

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/advaitin/message/15182>
15207, 15231, 15250, 15282, 15299, 15312,
15328, 15361, 15372, 15373, 15393, 15412

=====
Message 15182 of 15207 | Previous | Next [Up Thread] Message
Index Msg #

From: "V. Krishnamurthy" <profvk@yahoo.com>
Date: Mon Nov 11, 2002 10:11 am
Subject: Advaita Bhakti thro. Contemplative Practice of Narayaniyam
(ABCPN - 0)

Namaste.

This is only an Introduction.

Starting from this post I intend to make 13 posts on the subject of symbiotic verbal expression of Bhakti as understood and practised by an advaitin. For this purpose I have selected 36 verses from nArAyaNIyaM, the great poetical work of Narayana Bhattatiri, who lived in the 16th and 17th centuries. This work is an inimitably faithful epitome in 1036 Sanskrit verses of Srimad Bhagavatam, in such a masterly fashion that the epitome itself is considered as sacred as the original, which contains 18000 verses. In 1587 A.D. Bhattatiri took the paralysis of his Guru on himself and then to get rid of his illness, he composed the nArAyaNIyaM sitting in front of the idol of Krishna at Guruvayoor temple, where on the 100th day of the composition, he was blessed by the Lord with a darshan and also a complete cure of his illness. In all the works of Bhattatiri, the Absolute Transcendental is Krishna, the deity of Guruvayoor in the state of Kerala, India. He is usually referred to as Guruvayoor-appan by his devotees throughout the world. As sAdhakas towards the goal of advaita we should not have any qualms in conceiving of Guruvayoor-appan, (or for that matter any deity of a temple) as THE manifestation of The Transcendental Absolute.

It is generally thought that advaita is just a philosophy and bhakti is a way of life. In my personal experience of having seen my father Sri R. Visvanatha Sastri live his life, I feel that the advaitic attitude is also a way of life and (according to me, as I understood him) THE way of life. It is the

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

continuing PRACTICE OF THIS ADVAITIC ATTITUDE by my father that convinced me that the expression of true bhakti has to be advaitic in essence. In fact Adi Sankara says (Vivekachudamani–33). that contemplative living in one's natural state, that is the divine state, is bhakti. 'svasvarUpA-nusandhAnaM bhaktir-ity-abhidhlyate'. I have seen my father practise it (perhaps) all his life – he was already 45 when I was born, and when I was 29 he was no more.

The 36 slokas that I have selected from nArAyaNIyaM are mostly expressions of bhakti but, with my experience of my father's life, I can see how Bhattatiri must have felt and lived. These slokas have a running thread of the advaitic spirit and attitude. In fact Bhattatiri transforms philosophy into scintillating poetry. His is a philosophy of advaita which is devotional, almost like (in the devotional aspect) the one which Sankara himself followed in his own life, though, Bhattatiri's understanding of the advaita concept has shades of the Vaishnava philosophy in it. For the past five years I have been contemplating on the thread of these 36 slokas daily at all possible times of day and night. The Slokas and their meanings are listed in these posts in the order in which I have sequenced and remembered them. This is, however, not their sequential order in the text. The sequence below is mine. It is so because I feel that this way it gives expression to my feeling towards the Lord and to my conviction that it is leading me – mark it, 'leading me' – to that distant goal of realisation of NON-DUALITY. The reader of these posts may or may not resonate with this feeling of mine, but still I thought I will share with you my experience.

Each of these posts, starting from the next, will dwell on three slokas, in my sequential order. I am sure there can be several opinions on my selection of the particular slokas as well as their sequencing, but what is to be remembered is that it is a personal selection and I enjoy contemplation on it. I consider it as a spiritual exercise in tuning my mind to advaitic practice – my model being, my FATHER.

(To be continued)
praNAms to all advaitins
profvk

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

=====

Prof. V. Krishnamurthy

My website on Science and Spirituality is

<http://www.geocities.com/profvk/>

You can access my book on Gems from the Ocean of Hindu Thought
Vision and

Practice, and my father R. Visvanatha Sastri's manuscripts from the
site.

=====

Message 15207 of 15207 | Previous | Next [Up Thread] Message
Index Msg #

From: "V. Krishnamurthy" <profvk@yahoo.com>

Date: Wed Nov 13, 2002 9:26 am

Subject: Re: [advaitin] Advaita Bhakti thro. Contemplative Practice
of Narayaniyam (ABCPN - 1)

ABCPN - 1

(Note: Please read the Introduction

– post #15182 - if you have not already read it)

Sloka No. 1 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 100 – 10)

yogIndrANAM tvad-angeSh-vadhika-su-madhuraM mukti-bhAjAM nivAso
bhaktAnAm kAma-varSha-dyu-taru-kisalayaM nAtha te pAda-mUIaM /
nityaM citta-sthitaM me pavana-pura-pate kR^iShNa-kArUNya-sindho
hR^itvA nissheSha-tApAn pradishatu paramAnanda-sandoha-lakshmiM
//

Tr. Oh Lord! To the great yogins, Thy feet are the most beloved
of all Thy limbs. They form the abode for the emancipated ones.
For the devotees they are like the celestial tree which yields
them all their wants. Oh Lord of Guruvayoor! Oh Krishna! Oh
Ocean of Mercy! May those feet of Thine ever rest in my heart,
destroy all my sufferings and bestow on me the treasure of
Supreme Bliss!

Comment. The first ten of this series of 36 slokas constitute a
variety of different prayers to the Absolute Lord Krishna. These

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

prayers are intended to help us embark on the divine path to Realisation. This first one offers prostrations to the lotus feet of the Lord. Quite fittingly we are asking for the Lord's Grace to descend on us by figuratively asking for the Lord's feet to rest in our heart. Here the heart is the spiritual heart. The spark of the Absolute is already there, whether we recognise it or not. By requesting God to have his feet rest in our heart we are only praying that His omnipresence there may be 'felt' by us.

Sloka No.2. (Ref. nAryaNiyam: 92 – 9)

**gangA gltA ca gAyatry-api ca tulasika gopikA-candanaM tat
sAlagrAmAbhi-pUjA para-puruSha tathaikAdashI-nAma-varNAH /
etAny-aShTapy-ayatnAny-ayi kali-samaye tvat-prasAda-prasiddhya
kShipram-mukti-pradAnty-abhidadhur-R^iShayas-teShu
mAM sajjayethAH //**

Tr.: Oh Supreme Lord! there are just eight items, namely, Ganga, Gita, Gayatri, Tulasi leaves, sandal paste, the worship of sAlagrAmAM, (the fast on the day of) Ekadasi, and Divine names. These eight, declare the sages, are the easy and quick means of salvation, in this age of kali-yuga, as they secure Thy abounding grace. May I be intensely devoted to them all!

Comment: This asks for karma-yoga with the stamp of bhakti. There is a folk-lore sloka which says:

**gangA gltA ca gAyatrI govindeti catuShTayaM /
catur-gakAra-samyukte punar-janma na vidyate //**

Meaning, 'when the four that begin with the consonant 'ga' are integrally present, the four being gangA (the river Ganges), gltA, gAyatrI and govinda (standing for God's name) – then there is no rebirth'. Bhattatiri adds to these four, another four. In the orthodox traditions initiated by Adi Sankara, five main divinities are worshipped through a sophisticated ritual called pancAyatana-pUjA, meaning, worship at five altars. Here the divinities are worshipped not in their human-like forms but in certain symbols in the form of stones, which are nothing but certain rock formations available in specified locations in India. The Sun-God, sUrya, is taken as inherent in certain crystals normally found in Vallam in Tamilnadu. The Mother Goddess, shakti, is represented by the svarNamukhi stone found in the bed of the river of that name in the Andhra region of South India. VishNu is worshipped in the sAlagrAmA (mentioned in

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

Bhattatiri's verse) stone that can be had in plenty on the bed of the river Ghantaki in the Himalayas. Ganesa is the red shonabhadra stone found on the bed of the river Sone flowing into the Ganges. Finally shiva is the bANa-linga found in the Omkarakunda of the river Narmada, near the island of Mandhata. The pancAyatana pUja tradition may be taken as an intermediate stage between the worship of Godhead with form and the worship of the formless, because the symbols of worship as rock formations have certainly a form but they are also formless in that they have no parts like face, eyes, body, hands and feet. It is as though the devotee trains himself to take the mind from the formful to the formless while at the same time allowing full scope for one's devotional feelings. Also note that in the Vaishnava tradition, the emphasis is on the sAlagrAma to such an extent that the other four of the pancAyatana tradition are mostly omitted.

