

24. श्रीउपदेशपञ्चकम्/ Sri Upadesha Panchakam

Introduction:

Upadesa Panchakam is also known as Sadhana Panchakam – meaning, the five important sadhanas (disciplines) a human being has to practice. Sopana Panchakam - meaning the five steps a man has to go through in his life. Advaita Panchakam - as these verses deal with advaitic teaching contained in the Vedas, and Upadesa Panchakam - meaning the five important advices.

Adi Shankara's disciples approached him when he was about to leave his body, requesting him to summarize the essence of all Vedantas. They told him that they were overwhelmed with so many Vedantic concepts he taught, the various books he wrote, and various kinds of upadeshas he gave, and hence they requested him to bring out the essence in a short stotra. So Adi Shankara brought out the entire summary of all his teachings in these five verses. Once we understand this, it is believed that we can understand everything in short. This is a very important Stotra which needs to be understood with proper interpretation. It is recommended that this be memorized.

**1. वेदो नित्यमधीयतां तदुदितं कर्म स्वनुष्ठीयतां तेनेशस्य विधीयतामपचितिः काम्ये मतिस्त्यज्यताम् ।
पापौघः परिधूयतां भवसुखे दोषोऽनुसन्धीयतां आत्मेच्छा व्यवसीयतां निजगृहात्तूर्णं विनिर्गम्यताम् ॥**

**1. vedo nityamadhīyatām taduditam karma svanuṣṭhīyatām teneśasya vidhīyatāmapacitiḥ
kāmye matistyajyatām ।
pāpaughāḥ paridhūyatām bhavasukhe dośo'nusandhīyatām ātmecchā vyavasīyatām
nijagrḥāttūrṇam vinirgamyatām ॥**

Meaning & Explanation:

In this Stotra, Adi Shankara has beautifully phrased these verses in passive voice.

**वेदो नित्यमधीयतां तदुदितं कर्म स्वनुष्ठीयतां / vedo nityamadhīyatām taduditam karma
svanuṣṭhīyatām**

वेदो – vedo – the Vedas ; नित्यम् - nityam - everyday; अधीयतां - adhīyatām - be chanted ; तत्
- tat - those (Vedas); उदितं - uditam - as stipulated ; कर्म – karma - deeds; सु-अनुष्ठीयतां – su
anuşṭhīyatām - be well practiced ;

Let Veda be chanted every day and various karmas be well practiced as stipulated by Vedas.

Notes:

Even though one might have completed Vedadhyayana, he should still chant Vedas every day, as it gives the identity with Paramatma. Dropping identity with the body will happen only if we keep in touch with Vedas.

Veda includes Upanishad, the pinnacle of knowledge. A gruhasta should do all karmas as stipulated by Vedas. We should not be doing anything that is not mentioned in Vedas. A Brahmana has to perform only the stipulated six karmas everyday, viz, studying Vedas, teaching Vedas, performing Yagna, teaching (conducting) yagna for others, accepting danam and (Donation) giving danam. For example, a lot of importance is given for Sandhyavandanam which is a basic Karma which a gruhasta / brahmachari has to perform.

Similarly, Karmas are stipulated for other Varnas as well, which should be followed by the people who belong to respective Varnas.

तेनेशस्य विधीयतामपचितिः काम्ये मतिस्त्यज्यताम् / teneśasya vidhīyatāmapacitiḥ kāmye matistyajyatām

तेन – tena – by that karma ; ईशस्य- śasya – of Eswara; विधीयतां –vidhīyatām - be done; अपचितिः –apacitiḥ - puja / worship; for developing bhakti ; काम्ये – kāmye - in activities driven by desires ; मतिः - matih – the mind; त्यज्यताम् - tyajyatām – let it be abandoned;

By doing that karma, may puja be done to Eswara – separate puja is not required. Karmas having desires should be abandoned.

Notes:

Separate puja is not mentioned in Vedas, but Shastras have stipulated, to cover our deficiencies. Vedokta karma itself constitutes worship. We don't need to worship Eswara separately, if we perform all our stipulated karmas properly.

Vedokta karma should never be neglected, just because, one is performing Pujas. All yagnas and the 40 samskaraas are part of Vedokta karma, so doing them itself is nothing but performing pujas and worships. No puja should be done without performing Sandhyavandanam.

