

Voice of Jagadguru

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an e-magazine on advaita



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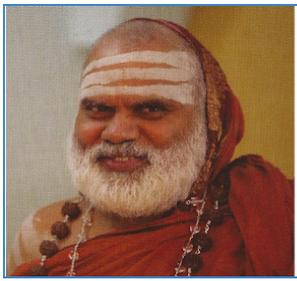
Prārthanā



ॐ असतो मा सद्गमय ।
तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय ।
मृत्योर्मा अमृतं गमय ।
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥
om asato mā sadgamaya |
tamaso mā jyotirgamaya |
mṛtyormā amṛtaṁ gamaya |
om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ ॥

Om,

Lead me from the unreal state to the real, (From ignorance, illusion, or falsehood to truth);
Lead me from darkness to light,(From spiritual blindness to knowledge and awareness);
Lead me from death to immortality, (From fear, limitation, and mortality to liberation and eternal truth); May peace be, may peace be, may peace be.



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Acharya Sandeshah = 1

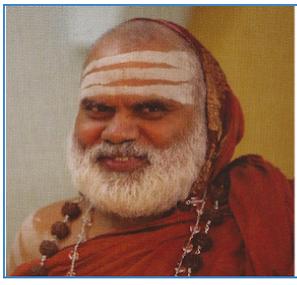
In His Anugraha Bhashanam, the Jagadguru said that one must be wise enough to know what has to be sought from the Lord. If a King is pleased with you and asks you to ask whatever you wish, it will be foolish if you wish for something meagre or insignificant. Similarly, our



Jagadguru Śankaracārya His Holiness Mahāsannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī Bhārati Tīrtha Mahāswāmiji, Shenkottai: MAY 8-10, 2012 Vijaya Yatra 2012)

prayers to the Lord who can grant us anything must not be for useless tinsel. The Jagadguru conveyed that we have to approach the Lord with a prayer for the removal of our ego.

It is true that all people have ego. Moreover, power, position, education etc. feed one's ego and makes a man commit sin. Realize that it is the nature of your karma to return an appropriate result. So it is essential to understand that one must not sin, and for this realization, one must shed the ego and develop humility. The Jagadguru illustrated this by giving an account of Rishi



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Yajnavalkya in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. King Janaka once called for a conference of learned men and wished to give away a present of a thousand cows to the one who was a Brahma Jnani. When others questioned the knowledge of the Rishi, he first replied that he did not claim to be the only Brahamana and offered his respects thus – नमो वयं ब्रह्मिष्ठाय कुर्मः – My salutations to all Brahma Jnanis. He then went on to answer all the questions and established his knowledge. The Jagadguru also recalled a similar reply given by Sri Adi Shankaracharya when Bhagavan Veda Vyasa came in the guise of a elderly Brahmna and questioned the Acharya.

The Jagadguru then spoke of praying for reducing one's desires. The Vedas declare that desire is verily like an ocean and has no end just as like the vast ocean seems to have no end – समुद्र इव हि कामः । न वै कामस्यान्तोस्ति । न समुद्रस्य । **samudra iva hi kāmah | na vai kāmasyāntosti | na samudrasya |** People never get satisfied and keep on increasing their desires and spend their entire lives in trying to satisfy their desires. Where is the time to engage in serving the needy, to improve one's spiritual welfare?

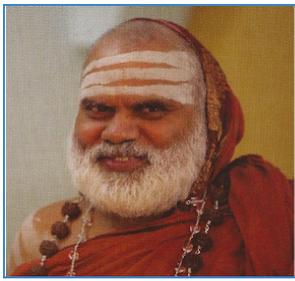
The Jagadguru also mentioned that one must pray for compassion to bloom in one's heart. Compassion is the inclination to remove the suffering of others. The Jagadguru also said that it is inappropriate to expect anything in return after doing a favour or rendering help or giving charity.

