



Bharani: ♀ I A

DISPASSION

Once while the Lord was abiding at Ayojjhaya on the bank of the Ganga, he spoke these words to the Bhikkus:

“Imagine, Bhikkus, that a large patch of froth was floating on the river Ganga, and suppose that a clear-sighted man were to look at it, observe it and examine it properly. Seeing it, observing it and examining it properly, the froth would appear to him to be empty, unsubstantial and without an essence. What essence, Bhikkus, could be found in a lump of froth? In the same way, Bhikkus, whatever form, past, present or future, inner or outer, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, far or near, is seen, observed and properly examined, will appear empty, unsubstantial and without an essence. What essence could there be in form?

“Imagine, Bhikkus, that when it is raining large drops in autumn, a great bubble arises and bursts on the water, and suppose that a clear-sighted man were to see it, observe it and examine it properly. The bubble would appear to him to be empty, unsubstantial and without an essence. What essence, Bhikkus, could be found in a water-bubble? In the same way, Bhikkus, whatever feeling, past, present or future, inner or outer, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, far or near, is felt, observed and properly examined, will appear empty, unsubstantial and without an essence. What essence could there be in feeling?

“Imagine, Bhikkus, that at midday in the last month of the hot season a mirage appeared, and suppose that a clear-sighted man were to see it, observe it and examine it properly. The mirage would appear to him to be empty, unsubstantial and without an essence. What essence, Bhikkus, could be found in a mirage? In the same way, Bhikkus, whatever perception is seen, observed and examined properly, will appear empty, unsubstantial and without an essence. What essence could there be in perception?

“Imagine, Bhikkus, that a man in need of strong timber should come upon a young, tall, plantain tree, and suppose that he chopped it down at the root, cut off the top and stripped away the outer skin. Looking at it, observing it and examining it properly, he would find no wood inside, and it would appear to him to be empty, unsubstantial and without an essence. What essence, Bhikkus, could there be in a plantain tree? In the same way, Bhikkus, whatever mental activity is experienced, observed and examined properly, will appear empty, unsubstantial and without an essence. What essence can there be in mental activity?

“Imagine, Bhikkus, that a magician produced an illusion in a thoroughfare, and suppose that a clear-sighted man were to see it, observe it and examine it properly. The magical illusion would appear to him to be empty, unsubstantial and without an essence. What essence, Bhikkus, could be found in a magical illusion? In the same way, Bhikkus, whatever consciousness is experienced, observed and examined properly, will appear empty, unsubstantial and

without an essence.

“Understanding this, the disciple of the Noble Eightfold Path is dispassionate towards the body, towards feeling and perception, mental activity and consciousness. Being dispassionate, he is detached; being detached, he is released from bondage; in release from bondage there is knowledge of freedom, and the disciple then knows:

Finished is birth,
Lived is the Life,
Done is all duty,
No longer is there
This or that.

Samyutta Nikaya



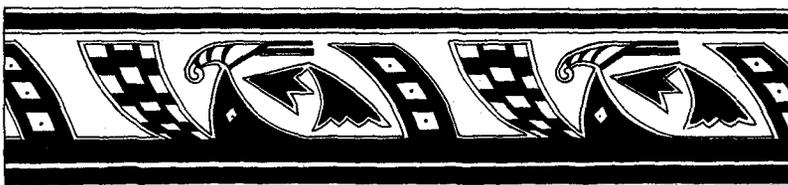
ICNOCUICATL

Waking up,
I dream this life.

My time on earth
Is borrowed.

In an instant
One day
I must leave.

NAHUATL SHAMAN





THE HOLY SIGN

I was made aware that I had risen higher
By the enkindled ardour of the red star
That glowed, I thought, with more than usual fire.

With all my heart, and in the tongue which is
One in all men, I offered God my soul
As a burnt offering for this new bliss.

Nor had the flame of sacrifice in my breast
Burnt out, when a good omen let me know
My prayer had been received by the Most Blest;

For with such splendour, in such a ruby glow,
Within two rays, there shone so great a glory
I cried, "O Helios that arrays them so!"

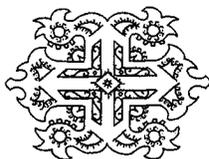
As, pole to pole, the arch of the Milky Way
So glows, pricked out by greater and lesser stars,
That sages stare, not knowing what to say —

So constellated, deep within that Sphere,
The two rays formed into the holy sign
A circle's quadrant lines describe. And here

Memory outruns my powers. How shall I write
That from that cross there glowed a vision of Christ?
What metaphor is worthy of that sight?

But whoso takes his cross and follows Christ
Will pardon me what I leave here unsaid
When *he* sees that great dawn that rays forth Christ.

DANTE ALIGHIERI





BEYOND STRIFE

Seeks thy spirit to be gifted
With a deathless life?
Let it seek to be uplifted
O'er earth's storm and strife.

Spurn its joys — its ties dissever;
Hopes and fears divest;
Thus aspire to live forever —
Be forever blest!

Faith and doubt leave far behind thee;
Cease to love or hate;
Let not Time's illusions blind thee;
Thou shalt Time outdate.

Merge thine individual being
In the Eternal's love;
All this sensuous nature fleeing
For pure bliss above.

Earth receives the seed and guards it;
Trustfully it dies;
Then, what teeming life rewards it
For self-sacrifice!

With green leaf and clustering blossom
Clad, and golden fruit,
See it from earth's cheerless bosom
Ever sunward shoot!

Thus, when self-abased, Man's spirit
From each earthly tie
Rises disenthralled t' inherit
Immortality!

SUFI POEM



Krittika: ☉ 0 D

RIGHT PROPORTION

Let man consider who he is and what he should and must become. . . .
Man needs more than common intelligence to know who he is; only he who studies him properly and knows whence he comes and who he is will also give profound attention to the eternal. . . .

Everything that man accomplishes or does, that he teaches or wants to learn, must have its right proportion; it must follow its own line and remain within its circle, to the end that a balance be preserved, that there be no crooked thing, that nothing exceed the circle.

PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA



RECOLLECT THRICE

Let not soft slumber close your eyes,
Before you've recollected thrice
The train of action through the day!
Where have my feet chose out their way?
What have I learnt, where'er I've been,
From all I've heard, from all I've seen?
What have I more that's worth the knowing?
What have I done that's worth the doing?
What have I sought that I should shun?
What duty have I left undone,
Or into what new follies run?
These self-inquiries are the road
That lead to virtue and to God.

ISAAC WATTS





NOTHING CAN BE LOST

If a man feels that what, without any fault of his own, he suffers in this life can only be the result of some of his former acts, he will bear his sufferings with more resignation, like a debtor who is paying off an old debt. And if he knows besides that in this life he may actually lay by moral capital for the future, he has a motive for goodness, which is not more selfish than it ought to be. The belief that no act, whether good or bad, can be lost, is only the same belief in the moral world which our belief in the preservation of force is in the physical world. Nothing can be lost.

MAX MÜLLER



SVADHARMA

We should think constantly of our *svadharma* and devote all our energies to it; we should have no thought for anything else. This is the touchstone of *svadharma*. *Karmayoga* is not action which is great or weighty. The *karmayoga* of the *Gita* is something quite different. Its distinctive virtue consists in progressively acquiring *chittashuddhi*, inner purity, through performing, without any thought of fruit, the *svadharma* that comes to one naturally and inescapably. Endless activities go on all the time throughout creation. But *karmayoga* means performing all actions with a special mental attitude.

To sow seed in a field and to scatter a handful of grain somewhere — these are entirely distinct actions. The difference between them is great; we know how much we gain by sowing the seed and what we lose by throwing it away. The *karma* that the *Gita* teaches is like the sowing of seed. There is an unlimited power in carrying out one's duty, one's *svadharma*. Here, no effort can be too great. Here, there is no excuse for running around.

VINOBA BHAVE



Robini:) V B

THE LAW OF THE LORD

Blessed is the man
Who walketh not in the counsel of the wicked
And standeth not in the way of sinners,
And sitteth not in the seat of scorers;
But his delight is in the law of the Lord;
And in his law he meditate both day and night.
He shall be like a tree planted by streams of water,
That yieldeth its fruit in its season,
And whose leaf doth not wither:
All that he doeth shall prosper.
Not so the wicked;
They are like chaff, which the wind driveth away.

The Book of Psalms



BLESSED ARE THE MEEK

And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,
Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peace-makers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

The Gospel According to Matthew



MUTUAL AID

May you grow many foods and many crops.

May you live in good houses; may you moreover live in a beautiful village.

Don't quarrel with one another.

Don't pursue another's spouse.

Don't mock the invalid passing in the village.

And he who seduces another's wife will be killed!

Accept the chief; fear him; may he also fear you.

May you agree with one another, all together, no enmity in the land nor too much hate.

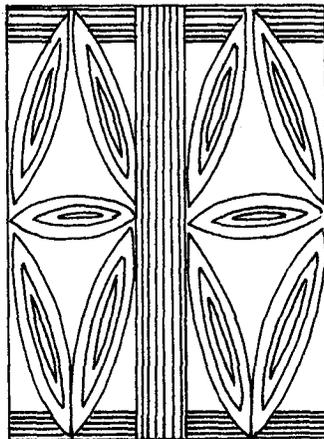
May you bring forth tall and short children; in so doing you will bring them forth for the chief.

Among children there are none bad; whether he be disabled, or whether he not be disabled, he must not be rejected. So then there is nothing bad in what God has given to man.

Heroism be hailed! But excessive callousness either pushes a man into a great crime or brings him a great one, which normally he would not have experienced. So, whosoever in a country is not advised will one day carry excrements – and to experience that is terrible.

Mutual agreement brings about kinship solidarity; the one who will save his companion is unknown; it is like the chief and his subordinates. So, the world is but made of mutual aid. So, then, may the chief safeguard subordinates and the subordinates safeguard the chief. Kingship is the stamping of feet; it is the tremor of people.

MWINDO EPIC

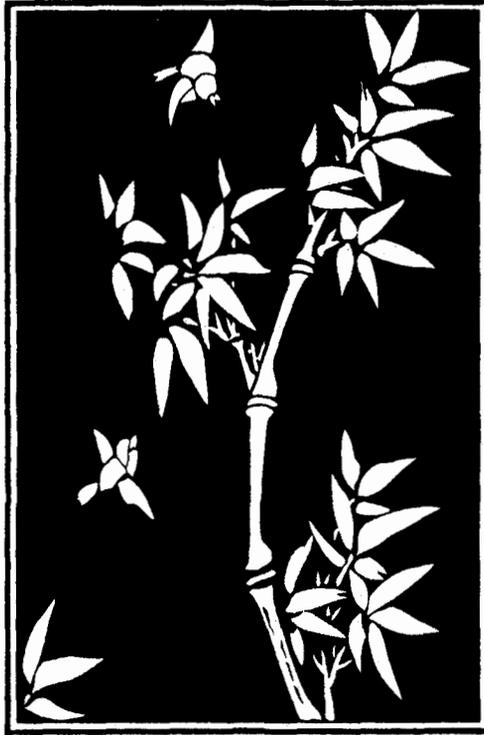




TRUE OPULENCE

Science and art may invent splendid modes of illuminating the apartments of the opulent: but these are all poor and worthless compared with the light which the sun sends into our windows, which he pours freely, impartially, over hill and valley, which kindles daily the eastern and western sky; and so the common lights of reason, and conscience, and love, are of more worth and dignity than the rare endowments which give celebrity to a few.

W. HENRY CHANNING





Mrigasbirsha: ♂ R C

PURITY AND CORRUPTION

By the sun and his midday brightness; by the moon, which rises after him; by the day, which reveals his splendour; by the night, which veils him!

By the heaven and Him that built it; by the earth and Him that spread it; by the soul and Him that moulded it and inspired it with knowledge of sin and piety: blessed shall be the man who has kept it pure, and ruined he that has corrupted it!

The Qu'ran



BEARING EACH OTHER'S BURDENS

God has furnished us with constant occasions of bearing one another's burdens. For there is no man living without his failings; no man that is so happy as never to give offence; no man without his load of trouble; no man so sufficient as never to need assistance; none so wise but the advice of others may, at some time or other, be useful for him; and, therefore, we should think ourselves under the strongest engagements to comfort, and relieve, and instruct, and admonish, and bear with one another.

THOMAS à KEMPIS





WITH EVERY GESTURE

How much may be done, is done, by the brain and heart of one human being in contact with another! We are answerable for incalculable opportunities of good and evil in our daily intercourse with every soul with whom we have to deal; every meeting, every parting, every chance greeting, and every appointed encounter, are occasions open to us for which we are to account. To our children, our servants, our friends, our acquaintances – to each and all, every day, and all day long, we are distributing that which is best or worst in existence – influence: with every word, with every look, with every gesture, something is given or withheld of great importance, it may be to the receiver.

F. A. KEMBLE



NIGHT CHANT

Tsegih!

House made of the dawn.

House made of evening light.

House made of the dark cloud.

House made of male rain.

House made of dark mist.

House made of female rain.

House made of pollen.

House made of grasshoppers.

Dark cloud is at the door.

The trail out of it is dark cloud.

The zigzag lightning stands high upon it.

Male deity!
Your offering I make.
I have prepared a smoke for you.
Restore my feet for me.
Restore my legs for me.
Restore my body for me.
Restore my mind for me.
Restore my voice for me.
This very day take out your spell for me.
Your spell remove for me.
You have taken it away for me.
Far off it has gone.

Happily I recover.
Happily my interior becomes cool.
Happily I go forth.
My interior feeling cold, may I walk.
No longer sore, may I walk.
Impervious to pain, may I walk.
With lively feelings, may I walk.
As it used to be long ago, may I walk.

Happily may I walk.
Happily with abundant dark clouds may I walk.
Happily with abundant showers may I walk.
Happily with abundant plants may I walk.
Happily on a trail of pollen may I walk.
Happily may I walk.
Being as it used to be long ago, may I walk.

May it be beautiful before me.
May it be beautiful behind me.
May it be beautiful below me.
May it be beautiful above me.
May it be beautiful all around me.
In beauty it is finished.
In beauty it is finished.

NAVAJO CHANT





Ardra: Ω W O

SALVATION AND AFFLICTION

In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

By the night, when she lets fall her darkness, and by the radiant day! By Him that created the male and the female, your endeavours have different ends!

For him that gives in charity and guards himself against evil and believes in goodness, We shall smooth the path of salvation; but for him that neither gives nor takes and disbelieves in goodness, We shall smooth the path of affliction. When he breathes his last, his riches will not avail him.

It is for Us to give guidance. Ours is the life of this world, Ours the life to come. I warn you, then, of the blazing fire, in which none shall burn save the hardened sinner, who denies the truth and gives no heed. But the good man who purifies himself by almsgiving shall keep away from it: and so shall he that does good works for the sake of the Most High only, not in recompense for a favour. Such men shall be content.

The Qu'ran



VICTORY

It is because man is half angel, half brute, that his inner life witnesses such bitter war between such unlike natures. The brute in him clamours for sensual joy and things in which there is only vanity; but the angel resists and strives to make him know that meat, drink, sleep, are but means whereby the body may be made efficient for the study of the truths, and the doing of the will of God. Not until the very hour of death can it be certain or known to what measure the victory has been won. He who is but a novice in the fear of God will do well to say audibly each day, as he rises: "This day I will be a faithful servant of the Almighty. I will be on my guard against wrath, falsehood, hatred, and quarrelsomeness, and will forgive those who wound me." For whoso forgives is forgiven in his turn; hard-heartedness and a temper that will not make up quarrels are a heavy burden of sin, and unworthy of an Israelite.

MOSES of COUCY

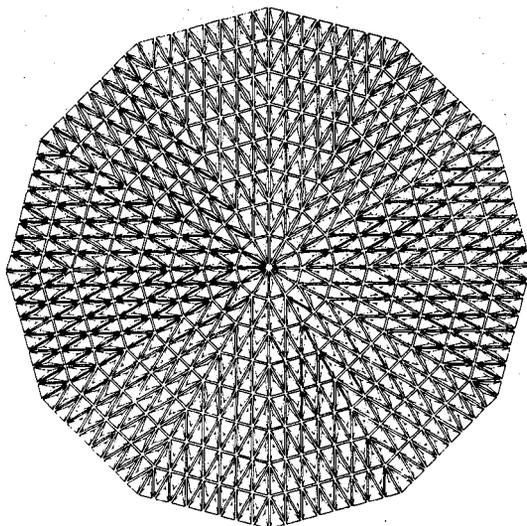


THE SECRET OF TRANSMUTATION

Seventy Thousand Veils separate Allah, the One Reality (*al-baqq*), from the world of matter and of sense. And every soul passes before his birth through these seventy thousand. The inner half of these are veils of light; the outer half, veils of darkness. For every one of the veils of light passed through, in this journey towards birth, the soul puts *off* a divine quality; and for every one of the dark veils, it puts *on* an earthly quality. Thus, the child is born weeping, for the soul knows its separation from Allah, the One Reality. And when the child cries in its sleep, it is because the soul remembers something of what it has lost. Otherwise, the passage through the veils has brought with it *nisyan*, forgetfulness: and for this reason, man is called *insan*. He is now, as it were, in prison in his body, separated by these thick curtains from Allah.