Similarly, Kamyas karma (a karma being done expecting a benefit in return) should not be performed. But, there are certain karmas that are allowed to be performed by Vedas. Eg, Dasaratha performed Putra Kameshti Yagam to be blessed with progeny. This should be understood with clear reference to Adhikaribheda, the difference in the aspirants. A Mumukshu, desiring Gnana, should not have ordinary mundane desires and hence he should avoid Kamyas karmas.

This Upadesa Panchakam is taking us step by step towards gnana. We have Paramatma in our mind, but these are the steps to reach this goal of becoming one with Paramatma. The first step is to study Vedas, and then perform Karmas as prescribed in Vedas.

While doing this, Kamyā karma should be avoided. It is to be noted that Veda itself prescribes certain yagas / yagnas that will take us to Swarga. But, this is not what we should aspire for.

पापौघः परिधूयतां भवसुखे दोषोऽनुसन्धीयतां / pāpaughah paridhūyatām bhavasukhe dośo'nusandhīyatām

पाप – pāpa – sins; औघः - oghah - heaps (of sins) ; परिधूयतां - paridhūyatām - be well washed away ; भव - bhava - Samsara (cycle of birth / death) सुखे – sukhe – in happiness ; दोषः-dośah – defects; अनुसन्धीयतां -anusandhīyatām - contemplated again and again ;

Let the heap of sins which are on one's account, be washed away; Happiness from Samsara is full of defects which should be contemplated again and again.

Notes:

Vedas have prescribed a lot of atonements (Prayashchita) to wash away sins. Further, by doing more good deeds (punyas) the effect of the sins committed lessens.

If we do not contemplate on the concept of defects in happiness arising out of samsara, then we run after it. Once we realize that every happiness has a misery as a genesis, we will not run after that.

Bhagavad Gita, (5-22), says

ये हि संस्पर्शजा भोगा दुःखयोनय एव ते ।
आद्यन्तवन्तः कौन्तेय न तेषु रमते बुधः ॥

ye hi samsparsa-ja bhoga duhkha-yonaya eva te ।
ady-antavantah kaunteya na tesu ramate budhah ॥

An intelligent person does not take part in the sources of misery, which are due to contact with the material senses. O son of Kunti, such pleasures have a beginning and an end and hence the wise man does not delight in them.

आत्मेच्छा व्यवसीयतां निजगृहात्तूर्णं विनिर्गम्यताम् / ātmecchā vyavasīyatām nijagrhāttūrṇam vinirgamyatām

आत्म-इच्छा - ātma icchā – desire to attain Atma; व्यवसीयतां - vyavasīyatām - special effort be made; निजगृहात् - nijagr̥hāt - from one's house ;तूर्ण - tūrṇam - immediately ; विनिर्गम्यताम् - vinirgamyatām - should be left (leave house quickly) ;

Let special efforts be made to attain Atma. One needs to leave the house quickly – meaning move from Grahastashrama to Vanaprastha.

Notes:

This is the third ashram in the order out of the four ashramas we have, viz, Brahmacharya, Gruhastashrama, Vaanaprastha, and Sanyasa. As per the Shastras, one should leave the house quickly, meaning, move to the next ashram once the duties are completed as Gruhastha. They should lead life in the forest with spouse and follow the rules prescribed, viz, they should not hoard anything and collect food grains that are left in the field by farmers. Unchavritti is one such activity.

Alternatively, as living in forest is practically not feasible in these modern times, they can practice this third stage and also the fourth stage, while at home, detaching oneself from the daily mundane activities. One has to focus on meditation without interfering in the activities of the house. Such a life, committed to meditation will enable one to purify and focus his mind. However, one has to be in the elevated state of mind to practice this. There are a lot of examples in the past, like Appayya Deekshithar, who led this kind of unattached life being a Gruhastha, and ultimately he merged with Lord Nataraja in Chidambaram. He had that kind of maturity. These are all the requirements to be kept in mind and should be practiced.