दातव्यमिति यद्दानं दीयतेऽनुपकारिणे ।
देशे काले च पात्रे च तद्दानं सात्त्विकं स्मृतम् ॥
dātavyamiti yaddānaṃ dīyate'nupakāriṇe |
deśe kāle ca pātre ca taddānaṃ sāttvikaṃ smṛtam ||

Quoting thus from the Bhagavad Gita on the nature of charity that can be termed as Sattvic, the Jagadguru said that one must pray to the Lord for granting us such a bent of mind. When we pray thus – for quelling our ego, removing our desires and giving us a charitable bent of mind – our lives will turn out to be purposeful. Sri Adi Shankaracharya has said that everyone should pray in this manner.

(2012 Vijaya Yatra : Shenkottai: May 8-10)

Source : <https://vijayayatra.sringeri.net/archiveyatra/shenkottai-may-8-10-2012/>



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The Path of Dharma Śāstra

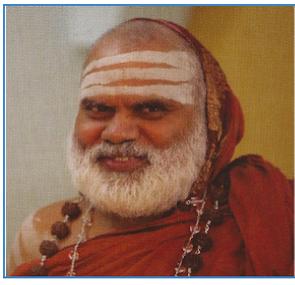
In this portion we are going to see "The Path of Dharma Śāstra" in Question and Answer form. For our doubts regarding "Dharma Śāstra" Pujyasri Swami Omkarananda Saraswati, Founder Acharya, Śri Swami Chidbhavananda Ashram, Vedapuri, Theni will guide us according to Vedic Scriptures.

The recorded teachings, Q and A sections by Swami Omkaranada Saraswati.



Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Mahāsannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī Bhārati Tīrtha Mahāswāmiji and Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Sannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī Vidhuśekhara Bhārati Mahāswāmiji Pujyasri Swami Omkarananda Saraswati, Founder Acharya, Śri Swami Chidbhavananda Ashram, Vedapuri, Theni ,2017 Vijaya Yatra

Question : How do we understand the significance of compassion as a value?



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Swamiji: Compassion in simple terms is to empathise with others. Sri Krishna says in the Gita: The equal-minded see all beings in oneself, and oneself in all beings.

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि।

ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः॥6.29॥

sarvabhūtasthamātmānaṃ sarvabhūtāni cātmani|

Īkṣate yogayuktātmā sarvatra samadarśanaḥ||6.29||

It is only with atma jnana (Self-knowledge) that one can see everyone, including unconnected people, as oneself. One should reduce attachment with relatives and friends, give up selfishness and spread love to all fellow beings in the creation – be in plant or animal or human. One should practice yama and niyama (do's and don'ts) prescribed in Yoga sastra, pray, and earn values of compassion or love for one and all. This is where we will come to eventually, after various philosophical enquiries (#242). Thiruvalluvar says that this compassion is one's real wealth. Even unethical people can earn material wealth, but not compassion. (#241)

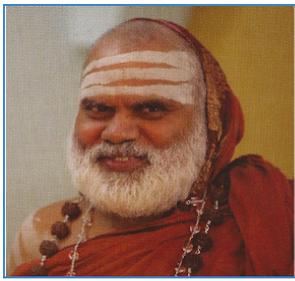
Question: What is the benefit of being compassionate?

Swamiji: The one who sees with compassion every being as the very self is free from fear. He will never hurt any being and that will avoid paapam accruing to his jiva (soul living in the human body). Thereby, he will never need to fear suffering in this world or the world after (#243). This may be understood as ahimsa vrat and abhaya vrat. Thiruvalluvar says: in (#244) Such a noble person will not be perturbed by the difficulties faced in helping others. He will not be affected by criticism. The best example for this is sanyasis (renunciates), who are minimalists in terms of consumption and are compassionate contributors.

Question: 'Every man for himself'. Isn't it better for each one to take care of themselves? What is the need for compassion? What if one lacks compassion?

Swamiji : No human is an island. No being is self-sufficient in all respects. This world is a human chain. Caring with compassion in times of another's need is well appreciated by the learned noble elders.

