

# **THUS AWAKENS THE AWAKENED ONE**

*by*

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## **CONTENTS**

I. Practical Wisdom	3
II. Some Rare Truths	6
III. From the Scriptures and Wise Ones	8
IV. Subtle Secrets of Sadhana	10
V. Shun the Ego	13
VI. Random Useful Thoughts	14
VII. On Attainment and Experience	17

## I. PRACTICAL WISDOM

- A Sultan asked an astrologer to tell something about his future. The astrologer said: “Your highness will live long to see all your sons dead.” The Sultan was enraged and ordered the astrologer’s arrest and imprisonment. He consulted another astrologer on the same point. This second astrologer said: “Your highness will enjoy a long life and outlive all your family.” The Sultan was highly pleased and gave him rich presents. Both the astrologers knew the truth, but the latter knew the Sultan.
- ‘God helps those who help themselves.’ But we have to help ourselves in terms of God’s law which requires that we sacrifice ourselves in every one of our acts in such a manner that our acts help in exceeding the lower personality by degrees, and approximating God’s existence.
- What you have enjoyed yourself and what you have given over to others in charity or as gift is really yours. Everything else is of doubtful nature and you are merely a protector thereof.
- In your dealings with another person, try first to think through the feelings of that person and then try again to overcome the limitations of those feelings by rational methods of approach. This will avoid much of the unnecessary tangles in which social life is caught up every day.
- Do not keep anything which you will be afraid of showing to others. Do not do anything which you would not like others to know. In spiritual life secrecy has no place *except in regard to one’s sadhana* (spiritual practice).
- “Even this will pass away.” This is a good maxim to remember that our joys and sorrows are not permanent, and that we should always be therefore unattached and hopeful of a better future.
- We can judge ourselves as to the spiritual progress we make by the extent to which we are free from seeing defects in others. The wider we grow, the narrower becomes the eye which sees defects in the world.
- When we come in conflict with things, we are likely to think that the things are against us. But this would be like imagining that a stone is against us because it is thrown at us by someone. The things and circumstances are only instruments in meting out our dues.
- Often, what matters most is not the words that are said but the way in which they are said. People either bore or irritate others with what they regard as wisdom, when it is wrongly uttered or expressed at the wrong moment or told to the wrong person, though the intention behind it may be good. Judgment of circumstances is necessary to bring about the requisite result. Else effort may become a waste or even harmful.
- The distance between you and God is the same as the extent of your desire for the world.
- Our joys and sorrows are just sensations or experiences and cannot be called

either good or bad, even as we cannot say whether the heat of the sun or the coldness of water is good or bad. Goodness and badness of things are personal evaluations of situations which are themselves impersonal.

- Often it so happens that our contemplation on a vice which we feel we have and which we wish to avoid leads us more deeply into it until it is too late to recover from the shock of this knowledge of the fact about us. It is better not to think of a vice, even if we have it, and concern ourselves only with positive virtue and spiritual conduct.
- “Love all, but trust a few” is a good policy in social dealings. To trust a few is, of course, not to be suspicious of everyone, but to be vigilant in every case, even when things are entrusted to others for execution or when some situations are involved in other personalities. One should not trust even one’s own self when the senses are in the proximity of their desired objects.
- Dirt is matter out of place. Weed is a plant out of place. Nuisance is action out of place. Even those things, acts or words which are normally good and useful become bad, useless and even harmful when they are out of place, time and circumstance. A knowledge of this fact is an essential part of wisdom.
- Material amenities and economic needs and the satisfaction of one’s emotional side are permissible only so long as this law and order of this eternal truth of the liberation of the Self in universality of being regulates their fulfilment.
- The temptation from the evil one comes, first, in the form of unsettled thinking which makes one immediately forget the Presence of God. This is at once followed by the implementation of the evil move, whether in the shape of passion or anger. When the deed is done and the matter has ended, the remembrance of God might come in, but it rarely appears in the presence of things which we either love or hate.
- They say that procrastination is the thief of time, postponing a work which needs to be done immediately. There is no use committing the same mistake again and again and resolving every day to avoid it, but with no success. Something positive has to be done with strength of will.
- Where either the question of self-respect or sex is involved, the spirit of service goes to the winds.
- When you have inadvertently done a wrong, switch on the situation, person or thing involved to the Absolute and concentrate on the former as an inseparable part of the latter. The wound shall then be healed and the determination to refrain from repeating the act shall make you stronger than before.
- That is wisdom which can reconcile itself with actual life. When the realities of practical life conflict with or stare at the knowledge we possess, it should be remembered that such knowledge is immature and is a mere theory. Moreover, it is not knowledge ‘of’ life that we need; we require knowledge which ‘is’ life, and is inseparable from its daily vexations. We have to view ourselves in a Universal context and then live life, not look upon ourselves as individuals who have to be at war with the world in our everyday life.