**2.सङ्गः सत्सु विधीयतां भगवतो भक्तिर्दृढाऽऽधीयतां शान्त्यादिः परिचीयतां दृढतरं कर्माशु सन्त्यज्यताम् ।
सद्विद्वानुपसृप्यतां प्रतिदिनं तत्पादुका सेव्यतां ब्रह्मैकाक्षरमर्थ्यतां श्रुतिशिरोवाक्यं समाकर्ण्यताम् ॥**

**2.saṅgaḥ satsu vidhīyatām bhagavato bhaktirdṛḍhā” dhīyatām śāntyādiḥ paricīyatām dṛḍhataram karmāśu santyajyatām ।
sadvīdvānupasṛpyatām pratidinaṁ tatpādukā sevyatām brahmaikākṣaramarthyatām śrutiśirovākyaṁ samākarnyatām ॥**

Meaning & Explanation:

In the previous shloka, Acharya advised that we should study Vedas daily and practice all karmas stipulated for our respective varna and ashrama which itself constitutes worship of Eswara and we should leave aside kama karmas; this enables the purification of our chitta and at that stage one should go for Vanaprastha Ashrama. In this shloka he emphasizes more on how we should engage ourselves in those ashramas, which may not be easy to practice in today's world but we should atleast try to follow these concepts.

सङ्गः सत्सु विधीयतां भगवतो भक्तिर्दृढाऽऽधीयतां / saṅgaḥ satsu vidhīyatām bhagavato bhaktirdṛḍhā”dhīyatām

सङ्गः - saṅgaḥ - association; सत्सु - satsu - in virtuous (people, matter, company, books, bhajan); विधीयतां - vidhīyatām - let it be practiced; भगवतोभक्तिः - bhagavatobhaktiḥ - devotion towards Bhagavan; दृढा - dṛḍhā - firmly; अधीयतां -adhīyatām - be established;

Let association with virtuous people be practiced and devotion towards Bhagavan be established in a firm manner.

Notes:

In Shloka 1, he mentioned that following Karma itself constitutes Bhakti, but in this shloka he mentions that bhakti is needed as, by now, affiliation towards karma has lessened and one has attained Chitta Shuddi and has reached Vanaprastashrama. This is applicable for these matured people and not ordinary people like us. Hence we should not reduce our focus on the karmas.

शान्त्यादिः परिचीयतां दृढतरं कर्माशु सन्त्यज्यताम् / śāntyādiḥ paricīyatām dṛḍhataram karmāśu santyajyatām

शान्ति - śānti - peace of mind; आदिः ādiḥ - etc; परिचीयतां - paricīyatām - repeated frequently ; दृढतरं - dṛḍhataram - very firmly; कर्मआशु - karma āśu - (not ordained) deeds quickly ; सन्त्यज्यताम् - santyajyatām - be abandoned ;

Let peace of mind etc, be frequently practiced repeatedly; the ordained karmas should be practiced till one attains maturity, where the karma itself leaves him. Karma to attain certain desires should be abandoned.

Notes:

As seen earlier, Samadi Shatka Sampatti, Uparati etc, i.e., control of sense organs, withdrawal of sense organs from outside mundane things, peace of mind, etc., and establishing oneself in Dhyana should finally lead to Samadhi (in ashtanga yoga) or Samadhanam (in gnaana marga) which means one and the same.

Here abandoning karmas should be understood correctly. Even in Vanaprasthaashrama there are some karmas to be carried out. Hence the ordained karmas should be practiced till one attains maturity, at which stage, the karma itself will leave him. So one should have the desire to attain that maturity so that the karmas leave him on its own.

सद्विद्वानुपसृप्यतां प्रतिदिनं तत्पादुका सेव्यतां / sadvidvānupasṛpyatām pratidinaṁ tatpādukā sevayatām

सद्विद्वान्- sadvidvān – a good scholar; उपसृप्यतां- upasṛpyatām - be approached ; प्रतिदिनं - pratidinam -everyday ;तत्पादुका - tatpādukā - his footwear; सेव्यतां - sevyatām - be served ;

Let a good scholar should be approached. His (refers to Guru) lotus feet (Paduka) should be worshipped every day.