If one lacks compassion, he will suffer in the world after, even if he manages to live a happy life on earth. Generally, a self-centred person will not fear crossing the line of dharma to have his desires fulfilled. Material wealth that he earns will fulfill worldly pleasures. But fleeting joys do not lead to ultimate happiness. (#247)



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Learned elders recognise that such a person has no sight of the ultimate goal of life (#246). One who loses material wealth can earn it back. But one who has lost compassion cannot earn it back. (#248)

(Jagadguru Śankaracārya His Holiness Mahāsannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī Bhārati Tīrtha Mahāswāmiji and Pujyasri Swami Omkarananda Saraswati, Founder Acharya, Śrī Swami Chidbhanananda Ashram, Vedapuri, May 31-June 1, Vijayayatra 2012)

If a person lacking compassion happens to do any good deed, it is only like the essence of the scriptures being shared with an immature person. It will not give him full benefit. (#249)

Question : How does one cultivate compassion?

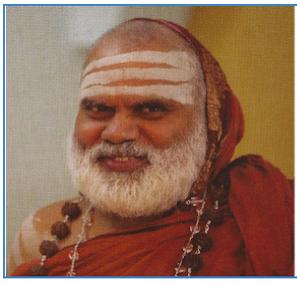
Swamiji : Think about how it feels when someone stronger than us troubles us - we painfully endure it. Keeping this in mind, we should not show our strength towards someone weaker than us. We should endure even if they trouble us. We should understand that their actions are out of their ignorance and keep patience compassionately, said In Tirukural (#250).

It will be nice to correlate this with kural from Vegulamai (Restraining anger) – one who keeps patience with someone weaker deserves appreciation. There is no surprise in bearing the brunt of the boss. Everyone knows that it will be detrimental to express anger towards higher ups, it is worse to express anger towards lower rank reportees as it amounts to more paapam, says Thiruvalluvar. (#301,302)

So, let us cultivate compassion and be empathetic towards all beings for each is a unique creation of Bhagavan.

(these are based on 'Aruludaimai' adhikaram of Thirukural including commentaries & teachings of Pujyasri Swami Omkarananda)

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||vidura nīti:||

॥विदुर नीतिः॥

सप्त दोषाः सदा राज्ञा हातव्या व्यसनोदयाः ।
प्रायशो यैर्विनश्यन्ति कृतमूलाश्च पार्थिवाः ॥ ७३ ॥
स्त्रियोऽक्षा मृगया पानं वाक्पारुष्यं च पञ्चमम् ।
महच्च दण्डपारुष्यमर्थदूषणमेव च ॥ ७४ ॥

sapta doṣāḥ sadā rājñā hātavyā vyaśanodayāḥ |
prāyaśo yairvinaśyanti kṛtamūlāśca pārthivāḥ || 73 ||
striyo'kṣā mṛgayā pānaṃ vākpāruṣyaṃ ca pañcamam |
mahacca daṇḍapāruṣyamarthadūṣaṇameva ca || 74||

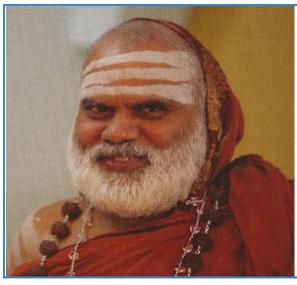
A king should renounce these seven faults that are productive of calamity, in as much as they are able to effect the ruin of even monarchs firmly established; these are women, harshness of speech, severity of punishment dice, hunting, drinking, and misuse of wealth.

अष्टौ पूर्वनिमित्तानि नरस्य विनशिष्यतः ।
ब्राह्मणान्प्रथमं द्वेष्टि ब्राह्मणैश्च विरुध्यते ॥ ७५ ॥
ब्राह्मण स्वानि चादत्ते ब्राह्मणांश्च जिघांसति ।
रमते निन्दया चैषां प्रशंसां नाभिनन्दति ॥ ७६ ॥
नैतान्स्मरति कृत्येषु याचितश्चाभ्यसूयति ।
एतान्दोषान्नरः प्राज्ञो बुद्ध्या बुद्धा विवर्जयेत् ॥ ७७ ॥
aṣṭau pūrvanimittāni narasya vinaśiṣyataḥ |
brāhmaṇānprathamam dveṣṭi brāhmaṇaiśca virudhyate || 75||
brāhmaṇa svāni cādatte brāhmaṇāṃśca jighāṃsati |
ramate nindayā caiṣāṃ praśaṃsāṃ nābhinandati || 76 ||
naitānsmarati kṛtyeṣu yācitaścābhyasūyati |
etāndoṣānnaraḥ prājño buddhyā buddhā vivarjayet || 77||