- Thus did a wise man pray: 'Give me the will to change what I can, the strength to bear what I cannot, and the wisdom to know the difference.' This is the secret of worldly wisdom, that which decides the nature of one's success in life.
- The vision of God seems to be as far from us even now as it was many years back, and there is no proper yardstick with which the progress made on the path can be measured. There is much difference of opinion as to this matter among wise men, and the wisdom of one does not seem to tally in all details with that of another. Perhaps self-confidence, coupled with goodness and an immense capacity for adjustment, as well as continuous delight, form a good touchstone.

## II. SOME RARE TRUTHS

- One is born alone, and one dies alone. Hence one should live also alone. This art of living alone is yoga. Life is the process of the flight of the 'alone' to the 'Alone'.
- You are alone with your God, and there is no one around you. This is the truth. Rest your mind on this, and attain peace.
- The thought of an object intensely entertained causes a proportionate stimulation in the body of the object by means of a certain affection for its psychic substance. There is, thus, a reciprocal action set up by the generation of any sustained thought of the object. The various things thought in various incarnations create a network of experiences which is called Samsara.
- The rivers do not flow for their own benefits; trees do not eat their own fruits; cows part with their milk for others' good; the life of a saint is not for himself alone.
- Evil sets in the moment we forget the Presence of God everywhere. This is the beginning of the real *kaliyuga*, and *kritayuga* reigns when the consciousness of His Presence is vigilantly maintained.
- Narayana and Nara meditate together and are inseparables; which means that God and man coalesce in every action and form a union in which *karma* becomes Karma Yoga, and that spiritual meditation is not merely a human effort but involves Divine interference. Though we may lift our arms to touch a magnetic field, when once we raise it near it is pulled by the force of the field, and here our effort ceases and we are under the influence of another power altogether.
- If omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence are to be pressed into one being and this being is to be focussed into a jet of action, what will be the result? This is what happened when Sri Krishna lived as a Person in this world. This is also the difficulty which people feel in writing a biography of Krishna, for to be all-comprehensive is a difficult thing for the mind to think.
- The more does one become fit for the practice of Advaita Vedanta, the less is the consciousness of the body and world around. Advaita and body-consciousness do not go together.
- God's Grace is a powerful tonic which can correct the heart, lungs, stomach and the general condition of the body. This Divine Grace is drawn through meditation on God.
- The fact that consciousness knows the existence of matter in experience should unavoidably stumble upon there being something in matter itself akin to consciousness without which objective knowledge would not be feasible. The position that matter should have a character of consciousness inherent in it would automatically land one in the conclusion that matter is also a state of consciousness, though incipient and not actually manifest openly. Matter is Spirit discerned through the senses.
- There are no five *koshas* covering the Atman like five boxes inverted one over the

other hiding a flame within. The *koshas* are not compartmentalised boxes, but are the graded density in which the desires of the mind obscure the vision spiritual.

