

Vivekachudamani.

सर्ववेदान्तसिद्धान्तगोचरं तमगोचरम् ।

गोविन्दं परमानन्दं सद्गुरुं प्रणतोऽस्म्यहम् ॥१॥

1. I bow to Govinda, whose nature is Bliss Supreme, who is the Sadguru, who can be known only from the import of all Vedanta, and who is beyond the reach of speech and mind.

['Viveka' means discrimination, 'Chudá' is crest, and 'Máni,' jewel. Hence the title means 'Crest-jewel of discrimination.' Just as the jewel on the crest of a diadem is the most conspicuous ornament on a person's body, so the present treatise is a masterpiece among works treating of discrimination between the Real and the unreal.

In this opening stanza salutation is made to God (Govinda), or to the Guru, in his absolute aspect. It may be interesting to note that the name of Sankara's Guru was Govindapâda, and the Sloka is ingeniously composed so as to admit of both interpretations.

Sadguru—lit. the highly qualified preceptor, and may refer either to Sankara's own Guru or to God Himself, who is the Guru of Gurus.]

जन्तूनां नरजन्म दुर्लभमतः पुंस्त्वं ततो विप्रता
 तस्माद्वैदिकधर्ममार्गपरता विद्वत्त्वमस्मात्परम् ।
 आत्मानात्मविवेचनं स्वनुभवो ब्रह्मात्मना सांस्थिति-
 मुक्तिर्नो शतजन्मकोटिसुकृतैः पुण्यैर्विना बभ्यते २

2. For all beings a human birth is difficult to obtain, more so is a male body, rarer than that is Brahminhood, rarer still is the attachment to the path of Vedic religion; higher than this is erudition in the Scriptures; discrimination between the Self and not-Self, Realisation, and continuing in a state of identity with Brahman,—these come next in order. (This kind of) Mukti is not to be attained except through the well-earned merits of a hundred crore of births.

दुर्लभं त्रयमेवैतद्देवानुग्रहहेतुकम् ।

मनुष्यत्वं मुमुक्षुत्वं महापुरुषसंश्रयः ॥३॥

3. There are three things which are rare indeed and are due to the grace of God—namely, a human birth, the longing for Liberation, and the protecting care of a perfected sage.

ब्रह्वा कथंचिन्नरजन्म दुर्लभं

तत्रापि पुंस्त्वं श्रुतिपारदर्शनम् ।

यस्त्वात्ममुक्तौ न यतेत मूढधीः

स ह्यात्महा स्वं विनिहन्त्यसद्ब्रह्मात् ॥४॥

4. The man who having by some means obtained a human birth, with a male body

and mastery of the Vedas to boot, is foolish enough not to exert for self-liberation, verily commits suicide, for he kills himself by clinging to things unreal.

इतः को न्वस्ति मूढात्मा यस्तु स्वार्थे प्रमाद्यति ।
दुर्लभं मानुषं देहं प्राप्य तत्रापि पौरुषम् ॥५॥

5. What greater fool is there than the man who having obtained a rare human body, and a masculine body too, neglects to achieve the real end of this life.

[*The real end &c.*—viz. Liberation.]

वदन्तु शास्त्राणि यजन्तु देवान्
कुर्वन्तु कर्माणि भजन्तु देवताः ।
आत्मैक्यबोधेन विनापि मुक्ति-
र्न सिद्ध्यति ब्रह्मयतान्तरेऽपि ॥६॥

6. Let people quote scriptures and sacrifice to the gods, let them perform rituals and worship the deities, there is no Liberation for anyone without the realisation of one's identity with the Atman, no, not even in the lifetime of a hundred Brahmás put together.

[*Lifetime &c.*—i. e., an indefinite length of time. One *day* of Brahmá (the Creator) is equivalent to 432 million years of human computation, which is supposed to be the duration of the world.]

अमृतत्वस्य नाथास्ति वित्तेनेत्येव हि श्रुतिः ।
ब्रवीति कर्मणो मुक्तेरहेतुत्वं स्फुटं यतः ॥७॥

7. There is no hope of Immortality by means of riches—such indeed is the declaration of the Vedas. Hence it is clear that works cannot be the cause of Liberation.

[The reference is to Yâjnavalkya's words to his wife Maitreyi, Brihadâraṇyaka II. iv. 2. Cf. the Vedic dictum, न कर्मणा न प्रजया धनेन त्यागेनैके अमृतत्वमानशुः— 'Neither by rituals, nor progeny, nor by riches, but by renunciation alone some attained immortality.]

अतो विमुक्त्यै प्रयतेत विद्वान्

संन्यस्तबाह्यार्थसुखस्पृहः सन् ।

सन्तं महान्तं समुपेत्य देशिकं

तेनोपदिष्टार्थसमाहितात्मा ॥८॥

8. Therefore the man of learning should strive his best for Liberation, having renounced his desire for pleasures from external objects, duly approaching a good and generous preceptor, and fixing his mind on the truth inculcated by him.

[*Duly*—i. e. according to the prescribed mode. (Vide Mundaka I. ii. 12). The characteristics of a qualified Guru are given later on in sloka 33.]