These eight are the immediate indications of a man en.route to destruction, viz., hating the Brahmanas, disputes with Brahmanas, appropriation of a Brahmana's possessions, taking the life of Brahmana, taking a pleasure in reviling Brahmanas, grieving to hear the praises of Brahmanas, forgetting them on ceremonious occasions, and giving vent to spite when they ask for anything. These transgressions a wise man should understand, and understanding, eschew

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Yaksha Prashna

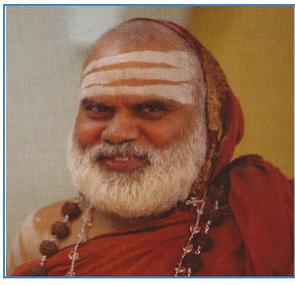
यक्षप्रश्नः

ततः कुन्तीसुतो राजा विचिन्त्य पुरुषर्षभः । समुत्थाय महाबाहुर्दह्यामानेन चेतसा ॥ ३९
 अपेतजननिर्घोषं प्रविवेश महावनम् । रुरुभिश्च वराहैश्च पक्षिभिश्च निषेवितम् ॥ ४०
 नीलभास्वरवर्णैश्च पादपैरुपशोभितम् । भ्रमरैरुपगीतं च पक्षिभिश्च महायशाः ॥ ४१
 स गच्छन्कानने तस्मिन्हेमजालपरिष्कृतम् । ददर्श तत्सरः श्रीमान्चिश्चकर्मकृतं यथा ॥ ४२
 tataḥ kuntīsuto rājā vicintya puruṣarṣabhaḥ | samutthāya mahābāhurdahyamānena
 cetasā || 39
 apetajananirghoṣaṃ praviveśa mahāvanam | rurubhiśca varāhaiśca pakṣibhiśca
 niṣevitam ||40
 nīlabhāsvaravarṇaiśca pādapairupaśobhitam | bhramarairupagītaṃ ca pakṣibhiśca
 mahāyāśāḥ ||41
 sa gacchankānane tasminhemajālapariṣkṛtam | dadarśa tatsaraḥ śrīmānviśvakarmakṛtaṃ
 yathā ||42

Then thinking that his brothers had left him long since, Yudhishtira waited for some time. And the king said to himself again and again, 'Why is it that the two sons of Madri are delaying? And why do the wielder of the Gandiva delay? And why did Bhima too, endued with great strength, delay? I shall go to search for them!' And resolved to do this, the mighty-armed Yudhishtira then rose up, his heart burning in grief. And that bull among men, the royal son of Kunti thought within himself. 'Is this forest under some influence? Or, is it infested by some wicked beasts? Or, have they all fallen, in consequence of having disregarded some might being? Or, not finding water in the spot where those heroes had first repaired, they have spent all this time searching throughout the whole forest? What is the reason for which those bulls among men do not come back?' And speaking in this strain, that foremost of ruler, the illustrious Yudhishtira, entered into that dense forest where no human sound was heard and which was inhabited by deer and bears and birds, and which was adorned with trees that were bright and green, and which echoed with the hum of the black-bee and the notes of winged crooners. As he was proceeding along, he beheld that beautiful lake which looked as if it had been made by the celestial artificer himself.