- All that we read and think does not get assimilated into the feeling of the heart. That is why a post-graduate scholar who is dead is not reborn with the same amount of knowledge. That which has gone deep into the heart becomes a part of our life. The rest is only a wind that blows over the surface of our minds.
- Whether man is different from God, a part of God, or one with God can be known from the relation of the dreaming individual to the waking individual. The relation is similar.
- God first; the world next; yourself last; follow this sequence in the development of the thought-process so that God's Power and existence may be affirmed in everything.

### III. FROM THE SCRIPTURES AND WISE ONES

- Manu Smriti says: One-fourth of one's knowledge comes from the Teacher, one-fourth from study, one-fourth from co-students and one-fourth by experience in the passage of time.
- "He who is humbler than a blade of grass and more patient than a tree; who respects others but wants not any respect for oneself, is fit to take the Name of the Almighty Lord." This was the famous instruction of Sri Gauranga Mahaprabhu.
- *Samsara* or world-existence comes to an end only when the *jiva* recognises its true identity with the Absolute. The condition of the *jiva*-consciousness is just the condition of the sheath with which it identifies itself at any given time. When the Atman is discovered to be different from the sheaths, it is at once realised as Brahman. - *Panchadasi*
- "He is called a 'man' who, when anger rises forcibly within, is able to subdue and cast it out as a snake casts away its slough with ease," said Hanuman to himself when he suspected that the fire he set through the whole of Lanka might perhaps have burnt Sita, too.
- "Poison is not real poison. Sense-objects are the real poison. Poison kills one life, but sense-objects can devastate a series of lives."
- These persons do not get sleep, says Vidura to Dhritarashtra: Those who are sick, those who have been overthrown by others and are deprived of power and assistance from any side, those who are afflicted with lust, and those who are scheming to deprive others of their possessions.
- The Mahabharata says that the Vedas are afraid of him who tries to approach them without a knowledge of the correct import of the Epics and Puranas. Here is a covert suggestion that the Absolute of philosophy should also include the variety and conflict of practical life, in order to be real and not merely an object of speculation.
- The four noble truths of the Buddha that there is suffering, that there is a cause for suffering, that there is a way out of suffering and that there is a state beyond suffering, are proof enough to show that he was not a nihilist in the sense in which the word is used today, but a practical man who had an eye to doing something than merely conjecturing about Truth and its realisation.
- The teaching of the Yoga-Vasishtha emphasises that when there is perception of an object by the seer or observer, there has to be pre-supposed the existence of a consciousness between the subject and the object. If this conscious connecting link were not to be, there would be no perception of existence. There cannot be a consciousness of relation between two things unless there is a consciousness relating the two terms and yet standing above them. The study of the perceptual situation discloses the fact that the subject and the object are phases of a universal consciousness.
- "By excess of passion Ravana was destroyed; by excess of greed Duryodhana was

killed; by excessive charity Kama came to ruin; excess is always to be avoided,” says a *hitopadesa*.

- “By *pranayama* one should burn all dross; by *pratyahara* sever all attachments; by *dharana* all distraction; and by *dhyana* all undivine qualities.” - *Manu Smritis*
- Krishna and Arjuna should be seated in one chariot. Isvara and *jiva* should partake of a single objective in all action. This mutual transfusion of the universal and the individual is Krishna-Arjuna-Samvada, the eternal Gita of the cosmos which is Dharmakshetra and Kurukshetra.
- *Tena tyaktena bhunjithah*, is the exhortation of the Isopanishad. It means that our enjoyment in the real sense is possible of achievement only when we renounce everything. But what is this renunciation? It is implied in the earlier sentence of the verse, which states - *isavasyam idam sarvam*. All this universe is indwelt by the Lord. As such, desire for objects is an impossibility. This is true renunciation; which is also the true freedom and joy.
- *Sarvam paravasam dukkham, sarvam atnavasam sukham* - ‘All dependence on persons and things is pain; all self-dependence is joy.’ This has to be practised gradually, by rise from the grosser to the subtler, from the external to the internal.
- Each and every contact which the desirous nature establishes with the outer world is a piercing dart thrust into the heart of the person cherishing such nature.” - Vishnu Purana
- “Our prosperity, our friends, our bondage and even our destruction are all in the end rooted in our tongue,” says a famous adage.
- Draupadi exclaims in the court of the Kauravas: “That is not an assembly where there are no elders; they are not elders who do not know *dharma*; that is not *dharma* which is not in consonance with truth; that is not truth which has crookedness behind it.”
- “He who knows, knows not; he who knows not, knows.” This is a statement in the Upanishad, meaning that one who has realised the Truth has no personality-consciousness, and one who has it knows not the Truth.