Sloka No.3: (Ref. nAryaNiyam: 94 - 10)

aikyaM te dAna-homa-vrata-niyama-tapas-sAnkhya-yogair-durApaM
tvat-sangenaiva gopyaH kila sukR^iti-tamAH prApurAnanda-sAndraM
/
bhakteSh-vanyeShu bhUas-svapi bahumanuShe bhaktim-eva tv am-AsAM
tan-me tvad-bhaktim-eva dR^iDaya hara gadAn kR^iShNa vAtAlayesha
//

Tr.: That state of supremely blissful union with Thee, which is difficult to obtain through (disciplines like) charity, (ritual) sacrifices, observance of vows, self-control, austerities, knowledge (sAnkhya), and yoga, was attained by the blessed gopikas (cowherdresses) of Brindavan, through just personal attachment to Thee as their own beloved. Numerous are Thy other devotees, but it is this loving personal devotion of the gopikas that has received Thy highest appreciation. Therefore Oh Krishna, Oh Lord of Guruvayoor, May Thou strengthen my devotion to Thee and destroy my ailments.

Comment. This underscores the importance of personal involvement with the Lord in intimate terms, from the heart of hearts. All the formalities of our religious observances pale into insignificance before such a personal relationship with God. So whatever we may do, we must strive to see that this innate feeling of love for the Lord is the undercurrent. This is the only thing He asks from us. More than intellectual understanding of the various nuances of scriptures and philosophy, what He

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

expects from us is this self-negating love for Him and all that stands for Him, namely, the universe. One may recall here Gita Ch.IX – 34:

manmanA bhava madbhakto madyAjl mAM namaskuru /
mamevaiShyasi yuktvaivaM AtmAnaM mat-parAyaNaH //

meaning, Saturate your mind with me; be devoted to me; work for me; bow down to me; having thus united your whole self with me, taking me as the supreme goal, you shall come unto me. This self-negating love has been defined by Narada in his

bhakti-sutra, as follows (Sutra 54):

guNa-rahitaM kAmanA-rahitaM pratikShaaNa-varDhamAnaM avicchinnaM
sUkShma-taram anubhavarUpaM.

Meaning, (This pure love is) without attributes, without the poison of desire, every moment increasing, unbroken, subtlest, and of the nature of sheer immediate experience.

(To be continued)

=====
Message 15231 of 15233 | Previous | Next [Up Thread] Message
Index Msg #

From: "V. Krishnamurthy" <profvk@yahoo.com>

Date: Fri Nov 15, 2002 10:00 am

Subject: Re: [advaitin] Advaita Bhakti thro. Contemplative Practice
of Narayaniyam (ABCPN - 2)

ABCPN - 2

Note: Please read the Introduction

– post #15182 - if you have not already read it)

Namaste.

Sloka No. 4 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 91 - 4):

bhakter-utpatti-vR^iddhl tava caraNa-juShAM sangamen-aiva pumsAM
AsAbye puNya-bhAjAM shriya iva jagati shrImatAM sangamena /
tat-sango deva bhUyan-mama khalu satataM tan-mukhAd-unmiShadbhiH

tvan-mAhAtmya-prakArair-bhavati ca sudR^iDA bhaktir-uddhUta-pApA
//

Tr.: It is by association with Thy devotees that bhakti

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

germinates and develops in men who have auspicious deeds to their credit, just as in this world it is the relationship with prosperous men in various ways that leads to the prosperity of people. Therefore Oh Lord, may I always have contact with holy men, and through their outpourings of narratives and hymns dealing with Thy excellences, may I, with all my sins effaced, become established in firm and whole-hearted devotion.

Comment. What is being prayed for is sat-sangh, the company of the noble and the holy, which is the first step on the ascent in the ladder of spirituality. Narada waxes eloquent on the mental attitudes of these noble souls: (Bhakti sutra 68) When (they) with choked emotion, body covered with horripulation and tears flowing down, converse with each other in broken words, they sanctify their family and tribe, nay the very earth itself they come to glorify. “kaNTAvarodha-romAnchAshrubhiH parasparaM lapamAnAH pAvayanti kulAni pR^ithivIM ca.”

Hearing the narratives and hymns dealing with God’s excellences is the ‘shravaNa’ regimen prescribed as Number one of the nine manifestations of bhakti, enunciated long ago, by the greatest devotee of all times, Prahlada. ‘By hearing and singing the glories of the Lord, even while engaged in the activities of the world’, says Narada again in Sutra 37: “loke’pi bhagavad-guNa-shravaNa-klrtanAt”.

Sloka No.5 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 91 - 5):

shreyo mArgeShu bhaktA-vadhika-bahu-matir-janma-karmANi bhUyo gAyan kShemANi nAmAny-api tad-ubhayataH pradrutaM pradrutAtmA / udyad-hAsaH kadAcit-kuhacid-api rudan kvApi garjan pragAyan unmAdiva pranR^ityann-ayi kuru karuNAM loka-bAhyash-careyaM //

Tr.: Oh! Lord, Deign to bestow on me that state of mind, whereby, preferring the path of devotion as the best among the various paths for spiritual attainment, I fervently chant again and again Thy names and accounts of Thy achievements in Thy incarnations, so sanctifying and spiritually elevating, until with my mind melting with loving emotion, I shall sometimes laugh, sometimes cry, sometimes shout, sometimes sing aloud and sometimes dance in ecstasy, and move about like a mad man who has lost his link with society and its conventions.

Comment. It is by such devotion one comprehends ‘Who is He? What is He?’ (cf. Gita XVIII – 55). Usually when one asks God for something, that is what is meant by petitional prayer and most of our prayers are petitional prayers. But that prayer itself

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

has to be supported by intense devotion. We never ask of God to give us that intensity of devotion; because we think we have it. This is where our free will comes in the way, without our being aware that it does so. We never ask God to give us bhakti. Bhakti means the decision to go back to the source, knowing full well that it is the royal road to the goal of spirituality. And He waits and waits (-- this is the 'agony of God', talked about in Christianity --) until we ourselves, by our own free will, decide to go back to Him. In the meantime He gives us some petty things we have always wanted, so that in due time we may begin to want what He wants to give us. It is in this context, one asks for bhakti to be granted to us by Himself. The mind that attaches to God automatically liberates. The thesis here is that such a mind is already in the transcendental experience of bliss, it need not wait for the so-called mukti. In this connection listen to Adi Sankara: It appears Narayana Bhattadri has echoed this sloka of Sankara.(Sivananda-lahari: Verse no.81).

kamcit-kAlam-umAmahesha bhavataH pAdAravindArcanaiH
kamcit-dhyAna-samAdhibhishca natibhiH kamcit kathA-karNanaiH /
kamcit-kamcid-avekshaNaishca nutibhiH kamcid-dashAmlDR^ishIM
yaH prApnoti mudA tvad-arpita-manA jlvan sa muktaH khalu //
Meaning,

Sometime in worshipping Your lotus feet, sometime in meditation and concentration sometime in offering obeisance, sometime in listening to stories about You, sometime in looking at Your form, sometime in singing Your praise - he who gains such a state in exultation, having surrendered his mind to You, O Lord, he is verily liberated even when alive.