Notes:

As a Gruhasta one might have studied a lot, listened to discourses and might be still in contact with this knowledge in Vanaprastashrama as well. However, this is not sufficient, and hence upadeshas from good scholar (Guru) should be taken. We should go to a good scholar (Sadvidwan – not ordinary vidwan). Good Guru will assess after asking questions, and advice on what is suited for oneself. Bhagavad Gita states:

तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।
उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः

tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya
upadeksyanti te jnanam jnaninas tattva-darsinah

Learn the Truth by approaching a Sadguru. Such an enlightened Guru can impart knowledge to you because he has seen the Truth. Ask relevant questions with humility and perform service to him with concentration. All these are important and gnana cannot be obtained if we ignore even one of the above.

A lot of time should be spent with Guru as upadesha comes not only by words from Guru, but also from his signs and actions. Worshipping Guru Padukas every day is very important, which helps one in developing humility that will help him obtain the required ability to grasp the advices.

There is also reference in Chandhogya Upanishad where it mentions how Narada learnt Brahma Vidya. Narada approaches Sanathkumara for Upadesha (advice). The Guru first asks all that Narada knows, in response to which he says that he has learnt four Vedas, Puranas, Six Vedangas, Jyotisha etc. Then Sanathkumara smiles and says, “You have learnt a lot, but not what is the core”, to which Narada replied that this is why he has approached him. Then he was taught Brahma Vidya.

ब्रह्मैकाक्षरमर्थतां श्रुतिशिरोवाक्यं समाकर्ण्यताम् / brahmaikākṣaramarthyatām śrutiśirovākyaṁ samākarnyatām

Now that our Chitta is purified, and we have developed firm devotion, by abandoning Karmas that bestow benefit, which leads to getting actual Brahma Vidya from Guru. He is making this clear in this line.

ब्रह्मएकअक्षरम् – brahma Eka akṣaram –the one unique letter Omkara; / also refers to the Brahman who is not subject to decay; अर्थ्यता- arthyatām - be desired; श्रुतिशिरोवाक्यं - śrutiśirovākyaṃ - the crown of Vedas, (which are the Upanishads) ;समाकर्ण्यताम् - samākarnṇyatām – let it be listened intently ;

Let Om, unique single syllable, be desired (sought after) and the crown of Vedas which is nothing but Upanishad, be listened intently.

Notes:

We should desire for one unique (Eka) syllable (Aksharam) which refers to Omkara or can also be interpreted as the adjective of Para Brahman that does not decay. Omkara chant is practiced by Sanyasis constantly.

In pursuance of that prayer to attain Parabrahman, we should listen to Vedānta-vakyas dealing with Brahman, the four Mahavaakyas in the Upanishads. Though one might have listened / studied various Vedas and Shastras, the essence can be granted only by Guru. He is the only capable person to bestow that experience of realizing “Aham Brahmasmi”. This comes only by seeking and intensely listening to his words.

3.वाक्यार्थश्च विचार्यतां श्रुतिशिरः पक्षः समाश्रीयतां दुस्तर्कात्सुविरम्यतां श्रुतिमतस्तर्कोऽनुसन्धीयताम् ।
ब्रह्मास्मीति विभाव्यतामहरहर्गर्वः परित्यज्यतां देहेऽहंमतिरुज्झ्यतां बुधजनैर्वादः परित्यज्यताम् ॥

3.vākyaṛthaśca vicāryatām śrutiśiraḥ pakṣaḥ samāśrīyatām dustarkātsuviramyatām śrutimatastarko'nusandhīyatām ।
brahmāsmīti vibhāvvyatāmaharahargarvaḥ parityajyatām dehe'hammatirujhyatām budhajanairvādaḥ parityajyatām ॥

Meaning & Explanation:

वाक्यार्थश्च विचार्यतां श्रुतिशिरः पक्षः समाश्रीयतां / vākyaṛthaśca vicāryatām śrutiśiraḥ pakṣaḥ samāśrīyatām

वाक्यार्थश्च – vākyaṛthaśca – words (of Vedas and Upanishads) and (deduced) meanings ;विचार्यतां - vicāryatām - be enquired into ; श्रुतिशिरः - śrutiśiraḥ - Upanishad; पक्षः - pakṣaḥ - side; समाश्रीयतां - samāśrīyatām - let it be resorted to with full faith;

Enquire into the import of scriptural texts namely Vedas and Upanishads, dealing with Brahman. Place full faith on Upanishads and accept the view of what Shruti (Upanishad) says.