#### IV. SUBTLE SECRETS OF SADHANA

- “Do the best and leave the rest” is the key motto in Karma Yoga. The ‘doing of the best’, of course, does not mean being foolhardy or going headlong without thought on consequences, but the harnessing of one’s full resources to the execution of a noble ideal which is calculated to aid one in the attainment of God-realisation. To ‘leave the rest’ is to resign the results of the work to God, for, when even the best that one can do falls short of the effort needed to achieve a desired result, the mind is likely to get upset, which is not the spirit of Karma Yoga.
- The more we try to depend on God, the more He seems to test us with the pleasures of sense and the delights of the ego. Finally, the last kick He gives is, indeed, unbearable. Those who bear it are themselves gods.
- Every moment of life should be regarded as the last moment, as there is no knowing when this moment will come. When it is said that the last thought of a person should be God’s thought, we are impliedly admonished to remember God every day and every moment.
- The energy that leaks through the senses by way of excitation and pleasure-seeking diminishes the psychic force that is necessary for meditation. Hence before any attempt at successful meditation this energy-leakage has to be blocked, and the direction of the flow of this energy turned inward.
- We should not try to be more strict on others than we are on ourselves. Our task is not so much to change the world as to change ourselves.
- The *prarabdha karma* is like an extortioner who will not let loose the victim until the last vestige of dues is cleared out. It cannot be exhausted without being worked out through experience, and the role of spiritual *sadhana* in relation to *prarabdha* is not one of negating or counteracting it, but of bringing about a transformation in the vision that evaluates and judges experience, pleasurable or miserable.
- Mostly, the mind is where the eyes are. Look not at anything which may stimulate desire, or rouse egoistic ambition. The eyes have to be carefully guarded.
- The importance of *sadhana* in spiritual life is great enough to compel the attention of anyone wishing to be freed from botherations. The vexations of life are due to entanglement in externalised forms, while freedom at once manifests itself when the universal nature of these forms is beheld. *Sadhana* is nothing but an attempt to withdraw from the particulars and sink into the Universal.
- Doubts on the path of *sadhana* indicate that the spirit of *sadhana* has not been properly grasped. When there is enough conviction about the correctness of the method adopted, *sadhana* quickly bears fruit.
- The highest fulfilment is the result of the highest renunciation. The less you want, the more you get. He who wants nothing from the world finds the world falling at his feet. Even the gods are afraid of him who wants nothing for himself.
- Space, time and gravitation divide and pull the body by isolating it from other

bodies. With this division and pull of the body, consciousness also appears to be affected due to its association with the body through the mind, Prana and the nervous system. The overcoming of this distracting effect of space, time and gravitation in one's consciousness is yoga.