But the whole purpose of Sufism, the way of the dervish, is to give him an escape from this prison, an apocalypse of the Seventy Thousand Veils, a recovery of the original unity with the One, whilst still in this body. The body is not to be put off; it is to be refined and made spiritual — a help and not a hindrance to the spirit. It is like metal that has to be refined by fire and transmuted. And the shaikh tells the aspirant that he has the secret of this transmutation. “We shall throw you into the fire of Spiritual Passion”, he says, “and you will emerge refined.”

RIFA'I



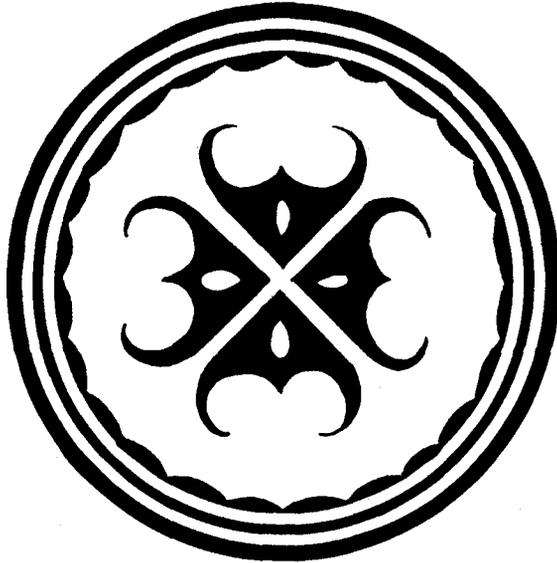


LIVE TRULY

Thou must be true thyself,
If thou the truth wouldst teach;
Thy soul must overflow if thou
Another's soul would reach.

Think truly, and thy thoughts
Shall the world's famine feed;
Speak truly, and each word of thine
Shall be a fruitful seed;
Live truly, and thy life shall be
A great and noble creed.

BONAR





Punarvasu: ४ B G

SELF-CREATION

After having subdued by sleep all that belongs to the body, he, not asleep himself, looks down upon the sleeping. Having assumed light, he goes again to his own place, the gold-gleaming genius, the solitary bird.

Guarding with the *prana* the lower nest, the immortal moves away from the nest; that immortal one goes wherever he likes, the gold-gleaming genius, the solitary bird.

Going up and down in his dream, the god makes manifold shapes for himself, either rejoicing together with women, or laughing with comrades, or seeing terrible sights.

People may see his playground, but himself no one ever sees. Therefore they say, "Let no one wake a man suddenly, for it is not easy to remedy, if he does not get back."

Now as a man is like this or like that, according as he acts and according as he behaves, so will he be: — a man of good acts will become good, a man of bad acts, bad. He becomes pure by pure deeds, corrupt by bad deeds.

And here they say that a person consists of desires. And as is his desire, so is his will: and as is his will, so is his deed; and whatsoever deed he does, that he will reap.

If a man understands the Self, saying "I am He", what could he wish or desire that he should pine after the body?

Whosoever has found and understood the Self that has entered this patched-up hiding place, he indeed is the creator, for he is the maker of everything, his is the world, and he is the world itself.

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad



THE UNRUFFLED MIND

It is upon the serene and placid surface of the unruffled mind that the visions gathered from the invisible find a representation in the visible world. Otherwise you would vainly seek those visions, those flashes of sudden light which have already helped to solve so many of the minor problems and which alone can bring the truth before the eye of the soul. It is with jealous care that we have to guard our mind-plane from all the adverse influences which daily arise in our passage through earth-life.

MAHATMA K. H.



SERENITY

THAT blessed mood,
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened: — that serene and blessed mood
In which the affections gently lead us on, —
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul;
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH



THE UNCARVED BLOCK

Know the strength of man,
But keep a woman's care!
Be the stream of the universe!
Being the stream of the universe,
Ever true and unswerving,
Become as a little child once more.

Know honour,
Yet keep humility.
Be the valley of the universe!
Being the valley of the universe,
Ever true and resourceful,
Return to the state of the uncarved block.

Tao Te Ching



Pusbya: ṛ G F

KEY IN HAND

Every instant I give to the heart a different desire,
Every moment I lay upon the heart a different brand.
At every dawn I have a new employment.
'Tis wonderful that the spirit is in prison,
And that the key of the prison is in its hand!

JALALUDDIN RUMI



THE NACHIKETAS FIRE

To make our body of senses and limbs the stately mansion which puts forth the majesty and tenderness of Mother Earth; to make our emotions start from the spring of Love, glide forth in the river of gentleness and empty themselves in the Ocean of Compassion; to make our thoughts harbingers of goodwill and like birds rise in the Aether of Space, singing their songs — joyous and clear and fresh; to transform ourselves into the steady-burning Flame of the Nachiketas Fire — symbol of the Disciple; that is the task that lies before us.

B. P. WADIA





PREPARING FOR WOMANHOOD

O You, White Swan Power of the place where we always face, who control the path of the generations and of all that moves, we are about to purify a virgin, that her generations to come may walk in a sacred manner upon that path which You control. There is a place for You in the pipe! Help us with Your two red and blue days!

O Wakan Tanka, Grandfather, behold us! We are about to offer the pipe to You!

O You, Grandmother, upon whom the generations of the people have walked, may White Buffalo Cow Woman Appears and her generations walk upon you in a sacred manner in the winters to come. O Mother Earth, who gives forth fruit, and who is as a mother to the generations, this young virgin who is here today will be purified and made sacred; may she be like You, and may her children and her children's children walk the sacred path in a holy manner. Help us, O Grandmother and Mother, with Your red and blue days!

O Wakan Tanka, behold us! We are about to offer this pipe to You.

O you, our four-legged relative, and who of all the four-legged peoples are nearest to the two-leggeds, you too are to be placed in the pipe, for you have taught us how you cleanse your young, and it is this way that we shall use in purifying White Buffalo Cow Woman Appears. I give to you an offering, O four-legged, water, paint, cherry juice, and also grass. There is a place for you in the pipe – help us!

O Wakan Tanka and all the winged Powers of the universe, behold us! This tobacco I offer especially to You, the Chief of all the Powers, who is represented by the Spotted Eagle who lives in the depths of the heavens, and who guards all that is there! We are about to purify a young girl, who is soon to be a woman. May You guard those generations which will come forth from her! There is a place for You in the pipe – help us with the red and blue days!

OGLALA DAKOTA CHANT





PLASTICITY OF IMAGINATION

The sculptor exemplifies the creativity of purifying, sifting, structuring and refining, resting in the unusual position wherein the acts of creation and of appreciation inconspicuously merge, so that every gesture of the sculptor is tending towards his conception of beauty and perfection. He adapts the human form to the divine purpose and at the same time disseminates divine ideas in a self-aware, but ego-less, activity. Leonardo would often give up sculptures midway because he felt he could not do adequate justice to his notion of divine perfection. Equally, Michelangelo, whenever he saw a thick and uncarved block, felt that he perceived a spirit waiting to be released. The sculptor is in the unusual position both of rendering beauty and attenuating the redundant dross into a pure refined truth. By reducing the excesses of self, he is subjugating self in order to release it. Eye and hand are perfectly attuned, the emotional elaboration upon the rational theme; he shows a sureness of vision but a plasticity of imagination. One could relate this to the Taoist notion of the uncarved block, which respects the integrity of the block, whether individual or collective, but also apprehends the sympathy that flows from non-being so that, when a sculptor is cutting away at himself to come to a chaster whole, he is also indirectly contributing towards the creativity of society.

The sculptor obviously provides an important model for self-examination if you think of the way he must move around his object in order to see it from every angle and from every perspective. So, too, when we are engaging in the process of self-scrutiny, it is necessary not merely to consider ourselves in terms mental, physical, spiritual, rational, but also to have an empathic distanced grasp whereby we can see ourselves from the perspectives of other people and from each angle, and thus come to a rounded wholeness while cutting away that which is superfluous. The sculptor involves himself in a symmetrical flow whereby he is fragmenting in order to make whole, a process pregnant with important corollaries. Man is at the gateway between mortal and immortal, and the sculptor is poised on that threshold, trying to bridge the gap between a perceptible humanity and a dimly apprehended divinity. We think of Goldmund trying to sculpt and shape the perfect feminine spirit, the feminine principle that guides the universe, although the only way that he can approach the divine conception is by amalgamating all the women that he has known and the creativity from them that he has been privileged to receive. The prominent characteristics of the sculptor are detachment, beauty of ideal and clarity of vision.

PICO IYER



Asblesba: ♀ Y E

LADDER OF LIFE

Poor copies out of Heaven's original,
Pale earthly pictures mouldering to decay,
What care although your beauties break and fall,
When that which gave them life endures for aye?

Oh, never vex thine heart with idle woes:
All high discourse enchanting the rapt ear,
All gilded landscapes and brave glistering shows
Fade — perish, but it is not as we fear.

Whilst far away the living fountains ply,
Each petty brook goes brimful to the main.
Since brook nor fountain can forever die,
Thy fears how foolish, thy lament how vain!

What is this fountain, wouldst thou rightly know?
The Soul whence issue all created things.
Doubtless the rivers shall not cease to flow
Till silenced are the everlasting springs.

Farewell to sorrow, and with quiet mind
Drink long and deep: let others fondly deem
The channel empty they perchance may find,
Or fathom that unfathomable stream.

The moment thou to this low world wast given,
A ladder stood whereby thou mightst aspire;
And first thy steps, which upward still have striven,
From mineral mounted to the plant; then higher

To animal existence; next, the Man
With knowledge, reason, faith. O wondrous goal!
This body, which a crumb of dust began —
How fairly fashioned the consummate whole!

Yet stay not here thy journey: thou shalt grow
An angel bright and have thine home in Heaven.
Plod on, plunge last in the great Sea, that so
Thy little drop make oceans seven times seven.

JALALUDDIN RUMI



THE VOICE DIVINE

Volcanic forces, in their gulfs compress'd,
By rocks and torrents are denied all rest,
But the fierce flame leaps round them and subdues —
Do thou, O timid man, like forces use!
A constant power direct to rend the chain,
To burst the bar, and thus thy freedom gain;
Inert are they, nor shall withstand thy strength,
Far from their fragments shalt thou soar at length!

When the swift lightning ere the thunder's peal,
Doth all the vault of heaven by fire reveal,
It manifests a master to the air;
Such work is thine; discern thy symbol there.
Lo, I have launch'd thee from the starry height,
'Tis thou who dartest downward trailing light,
And flash-like striking on the earthly ground,
Dost with the shock to thy first heaven rebound.

Man is the secret sense of all which seems;
That other doctrines are but idle dreams,
Let Nature, far from all contention, own,
While his grand doom is by her day-star shown.
To vaster laws adjusted, he shall reign,
Earth for his throne, and his star-crown attain,
The universal world his empire wait,
A royal court restore his ancient state.

LOUIS CLAUDE de SAINT-MARTIN

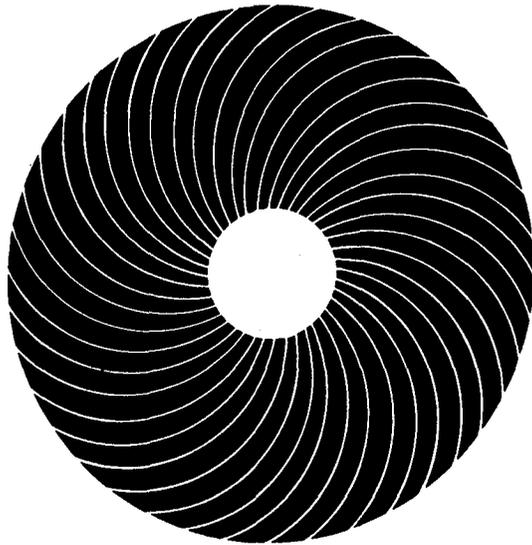




A PERPETUAL JOURNEY

I tramp a perpetual journey, (come listen all!) . . .
Not I, not any one else can travel that road for you,
You must travel it for yourself. . . .
This day before dawn I ascended a hill and look'd at the
crowded heaven,
And I said to my spirit, When we become the enfolders of
those orbs, and the pleasure and knowledge of everything
in them, shall we be fill'd and satisfied then?
And my spirit said, No, we but level that lift to pass and
continue beyond.

WALT WHITMAN





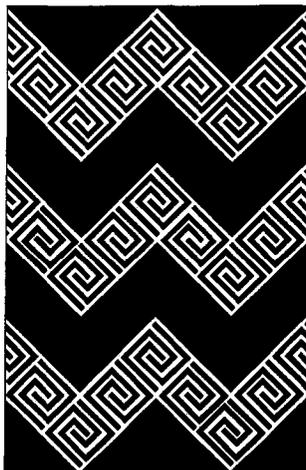
THE INEFFABLE NAME

Therefore to whom turn I but to thee, the ineffable Name?
Builder and maker, thou, of houses not made with hands!
What, have fear of change from thee who art ever the same?
Doubt that thy power can fill the heart that thy power expands?
There shall never be one lost good! What was, shall live as before;
The evil is null, is nought, is silence implying sound;
What was good shall be good, with, for evil, so much good more;
On the earth the broken arcs; in the heaven, a perfect round.

All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist;
Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty, nor good, nor power
Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist
When eternity affirms the conception of an hour.
The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,
The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky,
Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard;
Enough that he heard it once: we shall hear it by-and-by.

And what is our failure here but a triumph's evidence
For the fullness of the days? Have we withered or agonized?
Why else was the pause prolonged but that singing might issue thence?
Why rushed the discords in but that harmony should be prized?

ROBERT BROWNING





Magba: ॐ BI S

THY KINGDOM

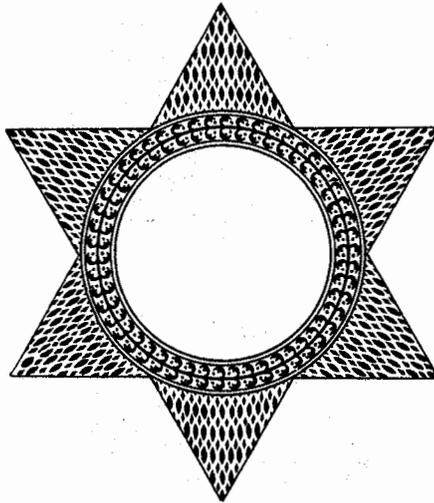
All the gates are firmly bolted.
How can I meet Thee, then, O Lord.
The path is slippery and winding, full of
Many ups and downs.

The rough ground offers me no footing.
Step by step, I move on with caution,
Trembling lest I fall, unsteady.
It is a hard, steep climb to the Lord's domain,
For my Lord dwells far off.

The path is very narrow.
All the while my mind sways hither and thither.
Each stage I climb, the sentinels keep watch.
The way is infested with robbers.
How hard is the journey to Thee,
And the way there proves so distant.

At last, O Lord of Mira,
Thou hast shown me Thy dwelling-place.
Long absent from her home, Mira at last
Has found her way back to Thy Kingdom.

MIRA





INWARDNESS

A wise man [Seneca] once said, "As often as I have been among men, I have returned home a lesser man." . . . It is easier to keep silence altogether than not to talk more than we should. It is easier to remain quietly at home than to keep due watch over ourselves in public. Therefore, whoever is resolved to live an inward and spiritual life must, with Jesus, withdraw from the crowd.

THOMAS à KEMPIS



THROUGH THE NIGHT

I cannot find my way: there is no star
In all the shrouded heavens anywhere;

And there is not a whisper in the air
Of any living voice but one so far
That I can hear it only as a bar
Of lost, imperial music, played when fair
And angel fingers wove, and unaware,
Dead leaves to garlands where no roses are.

No, there is not a glimmer, nor a call,
For one that welcomes, welcomes when he fears,
The black and awful chaos of the night;
For through it all — above, beyond it all —
I know the far-sent message of the years,
I feel the coming glory of the Light.

EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON

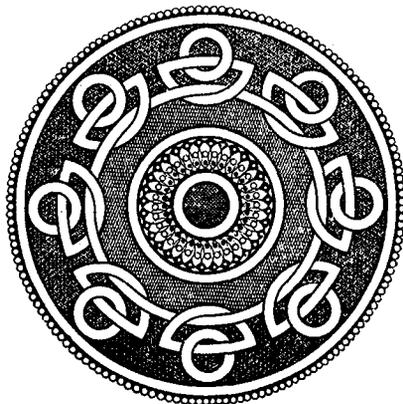


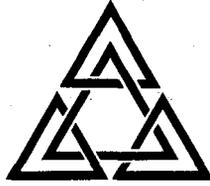
TRANSMISSION AND CREATIVITY

Life is no cruel burden imposed upon human beings by some capricious external power, but rather a festival in which there is continual learning and living and loving. But these cannot occur without unlearning, unloving and undoing the excess and illusion of the past. It is a cleansing process of transmission and continuity; it is, ultimately, a great sacrifice. Instead of sacrificing ignorantly and impulsively, unwittingly and feebly, one can make everything one has to offer count in the larger context of the vast, ceaseless sacrifice. This can be known only in solitude, at dawn or sunset, in meditation or during deep sleep, wherever one draws within the very depths of one's inmost self and feels closer to the core of every being. It is known to Krishna and Buddha and all the Mahatmas of boundless compassion who are such magnificent evergreen examples of sacrifice, with both the great fruit of immense, painfully won experience, the wisdom born of suffering and struggle, and also with the eyes of a child capable of looking with wonder and freshness at every moment.