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Introduction TO Vedānda (The Vedic View and Way Of Life)

(by His Holiness Swami Paramarthananda)

Chapter 3

VARṆĀŚRAMA - VYAVASTHĀ

VARṆA AND CHOICE

Thus, there are two choices available. There is no necessity for anyone to feel any kind of complex because all professions are equally good. However, the scriptures say that when you choose your profession let it not be a money - based choice. In other words, let money not become the primary criterion for choosing a profession. If money - based choice is made, there will be competition for certain professions while, for a few others, there will be no takers. For example, there are very few people opting for a religious profession. Very few people are opting to learn and propagate the scriptures. In the twentyfirst century our wonderful scriptures may merely decorate libraries. In other religions, every family feels proud to dedicate at least one child for religion. In Hinduism, even the priest feels reluctant to send his own child to the vedic profession. The vedic scholar may become an endangered species some day.

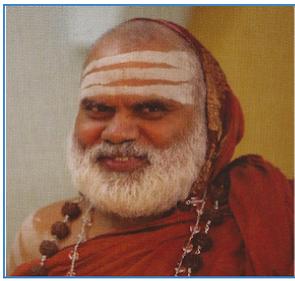
The reason for all this is money-based choice of profession. People will become more and more materialistic if money is the primary criterion. Our ancient culture and the scriptures will be forgotten. Therefore, even as I practise a profession, the goal of my life and my character should be gradually changed. I should change from a guṇa-śūdra to guṇa-vaiśya to guṇa-kṣatriya to guṇa-brāhmaṇa. This is called varṇa-vyavasthā.

THE ĀŚRAMA-SCHEME

Now let us go briefly into āśrama-vyavasthā, the scheme of stages of life. The scriptures talk about four stages of life, which every body has to go through, either externally or at least internally. Mentally every person has to go through these four stages of life. The word "āśrama here means a stage of life in the progress of our spiritual journey. The scriptures talk about four stages-brahmacārī, gr̥hastha, vānaprastha and sannyāsa stages.

In English, we can call the four stages as, the student stage, householder's stage, the hermit or ascetic stage and the monk or the renunciate stage.

As a brahmacārī, a person has to first go through a life of learning. Professional learning helps a person become professional. In addition to this, a religious learning is also necessary because it helps a person in the fulfillment of the four purusarthas. While scriptural learning is



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common, acquiring professional skills differs from individual to individual.

The householder's āśrama is the second stage where a person concentrates on preyas-the fulfillment of artha, kāma and puṇyam and prepares for Śreyas. To a householder preyas is of primary importance; Śreyas or mokṣa receives secondary importance only. Gradually the priority has to shift from preyas to Śreyas. Thus, in the vānaprastha-stage mokṣa is pradhāna or primary while preyas is secondary. There is a gradual withdrawal from artha, kāma and puṇyam. The fourth stage of sannyāsa is fully dedicated to śreyas or mokṣa. Thus, by gradually shifting the vision, a person finally dedicates himself/herself wholly to the pursuit of śreyas and attains mokṣa.

A person can attain mokṣa by following this mokṣa-mārga, the varṇāśrama-scheme. A person who keeps his ultimate goal as mokṣa is called a mumukṣu. Now the question is: as a mumukṣu, how do I discover mokṣa? What is the means of acquiring mokṣa? The scriptures prescribe a series of disciplines to help a mumukṣu attain his goal. This series of disciplines can be divided into three stages or three-fold discipline, namely karma-yoga, upāsana-yoga, and jñāna-yoga. By following these sādhanas, a person will ultimately attain mokṣa.

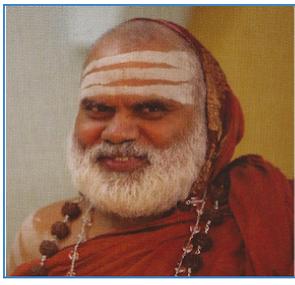
Chapter - 4 KARMA - YOGA

Karma-yoga is a compound word consisting of two simple words - 'karma' and 'yoga'. By karma here we mean 'proper action'. The second part is yoga which means 'proper attitude' or 'proper state of mind'. Thus, doing proper action with proper attitude is called karma-yoga. Now what is proper action? Based on the scriptures we can divide all actions broadly into three categories. They are sāttvika-karma, rājasa-karma and tāmasa-karma.