Sloka No.6 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 2 - 10):

tvad-bhaktistu kathA-rasAmR^ita jharI nirmajjanena svayaM
siddhyantI vimala-prabodha-padavIM akleshatas-tanvatI /
sadyas-siddhikarI jayaty-ayi vibho saivAstu me tvat-pada-
prema-prouDhi-rasArdratA drutataraM vAtAlayAdhIshvara //

Tr. For, Devotion to Thee stands (as a unique path) in that it bestows purity and enlightenment directly and immediately, without any pains, by submerging one in the flood of delight generated by hearing and remembering Thy deeds and excellences. Oh Lord of Guruvayoor! May I soon attain that tenderness of heart produced by intense love for Thy feet!

Comment. The two attributes of bhakti, namely 'svayam siddhyantI' (= leads to the goal by itself) and

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

'sadyas-siddhikar!' (= immediately successful), -- these two are what made Tulasi, one of the greatest exponents of bhakti as a philosophy, to extol it above jnAna or yoga, or vairAgya (detachment or dispassion). We may recall and enjoy his powerful metaphor in this connection. JnAna, yoga and vairAgya are all masculine in conception (according to the grammar of the language) and so they cannot ultimately succeed as bhakti can, over the enchantments of mAyA which is feminine. mAyA, says the poet of the Rama-carita-manas, is only a nartaki (dancer) whereas bhakti is the beloved of his hero Sri Ram. The 'feminine' bhakti can conquer mAyA whereas the 'masculine' jnAna, yoga, and vairagya, etc. however powerful they may be, tend to succumb to her charms!

(To be continued)

=====

Message 15250 of 15250

From: "V. Krishnamurthy" <profvk@yahoo.com>
Date: Mon Nov 18, 2002 9:34 am
Subject: Re:Advaita Bhakti thro. Contemplative Practice of
Narayaniyam (ABCPN - 3)

ABCPN - 3

Note: Please read the Introduction
– post #15182 - if you have not already read it)

Namaste.

Sloka No. 7 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 91 - 1):
shri-kr^iShNa tvat-padopAsanam-abhaya-tamaM
baddha-mithyArtha-dR^iShTeH
martyasy-Artasya manye vyapasarati bhayaM yena sarvAtmanaiva /
yat-tAvat-tvat-praNIItAn-iha bhajana-vidhIn-Asthito moha-mArge
dhAvan-napy-AvR^itAkShaH skhalati na kuhacid-deva dev-AkhilAtman
//

Tr. Oh Lord Krishna ! Service to Thee is what I consider to be the best option for Man afflicted with miseries caused by the wrong acceptance of ephemeral values as true and enduring. Only that way, the Lord removes our fear of the cycle of births and deaths, completely and for ever. Oh Lord of Lords ! Oh Soul of all beings! A person who steadily follows the path of devotion promulgated by Thee, will be able to dash forth through the

world's delusive paths, even with closed eyes, without slipping anywhere!

Comment. This thought is an exact echo of Srimad Bhagavatam 11th Canto, 2nd chapter Slokas 33-35. The confidence that one has in the Lord becomes the foundation for all spiritual growth. The purpose of including this sloka among the chosen 36 is to strengthen that foundation for oneself.

There is an interesting keyword here which is full of meaning.

It is 'sarvAtmanA' at the end of the second quarter of the verse. It means 'with heart and soul'. It has been translated, in the context, as 'completely and for ever'. When the Lord removes our fears there is no half-hearted work there. It is total and complete. This word and this context should be aligned with 'sarva-bhAvena' in Gita XVIII – 62. He says there:

'tameva sharaNam gaccha sarva-bhAvena bhArata'

meaning, Seek only Him for refuge, with all your being.

'sarva-bhAvena' means here: 'convert all your emotions into devotion and direct that to God. Love Him as your master, your friend, your parent and your lover; seek Him in all these attitudes (bhAva).' Cf. Gita IX – 18:

gatiR-bhartA prabhUs-sAkshI nivAsaH sharaNaM suhR^it /
prabhavaH praLayaH sthAnaM nidhAnaM bljam-avyayaM //
meaning, 'I am the goal, the supporter, the lord, the witness, the abode, the shelter, the friend, the origin, the dissolution, the foundation, the treasure-house, and the seed imperishable.'

Thus when we surrender to him 'with all our being'

(sarva-bhAvena), He removes our fears 'totally and completely' (sarvAtmanA eva).

Sloka No. 8 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 94 - 9):

yadyal-labhyeta tat-tat-tava samupahR^itaM deva dAso'smi te'haM

tvad-geh-onmArjan-AdyaM bhavatu mama muhuH karma-nirmAya-meva /
sUryAgni-brAhmaN-AtmAdiShu lasita-catur-bAhum-ArAdhaye tvAM
tvat-prem-Ardratva-rUpo mama satatam-abhiShyandatAM bhakti-yogaH
//

Tr. Oh Lord! Whatever comes into my possession, I offer it unto Thee. I am Thy servant. Let me repeatedly do with utmost sincerity and interest such devotional duties as cleaning Thy temple, Thy altar! Let me perform the worship of Thy four-handed form conceived as manifesting in the solar orb, in fire, in holy men and in the Atman!. Let my mind be ever in communion with Thee through devotion, which consists in the melting of heart

into a continuous stream of love ever flowing towards Thee!

Comment. The sun and fire have always been considered holy in all religions and in Hindu culture and literature, starting from the time of the Vedas, they each take the first place in physical representations of the Absolute. The very first prayer of the Rig veda is to 'agni', the God of fire. He is the symbol of the Divine Will, Power and Force. He is the messenger who connects the offerings of the humans with their divine destinations. He also brings the messages and presents from the Divine to the human world. The last prayer of Man before he leaves the body should be to 'agni', according to the very last verse of the shukla Yajur Veda. The Sun is another major visible expression of Divine Light, representing the infinite power, majesty and glory of the Almighty . But mark it, it is not the visible sun or the visible fire that is worshipped or considered as the Absolute. Behind the physical sun there is the concept of a surya-devata and behind the physical fire there is the concept of an agni-devata. That is where, as the poet says here, the Lord is reachable to us.

Sloka No. 9 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 97 - 3):

tvad-bhAvo yAvadeShu sphurati na vishadaM tAvadevam hyupAstiM
kurvan-naikAtmya-bodhe jhaTiti vikasati tvan-mayo'haM careyaM /
tvad-dharmasy-Asya tAvat-kimapi na bhagavan prastutasya prNAshaH

tasmAt-sarvAtmanaiva pradisha mama vibho bhakti-mArgaM manojnaM
//

Tr. As long as the experience that 'Thou art the All' does not arise, I shall continue to perform your worship thus. Soon shall I attain to this experience of the unity of all existence. Thereafter I shall move about with a complete identification with Thee. Oh Lord! For one traversing the path of Thy (Bhagavata) dharma there cannot be any downfall or destruction. Therefore bestow on me the capacity to follow the path of bhakti, the most fulfilling of all spiritual paths.

Comment. Here the thought is that bhakti matures into the ultimate jnAna. To speak of two paths bhakti and jnAna as if they are mutually exclusive is contrary to the conclusions of Krishna in the eighteenth chapter of the Gita. Once the path of jnAna becomes second nature, it includes the feelings of bhakti also. This is the essential content of the Gita. Refer Gita

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

XVIII – 49-55. To say that the centrality of Bhattatiri's poem is only Bhakti is to miss this focus of his. It is clear that Bhattatiri here indicates that the ultimate goal of any path, including bhakti, is what Krishna enjoins in Gita VI – 30:
yo mAM pashyati sarvatra sarvaM ca mayi pashyati /
tasyAhaM na praNashyAmi sa ca me na praNashyati //
meaning, He who sees me everywhere and sees everything in me, never becomes separated from me nor do I become separated from him.