Like the poet, "Look thy last on all things lovely." Look at every moment as if it will never come again. At the same time, do not live by breathless, feverish anticipation. Live at a distance from what men who hug this painted veil call life, and then one will discover that there is a deeper life. There are others who have gone before in that undiscovered country of the unmanifest. There are those who have kept the fires burning through the long night of history, through the cycles of rise and fall of cultures and civilizations, who have stood apart from Atlantis and Athens, from the great pyramids of Egypt and Central America, who have contemplated on the banks of the Ganges and watched over the temples and the pagodas of the East, because they knew that these were part of a larger sacred history which will unfold itself through millennia in the future.

RAGHAVAN IYER





BHAKTI KHANḌA

DEVOTION

FAITH

The Guru bestows Divine Knowledge and reveals the mysteries of the three worlds.

In the heart's garden, plant, like seeds, the Word of the Guru.

Let brotherhood with every being on earth be the highest aspiration of your Order.

Through faith in the Guru the True Self is known.

GURU NANAK



LIFE IS A FESTIVAL

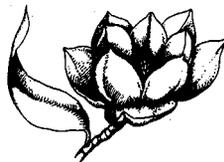
When Thou, my Expectation, art not near,

Each moment is an age of grief and fear;

But while I may behold and hear thee, all

My days are glad, and life's a festival.

AL-NURI





Purva Phalguni: ♀ I A

MAHA SHIVA

Salutations to Thee, O Lord unattached, who art nearest and yet farthest. Salutations to Thee, O destroyer of animal passions, who art the smallest of the small and yet art the greatest of the great. Salutations to Thee, O possessor of the highest wisdom, who art ancient and yet ever youthful. Salutations to Thee who art all things, seen and unseen, and yet beyond them all.

Salutations to Thee, O Lord, who as Creator assumest the immense power of dynamism (*rajas*) and producest the cosmos. Salutations to Thee who as Destroyer causetest its dissolution by the mighty power of inertia (*tamas*). Salutations to Thee who as Protector blessest men with happiness through the power of balance (*sattva*). Salutations to Thee, O auspicious Lord, who in Thy transcendent aspect art beyond the three *gunas*.

Shivamabimna Stotra





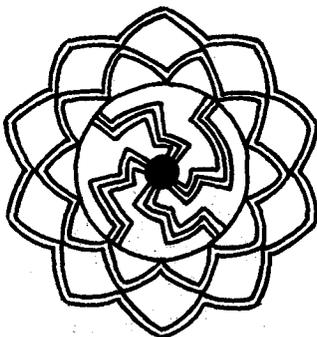
THE SACRED DANCE

His form is everywhere: all-pervading in His Shiva-Shakti:
Chidambaram is everywhere, everywhere His dance:
As Shiva is all and omnipresent,
Everywhere is Shiva's gracious dance made manifest.
His fivefold dances are temporal and timeless.
His fivefold dances are His Five Activities.
By His grace He performs the five acts,
This is the sacred dance of Uma-Sahaya.
He dances with Water, Fire, Wind and Ether,
Thus our Lord dances ever in the court.

Our Lord dances His eternal dance.
The form of the Shakti is all delight —
This united delight is Uma's body:
This form of Shakti arising in time
And uniting the twain is the dance.
His body is Akash, the dark cloud therein is Muyalaka,
The eight quarters are His eight arms,
The three lights are His three eyes,
Thus becoming, He dances in *our* body as the congregation.

The dancing foot, the sound of the tinkling bells,
The songs that are sung and the varying steps,
The form assumed by our Dancing Gurupara —
Find out these within yourself, then shall your fetters fall away.

TIRUMALAR





HE IS OMNIPRESENT

Where did you go,
Wherefrom did you come;
Easily pervading all,
Is and is not:
In reality he is omnipresent;
None feels any non-being anywhere.
Where is he not, where is such emptiness,
God experiences himself all over;
We go and come
In the company of God,
Tuka says, reciting His name.

TUKARAM



THE FLAMING RING

Cast in shadow that
Which shines for self
And forgets the lamp-lighter.

Eclipse the doubt
And let me soar
Through the flaming ring of Shiva's Eye.

Hermes





Uttara Phalguni: ☉ 0 D

LORD, WHERE SHALL I FIND YOU?

Lord, where shall I find you? Your place is lofty and secret. And where shall I not find you? The whole earth is full of Your glory!

You are found in man's innermost heart, yet You fixed earth's boundaries. You are a strong tower for those who are near, and the trust of those who are far. You are enthroned on the cherubim, yet You dwell in the heights of heaven. You are praised by Your hosts, but even their praise is not worthy of You. The sphere of heaven cannot contain You; how much less the chambers of the Temple!

Even when You rise above Your hosts on a throne, high and exalted, You are nearer to them than their own bodies and souls. Their mouths attest that they have no Maker except You. Who shall not fear You? All bear the yoke of Your kingdom. And who shall not call to You? It is You who give them their food.

I have sought to come near You, I have called to You with all my heart; and when I went out towards You, I found You coming towards me. I look upon Your wondrous power with awe. Who can say that he has not seen You? The heavens and their legions proclaim Your dread — without a sound.

JUDAH HALEVI



THE FLAWLESS

Blessed be He to whom all sovereignty belongs: He has power over all things.

He created life and death that He might put you to the proof and find out which of you acquitted himself best. He is the Mighty, the Forgiving One.

He created seven heavens, one above the other. His work is faultless. Turn up your eyes: can you detect a single flaw?

The Qu'ran



DIVINE LOVE

Love is divine. But love is expressed differently and in different degrees according to the evolution of the individual human soul.

There are people who still have hatred, jealousy, anger and pride in their hearts. To such, God is above, beyond and apart. They also may love God, but their love is selfish. This love is tamasic.

That, too, is a low form of love by which people love and worship God as a separate being, and pray to him for the fulfilment of their material desires. Such love is known as rajasic love.

But the love which seeks God for the sake of love alone and by means of which we offer ourselves whole-heartedly to him — this love we call sattvic love.

But when the love, the lover and the beloved have become one, when we see God and love him as the innermost Self in all beings; and when there is a continuous current of love flowing in the heart, then is it that we realize divine love.

When such divine love fills the heart, we transcend the three *gunas* and become united with *Brahman*.

KAPILA



A LIVING FLAME

Love is a mighty power, a great and complete good. Love alone lightens every burden and makes the rough places smooth. It bears every hardship as though it were nothing and renders all bitterness sweet and acceptable. The love of Jesus is noble and inspires us to great deeds; it moves us always to desire perfection. Love aspires to high things and is held back by nothing base. Love longs to be free, a stranger to every worldly desire, lest its inner vision become dimmed. . . . Love flies, runs, and leaps for joy; it is free and unrestrained. Love gives all for all, resting in One who is highest above all things, from whom every good flows and proceeds. . . . Love is watchful, and whilst resting never sleeps; weary, it is never exhausted; imprisoned, it is never in bonds; alarmed, it is never afraid; like a living flame and a burning torch, it surges upward and surely surmounts every obstacle.

THOMAS à KEMPIS



Hasta:) V B

THE SACRED DRUM

Creation arises from the drum: protection proceeds from the hand of hope: from the fire proceeds destruction: the foot held aloft gives release.

Unmai Vilakkam

O my Lord, Thy hand holding the sacred drum has made and ordered the heavens and earth and other worlds and innumerable souls. Thy lifted hand protects both the conscious and unconscious order of Thy creation. All these worlds are transformed by Thy hand bearing fire. Thy sacred foot, planted on the ground, gives an abode to the tired soul struggling in the toils of causality. It is Thy lifted foot that grants eternal bliss to those that approach Thee.

Chidambara Mummani Kovi



THE LAW OF LOVE

Fear and love are contradictory terms. Love is reckless in giving away, oblivious as to what it gets in return. Love wrestles with the world as with itself and ultimately gains a mastery over all other feelings. My daily experience, as of those who are working with me, is that every problem would lend itself to solution if we are determined to make the law of truth and non-violence the law of life. For truth and non-violence, are to me, faces of the same coin.

Whether mankind will consciously follow the law of love I do not know. But that need not perturb us. The law will work, just as the law of gravitation will work whether we accept it or no. And just as a scientist will work wonders out of various applications of the laws of nature, even so a man who applies the law of love with scientific precision can work greater wonders. For the force of non-violence is infinitely more wonderful and subtle than the forces of nature, like for instance electricity. The man who

discovered for us the law of love was a far greater scientist than any of our modern scientists. Only our explorations have not gone far enough and so it is not possible for every one to see all its workings. . . . The more I work at this law the more I feel the delight in life, the delight in the scheme of this universe. It gives me a peace and a meaning of the mysteries of nature that I have no power to describe.

M. K. GANDHI



TRUE LOVE

True Love in this differs from gold and clay,
That to divide is not to take away.
Love is like understanding that grows bright
Gazing on many truths; 't is like thy light,
Imagination! which, from earth and sky,
And from the depths of human fantasy,
As from a thousand prisms and mirrors, fills
The universe with glorious beams, and kills
Error, the worm, with many a sun-like arrow
Of its reverberated lightning.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY



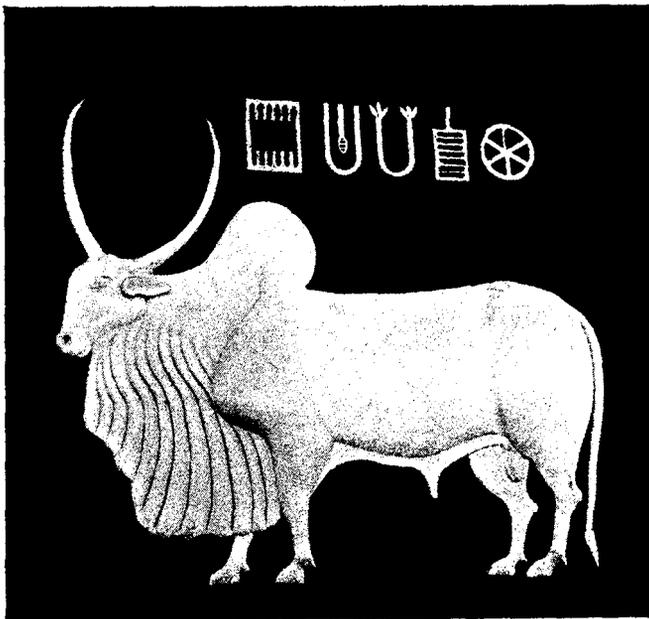


DEVOTION

When, moved by the law of Evolution, the Lords of Wisdom infused into him the spark of consciousness, the first feeling it awoke to life and activity was a sense of solidarity, of one-ness with his spiritual creators. As the child's first feeling is for its mother and nurse, so the first aspirations of the awakening consciousness in primitive man were for those whose element he felt within himself, and who yet were outside, and independent of him. DEVOTION arose out of that feeling, and became the first and foremost motor in his nature; for it is the only one which is natural in our heart, which is innate in us, and which we find alike in human babe and the young of the animal. This feeling of irrepressible, instinctive aspiration in primitive man is beautifully, and one may say intuitionally, described by Carlyle. . . .

It lives undeniably, and has settled in all its ineradicable strength and power in the Asiatic Aryan heart from the Third Race direct through its first "mind-born" sons — the fruits of *Kriyasakti*.

H. P. BLAVATSKY





Chitra: ♂ R C

EROS

DIOTIMA:

Love interprets and makes a communication between divine and human things, conveying the prayers and sacrifices of men to the gods, and communicating the commands and directions concerning the mode of worship most pleasing to them, from gods to men. He fills up that intermediate space between these two classes of beings so as to bind together, by his own power, the whole universe of things. Through him subsist all divination, and the science of sacred things as it relates to sacrifices, and expiations, and disenchantments, and prophecy, and magic. The divine nature cannot immediately communicate with what is human, but all that intercourse and converse which is conceded by the gods to men, both whilst they sleep and when they wake, subsists through the intervention of Love; and he who is wise in the science of this intercourse is supremely happy, and participates in the daemoniacal nature; whilst he who is wise in any other science or art remains a mere ordinary slave. These daemons are, indeed, many and various, and one of them is Love. . . .

On the birth of Venus the gods celebrated a great feast, and amongst them came Plenty, the son of Metis. After supper, Poverty, observing the profusion, came to beg, and stood beside the door. Plenty being drunk with nectar, for wine was not yet invented, went out into Jupiter's garden and fell into a deep sleep. Poverty, wishing to have a child by Plenty, on account of her low estate, lay down by him, and from his embraces conceived Love. Love is, therefore, the follower and servant of Venus, because he was conceived at her birth and because by nature he is a lover of all that is beautiful, and Venus was beautiful. And since Love is the child of Poverty and Plenty, his nature and fortune participate in that of his parents. He is forever poor, and so far from being delicate and beautiful, as mankind imagines, he is squalid and withered; he flies low along the ground, and is homeless and unsaddled; he sleeps without covering before the doors, and in the unsheltered streets; possessing thus far his mother's nature, that he is ever the companion of Want. But, inasmuch as he participates in that of his father, he is forever scheming to obtain things which are good and beautiful; he is fearless, vehement and strong; a dreadful hunter, forever weaving some new contrivance; exceedingly cautious and prudent, and full of resources; he is also, during his whole existence, a philosopher, a powerful enchanter, a wizard and a subtle sophist. And, as his nature is neither mortal nor immortal, on the same day when he is fortunate and successful, he will at one time flourish, and then die away, and then, according to his father's nature, again revive. All that he acquires perpetually flows away from him, so that Love is never either rich or poor, and holding forever an intermediate state between ignorance and wisdom. . . .

Love is indeed universally all the earnest desire for the possession of happiness and that which is good; the greatest and the subtlest love, and which inhabits the heart of every living being; but those who seek this object through the acquirement of wealth, or the exercise of the gymnastic arts, or philosophy, are not said to love, nor are called lovers; one species alone is called love, and those alone are said to be lovers, and to love, who seek the attainment of the universal desire through one species of love, which is peculiarly distinguished by the name belonging to the whole. It is asserted by some that they love who are seeking the lost half of their divided being. But I assert that Love is neither the love of half nor of the whole, unless, my friend, it meets with that which is good, since men willingly cut off their own hands and feet if they think that they are the cause of evil to them. Nor do they cherish and embrace that which may belong to themselves merely because it is their own, unless, indeed, anyone should choose to say that that which is good is attached to his own nature and is his own, whilst that which is evil is foreign and accidental, but love nothing but that which is good. . . .

The bodies and the souls of all human beings are alike pregnant with their future progeny, and when we arrive at a certain age our nature impels us to bring forth and propagate. This nature is unable to produce in that which is deformed, but it can produce in that which is beautiful. The intercourse of the male and female in generation, a divine work, through pregnancy and production, is, as it were, something immortal in mortality. These things cannot take place in that which is incongruous; for that which is deformed is incongruous, but that which is beautiful is congruous with what is immortal and divine. Beauty is, therefore, the fate and the Juno Lucina to generation. Wherefore, whenever that which is pregnant with the generative principle approaches that which is beautiful, it becomes transported with delight, and is poured forth in overflowing pleasure, and propagates. But when it approaches that which is deformed, it is contracted by sadness, and, being repelled and checked, it does not produce, but retains unwillingly that with which it is pregnant. Wherefore, to one pregnant, and, as it were, already bursting with the load of his desire, the impulse towards that which is beautiful is intense, on account of the great pain of retaining that which he has conceived. . . . Generation is something eternal and immortal in mortality. It necessarily, from what has been confessed, follows that we must desire immortality together with what is good, since Love is the desire that good be forever present to us. Of necessity Love must also be the desire of immortality. . . .

The greatest and most admirable wisdom is that which regulates the government of families and states, and which is called moderation and justice. Whosoever, therefore, from his youth feels his soul pregnant with the conception of these excellences, is divine; and when due time arrives, desires to bring forth; and wandering about, he seeks the beautiful in which he may propagate what he has conceived, for there is no generation in that which is deformed; he embraces those bodies which are beautiful rather than those

which are deformed, in obedience to the principle which is within him, which is ever seeking to perpetuate itself. And if he meets, in conjunction with loveliness of form, a beautiful, generous and gentle soul, he embraces both at once, and immediately undertakes to educate this object of his love, and is inspired with an overflowing persuasion to declare what is virtue, and what he ought to be who would attain to its possession, and what are the duties which it exacts. For, by the intercourse with, and as it were, the very touch of that which is beautiful, he brings forth and produces what he had formerly conceived; and nourishes and educates that which is thus produced together with the object of his love, whose image, whether absent or present, is never divided from his mind. So that those who are thus united are linked by a nobler community and a firmer love, as being the common parents of a lovelier and more endearing progeny than the parents of other children. . . .