SĀTTVIKA-KARMAS

Sāttvika-karma refers to certain actions which are prescribed by the scriptures as compulsory for every mumukṣu or seeker of mokṣa. Since these actions are compulsory, there is no question whether I like them or not. If I like them, it is wonderful; if I do not like them, I should better learn to like them. They have to be done. As these actions are not based on our likes and dislikes or on our kama, they are called niṣkāma-karma. Why do scriptures prescribe those compulsory actions? All sāttvika-karmas primarily contribute to the inner and spiritual growth of a person. They are not primarily meant for the material growth of a person. They are not meant for money, name, fame, status, family, children and the like. To put it in technical language, they are dharma-mokṣa-pradhāna; they are not artha-kāma-pradhana. Their focus is inner growth. By performing these actions a person does not get much material benefit; does not get any visible, tangible benefit. The benefits are all subtle internal benefits.

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Stray Thoughts on Dharma

(by Sri. Jnanananda Bharathi Swamigal)

CHAPTER XI

BHAKTI

1. Ordinary Bhakti



Bhakti and Jnana are they mutually contradictory or are they mutually complementary? Of them two, which is the "better", both from the practical view and from the theoretical standpoint? These and similar questions are discussed at great length and quarrelled over by learned scholars. Without going into the dialectics of the matter, I propose to consider just a few simple statements which Lord Sri Krishna has made in His immortal Gita. It may be

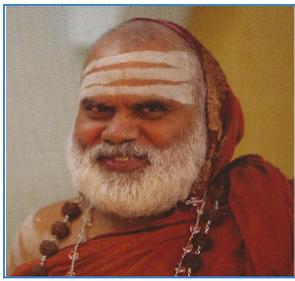
mentioned at the outset that the modern view of Bhakti,-which equates it with music, cymbals, dancing and chanting individually or in groups-has no warrant in the Gita.

चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन ।
आर्को जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ ॥ VII 16

caturvidhā bhajante māṃ janāḥ sukr̥tino'rjuna ।
ārko jijñāsurar̥thāthīṃ jñānī ca bharatar̥ṣabha ॥ VII 16

"Four kinds of meritorious people resort to me, O Arjuna: the afflicted one, one who longs to know, one who yearns for worldly things and the knower, O best of Bharatas."

The Lord, therefore, counts the Jnani not as distinct from a Bhakta but as a variety of Bhaktas. This is quite sufficient to show that Bhakti and Jnana are not contradictory to each other. A patient who goes to a doctor to get himself cured of a disease behaves very respectfully towards that doctor and implicitly follows his directions. What for? On the face of it, it would seem that his behaviour was dictated by a desire to please the doctor- Is it really so? Or is it only to get cured as early as possible? The resort to the doctor itself is because of the ailment; his seeming obedience to the doctor is also due to a desire to be free from the ailment; if the doctor is a kind one, there may be a lurking sense of gratitude in the patient after he is cured; but, if the doctor is a pure "professional", the tie if any snaps the moment the cure is effected. In any case the ultimate aim of the patient is to get cured; his resorting to that doctor is only as a means of carrying out that aim. Similarly, if an afflicted person prays to God for His grace, it is really with a view to rid himself of that affliction: God's grace is a means to so rid himself and is therefore prayed for. If without it he can free himself from the affliction, he has no need to pray for that grace. That is, the resorting to God is not an end in itself but only a means towards another object, namely, the freedom from affliction.



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Similarly the servant who serves a master with devotion with a view to getting his salary intact at the end of the month may seem devoted to the master; but what he is really devoted to is the expected salary and the master is served devotedly, not for the master's sake, but only with an eye to the salary. In other words, the master is the object of his devotion, the salary is the aim of that devotion. The devotee, therefore, who resorts to God only with a view to some worldly benefit prizes really that benefit and relegates God to the status of a means to get that benefit. So also in the case of a devotee who seeks to know: to him, knowledge is his ultimate aim and resort to God is a means to obtain that knowledge.(Will Continue...)

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