Notes:

It is important to know about Vakyarta Sadas. This is where Vakyartha is debated.

There are various sentences (Vaakyas) which contradict each other. However, Adi Shankara has very clearly explained the meanings through his commentaries on Sutra Bhashya, Upanishad Bhashya, with the help of Tarka Shastra (Logic) and Vyakarana (grammar). He draws references from various shastras and explains how and why what we may think is not correct. We need to understand this deduction properly and only then our faith will become stronger and we will be in a position to understand the Maha Vaakyas properly.

For example, when we say “Aham Brahma Asmi”, I am Brahman, we know we are not Brahman, but the body. These kinds of contradictions are resolved well by Adi Shankara by giving the meaning of each word. In this Maha Vakya, Asmi means equivalent. He is equating two entities which are not equal. For that we need to qualify Aham, then qualify Brahman - what is qualification of Brahman when it is equal to aham; what is the qualification of aham, when it is equal to Brahman. He uses various Tarka shastras and lakshanas to explain. That is Vakyartha.

Vicharana is enquiry into Vakyartha. If we do not understand, the Guru explains to us. When a contradictory situation appears, we need to take the side of Upanishad. Upanishad is the concluding final word on Brahma Vichara.

**दुस्तर्कात्सुविरम्यतां श्रुतिमतस्तर्कोऽनुसन्धीयताम्/ dustarkātsuviramyatām
śrutimatastarko'nusandhīyatām**

दुस्तर्कात् – dustarkāt- from vain debate; सुविरम्यतां -suviramyatām - always keep a distance;
श्रुतिमतःतर्कः – śrutimatahtarkah – Vedic philosophy logic'; अनुसन्धीयताम्- anusandhīyatām-
engage in repeated contemplation;

Desist oneself from vain debates. Always, contemplate upon the logic mentioned in Upanishad.

Notes:

Debate should be done in a positive way to understand the essence and not to bring down the opposite party though we know he is not right. For eg. Followers of Buddhist philosophy, which does not believe in Bhagawan, Vedas and claims everything as Shoonya will put forth their logic and debate to establish their belief as correct. If one wants to establish Advaita Vedanta in Para Brahman, one should keep distance from these irrelevant debates.

Vedic philosophy, its logic, and philosophy of Upanishads should be repeatedly contemplated upon. (Anusandhana – repeated meditation).

**ब्रह्मास्मीति विभाव्यतामहरहर्गर्वः परित्यज्यतां / brahmāsmīti vibhāvyaatāmaharahargarvaḥ
parityajyatām**

ब्रह्मअस्मिइति – brahma asmi iti - (I) am Brahman ; विभाव्यताम् – vibhāvyaṭām – should feel ;
अहरहः – aharahah - everyday / every minute, गर्वः - garvaḥ - arrogance ; परित्यज्यताम्-
parityajyatām - abandon completely ;

The thought of 'I am Brahman' should revolve in one's mind every day, every minute. One should, every day, feel (Bhavanā) that he is Brahman and abandon arrogance completely.

Notes:

Ultimately, "vibhāvyaṭām" – one should always feel (Bhavana) that he is Brahman. One should keep on establishing this repeatedly. When one says "I am Brahman", he has possibly not lost association with the body and hence he has not completely lost his identity of Ahankara, as distinction from others. So, it may lead to arrogance. Hence, if he says he is Brahman, when the real Gnana has not dawned, then he is not Brahman. This is the starting point for the downfall. Because he is unable to see Brahman in everything surrounding him. Hence he has not reached that stage. So, one has to be very careful always, and arrogance should be completely abandoned.

**देहेऽहंमतिरुज्ज्यतां बुधजनैर्वादः परित्यज्यताम् / dehe'hammatirujhyatām budhajanairvādaḥ
parityajyatām**

देहे – dehe – in body; अहं- ahaṁ - I ; मतिः- mathihi- mind; उज्ज्यतांujhyatām - abandoned ;
बुधजनैः- budhajanah –with wise men ; वादः - vādaḥ - debate; परित्यज्यताम् - parityajyatām - to
be completely abandoned.

The mind that associates oneself with the body, should be completely removed. Debate with the wise men should be abandoned.