He who aspires to love rightly ought from his earliest youth to seek an intercourse with beautiful forms, and first to make a single form the object of his love, and therein to generate intellectual excellences. He ought, then, to consider that beauty in whatever form it resides is the brother of that beauty which subsists in another form; and if he ought to pursue that which is beautiful in form, it would be absurd to imagine that beauty is not one and the same thing in all forms, and would therefore remit much of his ardent preference towards one, through his perception of the multitude of claims upon his love. In addition, he would consider the beauty which is in souls more excellent than that which is in form. So that one endowed with an admirable soul, even though the flower of the form were withered, would suffice him as the object of his love and care, and the companion with whom he might seek and produce such conclusions as tend to the improvement of youth; so that it might be led to observe the beauty and the conformity which there is in the observation of its duties and the laws, and to esteem little the mere beauty of the outward form. He would then conduct his pupil to science, so that he might look upon the loveliness of wisdom; and that contemplating thus the universal beauty, no longer would he unworthily and meanly enslave himself to the attractions of one form in love, nor one subject of discipline or science, but would turn towards the wide ocean of intellectual beauty, and from the sight of the lovely and majestic forms which it contains, would abundantly bring forth his conceptions in philosophy; until, strengthened and confirmed, he should at length steadily contemplate one science, which is the science of universal beauty.

PLATO

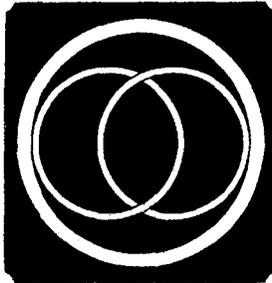




MARRIAGE OF TRUE MINDS

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove;
Oh no! it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken.
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error, and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE





AS ONE LIKES

The fire does not call anyone in particular;
Even due to cold a man gets temperature.
The water does not say: please come and drink me;
The thirsty runs to quench his desire.
The cloth does not invite anyone to wear it;
The world clothes oneself as one likes.
Tuka says, the Master does not beckon you:
"Remember me, for your own redemption."

TUKARAM



THINE OWN

"Speak not of this", Thou saidst,
Then into speechless mysteries Thou ledst
My wondering soul:
Can utterance describe th' unutterable?

Not every man that cries,
"Lo, thus am I!" Thou tak'st at his surmise;
When deeds have shown
That so he is, then claimest Thou thine own.

AL-NURI





Svati: Ω W O

ADORATION

And an old priest said, Speak to us of Religion. And he said:
Have I spoken this day of aught else?

Is not religion all deeds and all reflection,

And that which is neither deed nor reflection, but a wonder and a surprise
ever springing in the soul, even while the hands hew the stone or tend the
loom?

Who can separate his faith from his actions, or his belief from his
occupations?

Who can spread his hours before him, saying, "This for God and this for
myself; This for my soul and this other for my body"?

All your hours are wings that beat through space from self to self.

He who wears his mortality but as his best garment were better naked.

The wind and the sun will tear no holes in his skin.

And he who defines his conduct by ethics imprisons his song-bird in a
cage.

The freest song comes not through bars and wires.

And he to whom worshipping is a window, to open but also to shut, has
not yet visited the house of his soul whose windows are from dawn to dawn.

Your daily life is your temple and your religion.

Whenever you enter into it take with you your all.

Take the plough and the forge and the mallet and the lute,

The things you have fashioned in necessity or for delight.

For in reverie you cannot rise above your achievements nor fall lower than
your failures.

And take with you all men:

For in adoration you cannot fly higher than their hopes nor humble
yourself lower than their despair.

And if you would know God, be not therefore a solver of riddles.

Rather look about you and you shall see Him playing with your children.

And look into space; you shall see Him walking in the cloud, outstretching
His arms in the lightning and descending in rain.

You shall see Him smiling in flowers, then rising and waving His hands in
trees.

KAHLIL GIBRAN



THE LIGHT OF WISDOM

The submission of the soul to the Light of its being is imaged in Hindu mythology in the figure of Radha as she awaits the coming of her lover, Krishna, even as Mary received the angel of the Annunciation. For the Light loves the soul that is open to it, and our human love, even for the Master most dear to us, is partial and possessive until it is wholly infused with this Light of Wisdom. A Divinity which did not evoke love from us, and not merely as a spiritual hunger for some formless universal, but by Its adorable presence in the minute and concrete particulars of our daily life, would, indeed, be unreal. But equally unreal is the love which seizes on the particular and in whatever degree, wrests it out of the keeping of the universal to cherish and cage it in its own private hands.

Down the ages the Great Masters have revealed to men what it is to be a Son of God, a being who radiates the Light of wisdom and the power of love with a redeeming intensity. Each of them reveals to mankind a new dimension of human experience, a new possibility of integrating being and awareness.

HUGH I'ANSON FAUSSET



SPIRITUAL BROTHERHOOD

Love is the recognition of something greater than ourselves, something that lends all life its beauty, something that endures beyond the reach of death, and in the contemplation of this mystery we lose all thought of self and seek only to become one with it and so abide with it for ever. It is when we love, therefore, and only when we love, that we lose that cunning manipulation of our knowledge which we term worldly wisdom and which is in truth merely a weapon with which we seek to enforce the satisfaction of our selfish demands. When we love we live those values which previously were largely theoretical and so our lives become representative of our souls; then it is that we are amazed to discover the countless, invisible ties uniting ourselves with others and then we become aware of the spiritual brotherhood of man and so realize that no man lives unto himself alone.

CLAUDE HOUGHTON



THE WORD OF THE GURU

He is all in all Himself, devoid of material conditions.

Whosoever serves Him is honourable.

Nanak, let us, therefore, sing of Him, for He is full of all excellences.

Let us sing and hear His praises and keep them lovingly in our hearts.

We shall thus be freed from pain, and our hearts will be filled with joy.

To us the Guru's Word is the voice of Yoga, and the Word is the Veda, for it is inspired by the spirit of God.

God is Shiva; God is Vishnu and Brahmā; God is Parvati and Lakshmi.

Even if I knew Him, I could not describe Him, for

He cannot be described in human words.

My Teacher has, however, convinced me of one thing:

That there is but one Benefactor of all creatures; may I never forget Him.

I would bathe at sacred places, if by so doing I could please Him; otherwise, what is the use of bathing?

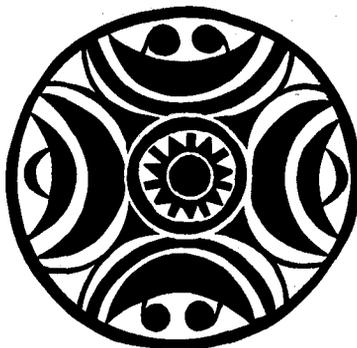
How can I please Him by merely bathing, when in the whole wide world that I see created nothing can be got without exertion?

There, in the mine of my soul, there are so many precious gems and jewels of faculties waiting for development, — only if I hearken to the voice of the Teacher.

The Guru has convinced me of one thing:

That there is but one Benefactor of all creatures; may I never forget Him.

GURU NANAK





Vishakha: २ B G

INWARD DELIGHT

As a lamp in a windless spot does not flicker, so is the man of subdued thought who practises union in the Self.

When the mind is disciplined and becomes still, and when the Self is self-perceived with inward delight,

And when he knows the infinite joy, which is beyond the grasp of the senses and can only be experienced by the understanding heart, and is established in his spiritual truth, the innermost truth of his being,

Then has he found the treasure incomparably greater than any other.

SHRI KRISHNA



NEGLIGENCE

Let there be no negligence in your devotion. Negligence in the practice of recollection is death — this has been declared by the Seer Sanatkumara.

For a spiritual seeker, there is no greater evil than negligence in recollection. From it arises delusion. From delusion arises egoism. From egoism comes bondage and from bondage misery.

Through negligence in recollection, a man is distracted from awareness of his divine nature. He who is thus distracted falls — and the fallen always come to ruin. It is very hard for them to rise again. . . .

Control speech by mental effort; control the mind by the faculty of discrimination; control this faculty by the individual will, merge individuality in the infinite absolute *Atman* and reach supreme peace.

SHRI SHANKARACHARYA



THE THREE QUALIFICATIONS

“Know this wisdom by long prostration, by enquiry, by service; those men of wisdom who have realized the truth will teach thee wisdom.” (Bhagavad Gita, IV, 34) This wisdom is ultimately to be imparted to his disciple by the Guru who has realized the Truth, but what should be the equipment with which the disciple should approach his Guru? To understand the full significance of the words *“by long prostration, by enquiry, by service”* in the above verse, we should ponder over the 39th verse. It states: *“He obtains wisdom who is full of faith, who is devoted and who has subdued the senses, and having obtained wisdom he ere long attains to supreme peace.”* Unless a man has faith in the existence of this wisdom, *Brahma Vidya*, and also in the existence of the *Jivanmuktas*, who are its custodians, his prostration cannot be genuine and sincere. When he has such faith and also when he appreciates the greatness of this wisdom and is convinced of its being the only means of triumphing over the evil of *samsara*, then only is it possible for him to approach the Guru in that spirit of sincere humility and reverence which the physical action of long prostration symbolizes.

Thus, faith is the *first* qualification that is necessary to really prostrate before the Guru and approach him. Added to faith must be the earnest devotion to wisdom, and without this longing for wisdom he cannot properly enquire.

Before this, he had read the scriptures and had tried to understand them with a view to know the self through the not-self. By prosecuting his enquiries on analytical lines he had understood what *Atma* and what *anatma* is. But now he studies the scriptures to know the mystery of the One Life. His enquiries are deeper, they run on the lines of synthesis and are transcendental. He longs to attain to *Vidya*, the wisdom that alone can remove the root ignorance of separativeness — *avidya*. He longs to know that which is beyond both self and not-self and of which both self and not-self alike are expressions. The deeper and more earnest are his enquiries and longings, the more clearly does he see the greatness of the Guru; for he is the embodiment of Divine Wisdom and he alone, who is the representative of *Ishtwara*, can dispel the darkness of *avidya*, the false separative knowledge, by kindling the light of true wisdom. Realizing this, his devotion to the Guru increases, and out of devotion and love he entirely surrenders himself to the Guru.

The *second* qualification is, therefore, a deep longing for and devotion to Wisdom. Says *Light on the Path*: *“Those that ask shall have. But though the ordinary man asks perpetually, his voice is not heard. For he asks with his mind only; and the voice of the mind is only heard on that plane on which the mind acts. . . . To ask is to feel the hunger within — the yearning of spiritual aspiration.”*

The *third* qualification is “*service*”. With this goes the subdual of the senses in the 39th verse. Hitherto he had controlled the senses in order to realize his self against his not-self. But now the senses must be trained and tuned to see unity, the One Life. He must now strive to realize the One Life in his action and in his daily life, which becomes one service of his Guru. Says Bhagavan in the 27th verse of the 9th Chapter: “*Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou sacrificest, whatever thou givest, whatever austerity thou engagest in, do it as an offering to Me.*” Out of devotion and love he meditates on and worships his Gurudeva; and the inner spirit of surrender and worship is reduced to practice, and all his activities become one service of his Guru. The senses are thus trained to see and realize unity, and he realizes the presence of his Guru at all times and at all places and in all actions. This is real Seva which sees *Sa eva asamantat* — “*He indeed everywhere*”.

PANDIT BHAVANI SHANKAR





ASCENT THROUGH LOVE

Love is the moving power of life itself, and nothing can exist without the love which drives everything towards everything else that is. He alone who loves lives. Love is the drive towards the unity of the separated, and separation presupposes an original unity. The restlessness in love is only a dim reflection of the divine discontent of the soul, but it could act as a barrier to the union of the soul with invisible nature if it is channelled solely through personal and material forms of expression. The active and creative element in love is the longing of the human soul to collaborate in the work of cosmic and human evolution, a mode of *kriyashakti* which enables man to emulate the gods, the Dhyana-Chohan host of creative intelligences. Human love could become a bridge between the animal and the divine aspects of love provided the desire to ascend through lower to higher forms of love is continually nourished and sustained.

The *Narada Bhakti Sutras* and *The Voice of the Silence* point to the highest kind of love which transcends the three qualities, the constant love of the Absolute, Eternal Truth, the attributeless Compassion which is the Law of laws, embracing the entire universe, ceaselessly soothing the world with its benedictory and magical power. We can progress gradually from *Dana*, the key of charity and love immortal, to *Paramarthasatya* and *Karuna*, the universal and boundless compassion that is rooted in Eternal and Absolute Truth. The *Gita* warns against the rajasic and downward tendency of *kama*, the constant enemy of man, but it also points to the process by which we could perfect our power of devotion and become worthy of the Divine Grace that flows from the Lords of Love who reflect the Power and the Compassion of the Creative Logos in the cosmos.

The *Narada Bhakti Sutras* sets forth these eleven different forms of *Bhakti* or Divine Love: Love of the glorification of the Lord's blessed qualities, Love of His enchanting beauty, Love of worship, Love of constant remembrance, Love of service, Love of Him as a friend, Love of Him as a son, Love for Him as that of a wife for her husband, Love of self-surrender to Him, Love of complete absorption in Him, Love of the pain of separation from Him. If we wish to go beyond 'love' and 'hate', we must use all our loves as a preparation for *amor Dei* or true *Bhakti*, the total and endless Love of the Logos in the cosmos, God in man.

RAGHAVAN IYER





Anuradha: ṛ G F

LIBERATION FROM BONDAGE

A slave to the senses and racing towards death,
Restlessly I wandered midst encircling gloom.
My mind illumined, He enslaved me with radiant love.
His endless bliss, in beauteous Tillai I saw.

Enmeshed in the sorrow of birth and action,
With no thought for Him, I lay weary.
The peerless One with grace loosened my bonds of birth;
He whom the worlds worship, in Tillai's Hall I saw.

Tho' I knew Him not, He mingled in my mind and will;
And with tender love joined my way of life to His.
The Lord of Tiruturuti's sweet blessedness, even I
In lowly meekness saw with joy at beauteous Tillai.

To me who am ignorant and poorest of the poor,
He came as the wise Guru that I may dwell in grace.
Before them all, He cut the cords of bondage —
Him I too saw in Tillai's Hall where all adore.

In the whirlpool of stagnant values, tossed about
Helplessly, even I was rescued from life's anguish.
Purged of my estranged claims and egoistic vanity,
My flawless ambrosia, in august Tillai I too saw.

The Primal Lord of the World who transforms
Life, who banishes sickness, age and ties of kin;
I saw Him worshipped by Vedic seers and devas,
In the sacred Hall of Tillai, girt with leafy groves.

My crude ties and superficial loves He snapped,
And infused in me a frenzy that I may not stray;
He bound me to His holy feet by the cords of my will.
The Enlightened One's creative sport, in Tillai I saw.

Wrapt in endless conceits, in darkness I lay,
Unaware of the chain of actions, in abject futility;
Then He showered infinite bliss and subjugated me.
He whom heavenly hosts adore, I saw in Tillai.

My depraved self knew not the righteous code of living,
Yet He gave with unfailing love, the light of wisdom

And transmuted my destiny by His bequest of grace.
Him whom the Vedas extol, in Tillai's Hall I too saw.

In elements and senses five, in knowledge and substance too,
He pervades all diverse forms, tho' untouched by diversity:
The effulgent light, the lustrous gem that soothes,
Adored in scriptures, Him I saw in auspicious Tillai.

MANIKKAVACHAKAR



THE FLAME OF BHAKTI

When through 'Namashivaya' the ego
Burns and dies, the steady flame
Of *bhakti* shines as the triumphant,
True, clear light of Self-experience
Which is named 'Shiva am I'.

Knowledge absolute is free
From all the differences created
By the false, deluding ego.
The gracious stillness, the awareness
All-transcendent, is the state
Supreme experienced by the great.

If towards the Lord you take
A single step, then with much more
Than a mother's love He takes
Nine steps towards you to accept you.
Such is the Guru's Grace.

SHRI MURUGANAR



GURU AND CHELA

There is a strange Tree, which stands without roots
And bears fruits without blossoming;
It has no branches and no leaves, it is lotus all over.
Two birds sing there; one is the Guru, and the other the chela:
The chela chooses the manifold fruits of life and tastes them,
And the Guru beholds him in joy.
What Kabir says is hard to understand:
The bird is beyond seeking,
Yet it is most clearly visible.
The Formless is in the midst of forms.
I sing the glory of forms.

KABIR



THE SLUMBERER

O Thou mysterious One, lying asleep
Within the lonely chamber of my soul!
Thou art my life's true goal,
Thine is the only altar that I keep.
Rapt in the contemplation of thy repose,
I see in thy still face that Mystic Rose
Whose perfume is my soul's imaginings,
And Beauty at whose awesomeness I weep
With over-plenitude of ecstasy.
Thy slumber is the great world-mystery —
The paradigm of all the latent things
That in their destined hour Time magnifies:
Its emblems are the intimate hush that lies
Over the moonlit lake;
The wonder and the ache
Of unborn love that trembles in its sleep;
The hope that thrills the heavy earth
With presage of becoming, and vast birth;
The secret of the caverns of the deep.