(To be continued)

=====

Message 15282 of 15282 | Previous | Next [Up Thread] Message
Index Msg #

From: "V. Krishnamurthy" <profvk@yahoo.com>
Date: Wed Nov 20, 2002 9:09 am
Subject: Re:Advaita Bhakti thro. Contemplative Practice of
Narayaniyam (ABCPN - 4)

ABCPN - 4

Note: Please read the Introduction
– post #15182 - if you have not already read it)

Namaste.

Sloka No. 10 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 94 - 4):
tval-lokAd-anya-lokaH kvanu bhaya-rahito yat-parArdha-dvayAnte
tvad-bhltas-satyaloke'pi na sukha-vasatiH padmabhUH padma-nAbha
/
evaM bhAvepy-adharmArjita-bahu-tamasAm kA kathA nArKANAM
tan-me tvaM cchindhi bandhaM varada kr^ipaNabandho
kr^ipA-pUra-sindho //

Tr. There is no sphere other than Thy transcendent state of Vaikuntha that is free from the fear of death and downfall. Even satya-loka (the world of the highest level of divine existences, where the creator Brahma lives), Oh Lotus-navelled One, is not found to be a secure and happy place by the Lotus-born Brahma at the end of two parArdhas (that being the life-span of a Brahma). What then to speak of those who, in consequence of their unrighteous deeds, have incurred numerous sins and reside in

hells. Therefore Oh Giver of boons! Friend of the Lowly! Ocean of Mercy! Deign to cut off all my attachments to worldly life.

Comment. Recall: Certain is death for the born ('jAtasya hi dhruvo mR^ityuH') (Gita II – 27). Even Brahma, though the first-born, is born and the end awaits him. What begins has to end. Every movement of the Sun across the sky implies the passing away of our lives. This continual reduction in the remaining part of our lives is something that the scriptures are never tired of pointing out, because even after all this, we tend to forget this especially in crucial moments of self-consciousness, anger, jealousy, passion or disappointment.

Sloka No. 11 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 99 - 10):

avyaktaM te svarUpaM duradhigama-tamaM tattv shuddhaika-satvaM
vyaktaM cApy-etad-eva sphuTam-amR^ita-rasAmbhodhi-kallola-tulyaM
/
sarv-otkR^iShTAM-abhIShTAM tad-iha guNa-rasen-aiva cittaM
harantiM
mUrTiM te samshraye'haM pavanapura-pate pAhi mAM kR^iShNa rogAt
//

Tr. Thy nature as Absolute Being is not manifest to the senses or the intellect. It is therefore difficult to grasp or attain. But Thy Being manifest in shuddha-satva (spiritual purity) as Krishna is like the wavy surface of the ocean of Blissful Spirit, definite, clear and easy to grasp. Therefore I resort to the worship of this form of Thine which is superior to anything manifested and which is lovable and enchanting by its sweet beauty and other blessed attributes. Oh Krishna, Resident of Guruvayoor! Deign to free me from my ailments.

Comment. This is the explanation why followers of advaita have no reservation about the worship of the saguNa form of God while striving to comprehend the nirguNa concept of Godhead. Bhattatiri, through this sloka, sets at nought all the nagging dilemmas of a doubting advaitin, in regard to worship of the Formful. The real Nature of the Absolute Godhead is 'duradhigama-tamaM', that is, to reach out to it is most difficult, almost impossible. Recall, Gita Ch.XII – 5: Greater is the trouble of those whose minds are set on the manifest; for the goal, the unmanifest, is very hard for the embodied to reach.

klesho'dhikatarasteShAM avyaktA-sakta-cetasAM /
avyaktA hi gati-dukhaM dehavadbhir-avApyate //

The philosophy of advaita has two facets. One is the 'kevala-advaitam' and the other is 'bheda-abheda-advaitam'. The former one will not even talk of any attribute-ful form, as a possibility in the absolute sense. In other words, even Ishvara belongs to a lower reality than the Absolute. And because, everything other than the Absolute is non-real, Ishvara has to be non-real.

But the bheda-abheda-advaitam says that the wavy surface of the ocean even though it appears as if it can be distinguished from the ocean, IS the ocean. There is no distinction between them. If we have to make a distinction between them that distinction is one 'without a difference'. In other words, bheda (difference, distinction) appears 'without a real difference'. God is the highest being in devotional thought and He must therefore be Absolute also, even as the wavy surface and the ocean are one and the same in spite of the apparent difference. Bhattatiri's advaitic leanings are in this category.

Sloka No. 12 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 2 - 1):

sUrya-spardhi kirITam-Urdhva-tilaka-prodbhAsi-phAIAntaraM
kARuNyAkula netram-Ardra-hasitol-IAsaM sunAsApuTaM /
gaNDOdyan-makarAbha-kuNDala-yugaM kaNToj-jvalat-kaustubhaM
tvadrUpaM vanamAlya-hAra-patala-shrIvatsa-dIpraM bhaje //

I adore the form of the Lord with head crowned with a diadem that rivals the brilliance of the sun; with forehead whose beauty is enhanced by the upright sandal paste mark; with eyes wetted by mercy; with face lit up by a benevolent smile; with nose well-proportioned and attractive; with ears adorned with fish-marked pendants that add lustre to the cheeks by their reflection; with neck wearing the luminous jewel Kaustubha; and with chest resplendent with a variety of decorations like the wreath of flowers from the wilderness, lines of pearl necklaces and the auspicious mark called Srivatsa.

Comment. Here is the first of two slokas (this and the next) which are very suitable subjects for meditation. When the boy Dhruva (five years old) goes to the forest for doing penance and getting to see the Lord, the sage Narada accosts him, tries to dissuade him from the tortuous task of a penance in the solitary world of the forest, but finally finds him determined; and at that point he unfolds to the boy how he should meditate and on what form. The description that Narada gives to the boy is famous in the Bhagavatam for the charming visualization (of the

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

inaccessible Personality of Godhead) that it gives for meditation. Bhattatiri here goes one step further, by lyrically immortalising the beauty of form that one can see by going and having darshan at Guruvayoor. It is to this attractive form that Arjuna wanted the Lord to return, when he was overwhelmed, and frightened, by the cosmic vision which he had the rare opportunity to witness: 'I desire to see thee as before, Oh Lord, crowned, bearing a mace, with the discus in hand, in thy former form only, having four arms , Oh thousand-armed cosmic form' (Gita Ch.XI 46):

kirITinaM gadinaM cakra-hastaM
icchAmi tvAm draShTum-ahaM tathaiva /
tenaiva rUpeNa catur-bhujena
sahasra-bAho bhava vishva-mUrte //

(For reference to earlier posts in this series, see #s 15207, 15231, 15250)
(To be continued)

=====
Message 15299 of 15300 | Previous | Next [Up Thread] Message
Index Msg #

From: "V. Krishnamurthy" <profvk@yahoo.com>
Date: Fri Nov 22, 2002 8:37 am
Subject: Re:Advaita Bhakti thro. Contemplative Practice of
Narayaniyam (ABCPN - 5)

ABCPN - 5

Note: Please read the Introduction
– post #15182 - if you have not already read it)

Namaste.