Notes:

The arrogance arises as we think ourselves as body. Hence we should always think that we are Brahman - ब्रह्मास्मीति विभाव्यताम् - brahmāsmīti vibhāvyaṭām. We should not think that we are body, even for a minute.

One should not pick up debate with wise men, who have already done Brahma Vicharam and are established in Brahman. One should always be in their good books as they will bless him and help attain supreme knowledge.

We can ask questions but with great humility to understand the right aspects and with a view to eliminate our doubts. If we start unnecessary debate, it may lead one into difficulties. We don't know what is good / bad karma and what is good / bad debate. We should frame questions properly and carefully, as this is like walking on the edge of the sword.

4.क्षुद्ध्याधिश्च चिकित्स्यतां प्रतिदिनं भिक्षौषधं भुज्यतां स्वादन्नं न तु याच्यतां विधिवशात्प्राप्तेन सन्तुष्यताम् ।
शीतोष्णादि विषह्यतां न तु वृथा वाक्यं समुच्चार्यतां औदासीन्यमभीप्स्यतां जनकृपानैष्ठुर्यमुत्सृज्यताम् ॥

4.kṣudvyādhiśca cikitsyatām pratidinaṁ bhikṣauśadhaṁ bhujyatām svādvannaṁ na tu yācyatām vidhivaśātprāptena santuṣyatām ।
śītoṣṇādi viṣahyatām na tu vṛthā vākyaṁ samuccāryatām audāsīnyamabhīpsyatām janakṛpānaiṣṭhuryamutsṛjyatām ॥

Meaning & Explanation:

क्षुद्ध्याधिश्च चिकित्स्यतां प्रतिदिनं भिक्षौषधं भुज्यतां / kṣudvyādhiśca cikitsyatām pratidinaṁ bhikṣauśadhaṁ bhujyatām

क्षुत् -kṣut – hunger; व्याधिश्च –vyādhiśca – as a disease; चिकित्स्यतां – cikitsyatām - let it be treated; प्रतिदिनं – pratidinaṁ - everyday; भिक्षा - bhikṣa - alms; औषधं– auśadhaṁ - medicine ;भुज्यतां – bhujyatām - let it be eaten ;

Let the disease of hunger be treated with the food obtained through Biksha (alms) as medicine everyday.

Notes:

Hunger is to be considered as a disease which should be treated and not viewed as a desire to be satisfied. We should not treat hunger as a good thing as we like to eat delicious food. Food is important until we hold the body (even for gnanis it is important) and hence that should be the purpose of eating. If we develop taste for food, mental equipoise will be disturbed.

There should be no desire in our mind for anything mundane. Food is “mundane”. Anything other than Parabrahmam is mundane. This is the way we should consider the food. Sanyasis are prohibited from cooking and hence it needs to be taken through bhiksha only. Whatever food he gets by way of Bhiksha, is medicine (oushadham) for him for the hunger disease. If one is in Vanaprastha state, he should take the food grains that are left over in the fields and cook his own food.

स्वादन्नं न तु याच्यतां विधिवशात्प्राप्तेन सन्तुष्यताम् / svādvannaṁ na tu yācyatām vidhivaśātprāptena santuṣyatām

स्वादु - svādu- tasty; अन्नं –annaṁ - food; नतु – not to be; याच्यतां – yācyatām - asked for (even indirectly) ; विधिवशात् – vidhivaśāt – in course of destiny ; प्राप्तेन– prāptena – by what is obtained ;सन्तुष्यताम्– santuṣyatām - be satisfied ;

Do not ask for delicious food, even indirectly, but be satisfied with what you get by chance, as per the destiny.

Notes:

The kind of approach where you ask for delicious food indirectly or passing good comments about the bhiksha offered on the previous day, will make them give more. This should be completely abandoned. Such food that was obtained by chance (विधिवशात् – vidhivaśāt), without any effort, should be used to treat the disease of hunger. You should develop distaste towards taste.