- The establishment of oneself in a state of consciousness which stabilises one's being in a non- externalised Universal Pure Subjectivity of Selfhood is the final panacea for the sorrow of mortal existence. This is the great meditation in which every soul has to engage itself throughout its career in life. This is the final duty inseparable from man's aspiration, nay, the only duty in life.
- There are three grades of Self: The real, secondary and false. The real is the Atman which is universal; the secondary is the person or thing which one likes or dislikes; the false is the aggregate of the five sheaths. Meditation disentangles the real from the secondary and the false.
- Buddha and Sankaracharya represent two sides in the picture of life. The purely phenomenal approach of Buddha implies the so-called solid content of the appearance called the world, and the spiritual doctrine of Sankara fills this emptiness with Soul, and completes the picture.
- It may be that we try to remember God when we are comfortably placed. But the test as to whether He has really entered our hearts is whether we remember Him in sickness, suffering, opposition and times of temptation.
- The pain generally felt at death is due to the nature of the intensity of the desires with which one continued to live in the physical body. The more is the love for the Universal Being entertained in life, the less would be the pain and agony of departing from the body.
- Who is a fool? He who thinks that the world has any regard for him and is really in need of him.
- He it is that, as an old man, totters with a stick, thus deceiving the human eye, for He is all things.
- Ishvara , *jiva* and *jagat* are not three entities standing apart like father, son and their house. They are three presentations of reality or view-points of the Absolute from the level of the *jiva*.
- *sadhana* is a sort of constant remembering a thing against heavy odds, and pulling up oneself from sinking into deep mires. To retain the thought of God in a world of colours and sounds that dazzle the eyes and din the ears is hard enough. This is *sadhana*, a feat of will and understanding.
- Avoid contact with such things as are likely to stimulate sense desire or excite the ego. This is necessary until strength is gained to withstand the forces of the world.
- The test of spiritual advancement is a gradual attainment of freedom from doubts of all kinds and a conviction of having reached a settled understanding in regard to one's true aim of life. It is this conviction that brings inner strength and power to face all opposition.

- The strength to bear suffering comes not merely from a determination of the will, but the discovery that a vast treasure is awaiting one who practises such endurance. Students lose sleep and comfort, a lover undergoes untold pains, and an employee tolerates the unpleasantness of work, not because of a mere determination of will but due to the sure promise of an enjoyment which is known to exceed the pains which pave its way. So it is with spiritual *sadhana*.
- Spiritual *sadhana* is ultimately an effort to cease from all effort. This is the highest effort, because no one normally can be without exerting oneself in some direction. All activity is a process of moving away from the Centre. The activity to cease from such activity is *sadhana*.
- No saint has been able to maintain the spiritual balance throughout his life. There have been occasional reversals though these might not have left any impression on their minds any more than the mark left by a stick drawn on water. But the mark is there when it appears. Such is the difficulty of leading the spiritual life. The case of immature seekers is much more precarious, indeed.
- Just as when we touch a live wire the electric force infuses itself into our body, when we deeply meditate on God the power of the whole universe seeks entry into our personality.
- The *sadhana* that one does should speak through the actions and the words which manifest themselves through one's personality. The personality is the vehicle of the aspiration that wells up within. And the face is the index of the mind.
- The Ramayana and the Mahabharata are two great epics of the forces of lust and greed, respectively. The passion of Ravana and the greed of Duryodhana caused the wars of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. These are the twin forces of the devil which can be faced only with Divine Help.