ELSA BARKER



Jyeshtha: ४ Y E

MEDITATION UPON SHIVA

Lord Shiva said: Mahadeva is adored by the wise as intellect and conscious soul and also as pervading and supporting all being.

He is situated alike in pots and paintings, in trees and huts, and in the vestures of all men and creatures. He has the several names Shiva, Hara and Hari, Brahmā, Indra, Agni and Yama.

He is both within and without all things, as the Universal Soul, and dwells in the spirit and soul of every wise man. He is worshipped in various forms and modes by diverse peoples.

Hear me first recount, O Great Sage, how this Lord is worshipped as a form and by rituals. Then I shall relate unto you the inward form in which he is worshipped in spirit.

In all forms of worship you must cease thinking of your body, and separate your mind from your personality, however purified it may be. Then you must diligently apply your mind to thinking of pure and bodiless soul which witnesseth the operations of the body from within.

His worship consists solely in inward meditation upon him, and in no outward mode. Apply your mind, in its meditation within your soul, to the adoration of the Universal Soul.

He is of the form of intellect, the source of all light, and is as glorious as millions of suns. He is the light of the inward intellect and is the ground and origin of ego and other, subject and object.

His head and shoulders reach above the Heaven of heavens and his lotus feet descend far below the lowest abyss of space.

His arms extend without bound towards all the directions of space, holding the many worlds of the infinite firmament, wielding them like weapons and armaments.

The worlds rolling over one another rest in the corner of his spacious bosom. His effulgence passes beyond the range of the unlimited void, and his Being surpasses all imaginable bounds.

Above, below, in all four quarters of the compass, He extends exhaustless and endless. He is set about on all sides by hosts of gods, by Brahmā, Rudra, Hari and Indra, as by all the demigods.

All these are but rows of hairs on his body. Their courses of actions are cords binding together the system of the worlds.

His will and destiny are powers proceeding from his Being as active agencies in nature. Such is the Lord, Mahadeva, always worshipped by the best of men.

He is pure intelligence and the conscious soul, the all-pervading and supporting spirit, present alike in pots and paintings, in all vehicles and all creatures.

He is Shiva, Hari and Hara, Brahmā, Indra and Agni, and also Yama. He is the receptacle of endless beings, the aggregate body of all essences, and the

sole entity of all entities.

He contains the mundane sphere, with all its worlds, mountains and other contents. All-powerful Time, which hurls them ever onward, is the guardian at the gateway of his Eternity.

Mahadeva is to be contemplated as residing in some region of this body of eternity and infinity, with this body and its members, and with a thousand eyes and ears.

This figure has a thousand heads and a thousand hands, each holding emblems. It has as many percipient eyes all over its body, and as many listening ears.

It has the powers of touch and taste, as well as hearing, present in all its parts, and that of thinking in its interior mind.

It is, however, beyond all comprehension. It is perfectly good and gracious to all. It is the doer of all things done and the bestower of every blessing.

Situated in the heart of all beings, it is the giver of all strength and energy. Having thought upon the Lord of Lords in this way, the devotee is to acknowledge him in the rituals laid down.

Now hear me tell you, O thou who are best acquainted with Brahmā, the mode of worshipping him in spirit, which consists solely in adoring him in the conscious soul, and not in making ritual offerings.

It requires no fires nor fumigations of incense. It has no need of flowers or decorations, nor does it require oblations of rice, sprinkling of perfumes, or sandal paste.

It needs no exhalation of saffron nor camphor, nor any painting or other thing; nor has it need of any pouring of water.

It is only by the outpouring of the nectar of understanding that he is worshipped. The wise know this as the best meditation and adoration of Deity.

The pure intellect, known to be ever present within oneself, is to be constantly looked into and searched out, heard about and felt, whether one is sleeping, sitting or moving about.

Constantly dwelling on it, and resuming the enquiry quickly if ever left off, one becomes fully conscious of SELF, and then should worship the Lord – the self-same Soul – by meditation.

The offering of the heart in meditation unto the Lord is more delectable to him than the sweetest articles of food or the most delicate and fragrant flowers.

Meditation, joined with self-consciousness and contrition, is the *padya* and *arghya* most worthy of the Lord. The best meditation is that accompanied with the flower-self-offering to the Lord.

Without this meditation, it is impossible to realize the Supreme Soul in one's Self. Therefore, spiritual meditation is said to abound with divine grace and the greatest *ananda* and *artha*.

As the animal soul enjoys pleasures in the abode of its body, the rational and spiritual soul derives all happiness from meditation.

The ignorant man who meditates upon Mahadeva for a hundred twinklings of the eye obtains as reward the merit of making the gift of a milch cow to a *brabmana*.

The man who worships the Lord in his soul for half an hour in this manner reaps the reward of making the *ashvamedha* sacrifice.

He who meditates upon the Lord in spirit in his own spirit, and presents the offering of his reflections unto him, is entitled to the merit of a thousand such sacrifices.

Whosoever worships the Lord in this manner for a full half-hour receives the reward of making the *raja* sacrifice. By worshipping him in this way at the midday, he obtains the merit of thousands of such sacrifices.

He who worships him in this manner for a whole day settles in the abode of the Deity.

This is the superior *Yoga* meditation and the best service of the Lord, as also the highest adoration.

This mode of holy adoration destroys all sins. Whosoever practises it for even a minute with a steady mind is entitled to the veneration of gods and demigods, and is placed in the ranks of emancipated spirits like myself.

Yoga Vasishtha Maharamayana



FULLNESS

He who is meek and contented, he who has an equal vision,
Whose mind is filled with the fullness of acceptance and of rest;
He who has seen Him and touched Him, he is freed from all fear and travail.
To him the perpetual thought of God is like sandal paste
Smeared on the body, to him nothing else is delight:
His work and his rest are filled with music: he spreads the radiance of love.
Kabir says: Touch His feet, Who is one and indivisible,
Immutable and Calm,
Filling all vessels to the brim
With ecstatic joy,
Whose form is Love.

KABIR



CONTENTMENT

Going forth a-begging,
Let contentment be thine earrings,
Modesty thy begging bowl;
Smear thy body with ashes of meditation,
Let contemplation of death be thy beggar's rags;

Let thy body be chaste, virginal, clean,
Let faith in God be the staff on which thou leanest;
Let brotherhood with every man on earth
Be the highest aspiration of your Yogic Order.
Know that to subdue the mind
Is to subdue the world.

Hail, all hail unto Him,
Let your greetings be to the Primal God;
Pure and without beginning, changeless,
The same from age to age.

GURU NANAK





REPOSE IN THEE

My gift of thought is laid unto Thy domain of Thought;
Myself, lowliest of the low.
Thy luminous gracious form, I see all around;
My eyes take lustre from Thine.
These acts blossom as worship at Thy beauteous feet.
The spoken word of mine
Hallowed it be, as the precious pledge of Thy Word:
Well tuned are the senses five
To enjoy Thy symphony. Thou transfigured me thus.
Oh Thou irresistible,
Insatiable ocean of Love! Majestic Rock of Ages!
Thine are these gifts
To me, Oh Spark Eternal, whose visible presence
Dazzles aloft
Like a dense forest of flaming red lotuses.
This solitary self,
Empty of duality seeks repose in Thee.

MANIKKAVACHAKAR





Mula: ॐ BI S

THE VEIL IS RENT

But lo! Siddartha turned
Eyes gleaming with divine tears to the sky,
Eyes lit with heavenly pity to the earth;
From sky to earth he looked, from earth to sky,
As if his spirit sought in lonely flight
Some far-off vision, linking this and that,
Lost, past, but searchable, but seen, but known.
Then cried he, while his lifted countenance
Glowed with the burning passion of a love
Unspeakable, the ardour of a hope
Boundless, insatiate: "Oh! suffering world,
Oh! known and unknown of my common flesh,
Caught in this common net of death and woe,
And life which binds to both! I see, I feel
The vastness of the agony of earth,
The vainness of its joys, the mockery
Of all its best, the anguish of its worst;
Since pleasures end in pain, and youth in age,
And love in loss, and life in hateful death,
And death in unknown lives, which will but yoke
Men to their wheel again to whirl the round
Of false delights and woes that are not false.
Me too this lure hath cheated, so it seemed
Lovely to live, and life a sunlit stream
For ever flowing in a changeless peace;
Whereas the foolish ripple of the flood
Dances so lightly down by bloom and lawn
Only to pour its crystal quicklier
Into the foul salt sea. The veil is rent
Which blinded me! I am as all these men
Who cry upon their gods and are not heard
Or are not heeded – yet there must be aid!
For them and me and all there must be help!
Perchance the gods have need of help themselves
Being so feeble that when sad lips cry
They cannot save! I would not let one cry
Whom I could save!"

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD



SONG OF FOURFOLD MINDFULNESS

I. MINDFULNESS OF THE *GURU*

Upon the seat of the union of Wisdom and Method
Sits the Teacher of Compassion, the Refuge of all beings,
A Buddha perfect in renunciation and wisdom.
Forsaking all images of your imperfection,
Approach with pure perception.
Draw in your mind, centering it in reverence and adoration.
Guide your attention with mindfulness,
Holding it within reverence and adoration.

II. MINDFULNESS OF *ANUTTARA SAMYAK SAMBUDDHA*

Suffering in the prison of endless cycles of existence
Wander the six classes of sentient beings, all in unhappiness,
Even those fathers and mothers who protected you with kindness.
Forsaking all desire and hate,
Meditate upon altruism and compassion.
Draw in your mind, centering it in compassion.
Guide your attention with mindfulness,
Holding it within compassion.

III. MINDFULNESS OF THE DIVINE BODY

In the divine sphere of supreme bliss, joyous to experience,
Abides the divine body of your pure skandhas and dharmas,
The sacred and impartite *Trikaya*.
Forsaking all thoughts of a mundane self,
Practise divine reserve and vivid appearance.
Draw in your mind, centering it in voidness and the manifest.
Guide your attention with mindfulness,
Holding it within voidness and the manifest.

IV. MINDFULNESS OF *SUNYATA*

All through the circle of apparent and transitory objects
Spreads the space of the clear light of the real, the ultimate,
In which all things have a transcendental being.
Forsaking all mental inventions,
Dwell in the pure state of *sunyata*.
Draw in your mind, centering it in the Real.
Guide your attention with mindfulness,
Holding it within the Real.

In the meeting of the modes of *samsara*
With the sixfold consciousness,
Reside the confused and baseless phenomena of duality,
Like the illusory shows of a deceiving conjurer.
Forsaking all phenomena, apprehend them within *sunyata*.
Draw in your mind, centering it in *samsara* and *sunyata*.
Guide your attention with mindfulness,
Holding it within *samsara* and *sunyata*.

LOSANG KALSANG GYATSO
THE VIIth DALAI LAMA (1708-1757)



DESCENT OF SPIRIT

Descend, prophetic Spirit! that inspir'st
The human Soul of universal earth,
Dreaming on things to come; and dost possess
A metropolitan temple in the hearts
Of mighty Poets: upon me bestow
A gift of genuine insight; that my Song
With starlike virtue in its place may shine,
Shedding benignant influence, and secure,
Itself, from all malevolent effect
Of those mutations that extend their sway
Throughout the nether sphere! — And if with this
I mix more lowly matter; with the thing
Contemplated, describe the Mind and Man
Contemplating; and who, and what he was —
The transitory Being that beheld
The Vision; when and where, and how he lived —
Be not this labour useless. If such theme
May sort with highest objects, then — dread Power!

Whose gracious favour is the primal source
Of all illumination – may my Life
Express the image of a better time,
More wise desires, and simpler manners – nurse
My Heart in genuine freedom – all pure thoughts
Be with me – so shall thy unfailing love
Guide, and support, and cheer me to the end!

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH



THE PEACE OF THY PRESENCE

My God,
Wheresoever I go
Thou art my Comrade:

Lonely I fare through the world,
Yet never alone,
For thou art my Friend:

Thou ledest me on,
Thy hand set fast in mine:

Thou liftest the burden from my shoulder,
Thou bearest it thyself:

Foolish words I speak,
Yet thou, Lord, settest all right:

Thou hast taken away my fear,
Thou hast made me strong-hearted:

Thou hast taught me to see in all men my friends,
My guardians, my kindred:

Thou hast given me, O thou most bountiful,
The peace of thy presence, within and without.

TUKARAM



Purvasbadha: ♀ I A

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

The Book of Psalms



BEHOLD AS IN A MIRROR

Now I behold as in a mirror, in an icon, in a riddle, life eternal, for that is naught other than that blessed regard wherewith Thou never ceasest most lovingly to behold me, yea, even the secret places of my soul. With Thee, to behold is to give life; 'tis unceasingly to impart sweetest love of Thee; 'tis to inflame me to love of Thee by love's imparting, and to feed me by inflaming, and by feeding to kindle my yearning, and by kindling to make me drink of gladness, and by drinking to infuse in me a fountain of life, and by infusing to make it increase and endure. 'Tis to cause me to share Thine immortality. . . . For it is the absolute maximum of every rational desire, than which a greater cannot be.

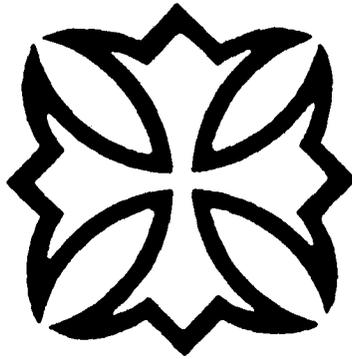
NICHOLAS of CUSA



THE LIGHT OF YOUR PRESENCE

Words fail me in Your presence; let my silence speak for me. How long will my Lord delay His coming? Come to me, Lord, poor and little as I am, and bring me joy. Stretch out Your hand, and deliver me from all my misery and pain. Come, Lord, come, for without You no day or hour is happy; without You my table is without its guest, for You alone are my joy. Sadness is my lot, and I am like a man imprisoned and loaded with chains, until You refresh me with the light of Your presence, and show me Your face as my friend. Let others seek whom they will besides You, but nothing ever can or will give me joy but Yourself alone, my God, my Hope, and my eternal Salvation. I will not keep silent, nor cease from urgent prayer till Your grace returns and my heart leaps at the sound of Your voice.

THOMAS à KEMPIS





THE FIRE OF HIS LOVE

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

Praise to God who has freed the hearts of His saints from the greed of this world and its false appearance.

Who has purified their secret thoughts from all contemplation except that of His presence;

Then has chosen these hearts for His worship on earth, covered with His Omnipotence;

Then has revealed Himself mystically to them with His Names and His Attributes so that these hearts are inflamed by contact with the rays of His Knowledge;

Then He has unveiled the Majesty of His Face to them so that their hearts are consumed by virtue of the flames of His Love;

Then He has concealed Himself from these hearts by the substance of His Majesty so that they have wandered in the perilous desert of His Sublimity and His Magnificence.

Each time that these hearts have thrilled at the essential spectacle of divine Majesty, the zeal of reason and of its introspection have covered them in helpless amazement.

Each time that these hearts have been tempted to depart, overcome by sadness, a voice from the direction of the Tents of Beauty has called them back, counselling them to have patience.

O thou who despairst of deserving the favour of Truth, this voice said, beware of thy ignorance and precipitation!

For their hearts have remained between refusal and acceptance; between repression and admission, for they have been shipwrecked on the Ocean of His Knowledge and have been consumed by the Fire of His Love.

AL-GHAZALI





Uttarashadha: ☉ O D

THE PROTECTOR OF VOWS

O Thou glorious Lord, O Protector of vows, I am determined to master my lower self. Vouchsafe unto me the needed strength and make my effort fruitful. Through Thy grace, shunning untruth, may I realize the Truth.

I worship Thee, O gracious Lord of transcendental vision. O giver of prosperity to all, may I be freed from the bonds of death, like a ripe fruit dropping from the tree. May I never again forget my immortal nature.

O Lord, Thou who blesseth all creatures by revealing the highest knowledge, deign to make us happy by Thy serene and blissful SELF that roots out terror as well as the taint of sin.

Salutations to Thee, O destroyer of the cycle of births and deaths. Salutations to Thee, O Lord of the cosmos.

Thou art, O Lord, the creator of worlds. Salutations to Thee. Thou producest the herbs and plants. O Thou bestower of earthly felicity, salutations to Thee.

Sbukla Yajur Veda Sambita



THE GARDEN OF THE HEART

In the Garden of the Heart, during the spring season of meditation upon Shambu, the assemblage of creeper-plants of devotion which have shed the old leaves of sins and taken on the fresh tender leaves of merit, the buds of virtue, the blooms of words that repeat the sacred names, the sweet scents, the profusion of nectar-juice of flowers of wisdom and bliss, the increase of the fruit of consciousness — all these abound resplendently.