Sloka No. 13 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 2 - 2):

keyUrAngada-kankaNottama-mahA-ratn-Angully-Ankita-
shrlmad-bAhu-catuShka-sangata-gadA-shankAri-pankeruhAM /
kAncit-kAncana-kAnci-lAnchita-lasat-pltAmbar-AlankR^itAM
Alambe vimal-Ambuja-dyuti-padAM mUrTiM tav-ARticchidaM //

Tr. I take refuge in Thy ineffable form glowing as it does with ornaments like keyUra (bracelet on the upper arm), angada

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

(armlet) and kankana (bangle) and finger-rings of precious jewels; with four sacred arms holding in them the mace, the conch, discus and the lotus; with waist wrapped in yellow silk fastened by a golden waist band; and with feet that resemble exquisite lotuses and remove the woes of the devotees.

Comment. Those who believe only in the attributeless Absolute might have problems in visualizing divine forms as described in these two stanzas (Nos.12 and 13); but it must be said to the credit of the bhakti movement in India from the 7th century onwards, that it is this personalized intimacy with the Lord that has shown thousands of devotees the path of spirituality and led them thereon to the ultimate path of jnAna. And this proves Bhattatiri's point made in Sloka No.11 of this selection.

Sloka No. 14 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 2 - 3):

yat-trailokya-mahlyaso'pi mahitaM sammohanaM mohanAt
kAntaM kAnti-nidhAnato'pi madhuraM mAdhurya-dhuryAd-api /
soundary-ottarato'pi sundara-taraM tvad-rUpam-Ashcaryato-
'py-AshcaryaM bhuvane na kasya kutukaM puShNAti viShNo vibho //

Oh All-pervading Being! Who is there in all the universe that will not be entranced by this Thy surprisingly wonderful Form, which is superior in excellences to all objects considered great in the three worlds; which is more charming than the most charming of entities; whose splendour outshines every form of brilliance; and whose sweetness and beauty would put to shame all other objects that are noted for such qualities.

Comment: The emotional heights to which this and the earlier verses may be associated with, cannot be dismissed as myths created by poet. It would be as foolish as saying that the Himalayas or the Ganges have been formed by spade work by some groups of men. The cumulative devotional impact on the human consciousness that these verses and the descriptions can and do create should not be missed for the growth of spirituality. To indulge in hair-splitting criticism of their methodology or relevance would only be missing the wood for the trees.

Sloka No. 15 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 98 - 1):

yasmin-netad-vibhAtaM yata idam-abhavad-yena cedaM ya eta-
dyo'smAduttIrNa-rUpaH khalu sakalam-idaM bhAsitaM yasya bhAsA /

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

yo vAcAM dUra-dUre punar-api manasA yasya devA munIndrA
no vidyus-tattva-rUpaM kimu punar-apare kr^iShNa tasmai namaste
//

Tr. Oh Krishna, to Him my salutations, who is the substratum on which this world of manifestation appears; who is the root cause of it; into whom it dissolves; who manifests as all the world but none-the-less transcends them all and forms the Light of Consciousness by which, and to which, they are revealed; who is far beyond the scope of exact descriptions by words and conception of mind; whose true nature neither the devas nor the sages have known, not to speak of others; to Him, Krishna, my salutations.

Comment. It is legitimate to ask for a quick list (and many have so asked) of all the attributes of the Ultimate God or Godhead in Hinduism. Here is an answer in this sloka. (Also see sloka 17 below). But, as the author himself acknowledges, the true nature of God cannot be fathomed by any one. The Lord Himself says: There is no end to their detailed description (Gita Ch. X – 19): ‘nAstyanto vistarasya me’. In trying to depict the undepictable, one uses words but the Vedas themselves say ‘Words recede from (describing) It’ (‘yato vAco nivartante’ – Taittiriyaopanishad). So Bhattatiri also says: ‘yo vAcAM dUra-dUre’, that is, ‘It is far beyond the scope of words’. To describe the undescribable, you cannot but borrow ideas and even words from the Upanishads. The words ‘sakalam-idam bhAsitaM yasya bhAsA’ of the second line reminds one of the famous line from Mundaka Upanishad II – 2 – 10: ‘Through Him all of them shine, and through His expression, everything is expressed’ : ‘tameva bhAntaM anubhAti sarvaM tasya bhAsA sarvam-idaM vibhAti’.

(For reference to earlier posts in this series, see #s 15207, 15231, 15250, 15282)

(To be continued)

=====
Message 15312 of 15312 | Previous | Next [Up Thread] Message
Index Msg #

From: "V. Krishnamurthy" <profvk@yahoo.com>
Date: Mon Nov 25, 2002 8:22 am
Subject: Re:Advaita Bhakti thro. Contemplative Practice of
Narayaniyam (ABCPN - 6)

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

ABCPN - 6

Note: Please read the Introduction

– post #15182 - if you have not already read it)

Namaste.

Sloka No. 16 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 98 - 8):

yad-bhltYodeti sUryo dahati ca dahano vAti vAyus-tathAnye
yad-bhltAH padmajAdyAH puna-rucita-balln-Aharante'nu kAlaM /
yen-aiv-AropitAH prang nija-padam-api te cyAvitArash-ca pashcAt
tasmai vishvaM niyantre vayam-api bhavate kR^iShNa kurmaH
praNAmaM //

Tr. Fearing whom the sun rises, fire burns and wind blows; for fear of whom Brahma and other deities perform their cosmic functions as obligatory punctual offerings; by whom all these deities are installed in their places at the beginning and removed afterwards – to Thee Oh Lord, who thus regulates the whole universe, my salutations.

Comment. This is actually an echo of Taittiriyanopanishad II -8 – 1. 'bhIshA'smAd-vAtaH pavate; bhIshodeti sUryaH ; bhIshA'smAd-agnish-cendrashca; mR^ityur-dhAvati pancama iti' , meaning, Out of His fear the Wind blows; out of fear the Sun rises; out of His fear runs fire, as also Indra, and Death, the fifth. The ultimate cause of fear must itself be indestructible, since a contrary supposition will lead to an infinite regress. And such an eternal agent is The Absolute. This sloka is also an epitome of a whole bunch of slokas (3 – 29 – 40 to 44) in the Bhagavatam in the chapters on Kapila's philosophical teachings to his mother.

Sloka No. 17 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 98 - 9):

trailokyaM bhAvayantaM triguNamayam-idaM
tryakSharasy-aika-vAcyaM
trIshAnAm-aikya-rUpaM tribhir-api nigamair-glyamAna-svarUpaM /
tisrovasthA-vidantaM triyuga-jani-juShaM trikram-AkrAnta-vishvaM

traikAlIye bheda-hInaM tribhir-aham-anishaM yoga-bhedair-bhaje
tvAM //

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

Tr. You manifest the three worlds through the three guNas. You are the One who is implied by the three letters of the praNava. You are the one Being who manifests as the three Deities, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva. It is your Nature that is sung and glorified in the three Vedas. You are the Pure Consciousness that witnesses the three states of waking, dream and sleep. You incarnate yourself in the three yugas of treta, dvapara and kali. You measured the whole universe with your three strides. You are changeless in the three parts of Time, namely, past, present and future. I worship You always with the three forms of yoga – karma, bhakti and jnana.

Comment. The list of attributes (see sloka 15) of the Lord is continued here with poetic excellence. One cannot but recall an analogous poetic flourish from the Tamil poet Kamban in his Ramayana, (yuddha-kANDa, iraNIyan-vadaip-paDalaM, verse 25), put in the mouth of Prahlad, the greatest devotee of all times:
(in Tamil)

mUnru avan guNangaL cheigai mUnru avan uruvam mUnru
mUnru kaN chuDar kol jothi mUnru avan ulagam mUnru
tonralum iDaiyum lrum toDangiya poruLkaTku eIlAm
sAnru avan-iduve veda muDivu idu sadam enrAn .

Meaning, His qualities are three (satva, rajas and tamas); His actions are three (Creation, Protection and Dissolution); His forms are three (Brahma, Vishnu and Siva); He has three eyes (Sun, Moon and Fire) ; His worlds are three (Earth, the nether-world and Heaven). All that have a beginning, a middle and an end constitute a monumental proof of His existence, This is also the bottom line of all the Vedas.