## V. SHUN THE EGO

- When we get irritated or annoyed in the midst of work, for any reason, it is to be taken as a caution that our personality has entered into it, and the 'unselfishness' of the work has been adulterated with that undesirable and vitiating factor, the ego. When the work is 'not mine', there is no reason for internal disturbance.
- If the hydrogen and oxygen that are in the entire atmosphere get mixed up in the proportion of H<sub>2</sub>O, what will happen to us? And why should it not happen? Who controls the atmosphere and prevents such a combination? What is this mystery and this precariousness of life? Where then is the need for man to be proud of his powers?
- It is futile on the part of a *sadhaka* to attempt at sense-control when he or she is in the vicinity of objects of enjoyment. It is necessary that one should be wary of this truth of *sadhana*, a truth which most people do not recognise due to vanity and foolishness.
- There are ups and downs in spiritual life, even if one might have reached a high stage of development. The prominent hurdles are lust and ego. There has not been one who could overcome both these forces completely. Whatever caution we may exercise in this regard, we will find, when the time comes, that it is insufficient.
- "Man proposes; God disposes," says an old adage. It does not mean that God is perpetually opposing whatever man does. What really happens is that when man exerts through his egoism in a manner which violates the eternal law of God, he naturally feels frustrated, being beaten back by the law of Truth.
- It is difficult to live in society with mental peace, because it is difficult to be charitable in nature. Charity of things is of less consequence than possession of charitable feelings, and resorting to charitable speech, charitable demeanour, and charitable actions through a general charitable temperament. This is, in short, what is called self-sacrifice, for it involves parting with some part of the delights of the ego.
- The notion of oneself being identical with the body is the cause of egoism. It is this egoism that entangles all judgments of value in the preconception that knowledge is acquired through the senses and the mind or the intellect. This prejudice of egoism is Samsara, the persistent idea that all knowledge is in terms of space, time and externality.
- What 'happens' is done by God. What is 'initiated' is done by the *jiva*. We should be able to distinguish between what happens without our interference and what is done with it.
- One's life-span, actions, wealth, education and death are all determined even while in the womb of the mother. The Omniscience of God is proof enough of the predetermination of everything. Human effort is a part of the way in which the universal plan works. Any egoism of man is thus sheer vanity.

## VI. RANDOM USEFUL THOUGHTS

- The difference between the natures of Isvara and *jiva* is something like that between the meanings of the words, 'God' and 'dog'. There is no doubt some relation between the two, and yet what a contrast of characters! In the *jiva* the character of Isvara is completely reversed in a topsy-turvy manner, though the relation between Him and the *jiva* is, no doubt, there.
- Dharma is that sustaining universal impulse which conduces to the prosperity of the individual both here and hereafter. This means that the observance of Dharma does not violate the laws of the world for the sake of the Spirit or of the Spirit for the sake of the world. It views existence both in its depth and its width.
- The conclusions of physical science are as much true as the discovery that all the plays of Shakespeare are only combinations of the 26 letters of the English alphabet. This is no doubt a truth which no one can controvert or refute. And yet the heart will revolt against this conclusion since it apprehends in the Works of Shakespeare something more than the constituents of the alphabet. This is true in the case of every other observed phenomenon, also.
- The mind and the body get identified with each other, like fire and iron in a red hot iron-ball, in such a way that thought cannot be separated from object. There is always a flow of thought with perpetual reference to the body, and all human judgment is thus vitiated by the prejudice that the body is the thinking self. All science and even philosophy cannot help playing second fiddle to this erroneous hypothesis, and thus cut the ground from under their own feet.
- Hanuman is said to have told Sri Rama: "From the point of view of the body, I am Thy servant; from the point of view of the *jiva*, I am a part of Thyself; from the point of view of the Atman, I am Thy own-Self." These three standpoints correspond to the three great systems of philosophy propounded by Madhva, Ramanuja and Sankara.
- The thought of God is like the centripetal cohesive force in a star or a planet, which drives its constituents to its centre by a pressure of inwardly directed energy, and is strikes a universally attuned equilibrium of the entire personality in relation to creation as a whole, provided the thought is deep enough and is sincerely raised in one's mind. It produces a thrill beyond words.
- While Maya follows Brahman, the *jiva* follows Maya. It seems that while Rama was walking in the forest, Sita was following him and Lakshmana was following her. *Maya* obstructs the vision of Brahman by the *jiva*.
- Forces which constitute the universe react and interact among one another for effecting a higher integration - we may call them men and things, and so on in a state of ignorance. These activities of forces are the history of the universe.
- Hanuman is a combination of strength and intelligence. He was an *akhandabrahmacharin*. His life demonstrates that the *ojas-sakti* generated through *brahmacharya* heightens both understanding and vitality in a maximum degree.
- The effect of one's reading and learning can be seen in one's behaviour. If the

behaviour has not changed, it means the learning acquired is like water poured over a rock, which gets wet only on the surface without allowing the water to seep into it.