शीतोष्णादि विषह्यतां न तु वृथा वाक्यं समुच्चार्यतां / śītoṣṇādi viṣahyatām na tu vṛthā vākyaṃ samuccāryatām

शीत - śīta – cold; उष्ण - uṣṇa – heat; आदि- ādi - etc ; विषह्यतां – viṣahyatām - be endured ; न - na - not; तु – tu - but ; वृथा – vṛthā - purposeless ; वाक्यं – vākyaṃ -words ; समुच्चार्यतां – samuccāryatām - be uttered ;

Endure heat and cold patiently. Do not pronounce purposeless words.

Notes:

We need to treat the happiness and the misery with equanimity, like how the cold and heat come one after the other. One should not waste energy on uttering useless words, rather, spend that energy to contemplate on Parabrahmam.

Even Bhagavad Gita, (2-14) there is a reference in the shloka below –

मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः ।
आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत ॥

matra-sparsas tu kaunteya sitosna-sukha-duhkha-dah
agamapayino 'nityas tams titikṣasva bharata

O son of Kunti, the contact between the senses and the sense objects gives rise to happiness and distress. These are impermanent and come and go like the six seasons (rutus), that come and go. O descendent of Bharat, one must learn to endure them without caring for them.

औदासीन्यमभीप्स्यतां जनकृपानैष्ठुर्यमुत्सृज्यताम् / audāsīnyamabhīpsyatām janakṛpānaiṣṭhuryamutsṛjyatām

औदासीन्यम् – audāsīnyam - indifference ; अभीप्स्यतां –abhīpsyatām - be aimed for / desired ; जन- jana- people; कृपा – kṛpā- compassion ; नैष्ठुर्यम्– naiṣṭhuryam – harshness / severity; उत्सृज्यताम् – utsṛjyatām – be abandoned;

Develop indifference (neutral, without taking sides); abandon the attitude of being kind to some people and harsh to others.

Notes:

Aim to develop compassion towards the fellow beings, and develop indifference (without taking sides and without showing favoritism). There is a group called Udasee in North India, which helps one develop indifference towards mundane things. Indifference should be carefully cultivated. Being indifferent to anything other than Parabrahmam.

People will approach us if we have attained certain level of gnana. We may like some and not like few others. This is basic agnana that develops in us. This kind of favoritism should be completely abandoned. One should be compassionate with everyone and never show severity to anyone.

This can also be interpreted as: people whom we meet may treat us with kripa or harshness (Naishturyam) when we move around especially in unknown places; on such occasions we need to develop equanimity and not take it seriously.

5. एकान्ते सुखमास्यतां परतरे चेतः समाधीयतां पूर्णात्मा सुसमीक्ष्यतां जगदिदं तद्वाधितं दृश्यताम् ।
प्राक्कर्म प्रविलाप्यतां चित्बलान्नाप्युत्तरैः श्लिष्यतां प्रारब्धं त्विह भुज्यतामथ परब्रह्मात्मना स्थीयताम्
॥

5. ekānte sukhamāsyatām paratare cetaḥ samādhiyatām pūrṇātmā susamīkṣyatām jagadidaṁ tadvādhitaṁ dṛśyatām ।
prākarma pravilāpyatām citibalānnāpyuttaraiḥ śliṣyatām prārabdhaṁ tviha bhujyatāmatha
parabrahmātmanā sthiyatām ॥

Meaning & Explanation:

एकान्ते सुखमास्यतां परतरे चेतः समाधीयतां / ekānte sukhamāsyatām paratare cetaḥ
samādhiyatām

एकान्ते - ekānte - in being alone ; सुखं – sukham –happiness ; आस्यताम् –āsyatām - be sought ;
परतरे – paratare- in the supreme; चेतः –cetaḥ - mind- ; समाधीयतां - samādhiyatām - be
placed well;

Seek happiness by being alone and devote the mind well to the supreme.

Notes:

If one is in a company, there is always misery, unless it is satsanga. Particularly if one is going to the higher levels of gnana, one needs more and more of Ekanta (being alone). We need to seek happiness by being alone, and not focus on materialistic things.

Place the mind well and contemplate on the supreme and that is why one should seek loneliness.