Sloka No. 18 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 91 - 3):

bhltir-nAma dvitlyAd-bhavati nanu manH kalpitaM ca dvitlyAM
tenaikyA-bhyAsa-shllo hR^idayam-iha yathAshakti buddhyA
nirundhyAM /
mAyAviddhe tu tasmin punarapi na tathA bhAti mAyAdhi-nAthaM
tat-tvAM bhaktyA mahatyA satatam-anubhajan-nIsha bhltiM vijahyAM
//

Tr. Fear arises from the consciousness of a second (thing) different from oneself. This consciousness of (such) a second is indeed an imaginary super-imposition of the mind. Therefore I am trying my best through discrimination to discipline the mind in

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

the consciousness of oneness. But when this power of discrimination is overpowered by Thy mAyA, no amount of effort is of any avail in getting established in Unitary Consciousness. Therefore Oh Lord, I am trying to overcome the fear of samsAra by constant and devoted worship of Thee, the Master of mAyA.

Comment. This is one of the key slokas that trumpet the highest advaita concept, among the 36 of this selection. The sentence 'manaH-kalpitaM dvitIyaM' (The consciousness of a second object is an imaginary superimposition of the mind) constitutes the 'brahma-sUtra' of advaita. Bhattatiri clearly makes the point that the unity of the jIva with the supreme Spirit is the ultimate goal. But he hastens to add that the same is not reachable by any one directly but only through the love and service of Him and His Grace. It is only by God's Grace that non-dual consciousness is obtained. The devotee merges in His Being by His grace, The 'I' disappears in Him and 'He' is left. The becoming merges in the Being. It is not vice versa. This is what one might call Realistic advaita, to be subtly contrasted with 'kevala-advaita'.

(For reference to earlier posts in this series, see #s 15207, 15231, 15250, 15282, 15299)
(To be continued)

=====
Message 15313 of 15313 | [Previous](#) | [Next](#) [[Up Thread](#)] [Message](#)
Index Msg #

From: "V. Krishnamurthy" <profvk@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Nov 26, 2002 7:52 am
Subject: Re:Advaita Bhakti thro. Contemplative Practice of Narayaniyam (ABCPN - 7)

ADVERTISEMENT

ABCPN - 7
Note: Please read the Introduction
– post #15182 - if you have not already read it)

Namaste.

Sloka No. 19 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 98 - 5):

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

**shabda-brahmeti karmety-aNuriti bhagavan kAla ityAlapanti
tvAmekaM vishvahetuM sakala-mayatayA sarvathA kalpyamAnaM /
vedAntair-yattu gltaM puruSha-para-cidAtmAbhidhaM tattv tattvaM
prekshA-mAtreNa mUla-prakR^iti-vikR^iti-kR^it kR^iShNa tasmai
namaste //**

Tr. Oh Lord! Being the One that has become the many and therefore conceivable in any form, You, the Cause of all the universe, are being identified by different names, such as, the Primeval Sound, Karma, Atom, Time, and Atman. Oh Krishna, salutations to that Supreme Truth also described in the Vedantic scriptures as Purusha (Indwelling Spirit), Para (Supreme Being), Pure Consciousness and so on, who by a mere glance have set the mUla-prakR^iti in motion to diversify itself into its various evolutes that form the manifested universe.

Comment. The Transcendence and Immanence of the Absolute, are the two foundational concepts on which the entire Vedanta rests secure. Without this philosophical understanding given to us by the Upanishads, as capsuled here by Bhattatiri, in beautiful poetry, a devotional attitude may degenerate into a narrow cult and fanaticism. An intellectual understanding of the Upanishadic doctrine of the Absolute Brahman with a concurrent identification with that Absolute of one's Personal God, worshipped and loved, is what saves one from a limited understanding to which some devotees succumb, when they try to rationalize their devotion to their Personal God. However, thanks to the Hindu tradition, even the ordinary man has, in spite of his illiteracy, the necessary trace of this philosophical understanding passed on to him through osmosis by the very atmosphere in which he lives.

Note the words 'prekshA-mAtreNa' (by a mere glance) in the fourth quarter. The cosmic process of manifestation into a multiplicity from the 'original' single entity may cause a certain amount of confusion in our 'rational' thinking. Because it is difficult to coordinate this idea of creation, which has obviously a built-in duality in it, with the concept of non-duality of the Self irrespective of the so-called space, time, and causation – or, using Sadaji's (post #15255) pregnant phrase, 'in spite of duality'. There are several passages in the Upanishads which inspire Sankara to pour forth his thoughts on this subject in his commentaries. Let us quote one such passage, from his bhAshya on Aitareya Upanishad, where he meets the objection: Did the Self cease to be one? Why is the past tense used, in stories of creation, where it is said: 'In the

beginning this was but the absolute Self alone ... It thought (sa lkShata) ...'.

“Though even now that very same single entity (the Self) endures, still there is some distinction. The distinction is this: The universe in which the differences of name and form were not manifest before creation, which was then one with the Self and which was denotable by the single word and idea ‘Self’ has now become denotable by many words and concepts as well as by the single word and concept ‘Self’, because of its diversification through the multiplicity of names and forms. Foam is denoted by the single word and concept ‘water’, before the manifestation of names and forms distinct from water; but when that foam becomes manifested (as an entity) distinct from water, owing to the difference of name and form, then the very same foam becomes denotable by many words and concepts, viz., foam and water, as well as by only one word and one concept, viz., water. The same is the case here”.

Sloka No. 20 (Ref. nArAyaNlyaM : 1 - 3):

sattvaM yat-tat-parAbhyAm-aparikalanato nirmalaM tena tAvat
bhUtair-bhUtendriyais-te vapuriti bahushaH shrUyate vyAsa-vAkyaM
/
tat
svacchatvAd-yad-acchAdita-parasukha-cid-garbha-nirbhAsa-rUpaM
tasmin dhanyA ramante shruti-mati-madhure sugrahe vigrahe te //

Tr. Sage Vyasa has repeatedly declared that Thy form along with its accessories is constituted of pure sattva, without any admixture of the others (rajas and tamas). Because of this absolute purity, Thy form gives an unobstructed revelation of its underlying essence of Consciousness-Bliss. Enlightened men delight to contemplate on this, Thy Divine formful manifestation, which is easy to grasp and which is all sweetness to those who think or hear about it.

Comment. Here Bhattatiri probably differs from advaita regarding the nature of the Ultimate Reality. Bhattatiri displays two different minds in his rendering of nArAyaNlyaM. Sometimes he talks as if he is an advaitin to the core (as in our sloka No.18). But some other times he talks, as in this sloka 20, as if he is identifying Brahman with God, that is, Ishvara. In other words, the saguNa Brahman (Brahman with attributes) is the Absolute Brahman, for him in this and many other slokas of his. Since the advaita view anyway is that saguNa Brahman is a means

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

to the ultimate goal of nirguNa Brahman (attributeless Brahman),
this sloka fits into our selection for contemplative practice.