- The four *ashramas* of life are not four different stages with a jump from the preceding to the succeeding. Each following stage is the flowering of the earlier, a maturing, including and transcending of the past conditions, like the higher and higher standards in education superseding the earlier ones.
- Death is the law of life. It is the law that requires a constant transformation of all composite elements and a reshuffling of all existent forms. Thus, death cannot be avoided. And it can take place at any time, though it has its fixed time.
- Just as twenty-five paise are contained in a quarter rupee coin, the twenty-five manifestations of *prakriti* are contained in the *purusha*, though invisibly and intangibly. Though the variety of manifestation is manifold, it is all inherent in its cause, like a chair present in wood.
- The 'Advaita' of Sankara is not so much the assertion of oneness as the negation of duality, as the names of his system suggests. God is not one or two or three, for He is above numerical affirmation. He is not anything that we can think of, but, however, He does not involve in any difference; hence He is 'Advaita', non-dual. Such is the cautious name of Sankara's system of philosophy.
- Brahma, Vishnu and Siva are not three gods, but the one God performing three functions. There can, thus, be no superiority or inferiority among them. They are like the three faces of a crystal where one face reflects the others.
- An individual has as many organs as are required to fulfil the wishes that are embodied in the *prarabdha karma* of a given life, and these organs are of such quality and capacity as the needs of the individual concerned. Nothing more, and nothing less is given to us in this world.
- Every adversity should stimulate more and more strength in us, enough to be able to overcome onslaughts of such types again. Every fall should propel us to a higher aspiration, a longing which should never be dampened, threatened or vanquished at any time.
- Avidya is the disposition by which one mistakes the non-eternal for the eternal, the impure for the pure, the painful for the pleasant and the not-self for the Self. Avidya is the seed of egoism, craving, hatred and clinging to one's body, so hard to overcome.
- When senses trouble you, remember the sages Narayana and Nara. They are the supreme masters over the senses, before whom Indra had to bow his head in shame.
- There are two greater wonders: The starry heavens above, and the moral law within. Neither of these can be fathomed to their depths, and they will remain a wonder forever. They are endless in their extent and no one can study them as 'external' objects.
- When Maricha cried out: "O Lakshmana, O Sita," Sita mistook it for Rama's

voice. She could not identify Rama's voice as different from that of another, though she had lived with Rama for so long. So is the case with the *jiva*. It has forgotten its association with the Absolute and cannot distinguish the call of the Spirit from the clamours of the senses. This is called delusion.

- Krishna was a person of great enjoyments. Vasishtha was devoted to rituals. Janaka was a king. Jadabharata was looking like an idiot. Suka was renowned for his dispassion. Vyasa was busy in teaching and writing. But all these are regarded as equal in knowledge. Different forms serve different purposes, but their essential being is one.
- Man's conscience in its essentiality is not an accomplice of harm and injury being done to anyone. It is necessary for the evil one intending to destroy others to destroy his own conscience first. The self of the killer is killed much before the act of killing takes place.
- It is unwise to say that the world is good or bad, for the world is one of the conditions through which the '*gunas*' - *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* - evolve in the course of time. All things can be found always in different places and hence our narrow judgments confined to a limited perception of truth cannot be correct. How can we say that any part of '*prakriti*' is good or bad?
- Great men are not those who run fast and speak much but think deep and live wisely. More than doing it is being something - a change of outlook and attitude. We are great, not because we are something to the world but because we are something in ourselves, even if the whole world is not to exist at all.
- It is impossible to use one's commonsense when one is in the grip of intense desire; for passions have no commonsense. They have neither reason nor logic, like the overwhelming force of a mighty river in floods, or like a beast caught at bay. Conquest over the human passions is the same as self-control, for the personality of man is but a bundle of latent and patent forces which seek expression in various ways.
- The Ganga destroys sins; the moon destroys heat; the *kalpavriksha* destroys poverty. But the company of the wise ones destroys sin, heat and poverty all at once.
- It is said that when the devotee takes one step towards the Lord, he is greeted by the Lord with a hundred steps. The Bhakti-Sastras state that the love of God for the devotee is more than man's love for God. The power of the Whole is intenser than the force of the part.
- Religion is the reaction of the human mind to its notion of God.
- Dharma is that sustaining power of Righteousness by which one acquires here prosperity (*adhyudaya*) and attains in the end eternal blessedness (*nihisreyasa*). It is the law that maintains the balance of forces in the Universe and dispenses the retributive justice to the individuals in such a manner as the equilibrium of creation is never disturbed.