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं मग्नं संसारवारिधौ ।

योगारूढत्वमासाद्य सम्यग्दर्शननिष्ठया ॥९॥

9. Having attained the Yogârudha state, one should recover oneself, immersed in the sea of birth and death, by means of devotion to right discrimination.

[*Yogárudha state*—Described in Gita VI. 4.—
“When one is attached neither to sense-objects
nor to actions, and has given up all desires, then
he is said to be *Yogárudha* or to have ascended
the Yoga-path.”]

संन्यस्य सर्वकर्माणि भवबन्धविमुक्तये ।

यत्यतां पण्डितैर्धैरैरात्माभ्यास उपस्थितैः ॥१०॥

10. Let the wise and erudite man, having
commenced the practice of the realisation of
the Atman, give up all works and try to
cut loose the bonds of birth and death.

[*All works*—only *Sakáma-Karma* or works per-
formed with a view to gaining more sense-enjoy-
ment are meant, not selfless work.] ✓

चित्तस्य शुद्धये कर्म न तु वस्तूपलब्धये ।

वस्तुसिद्धिर्विचारेण न किञ्चित्कर्मकोटिभिः ॥११॥

11. Work is for the purification of the
mind, not for the perception of the reality.
The realisation of Truth is brought about by
discrimination and not in the least by ten
millions of acts.

{ [The idea is, that works properly done cleanse the
mind of its impurities, (when the Truth flashes of
itself.] ✓

सम्यग्विचारतः सिद्धा रज्जुतत्त्वावधारणा ।

भ्रान्तोदितमहासर्पभयदुःखविनाशिनी ॥१२॥

12. By adequate reasoning the conviction of the reality about the rope is gained, which puts an end to the great fear and misery caused by the snake worked up in the deluded mind.

[*Reality of the rope*—i. e. that it is a rope and not a snake, for which it was mistaken.]

मर्थस्य निश्चयो दृष्टो विचारेण हितोक्तिः ।

न स्नानेन न दानेन प्राणायामशतेन वा ॥१३॥

13. The conviction of the Truth is seen to proceed from reasoning upon the salutary counsel of the wise, and not by bathing in the sacred waters, nor by gifts, nor by hundreds of Pranayamas.

[*The wise*—men of realisation.]

अधिकारिणमाशस्ते फलसिद्धिर्विशेषतः ।

उपाया देशकालाद्याः सन्त्यस्मिन्सहकारिणः ॥१४॥

14. Success depends essentially on a qualified aspirant, and time, place and such other means are but auxiliaries in this regard.

[The qualifications will be enumerated in stanzas 16 and 17.]

मतो विचारः कर्तव्यो जिज्ञासोरात्मवस्तुनः ।

समासाद्य दयासिन्धुं गुरुं ब्रह्मविदुत्तमम् ॥१५॥

15. Hence the seeker after the Reality of the Atman should take to reasoning, after

duly approaching the Guru—who should be the best of the knowers of Brahman, and an ocean of mercy.

मेधावी पुरुषो विद्वानूहापोहविचक्षणः ।

अधिकार्यात्मविद्यायामुक्तबलखलचितः ॥१६॥

16. The intelligent and learned man skilled in arguing in favour of the Scriptures and refuting counter-arguments against them, —one who has got the above characteristics is the fit recipient of the knowledge of the Atman.

विवेकिनो विरक्तस्य यमादिगुणशालिनः ।

मुमुक्षोरेव हि ब्रह्मज्ञिज्ञासायोग्यता मता ॥१७॥

17. The man of discrimination between the Real and the unreal, whose mind is turned away from the unreal, who possesses calmness and the allied virtues, and is longing for Liberation, is alone considered qualified to inquire after Brahman.

साधनान्यत्र चत्वारि कथितानि मनीषिभिः ।

येषु सत्स्वेव सन्निष्ठा यदभावे न सिद्ध्यति ॥१८॥

18. Regarding this, sages have spoken of four means of attainment, which alone being present, the devotion to Brahman succeeds, and in the absence of which, it fails.

आदौ नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेकः परिगणयते ।

इहामुत्रफलभोगविरागस्तदनन्तरम् ।

शमादिषट्कसम्पत्तिर्मुमुक्षुत्वमिति स्फुटम् ॥१६॥

19. First is enumerated the discrimination
 1 between the Real and the unreal, next comes
 2 the aversion to the enjoyment of fruits (of
 3 one's actions) here and hereafter, (next is)
 4 the group of six attributes, viz., calmness and
 the rest, and (last) is clearly the yearning
 for Liberation.

ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्येत्येवंरूपो विनिश्चयः ।

सोऽयं नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेकः समुदाहृतः ॥२०॥

20 A firm conviction of the mind to the effect that Brahman is real and the universe unreal, is designated as the discrimination (Viveka) between the real and the unreal.

तद्वैराग्यं जिहासा या दर्शनश्रवणादिभिः ।

देहादिब्रह्मपर्यन्ते ह्यनित्ये भोगवस्तुनि ॥२१॥

21. Vairágya or renunciation is the desire to give up all transitory enjoyments (ranging) from those of an (animate) body to those of Brahmáhood, (having already known their defects) from observation, instruction and so forth.

[From those.....Brahmáhood.—Brahmá is the