SHRI SHANKARACHARYA



SPIRITUAL FREEDOM

**From the beginningless time until now,
I have fallen into the realms of misery.
Again and again I have been born
Into a body of flesh and blood.
And again and again I have used it for
Meaningless work. . . .**

**I wander lost through the dark realms of ignorance;
Will you not guide me from darkness into day?
I stagger helplessly in the winds of confusion;
Will you not hold me in the palm of compassion? . . .**

**Lead me to spiritual freedom now.
Arrest and destroy all my fears;
Remove all adverse conditions from my life. . . .**

**Increase and further my life and work
And grant me spiritual insight now
Into the vision that transcends conception. . . .**

**This prayer I offer with concentrated mind,
And not in words empty of feeling.
Send your blessings to me. . . .
Help me to perfect my contemplation.
And help me to realize my nature,
Impermanence, love and compassion,
Faith, enthusiasm, renunciation,
The supreme view of voidness, the profound point;
Protect my practice and my life.**

NAGARJUNA

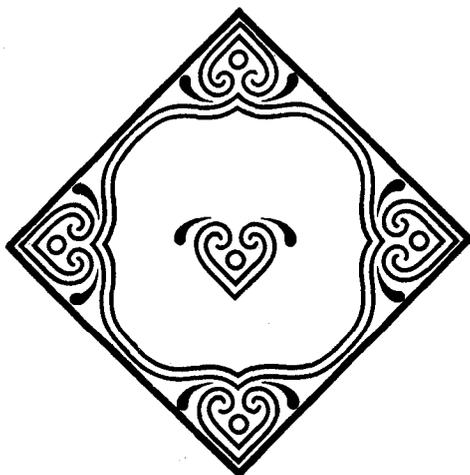




COME TO OUR AID

Many people know the surface of this ocean, but they ignore its depth. Now there is a treasure in this depth and the visible world is the talisman which protects it, but this talisman of bodily shackles will at last be broken. Thou will find the Treasure when the talisman has disappeared; the soul will manifest itself when the body shall have been laid aside. But thy spirit is another Talisman; it is for this mystery another substance. Walk in the way which I show thee and do not ask for an explanation; do not ask a remedy for such an ill. . . . O God, who is infinite if it be not Thou? Who is like Thee without limit and without bounds? I am in the tumultuous ocean of the world. Ah! rescue Thy servant from this sea which is foreign to him! Thou didst throw me into it Thyself; now rescue me. Concupiscence seized my whole being completely. If Thou dost not reach out Thy hand to me, alas, what will become of me? Good comes of Thee but evil of me. Believers and unbelievers are equally immersed in blood; their head turns and they are mad. Ah! be a guide! One who has had the good fortune to enter the way has become disgusted with himself and has lost himself in Thee. O Thou Whose tenderness is like that of a mother! O Thou Who art full of tenderness towards the children of Thy Way, throw a kind glance on those who are submerged. Have pity on our heart full of agony; come to our aid when Thou seest the waters engulf us!

FARID AD-DIN 'ATTAR





Shravana: D V B

FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burnt, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.

Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

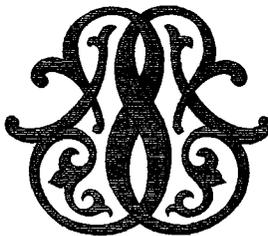
But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

ST. PAUL





AMOR DEI INTELLECTUALIS

The intellectual love towards God is the very love of God with which God loves himself, not in so far as he is infinite, but in so far as he can be expressed through the essence of the human mind considered under the species of eternity, that is, intellectual love towards God is part of the infinite love with which God loves himself. . . .

Hence it follows that God, in so far as he loves himself, loves men, and consequently that the love of God for men and the mind's intellectual love towards God is one and the same thing.

From this we clearly understand in what consists our salvation, blessedness, or liberty, namely, in the constant and eternal love for God, or in the love of God for men.

SPINOZA



GRANT ME YOURSELF

Grant me, most dear and loving Jesus, to rest in You above created things; above health and beauty, above all glory and honour; above all power and dignity, above all knowledge and skill; above all fame and praise, above all sweetness and consolation; above all hope and promise, above all merit and desire; above all gifts and favours that You can bestow and shower upon us; above all joy and jubilation that the mind can conceive and know; above Angels and Archangels and all the hosts of Heaven; above all things visible and invisible; and above everything that is not Yourself, O my God.

O Lord my God, You transcend all things; You alone are most high, most mighty, most sufficient and complete, most sweet and comforting. You alone are most full of beauty and glory, in Whom all good things in their perfection exist, both now and ever have been, and ever will be. All, therefore, is too small and unsatisfying that You can give me beside Yourself, or that You can reveal and promise me of Yourself unless I can see and fully possess You. For my heart cannot rest nor be wholly content until it rests in You, rising above all Your gifts and creatures.

THOMAS à KEMPIS

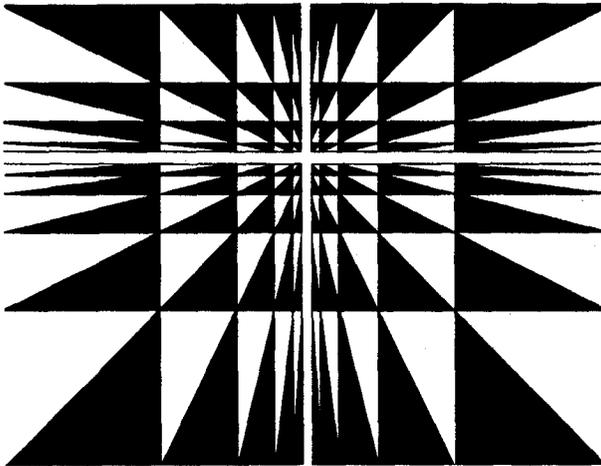


DYING TO THE SELF

**Lord, make me an instrument of thy Peace;
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
And where there is sadness, joy.**

**Oh Divine Maker! Grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled, as to console.
To be understood, as to understand.
To be loved, as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
It is in dying to the self that we are born to eternal life.**

FRANCIS of ASSISI





Sbravisbtha: ♂ R C

BHAJA GOVINDAM

Adore Govinda, adore Govinda,
Adore Govinda, O fool!
Rules of grammar are of no avail
When the hour of death approaches.

Renounce, O fool, your tireless thirst
For amassing gold and precious gems;
Content yourself with whatever comes
Through deeds performed in past lives;
Generate righteous thoughts
Devoid of passion.

Seeing the seductive female form,
Be not enslaved by delusive frenzy.
Bodies are made up of flesh and fat.
Think through this again and again.

Precarious is human life,
Like rain-drops on a lotus leaf;
All mankind is consumed
By conceit, disease and sorrow.

So long as you provide support,
Your dependents will cling;
When your aging body falters,
Approaching dissolution,
None, not even the nearest kin,
Will care to comfort you.

So long as there is breath,
Householders seem solicitous,
But when the breath leaves the body,
Near and dear flee in fear.

Remember, riches invite sorrow,
Verily, no joy abides in them.
The rich man fears his son:
Such is the common plight.

As a boy, one is lost in sport.
As a youth, one craves female company,
As an old man, one broods anxiously,
Alas, none yearns for Brahman.

Who is your wife? Who is your son?
Strange indeed is the glamour of *samsara*.
Who are you? Whom do you own?
Whence have you come?
Brother, ponder these truths.

Good company fosters detachment;
Detachment gives freedom from delusion.
Exempt from delusion, one is steadfast,
Steadfastness bestows liberation in life.

When youth is spent, passion is pointless.
When water has gone, what lake is left?
When money is consumed, where are friends?
When the truth is known, what is *samsara*?

Boast not of youth, wealth or kindred.
Swifter than eyes can wink,
Each is stolen by Time.
Let go the illusion of this world,
Knowing Brahman, merge into It.

Dusk and dawn, night and day,
Winter and spring, come and go;
Time sports, life is fleeting;
Yet linger the winds of longing.

Doting on wife, dreaming of wealth,
Why roam like the restless wind?
Is there not the One who ordains?
In all three worlds
Good company is the only vessel
For crossing the seas of *samsara*.

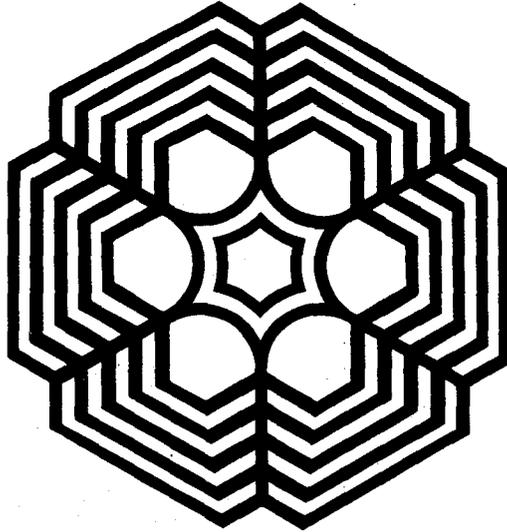
Restrain the self, regulate the breath,
Sift the transient from the true,
Recite the holy name of God,
And calm the turbulent mind.
This is the universal safeguard.
Adopt it with heart and soul.

**Cherish the lotus feet of the Guru
And free yourself without delay
From the entanglement of *samsara*.
Curbing the senses and the mind
Behold the Lord in your heart.**

**Adore Govinda, adore Govinda.
Adore Govinda, O fool!**

**Besides chanting the sacred names,
Nothing availeth on the ocean of life.**

SHRI SHANKARACHARYA

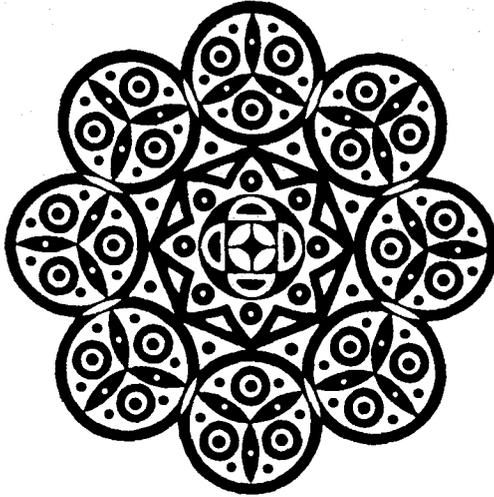




REVELATION

I was on that day when the Names were not,
Nor any sign of existence endowed with name.
By me Names and Named were brought to view
On the day when there were neither 'I' nor 'We'.
For a sign, the tip of the Beloved's curl became a centre of revelation;
And yet the tip of that fair curl was not.
Cross and Christians, from end to end,
I surveyed; He was not on the Cross.
I went to the idol-temple, to the ancient pagoda;
No trace was visible there.
I went to the mountains of Herat and Candahar;
I looked; He was not in hill or dale.
With unswerving purpose I reached the summit of Mount Qaf;
There was only the 'Anqua's abode.
I bent the reins of search to the Ka'ba;
He was not in that refuge of old and young.
I gazed into my own heart;
There I saw Him; He was nowhere else.

JALALUDDIN RUMI





THE LIVING GOD

Bow down before God, my precious thinking soul, and make haste to worship Him with reverence. Night and day think only of your everlasting world. Why should you chase after vanity and emptiness? As long as you live, you are akin to the living God: just as He is invisible, so are you. Since your Creator is pure and flawless, know that you too are pure and perfect. The Mighty One upholds the heavens on His arm, as you uphold the mute body. My soul, let your songs come before your Rock, who does not lay your form in the dust. My innermost heart, bless your Rock always, whose name is praised by everything that has breath.

SOLOMON BEN GABIROL

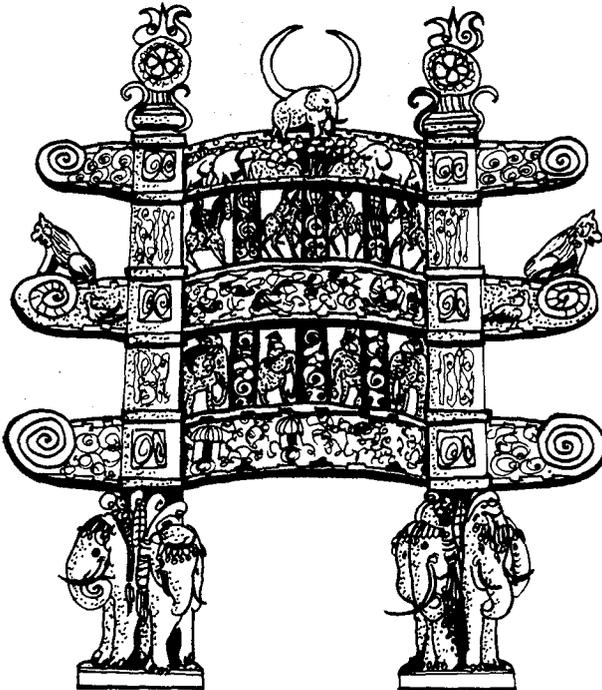




I TAKE REFUGE

AH! BLESSED LORD! OH, HIGH DELIVERER!
FORGIVE THIS FEEBLE SCRIPT, WHICH DOTHS THEE WRONG,
MEASURING WITH LITTLE WIT THY LOFTY LOVE.
AH! LOVER! BROTHER! GUIDE! LAMP OF THE LAW!
I TAKE MY REFUGE IN THY NAME AND THEE!
I TAKE MY REFUGE IN THY LAW OF GOOD!
I TAKE MY REFUGE IN THY ORDER! *OM!*
THE DEW IS ON THE LOTUS! – RISE, GREAT SUN!
AND LIFT MY LEAF AND MIX ME WITH THE WAVE.
OM MANI PADME HUM, THE SUNRISE COMES!
THE DEWDROP SLIPS INTO THE SHINING SEA!

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD





Shatabishaj: ॐ W O

GURU BHAKTI

Guru Bhakti, devotion to the preceptor, is at the root of all good fortune, because it enables a man overladen with troubles to attain *Brahman*. As the Ganges carries all its water into the ocean, as the Vedas seek to discourse on the attainment of *Brahman*, or as a devoted wife dedicates to her husband her body and soul, so it is that the man of wisdom gives everything that belongs to him to his preceptor. He makes his body the abode of devotion to the Guru. His mind always turns to the place where the house of the Guru is located in the same manner as a woman thinks of her absent lover. He goes and bows even to the wind blowing from that direction. He tries to speak of everything which is located in that direction. He establishes his very life in the abode of the Guru. It is only by the command of the Guru that he continues to keep his body in his native place. Just as the calf, when tied by the halter, continues to think of the mother cow, so his soul is a willing slave at the threshold of the dwelling-place of the Guru. He is constantly asking himself when he would be freed from restriction and would meet the preceptor. Each second appears to him like an age. . . .

The mention of the name of the Guru in his own house exalts him and in his joy he embraces everything around him. If you see such devotion towards the Guru and his house in anyone, know that wisdom — *jnana* — has dawned in him. With overflowing affection he visualizes in his mind the form of the Guru. He establishes this form on the throne of his purified heart and his whole self constitutes the means of worship for this deity. As a man at sunrise clasps his hands and offers obeisance to the sun, so does the man of wisdom with his mental awakening offer reverence to his Guru by means of *buddhi*. As in a sacrifice, incense is burnt three times a day and by means of the light — *arati* — worship is offered, so with purity in his heart, he burns in the sacrificial fire all animal feelings and worships the preceptor with the lamp of *jnana*. He offers refreshment to the Guru in the form of harmony of feeling. He makes himself the officiating priest in the temple of the Guru. His intelligence is constantly impressed by pleasant memories of the pure discourse of the Guru. He experiences ideal happiness on every occasion when his heart is overcome by affection of the Guru. The man of wisdom conceives his preceptor in different forms according to his feeling. He thinks of him as the Lord Vishnu and conceives of himself as Sesa, as Lakshmi and as Brahmadeva. He idolizes the Guru as the mother and himself as the little suckling child. The Guru is the cow and himself the calf under the influence of *chaitanya*. He thinks of himself as the fish in the waters of the favour of the Guru, or as the fledgling without eyes or wings looking up to the mother bird for protection. He regards the Guru as the lifeboat in the stormy waters of the world.

The extent of his devotion to the Guru is unfathomable. This is his attitude towards his preceptor from within. The outward attitude of the man

of wisdom towards his preceptor is this. . . . “The favours of the Guru will be sealed in my body from the four corners of which they will not be able to go out, just as the wind is confined in the four directions. I shall devise ornaments of my various qualities in order to decorate the person of the Guru. With these ideas I shall serve the shrine of Shri Guru. I shall be the threshold which he will cross whilst coming and going. I shall also become the doors and I shall be the hall porter. I shall be the footwear and I shall myself put these on the feet of the Guru. I shall be the umbrella and I shall hold it over the head of the Guru. I shall light the path of the Guru. . . .

“I shall be wherever the attention of the Guru goes. I shall fill the whole region of his hearing with millions of words, but I shall be present wherever the Guru is. Every form which he beholds affectionately will be myself. I shall constitute the substances agreeable to his palate and I shall be perfume for him. I shall in this manner embrace in myself the entire service of the Guru with regard to all external wants. While the body exists, service will be rendered by me in this manner. It will not be therefore a matter of any surprise if at the close of life the same mentality survives me. I shall mingle the dust of this body with that sacred spot by which the feet of my Guru have passed. . . .”