## VII. ON ATTAINMENT AND EXPERIENCE

- No one who is not established in God as an entirety of existence can feel a kinship with Nature or even a sense of brotherhood with others, let alone have peace of mind within one's own self. Unselfish dedicated work for the welfare of all (*sarvabhutahite ratah*) and constant devotion to God as the universality inseparable from one's true being are marks of perfection (*sthitaprajna*).
- When man's meditation on God ends, and God begins meditation on all Creation, the consummation is reached. It is here that all questions are answered and all problems solved.
- The highest meditation consists in the recognition of the Self in all things, so that there is no object before the Self to think or deal with. It is here that the mind melts like an exhausted camphor cake in the process of self-sublimation.
- The highest '*bhava*' which rouses '*para bhakti*' in a devotee is that in which one cannot recognise even one's own body as if forgotten since many years, for there is no body-consciousness when the mind expires in pure experience.
- To be able to realise God, you have first to want God. It is almost a question of supply and demand. To want God is not merely to 'think' but to 'feel' through your 'whole being' that you cannot exist without Him. The entire personality vibrates with a longing that cannot be satisfied by the beauty and the grandeur of the world. There is a want for 'That' alone, and nothing short of it.
- The sense of perfection slowly enters the mind, when it gradually learns to dovetail the various discrepant particulars of the world into a coherent whole. This stage comes when the existence and activity of the mind coalesce in an adjustment of oneself with God's Creation.
- Life is a process of entering into God. This is achieved by seeing God in the objects as well as the actions of the world, which is not the seeing of particulars, but of the Universal in them.
- *Tapas* is the process of stilling the senses and the mind and allowing the lustre of the Atman to manifest itself spontaneously. The power of the sage is this energy of the Atman revealed by the cessation of the externalising activity of the senses and the mind.
- *Brahmabhavana*, the art of the affirmation of Brahman, is called Brahmabhyasa in the words of the Yoga Vasishtha. It consists in constantly thinking of Brahman, speaking about Brahman, discoursing to one another on Brahman and depending on Brahman alone for everything that one values in life. This is the final stage of meditation.
- It is of little consequence to one who has awakened to normal consciousness whether he or she was a king or a beggar in last night's dream. Likewise, what one is in this world matters little to one who has awakened to the Presence of God.
- When the senses stand together with the mind and the intellect does not shake, the state of yoga supervenes. The secret of meditation is this: The mind and the

intellect should shine, but not shine upon things other than the shining awareness. This is the realisation of God within.

- Appearance is the *objectified character* of Reality; and when this character is negated in the immediacy of experience, it is not appearance that becomes Reality, but it is Reality free from objectification that knows itself as such.
- The depth and solidity of substance in the world is similar to the distance and substantiality of things seen in a mirror. This truth is not realised in life because the body of the observer is itself involved in this reflected appearance called the world.
- The passing of the soul from plane to plane is all a process of Consciousness within the Absolute. Just as our movements in the dream-world are actual spatial allocations of personality but are really within the circumference of mental activity - all dream being only within the mind - so is the transmigration of souls real empirically but are activities of Consciousness within its bosom.
- It is the opinion of Bhishma that it would not take more than six months to attain Samadhi if the needed precaution is taken to prevent the mind and the senses from hovering round their objects. That this achievement has not been possible in most people shows that it is easier to glorify God than to feel it in one's heart, and the effort at self-control is more difficult than it is announced from pulpits.