Sloka No. 21 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 1 - 5):

nirvyAporo'pi niShkAraNam-aja bhajase yat-kriyAm-IkShaNAkhyAM
tenaivodeti lInA prakR^itir-asatikalpA'pi kalpA''di-kAle /
tasyaH samshuddham-amshaM kamapi tam-atirodhAyakaM sattva-rUpaM
sa tvaM dhR^itvA dadhAsi sva-mahima-vibhavAkunTha vaikunTha
rUpaM //

**Tr. Oh Birthless One! Even Though You are without any activity
by nature, You do activate spontaneously by just a glance, the
prakR^iti, at the beginning of every new cycle of creation – the
prakR^iti that is latently abiding in You, without anyway
affecting You, as if it were a non-existent entity. Oh Lord of
VaikunTha, assuming the pure sattva aspect of the PrakR^iti,
which because of its purity does not in the least hide your
glories and majesties, You have manifested Yourself as this
divine form.**

**Comment. Pure sattva is used in contrast to material sattva,
which along with rajas and tamas becomes the source of all
matter creation. Pure sattva, according to Vaishnava philosophy,
is self-luminous, of the nature of cit (intelligence) and Ananda
(bliss). The Divine Form is constituted of this pure sattva.
This fact is agreed to by advaita philosophy also. But the
Vaishnava philosophy holds that it is in fact identical with the
Absolute. In advaita philosophy, the Absolute transcends the
three guNas. This is a substantial difference between the
non-dualist philosophy and the qualified-non-dualist philosophy.**

**(For reference to earlier posts in this series, see #s 15207,
15231, 15250, 15282, 15299, 15312)
(To be continued)**

=====
Message 15328 of 17293

From: "V. Krishnamurthy"

Date: Thu Nov 28, 2002 10:26 am

Subject: Re:Advaita Bhakti thro. Contemplative Practice of Narayaniyam (ABCPN - 8)

ABCPN - 8

Note: Please read the Introduction

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

– post #15182 - if you have not already read it)

ABCPN - 8

Note: Please read the Introduction

– post #15182 - if you have not already read it)

Namaste.

Sloka No. 22 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 91 - 2):

bhUman kAyena vAcA muhurapi manasA tvad-bala-preritAtmA
yadyat kurve samastaM tadiha paratare tvay-yasA-varpayAmi /
jAtyAplha shvapAkas-tvayi nihita-manaH-karma-vAg-indriyArtha-
prANo vishvaM punlte na tu vimukha-manAs-tvat-padAd-vipravaryaH
//

Tr. Oh All-Pervading Being! Whatever I do with the body, speech and mind prompted by thy Power (expressing as tendencies from within), all that I offer at the feet of Thee, the Supreme Spirit. Even if a person be of low birth, if he has resigned his mind, power of action, speech, senses and vital energies at Thy feet, he sanctifies the worlds. But not so even if he is a Brahmana by birth, if his mind is turned away from Thee.

Comment. Now comes what exactly should be done by a seeker of the Ultimate. To start on this path one has to remember Gita IX – 27 constantly:

yat-karoShi yad-ashnAsi yajjuhoShi dadAsi yat /
yat-tapasyasi kaunteya tat-kuruShva mad-arpaNaM //, meaning,
'Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer in sacrifice, whatever you give, whatever you practise as an austerity, Oh Arjuna, do it as an offering unto Me'.

Sloka No. 23 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 91 - 6):

bhUtAny-etAni bhUtAtmakam-api sakalAn pakshi-matsyAn mR^igAdln
martyAn mitrANi shatrUn-api yamita-matis-tvan-mayAny-AnamAni /
tvat-sevAyAM hi siddhyen-mama tava kR^ipayA bhakti-dArDyaM
virAgas-
tvat-tattvasy-Avabodho'pi ca bhuvanapate yatna-bhedaM vinaiva //

Tr. Having disciplined my mind to see Thy presence in everything, I shall salute all beings – the five elements and all the products of their combinations as also these living beings like birds, fish, animals and men, including friends and enemies. Thus following the path of devotion, I shall, through

They Grace, attain to deep-rooted God-love, dispassion and knowledge of Their truth-nature simultaneously.

Comment. All religious and spiritual observances finally are tantamount to the development of the attitude whereby one sees the Lord in everything. 'He who sees Me everywhere and sees everything in Me, never becomes separated from Me nor do I become separated from him' (Gita VI – 30). 'He sees, who sees the supreme Lord existing equally in all beings, the unperishing within the perishing' (Gita XIII – 27). 'Because he, who sees the same Lord equally dwelling everywhere, does not destroy the self by the self, he goes to the highest goal' (Gita XIII – 28). 'He who sees all beings in the Self and the Self in all beings, hates none. To the illumined Soul, who sees everything as a manifestation of his own Self, how can there be delusion or grief since he sees only oneness?' (Isopanishad, Verses 6 and 7). This sloka therefore, may be used for continuous meditation and fixed contemplation by dwelling (nidhidhyaAsana) on the meaning.

Sloka No. 24 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 96 - 8):

nirviNnaH karma-mArge khalu viShama-tame tvat-kathAdau ca gADhaM
jAta-shraddho'pi kAmAn-ayi bhuvana-pate naiva shaknomi hAtuM /
tad-bhUyo nishcayena tvayi nihita-manA doSha-buddhyA bhajans-tAn
puShNIyaM bhaktiveva tvayi hR^idaya-gate manGkShu nanGkShyanti
sangAH //

Tr. Oh Lord of all the worlds! Even after developing revulsion to the extremely difficult life of adherence to Vedic ritualism and cultivating deep faith in the discipline of listening to Thy deeds and excellences, I am not able to abandon all the desires of my heart. I shall therefore try to overcome these by resorting to them with a discriminative mind that is fully aware of the harmfulness and is firmly fixed on Thee. I shall strengthen my devotion to Thee; for when You reside in the heart, worldly attachments perish in no time.

Comment. The significant words here are: 'kAmAn naiva shaknomi hAtuM' that is, 'I am not able to cull out my desires'. This is the million dollar problem of every one. And the only remedy is as stated here: Discriminative mind; awareness of the harmfulness of the non-spiritual path; and strengthening of one's devotion to the Lord. This is the royal road to spirituality. Has not the Lord said, 'Even if the worst sinner

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

worships me, with devotion to nothing else, he too should indeed be regarded as righteous, for he has rightly resolved'? cf. Gita Ch.IX – 30 :

api cet sudurAcAro bhajate mAm-ananyabhAk /
sAdhurevea sa mantavyaH samyag-vyvasito hi saH //
'He has taken the first step', says the Lord. And Sathya Sai Baba used to say: 'If he takes one step towards me, I will take ten steps towards him!'.
So when temptations are there for the mind to stray away from its spiritual moorings, the only monitor for the discriminative mind is the Lord within. Even Sankara, for the benefit of us ordinary mortals, gives us strong forceful prayers, like the following one, that one can imbibe and make it come from one's innermost heart. This one is Sloka No.20 of Sivananda-lahari:

sadA mohATavyAm carati yuvatInAM kuca-girau
naTaty-AshA-shAkHAsu aTati jhaTiti svairam-abhitaH /
kapAlin bikSho me hr^idaya-kapim-atyanta-capalaM
dR^iDhaM bhaktyA baddhvA shiva bhavad-adhInaM kuru vibho //
meaning, Oh Lord Shiva, (The mind) constantly dwells on the sensualities of the woman's form, and dances on the hopes and desires generated by such thoughts. Oh Lord with the skull as the begging bowl, please deign to bind my extremely fickle monkey-mind, tightly with (the rope of) devotion and make it totally subservient to You!

(For reference to earlier posts in this series, see #s 15207, 15231, 15250, 15282, 15299, 15312, 15313)
(To be continued)

=====
====

Message 15361 of 15362 | Previous | Next [Up Thread] Message
Index Msg #

From: "V. Krishnamurthy" <profvk@yahoo.com>
Date: Mon Dec 2, 2002 9:20 am
Subject: Re:Advaita Bhakti thro. Contemplative Practice of
Narayaniyam (ABCPN - 9)

ABCPN - 9
Note: Please read the Introduction
– post #15182 - if you have not already read it)

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

Namaste.

