowledge is not all. It must be combined with devotion and action. Knowledge is the foundation. Karma is the upper structure. And Bhakti is the dome. The three go together to form the perfect and complete Mandir of God-realisation. Life is granted to us for the sake of Anand. Indeed, life springs from Anand; it lives in Anand and ultimately it merges in Anand. □

Ramdas



ANANDASHRAM NEWS

15,500-CRORE NAMA JAPA YAGNA FOR WORLD PEACE: The total Japa received in the third round of the 15500-Crore Nama Japa Yagna For World Peace in the month of May was 224 crores. The grand total of the Japa done so

far in this round now stands at 15500 crores. Thus concluding the third round of the 15500 crore Nama Yagna for Vishwa Shanti.

Spirituality can be broadly taken as a journey from self-centredness to selflessness, i.e. from the individual to universal. By praying for world peace, Pujya Mataji wanted us to develop a sense of connectedness with the world. In the month of May 2023, Beloved Papa made it possible to complete the target for the third phase of the Yagna.

Pujya Mataji, in late 1970s, initiated the Nama Yagna for world peace with the target of 15500 crores. She said, “My earnest prayer is that the Japa should exceed the target and continue with all love, devotion and zeal until peace and happiness is established on the earth and in the hearts of all.”

By His prompting, innumerable devotees have been taking part in the Yagna enthusiastically ever since then. In line with her Sankalpa, the fourth round of the 15500 Nama Japa Yagna for World Peace has been initiated from June 2023 onwards. We once again appeal to the readers to enthusiastically join and enlist as many participants in this Yagna as possible, so that Pujya Mataji’s Sankalpa may soon become a reality. □

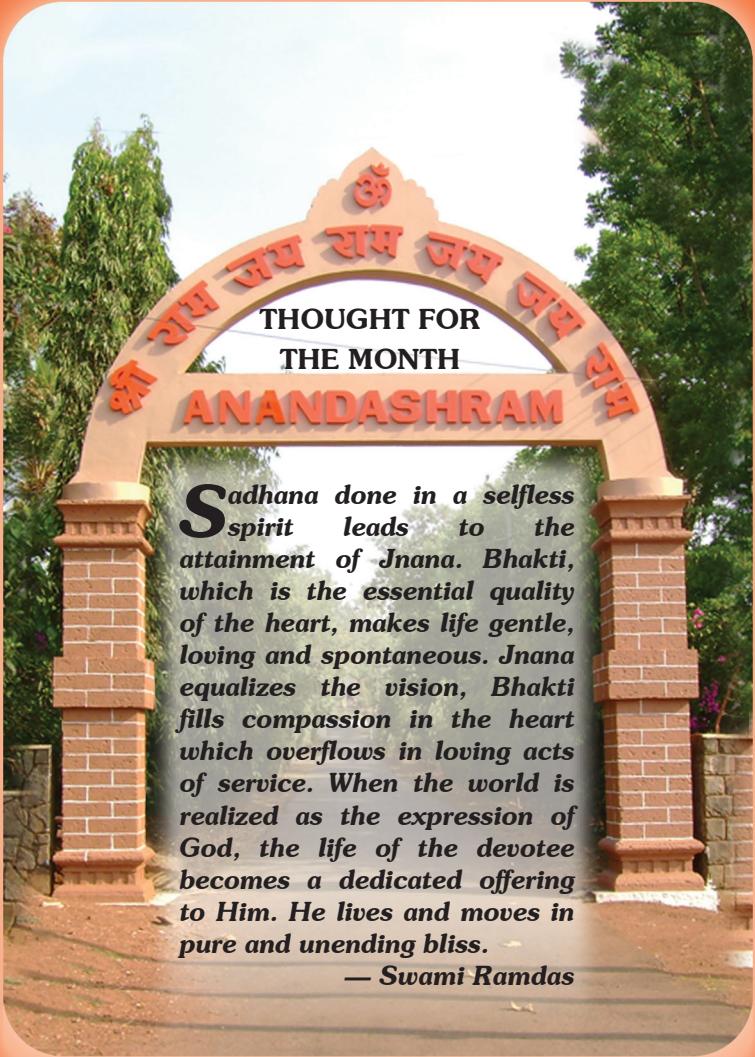


GURU PURNIMA

Right from day one of our entry into this world, we need a Guru for everything. Guru Purnima is an occasion when we parade before our mental vision several Gurus who have been guiding us at every stage and helping us to become aware of and express our inner potentiality.

This theme is reiterated in the following words of Swami Sivananda: “Behold the entire universe as Guru-Swarupa. See the guiding hand, the awakening voice, the illumining touch of the Guru in every object in this Creation. The Supreme Guru, manifest in the visible Nature, will teach you the most valuable lessons of life. The silent all-enduring earth with its lofty forbearance, the shady fruit-bearing tree with its willing self-sacrifice, the mighty Banyan tree (Pipal) reposing with patience in the tiny seed, the dripping drops whose persistence wears away the rocks, the planets and the seasons with their orderly punctuality and regularity are Divine Gurus to him who will look, listen and receive.”

We celebrate Guru Purnima on the 3rd of this month. On this occasion, let us reflect on these thoughts and pray to the Supreme Guru, who is seated within, to bless us to be aware of Him in His manifestation and serve Him in all.



Sadhana done in a selfless spirit leads to the attainment of Jnana. Bhakti, which is the essential quality of the heart, makes life gentle, loving and spontaneous. Jnana equalizes the vision, Bhakti fills compassion in the heart which overflows in loving acts of service. When the world is realized as the expression of God, the life of the devotee becomes a dedicated offering to Him. He lives and moves in pure and unending bliss.

— Swami Ramdas

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