पूर्णात्मा सुसमीक्ष्यतां जगदिदं तद्बाधितं दृश्यताम् / pūrṇātmā susamīkṣyatām jagadidaṁ tadvādhitaṁ dṛśyatām

पूर्णात्मा - pūrṇātmā - the complete (everfull) atma ; सुसमीक्ष्यतां - susamīkṣyatām - having good look at ; जगदिदं - jagadidaṁ - this world ; तत् – tat – that; बाधितम् - bādhitaṁ - affected (pervaded) - ; दृश्यताम् - dṛśyatām – let it be seen properly

Always seek the ever full atma (all-pervading). The world is pervaded by Paramatma and hence whatever we see, hear, touch, we should see that as Paramatma.

Notes:

pūrṇātmā means - Atma is ever full. Apoorna is when we are feeling that we are deficient at something, which refers to the deficiency in materialistic things. Paramatma is ever full. The more we contemplate on poornathma, we will become poornathma ourselves.

We are still having sense organs and hence have exposure to outside objects. When you see something, hear something, even as simple as hearing the chirping of birds, animals moving around, etc, you should see them as pervaded by Paramatma. There is no object which is not pervaded by Paramatma; thus develop an attitude to see Paramatma in everything.

प्राक्कर्म प्रविलाप्यतां चित्बलान्नाप्युत्तरैः श्लिष्यतां / prākkarma pravilāpyatām citibalānnāpyuttaraiḥ śliṣyatām

प्राक्कर्म – prākkarma – old / ancient karma ; प्रविलाप्यतां - pravilāpyatām - let it be merged; चित् - citi – mind; बलात् – balāt – by force of; नअपि – n apy – not even this उत्तरैः -uttaraiḥ - Agami Karma ; श्लिष्यतां - śliṣyatām - let it be (not) stuck to ;

Let the ancient karma (Sanchita karma) be destroyed by strength of your mind, and let the mind not be stuck even to the Agami Karma (uttara karma).

Notes:

There are three kinds of karmas – Sanchita karma, Agami karma and Prarabdha karma. Sanchita karma is what we have accumulated over crores and crores of births (Sanchayanam means accumulation). Out of this Sanchita Karma, a portion has been allotted to us to experience in the present birth, which is called Prarabdha Karma. The balance of Sanchita Karma will have to be experienced by us in future janmas.

There is another karma called Agami Karma, which we accumulate in this birth. Agami refers to future. Whatever we have accumulated in this birth, will be experienced by us in future. Whatever karma we had done in the past refers to Sanchita Karma. Whatever we are accumulating now, is Agami karma. What we are experiencing in this birth, is Prarabdha, which is not under our control. The two karmas, Sanchita and Agami are under our control. If we eliminate the possibility of having future life (avoiding next birth) by attaining gnana then the Sanchita karma as well as Agami karma are completely eliminated.

Gnaanagni dagdha karmanam – so says Gita. The burning away of Sanchita karma is what is discussed in this line.

By strength of our mind, we can avoid adding Uttara karma (Agami). Sanchita karma, is already burnt in the fire of gnana. If we dedicate all our karmas to Bhagavan (karma yoga) and we are always thinking of Prabrahma, then no karma will stick to us.

प्रारब्धं त्विह भुज्यतामथ परब्रह्मात्मना स्थीयताम् / prārabdham tviha bhujyatāmatha parabrahmātmanā sthīyatām

प्रारब्धं - prārabdham tu –when it comes to Prarabdha karma (current karma brought since the time of birth) ; इह – iha - in this birth ; भुज्यतां - bhujyatām – let it be experienced (let us not care for it)अथ –atha – now (having gone through all these steps) ; परब्रह्मात्मना - parabrahmātmanā - Paramatma (atma which is supreme / brahman) ; स्थीयताम् - sthīyatām - be established (in Parabrahmam) ;

When it comes to Prarabdha Karma let it be experienced. Having gone through all these steps, be established in Parabrahmam.

Notes:

Prarabdha karma is that which is going to affect our body till the end of this birth. We cannot avoid this. Even Jeevan Mukta / gnani cannot be free from Prarabdha karma. Even the great gnanis like Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Ramana Maharishi had developed cancer. They never cared, as they were gnanis and such was their attitude.

Get detached from future actions; go through the effect of karma which you have begun to experience here; finally remain (peacefully) in the exalted state of the Supreme Self (Parabrahmam).

॥श्रीउपदेशपञ्चकंसम्पूर्णम्॥

॥ Sri Upadesha Panchakam ॥