Such are the attitudes which dominate the mind of the man of wisdom, and even after carrying them out, he always remains dissatisfied. For such service he does not consider whether it is night or day, whether it is a big service or small service that he is rendering. The orders of the Guru provide for him perpetual excitement. He towers very high in the sky whilst doing these functions and does many things at the same time. His body triumphs over his mind in fulfilling his resolve. If he has grown thin, it is because he has sweated in serving the Guru. If he is well fed, it is because of the favour of the Guru. His existence is in carrying out his orders. The favour of the Guru constitutes in him pride of family and of country. They form the only link of friendship with others. The rules and practices followed by the Guru become the only caste rules for him, and his daily devotion consists of rendering service to the Guru. The Guru is his country, the Guru is his deity, the Guru is his mother and the Guru is his father, and he knows no path other than the service of the Guru. Towards his co-disciples he has fraternal affection. His speech is nothing but constant prayers offered to the Guru, and the precepts of his Guru constitute the only scientific laws for him. Water which has touched the feet of the Guru is for him sacred water. Food which has been touched by the Guru is prized even more than *samadhi*. There is no limit to the devotion which he offers cheerfully to his Guru. If you see anyone showing such devotion, you may know him to be the storehouse of *jnana*.

Dnyaneshwari



DEVOTION TO BHAGAVAN

Devotion to Bhagavan begins when a man acquires the control of his senses and mind following the Pravritti Marga according to the injunctions of Shastras, and fired by the desire of knowing the truth he studies deeply the scriptures. Where there is this soul-hunger, comes devotion. The *first* stage is called *shravana*, because the soul is now eager to hear of Bhagavan, and in listening to his glories it rejoices; the *second* stage, *kirtana*, is reached when, filled with the joy, it begins to participate in it with kindred souls, for, out of the fullness of the devotee's heart, his mouth speaketh. The *third* stage is called the stage of *smaranam*, brooding, when the mind always loves to dwell upon Bhagavan; and then comes the *fourth* stage, *padasevana*, when his love grows deeper, and not satisfied with merely brooding on the Lord he seeks to feel his solidarity with him, and clings to His blessed feet from which flow peace and bliss.

Here the *bhakta* feels the first thrills of the divine life, and with it grows his thirst for losing himself in that life; and the *fifth* stage of *archana* is reached when in the deep meditation of Bhagavan he forgets himself; and as he continues in this stage, and when Bhagavan is become enthroned in his heart more and more fully, he passes into the *sixth* stage of *vandanam*, where he feels the presence of the Lord everywhere and in everything; and, like Arjuna, begins to prostrate before all things both animate and inanimate; and when divine life is felt everywhere and in everything the *seventh* stage of *dasya* naturally follows, in which whatever the *bhakta* does, he does it as the servant of Bhagavan, keeping Him always as the supreme goal of his life. The distance and the dual sense implied in this stage of servant and master in course of time wears off, and the *eighth* stage of *sakhyata*, or friendship, is reached, where the oneness of the devotee with Bhagavan predominates. The tradition that Shri Krishna and Arjuna were of equal stature seems to have some allegorical significance.

At this stage the devotee grows like unto the object of his devotion, "just as the form to which the clay is modelled is first united with the potter's mind", and the devotee becomes fit to receive the supreme Yoga, just [as] Arjuna as Sakha and Bhakta of Bhagavan was, as in the shloka. There is not still the complete unity, the thorough oneness which is reached at the *ninth* stage of *atmanivedana* when the *bhakta* disappears and Bhagavan becomes all in all. Arjuna said: "Destroyed is delusion, and I have gained recognition through Thy Grace. O Achyuta, I am firm, with doubts gone. I will do Thy word." (*Bhagavad Gita*, XIII, 73) It is the final surrender of the devotee's self to Bhagavan, absolutely and unconditionally. Thus is devotion the potent power that leads to and makes possible the utter self-renunciation and self-surrender which are the only means for receiving spiritual illumination.

PANDIT BHAVANI SHANKAR



MINE IS THE WITNESS

In musk if dust is mixed,
How can they be separated?
So God's *bbakti* cannot be differentiated.
Let all doubts be dissolved.
Fire and fuel combine when confronted,
The ocean is not different from the rivulet.
Tuka says, mine is the witness,
Here what one needs is pure mingling.

TUKARAM



RISING TO THE LIGHT

Higher yet and higher
Out of clouds and night,
Nearer yet and nearer
Rising to the light –
Light, serene and holy,
Where my soul may rest,
Purified and lowly,
Sanctified and blest.

WOLFGANG GOETHE

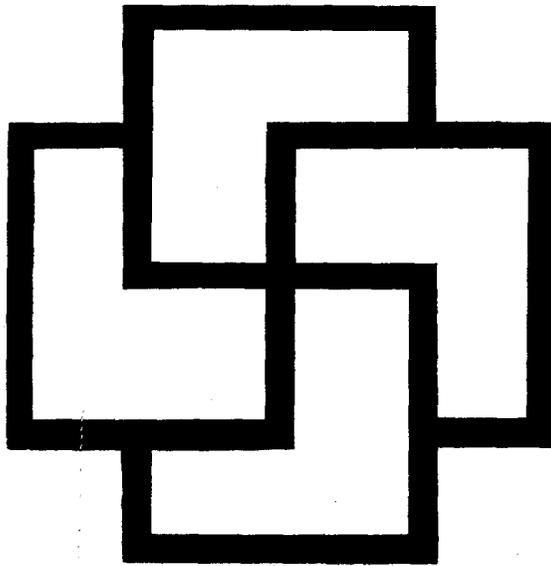


Purva Bhadrapada: २ B G

ABSORPTION

Being completely identified with Me – with their mind tied to Me, as it were – they did not know anything far or near, not even their bodies. Like the sages of realization fully absorbed in the SELF, or rivers which have emptied their waters into the ocean, losing their name-and-form personalities, they became one with Me. They were totally oblivious of everything else.

SHRI KRISHNA





THE WAY AND THE GOAL

Thou art my all, my all, O Lord,
Life of my life,
My innermost being.
I have none else in the three worlds
To call my own but Thee.

Thou art my peace, my joy, my hope.
Thou art my glory and my wealth.
Thou art all my knowledge, my strength.
Thou art my home, my place of refuge,
My dearest friend, my next of kin.

Thou art my present and my future,
My heaven and my salvation,
My scriptures, my commandments;
My Guru, thou art all these
And the spring of my eternal bliss.

Thou art the Way, Thou art the Goal,
O Worshipful One,
The tender-hearted Mother,
The raging Father too.
Thou art the Creator and the Protector,
And the Helmsman
Who steers my bark across the sea of life.

MIRA

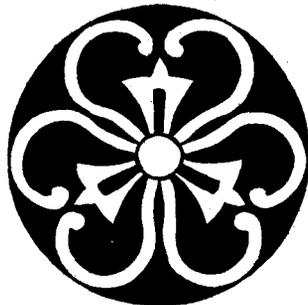




THE JOY OF ADORATION

I was only then
Contented, when with bliss ineffable
I felt the sentiment of Being spread
O'er all that moves and all that seemeth still;
O'er all that, lost beyond the reach of thought
And human knowledge, to the human eye
Invisible, yet liveth to the heart;
O'er all that leaps and runs, and shouts and sings,
Or beats the gladsome air; o'er all that glides
Beneath the wave, yea, in the wave itself
And mighty depth of waters. Wonder not
If high the transport, great the joy I felt,
Communing in this sort through earth and heaven
With every form of creature, as it looked
Towards the Uncreated with a countenance
Of adoration, with an eye of love.
One song they sang, and it was audible,
Most audible, then, when the fleshly ear,
O'ercoming by humblest preludes of that strain
Forgot her functions, and slept undisturbed.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

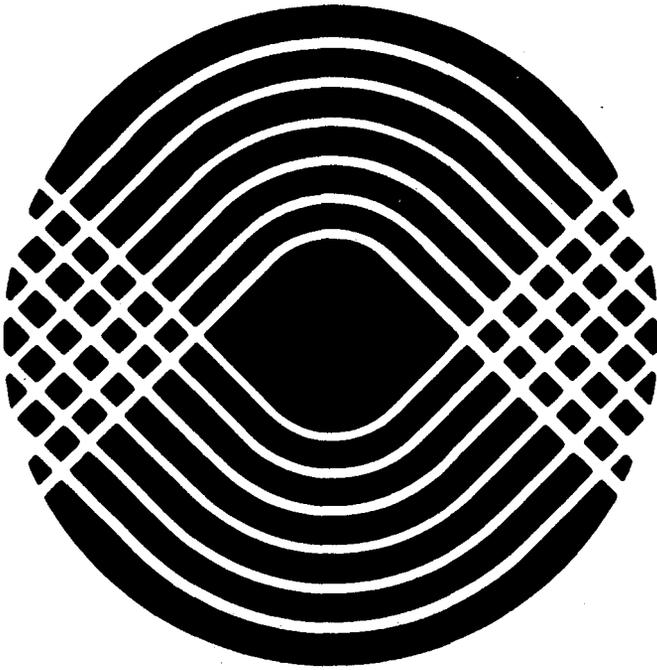




THY MAGIC FLUTE

O Venugopala, I shall make of my life an instrument of thy music. The bells on my feet shall echo thy movements and the chambers of my heart shall fill with the notes of thy divine melody. O Blessed One, I join the stars who cluster under thy loving gaze and intone the harmony of thy Universal Presence. O Beloved Lord, may I never cease hearing the sound of thy magic flute.

Hermes





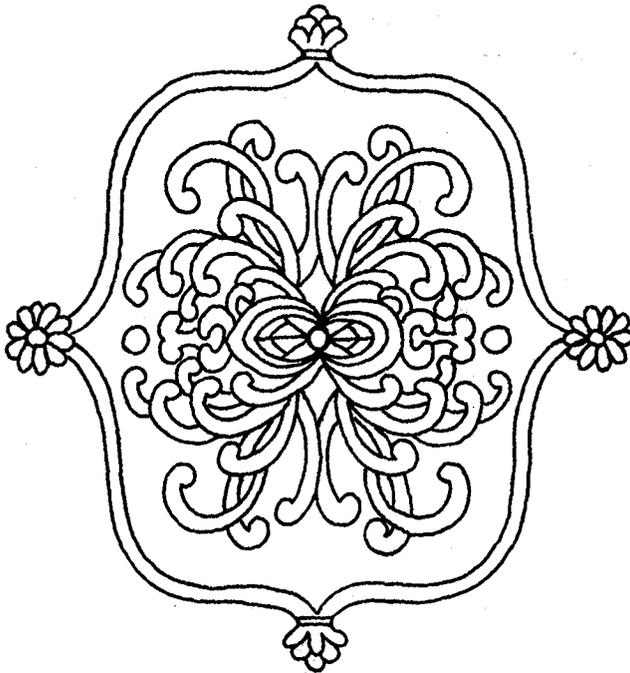
Uttara Bhadrapada: ५ G F

FERVOUR

In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

**Have We not lifted up your heart and relieved you, Muhammad, of the
burden which weighed down your back?
Have We not given you high renown?
Every hardship is followed by ease. Every hardship is followed by ease.
When your task is ended, resume your toil, and seek your Lord
with all fervour.**

The Qu'ran

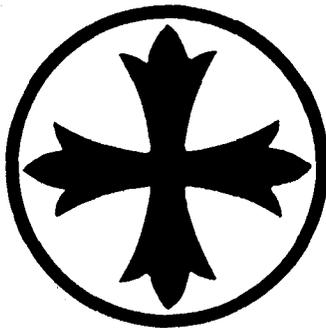




PURGATION

For truly in her dark night the soul feels the shadow of death and the groans and tortures of Hell, as if she saw them bodily before her, for Hell to her consists in feeling herself forsaken of God, and chastised and flung aside, and that He is outraged and wrathful. All this she suffers now; and, furthermore, she is overcome by a direful terror that it is forever. And she is haunted by this same sense of being forsaken and despised of all created people and things, particularly of her friends. She feels within herself a profound void and utter dearth of the three kinds of wealth which are ordered for her enjoyment, which are: temporal, physical and spiritual; and she sees herself plunged into the contrary evils, to wit: miserable trifles of imperfections, aridnesses and emptinesses of the perceptions of the faculties, and desolation of the spirit in darkness. To this is added that she cannot, owing to the solitude and desolation this night produces in her, find comfort or support in any teaching or in any spiritual master. For as she is so immersed and absorbed in this passionate sorrow for her own evil doings wherein she so clearly sees her vileness, she thinks that, as others do not see what she sees and feels, they speak from lack of apprehension; and instead of comfort rather doth she receive fresh grief, thinking that this is no remedy for her hurt; and truly she is right. For the soul can do little in this condition of terror until in this purgation the spirit is softened, humbled, and purified, and becomes so refined, simple, and rarefied, as to be enabled to become one with the spirit of God, according to the degree of union of love His mercy vouchsafes to concede.

JOHN of the CROSS





ALONE, YET NOT ALONE

Alone with a lone God he is alone:
One he remains, for his Desire is One.
So I have seen them, each in his degree,
Those solitary seekers; and lo, he
That travels farthest nearest is to goal.
One from the witnessed world, with zeal of soul,
Turns, and soars upwards, upwards in his flight
Alone, alone in all his suffering.
Another upwards from his soul doth spring
In lonely ecstasy. Another breaks
The clinging bonds of selfhood, and awakes
Alone, yet not alone: the bounteous Lord
Receives His own elect with love outpoured.

'AMR IBN UTHMAN AL-MAKKI



TAKE UP THE CROSS

No one can be made perfect in a day. A man must begin by denying himself, and willingly forsaking all things for God's sake, and must give up his own will, and all his natural inclinations, and separate and cleanse himself thoroughly from all sins and evil ways. After this, let him humbly take up the cross and follow Christ. Also let him take and receive example and instruction, reproof, counsel and teaching from devout and perfect servants of God, and not follow his own guidance. Thus the work shall be established and come to a good end. And when a man hath thus broken loose from and outleaped all temporal things and creatures, he may afterwards become perfect in a life of contemplation. For he who will have the one must let the other go. There is no other way.

Theologia Germanica





Revathi: ॐ Y E

SALVATION THROUGH RENUNCIATION

The supremely effulgent Being, beyond the great darkness of ignorance, knowing whom one transcends death — salutations to Him, the greatest object of knowledge.

Tranquil men of renunciation attain their salvation in Him, having their merits and demerits destroyed, and being freed from the fear of rebirth. Salutations to Him who exists in the form of salvation.

In Him all things abide; from Him they all originate. He has become all; He exists on every side. He is verily the All. Salutations to Him who is the Soul of everything.

Mahabharata



REASON AND ECSTASY

Reason is in us what the sun is in the world. . . . As long as our mind shines brightly and pursues its appointed course, pouring its noontide beams into every part of the soul, we are within our sober selves and not possessed, but when it comes to set, it is not surprising that the ecstasy and madness of divine possession should fall upon us. For when the Divine Light shines, the human light sets, and when the former sets, the latter dawns and rises. . . . Our mind departs at the coming of the Divine Spirit and returns when it departs. It is not lawful for mortal and immortal to dwell together.

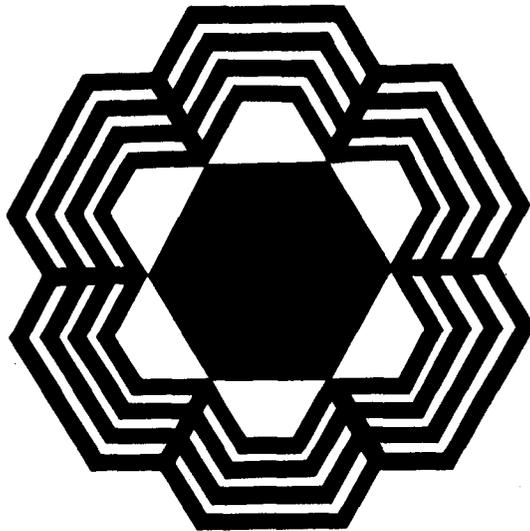
PHILO JUDAEUS



TO SERVE THE MASTER

**To be free from frailty, ignorance and fear,
To be free from conflict which makes him suffer so much,
To be free from cares, loneliness, despondency, sensual craving,
To be free from false judgement, indiscrimination,
To be free from infidelity and insincerity,
To be free from the temptations of the flesh;
To be free to sing and adore,
To serve the Master and his seekers steadfastly,
To thirst after Him and hunger for His Love,
To be liberated from all human taint.
And so attain the Feet of Shiva.**

MANIKKAVACHAKAR





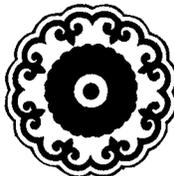
LONGING FOR THE DIVINE

Devotion is the insatiable thirst of the human spirit for the divine, a thirst that can never be satisfied either by the reading of scriptures or the performance of rites or ceremonies; it can be satisfied by individual experience alone. Says *Kathopanishad*, I, ii, 23:

This *Atma* (*Paramatma* – Supreme Self) is not attainable by the study of the Vedas, nor by keen intellect (understanding the meanings conveyed by *Shastras*), nor by great learning. It is attainable by him alone who longs to reach it and to him this self reveals its real nature.

Just as food is necessary for sustaining physical life, even so meditation and worship are needed for keeping up the spiritual life. The physical man must be made more ethereal by taking pure food; moral man more self-denying and philosophical; mental man more penetrating and profound; and spiritual man more devotional. The first preliminary is, therefore, the purification of the *upadhis*, and as man goes on evolving the *koshas*, devotion to *Ishwara* comes. The *sthoala sharira* and the *sukshma sharira* are the 'negative pole', while *Daiviprakriti* and *Ishwara* are the 'positive pole'. If *karana sharira* comes under the attraction of the negative pole, it becomes subject to the passions of embodied existence, but when it comes under the influence of the positive pole, one becomes liberated. The battle rages when you have to cross the neutral barrier – *Mahasmashana* – success in crossing which depends entirely on one's past virtuous Karma and complete devotion to Bhagavan. Out of the personality is evolved the individuality, which is later on transferred to *Ishwara*. There can be no *mukti* till the *abankara* is completely annihilated and all evil eradicated by the fire of devotion. "Sweep clean the threshold of your heart by pure life, garnish the dwelling-place of the beloved with virtues; when thou departest, He enters in and shows His Face to him whose self is gone." At first the devotee starts as *dasoham*, i.e., "I am the servant." The next stage of devotion is when he says and feels "He is Mine." Lastly comes the stage *sobam*, i.e., "I am He, Thou art myself", when the devotee is in a state of perfect union and oneness with the Beloved. In that *Parabhakti*, the devotee, on account of oneness, feels that what he sees, hears, etc., is Vasudeva.

PANDIT BHAVANI SHANKAR





Asbvini: U Bl S

SIGHS AND TEARS

The paths by which the Lover seeks his Beloved are long and perilous. They are populated by considerations, sighs and tears. They are lit up by love.

The Lover wept and said, "How long will it be until the darkness of the world is past, when the paths to hell will be no more? When will the hour come when water, which flows downwards, will change its nature and mount upwards? When will the innocent be more in numbers than the guilty?"

The Beloved asked the Lover, "Have you remembered any way in which I have rewarded you for you to love me thus?" "Yes," replied the Lover, "for I make no distinction between the trials which you send and the joys."

Love is the mingling of boldness and fear which comes through great fervour. It is the desire for the Beloved as the End of the will. It is this which makes the Lover like to die when he hears someone sing of the beauties of the Beloved. It is this through which I die daily, and in which my will dwells forever.

RAMÓN LULL



PEACE THROUGH RENUNCIATION

Observe this simple counsel of perfection: forsake all, and you shall find all. Renounce desire, and you shall find peace. Give this due thought, and when you have put it into practice, you will understand all things.

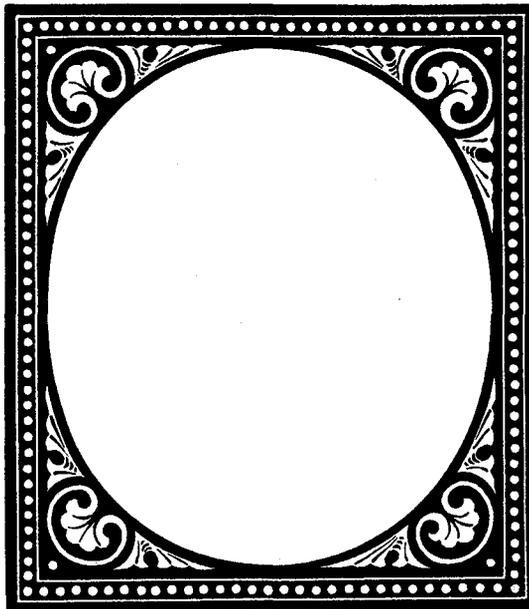
THOMAS à KEMPIS



I CAN CONJURE YOU

Put out my eyes, and I can see you still,
Slam my ears to, and I can hear you yet;
And without any feet can go to you;
And tongueless, I can conjure you at will.
Break off my arms, I shall take hold of you
And grasp you with my heart as with a hand;
Arrest my heart, my brain will beat as true;
And if you set this brain of mine afire,
Then on my blood-stream I yet will carry you.

RAINER MARIA RILKE





I SEE ONLY THEE

I run towards the breaths of the zephyr to distract myself but my gaze only rises to the face of the one to whom they have borne their perfume.

What does it matter if he seems to remove himself. He whom I love is with me!

Show the proudest coquetry, thou hast the right; conduct thyself as a tyrant; beauty has given thee this power.

If my loss may unite me with thee, ah! make it to come quickly, that I may be thy ransom!

Try my love as much as thou wilt; the choice that I have made is to please thee.

Thou art present in me even in thy absence, and in thy cruelty I feel a tenderness.

How I love that night when I was able to capture thy wandering; my half-sleep was the net that helped me to catch thee.

The full moon has replaced for my awakened eye the image of thy face; in every strange form, thy apparition has refreshed my eyes. I see only thee.

Take the remains of what thou hast left of thyself; there is no goodness in love if it leaves a drop of blood in the heart.

Welcome to him of whose visit I am not worthy! The word of the messenger is: after despair, deliverance.

There is good news for thee! Raise up what is on thee! Despite thy imperfection, thou hast been summoned above.

IBN AL-FARID





Bharani: ♀ I A

LOVE WITHOUT MEASURE

As a mother, even at the risk of her own life, protects her son, her only son, so let the disciple cultivate love without measure towards all beings. Let him cultivate towards the whole world, above, below, around, a heart of love unstinted, unmixed with differing or opposing interests. And let a man maintain this mindful love whether he stands, walks, sits or lies. For in all the world this state of heart is best.

GAUTAMA BUDDHA



GOD'S WILL

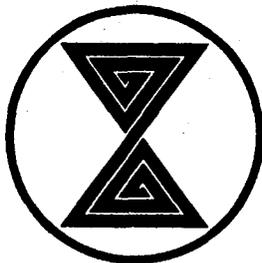
Resolve to do the will of others rather than your own.

Always choose to possess less rather than more.

Always take the lowest place and regard yourself as less than others.

Desire and pray always that God's will may be perfectly fulfilled in you.

THOMAS à KEMPIS





KWAN-YIN

Listen to the deeds of Kwan-Yin,
Who wholly responds in every direction;
Her all-embracing vow is deep as the sea,
Inconceivable in its *kalpas* beyond reckoning.
Serving thousands of millions of Buddhas,
She has intoned the great pure vow.
I will tell you briefly:
Whoever hears her name, whoever sees her
And remembers her unceasingly,
Will extinguish the sorrows of existence.

She is ever longed for, ever sought after,
The spotless pure ray of light,
The Sun of Wisdom dispelling darkness,
Subduer of misfortune of wind and fire
Who illuminates all the world,
The Law of Mercy, and clarifying thunder,
The numinous cloud of compassion
Pouring forth spiritual rain like sweet nectar
To quench the flames of agony.

The wondrous voice of Kwan-Yin,
The Brahmā-voice, voice of the sweeping tide,
Surpassing the sounds of the world,
Is to be held firm in the mind
Unaccompanied by even the shadow of doubt.
For one who is pure, Kwan-Yin,
In every pain, suffering and even death,
Can be a centre of reliance.
Perfect in every attainment,
Whose compassionate eye beholds all beings,
A boundless ocean of blessings —
Prostrate, let all revere Kwan-Yin.

Kwan-Yin Sutra



THE BURNING GROUND

Because Thou lovest the burning ground,
I have made a burning ground of my heart –
That Thou, Dark One, haunter of the burning ground,
Mayest dance the eternal dance.
Nought else is within my heart, O Mother:
Day and night blazes the funeral pyre:
The ashes of the dead, strewn all about,
I have preserved against Thy coming,
With death-conquering Mahakala neath Thy feet
Do Thou enter in, dancing Thy rhythmic dance,
That I may behold Thee with closed eyes.

BENGALI HYMN TO KALI





Krittika: ☉ O D

INVOCATION TO TARA

Everything is seen as empty. From the sphere of emptiness appears the letter OM which transforms into a jewel vessel holding a letter OM. The letter melts and becomes celestial substances: water for the mouth, water for the feet, flowers, incense, light, perfume, ambrosia, music and so forth, all of which are clear, unsullied and vast as the sky and able to endure until cyclic existence is ended. Then, by the powers of emanation of the All Good Bodhisattva Samantabhadra, the offerings become as clouds entirely suffusing the skies.

I and all sentient beings, endless and vast as space, from now until we return into the essence of enlightenment, turn to our refuge, the magnificent and holy Gurus, the perfected and transcendent Buddhas, the sacred and most holy Dharma and the exalted community of Supreme Beings.

Through the power of my prayers to the forces of goodness, and through the energies of kindness, integrity, patience, devotion, contemplation and wisdom of the Absolute, may enlightenment be gained for the sake of all.

May all beings realize bliss and the cause of bliss.
May all beings be free from sorrow and the cause of sorrow,
May all beings attain union with the sacred bliss, which is devoid
of suffering.
And may all beings abide in the limitless equanimity that is clear,
Free from attraction and aversion, the cause of pleasure and pain.

O Mother of all sentient beings, Deity who crushes the nightmares
of delusion,
Divinity who knows things as they are,
Together with your entourage, pray descend.

O Awakened Ones, who for countless aeons
Generated compassion out of mercy for beings,
Delight in the thoughts of my prayers.
The time is right to work the good of the world.
Send from your palace of the Sphere of Truth,
Magical emanations to empower and reveal.
Come, liberate the myriads of beings,
Descend with your entourage, I pray you.

O Lions amongst men,
Buddhas past, present and future,
To as many of you as there be,
Throughout the realms of space,
I bow with body, speech and mind.

On the waves of strength,
Of this king of prayers,
I bow to the Buddhas pervading space,
Their bodies as numerous as atoms.

On every atom is found a Buddha,
Sitting amidst countless sons.
In this infinite sphere of mystic beings,
I gaze with eyes of faith.

With oceans of conceivable sound,
In eulogy to the perfected Buddhas,
I give voice to their excellent qualities,
And glorify those gone to bliss.

Garlands of flowers I offer to them;
Music, perfumes, lamps and incense,
I arrange in mystic formation,
And offer to those who have conquered illusion.

All these taintless offerings I hold up,
In admiration for those gone to bliss.
In the potential of every living being,
I lift up my heart and rejoice.

Mount Meru, glorious mountain at the centre of the world,
The four continents, and the sun and the moon,
Placed on a base laden with incense and flowers,
I offer to the paradise of the Awakened Ones.
May all beings enjoy it as the field supreme.

O myriads of Gurus, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas throughout the ten directions, gaze upon me. You who possess the unapprehendable wisdom that knows, the compassion that responds and the magical emanations which act, preserve and spread the precious Buddha-dharma. Fulfil the wishes of the Gurus and Sages and give health and long life to those that uphold the sacred.

Radiate your illumined activity throughout the ten directions. Bring happiness and comfort to all that lives. Place us in the disciplines which please the High Ones and empower us with minds of skill and bliss.

Long life, health and wealth:
All beings long for them,
Just as they wish, just what they want,
May it come to them now,
And may they live in accord with Dharma.
Pray cut off the actions of ignorance,
Which deceive the sentient beings,
Concerning method, refuge, purification,
And the meaning of Mahayana Renunciation.

NAGARJUNA





SELF-ABANDONMENT

A walk. The atmosphere incredibly pure — a warm, caressing gentleness in the sunshine — joy in one's whole being. . . . Forgotten impressions of childhood and youth came back to me — all those indescribable effects wrought by colour, shadow, sunlight, green hedges, and songs of birds, upon the soul just opening to poetry. I became again young, wondering, and simple, as candour and ignorance are simple. I abandoned myself to life and to nature, and they cradled me with an infinite gentleness. To open one's heart in purity to this ever pure nature, to allow this immortal life of things to penetrate into one's soul, is at the same time to listen to the voice of God. Sensation may be a prayer, and self-abandonment an act of devotion.

HENRI FRÉDÉRIC AMIEL



DOUBT NOT

Indulge not in apprehensions of what evil might happen if things should not go as your worldly wisdom thinks they ought; doubt not, for this complexion of doubt unnerves and pushes back one's progress. To have cheerful confidence and hope is quite another thing from giving way to the fool's blind optimism: the wise man never fights misfortune in advance.

MAHATMA K. H.





RENUNCIATION

Act thou for them 'today', and they will act for thee 'tomorrow'.

'Tis from the bud of Renunciation of the Self, that springeth the sweet fruit of final Liberation.

To perish doomed is he, who out of fear of Mara, refrains from helping man, lest he should act for Self. The pilgrim who would cool his weary limbs in running waters, yet dares not plunge for terror of the stream, risks to succumb from heat. Inaction based on selfish fear can bear but evil fruit.

The selfish devotee lives to no purpose. The man who does not go through his appointed work in life — has lived in vain.

Follow the wheel of life; follow the wheel of duty to race and kin, to friend and foe, and close thy mind to pleasures as to pain. Exhaust the law of karmic retribution. Gain *siddhis* for thy future birth.

If Sun thou canst not be, then be the humble planet. Aye, if thou art debarred from flaming like the noonday Sun upon the snow-capped mount of purity eternal, then choose, O Neophyte, a humbler course.

Point out the 'Way' — however dimly, and lost among the host — as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness.

Behold Migmar, as in his crimson veils his 'Eye' sweeps over slumbering Earth. Behold the fiery aura of the 'Hand' of Lhagpa extended in protecting love over the heads of his ascetics. Both are now servants to Nyima, left in his absence silent watchers in the night. Yet both in Kalpas past were bright Nyimas, and may in future 'Days' again become two Suns. Such are the falls and rises of the Karmic Law in nature.

Be, O Lanoo, like them. Give light and comfort to the toiling pilgrim, and seek out him who knows still less than thou; who in his wretched desolation sits starving for the bread of Wisdom and the bread which feeds the shadow, without a Teacher, hope or consolation, and — let him hear the Law.

Tell him, O Candidate, that he who makes of pride and self-regard bond-maidens to devotion; that he, who cleaving to existence, still lays his patience and submission to the LAW, as a sweet flower at the feet of Shakya-Thub-pa, becomes a *srotapatti* in this birth. The *siddhis* of perfection may loom far, far away; but the first step is taken, the stream is entered, and he may gain the eyesight of the mountain eagle, the hearing of the timid doe.

Tell him, O Aspirant, that true devotion may bring him back the knowledge, that knowledge which was his in former births. The deva-sight and deva-hearing are not obtained in one short birth.

Be humble, if thou would'st attain to Wisdom.

Be humbler still, when Wisdom thou hast mastered.

Be like the Ocean which receives all streams and rivers. The Ocean's mighty calm remains unmoved; it feels them not.

Restrain by thy Divine thy lower Self.

Restrain by the Eternal the Divine.

The Voice of the Silence



Robini: D V B

THE VICTORIOUS CHARIOT

“Listen friend,” says the Merciful Lord, “the chariot which brings victory is different. The wheels of that chariot are bravery and fortitude. Its flags are truth and moral power. Its horses are vigour, judgement, self-control and service of fellowmen, tied to the chariot by the ropes of charity, compassion and equal-mindedness. Devotion is the skilled charioteer, selflessness the shield, contentment the sword, charity the axe, intelligence the mighty bolt, the elevated mind is the awesome bow. A heart, pure and unruffled, is the quiver, whilst the arrows are equality, disciplined life and self-control. The impenetrable armour is worship of the Teacher and the Brahmana. There are no better weapons for ensuring victory. Friend, for one who sits in such a chariot, there are no more foes to be conquered.”

TULSIDAS



O KRISHNA

O Krishna!
This is the gift of your blessed flute.
This is the sound reverberating in my soul.
Let me merge my melody with yours,
Let my speech echo your own.
Let my breath draw in and breathe out,
As though it were your own, Lord . . .
As though it were your own.

Hermes



CHANTING HIS NAME

I chant His pure Name
And delight in His worship
Unceasingly.

What use have I for fasts
And pilgrimages,
For sacred chants and incantations?
I have not studied the Vedas
In the holy places.

All I know is what I need to know:
Mira is lost in devotion
To the Lord of all time.

MIRA





GIRDHAR GOPAL

In life, no less than in death,
Thou art my friend.
I shall never depart from Thee,
For I am lost without the vision
Of Thy Effulgent Presence.

Ask my heart, it will tell Thee
That I climb higher and higher.
Always seeking a glimpse of Thee,
I have spent many a night weeping.

Oh, what is this world but a false
Elusive thing, a shadow-play?
Family, friends – all are false.
I stand before Thee, then,
With folded hands, like a suppliant.

Hear me, listen, oh listen to my words.
That mad elephant, the mind,
Breaking loose, roamed at large
Till the Lord brought it under control.

And now I live eternally in His presence.
Mira's Lord is Girdhar Gopal,
At whose lotus feet she dwells.

MIRA