Sloka No. 25 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 96 - 9):

kashcid-kleshArjitArtha-kShaya-vimala-matir-nudyamAno janoughaiH
prAgevaM prAha vipro na khalu mama janaH kAla-karma-grahA vA /
ceto me dukha-hetus-tadiha guNagaNaM bhAvayat-sarva-kArI-
tyuktvA shAnto gatastvAM mama ca kuru vibho tAdR^ishIM
citta-shAntiM //

Tr. (with added notes): Once a Brahmin, who had acquired great wealth through hard work, happened to lose it all. His experience (generated in him discrimination and renunciation, and) attaining purity of mind thereby, (he took to the life of an avadhUta (or all-renouncing naked ascetic). Persecuted by the populace (for his strange ways of life) he said: 'The cause of my sufferings is neither these people, nor time nor karma, nor planets. My own mind is the cause of my misery. (Itself a product of the Gunas of prakriti), it causes all actions to be done and superimposes these and other products of the gunas (on the Atman)'. Thinking thus, he remained at peace. Oh Lord! Deign to give me also that kind of mental poise!

Comment: Here is a practical advaitic philosophy of action in daily life. This portion of the bhagavatam is called BhikShu Gita. There the Bhikshu (renunciate) mentions 24 persons and things as his guru and also mentions what each of the 24 stood for, in his understanding. A brief reference to this is found in an introduction to avadhuta-gita in <http://www.za.spiritweb.org/Spirit/avadhut-gita.html>

For the Bikshu Gita itself in original one can go to Bhagavatam Skanda 11, Ch.7 Sloka 32 to end of Ch.9.

Sloka No. 26 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 96 - 10):

elaH prAg-urvashIM praty-ati-vivasha-manAH sevamAnash-ciraM tAM
gADhaM nirvidya bhUyo yuvati-sukham-idaM kShudram-eveti gAyan /
tvad-bhaktiM prApya pUrNaH sukha-taram-acarat tadvad-uddhUya
sangaM
bhaktottamsaM kriyA mAM pavana-purapate hanta me rundhi rogAn //

Tr. King Pururavas, the son of Ila, was deeply involved in a love affair with Urvasi, a heavenly damsel. After spending a long time in her company, he developed a mood of extreme renunciation and came to the realization that the so-called

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

sex-enjoyment is most trivial and wretched. Attaining to devotion for Thee, and through that to life's fulfillment, he moved about happily, singing Thy glory. Likewise, Oh Lord of Guruvayoor, uprooting all my sensuous tendencies, make me the best of Thy devotees, and free me from all my ailments!

Comment. We should remember that it is the Lord's solemn promise to all humanity, 'na me bhaktaH praNashyati' (My devotee never perishes), in Gita IX – 31. One should understand this promise carefully. There are many devotees whose physical and mental suffering in the world is all too obvious. Then what does this promise of God mean? It means 'My devotee never perishes – in the absolute sense'. That is, there is no slip-up for him in the spiritual ladder. Maybe the Lord doubtless takes care of our mundane needs also, as it did happen in the case of Bhattatiri himself. His ailment was cured miraculously. But that should be taken as nectar flowing from His Grace and not as 'fulfillment of one's demands'. In fact, to expect Him to recompense us for our 'devotion' is not 'devotion'.

Sloka No. 27 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 99 - 5):

no jAto jAyamAno'pi ca samadhigatas-tvan-mahimno'vasAnaM
deva shreyAmsi vidvAn pratimuhur-api te nAma shamsAmi viShNo /
taM tvAM samstaumi nAnA-vidha-nuti-vacanAir-asya loka-trayasyA-
pyUrdhvaM vibhrAjamAne viracita-vasatiM tatra vaikuNTha-loke //

Tr. Oh Lord Vishnu! No one either born till now or yet to be born, could possibly know Thy greatness in its fullness. What is possible at all to do – and that I am trying – is to chant Thy name again and again, knowing that it promotes one's spiritual evolution. With numerous hymns of praise I am therefore invoking Thee, who resides in the glorious sphere of Vaikuntha that transcends all the three material worlds.

Comment. A sahasra-nAma is a litany of one thousand names (of God). sahasra is one thousand and nAma is name. There are plenty of them, at least one for each particular divinity. These long, 'streamlined' poems, are densely packed with meaning -- apparfently endless recitals of the Lord's names, glories and splendours, with no sacrifice of poetic elegance and grace. The rhythmic sound effects and the elevating moods that these can produce must be heard and experienced to be believed. Every sahasra-nAma describes the Lord's infinite qualities in several ways and each description is only a fragmentary rendering of his

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

ananta kalyANa-guNa (infinite number of auspicious attributes).
Everywhere we see the same majesty of encyclopaedic
exhaustiveness. To recite these, to be immersed in their
meaning, is to be in the company of the Lord.

(For reference to earlier posts in this series, see #s 15207,
15231, 15250, 15282, 15299, 15312, 15313, 15328)

(To be continued)

=====
Message 15372 of 15373 | Previous | Next [Up Thread] Message
Index Msg #

From: "V. Krishnamurthy" <profvk@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Dec 3, 2002 10:55 am
Subject: Re:Advaita Bhakti thro. Contemplative Practice of
Narayaniyam (ABCPN - 10)

ABCPN - 10

Note: Please read the Introduction
– post #15182 - if you have not already read it.

Namaste.

Sloka No. 28 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 98 - 6):

satven-AsattayA vA na khalu sad-asatvena nirvAcya-rUpA
dhatte yA sAv-avidyA guNa-phaNi-mativad-vishvadR^ishyAva-bhAsaM
/ vidyAtvaM saiva yAtA
shruti-vacan-lavair-yatkR^ipA-syanda-lAbhe
samsAr-AraNya-sadyaH struTana-parashutAM eti tasmai namaste //

Tr. Ignorance (avidyA) which cannot be described either as
existing or non-existing or as a combination of the two,
apparently manifests, just like the snake seen on the rope, this
whole world of objectivity (along with the sense of
identification of the 'self' with aspects of it like the body,
mind, etc.). But when the current of Thy Grace sets in, this
avidyA itself gets transformed into vidyA (Knowledge) which,
with the help of a few drops of the vedic declaration, becomes a
veritable axe for clearing the forest of samsAra.

Comment. The term 'avidyA' is the veiling of the Self. It is not
just absence of vidyA, knowledge. It is the consciousness 'I do

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

not know'. The real Self of man has nothing to do with the vicissitudes of existence. By this ignorance of not knowing who the real Self is, man confounds his outer self with the real Self. An identification with the buddhi makes him the cogniser. An identification with the mind makes him the thinker. An identification with all forms of vitality like prANa, makes him the doer. Thus the entire samsAra is due to this avidyA. Is it something that is absolutely real? No, because it vanishes the moment one is enlightened. Is it something that is absolutely non-existent? No, because we have the consciousness 'I do not know'. Thus it is neither existent nor non-existent. It cannot be both, because that would imply self-contradiction. That is why the scriptures say that it is ('anirvacanlya') undecidable. The only thing we can be sure is that it will disappear once by God's Grace the very same consciousness 'I do not know' gives place to the consciousness 'I am the Self'.

On this point of 'vidyAtvam saiva yAtA' let me quote a highly relevant and illuminating paragraph from VidyaraNya's article on 'Introduction to the Upanishads' - in fact it is the last paragraph in his article going to about 70 pages. Lest this may disturb the continuity of this series of nArAyaNIyaM slokas, I shall give this paragraph of Vidyaranya in a separate post entitled 'Ignorance itself gets transformed into knowledge – Vidyaranya'.

Sloka No. 29(Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 98 - 7):

bhUShAsu svarNavad-vA jagati ghaTa-sharA-vAdike mR^ittikAvat
tattve samcintyamAne sphurati tad-adhunApy-advitlyaM vapuste /
svapna-draShTuH prabodhe timira-laya-vidhau jlrNa-rajjoshca
yadvat
vidyA-lAbhe tathaiva sphuTamapi vikaset kR^iShNa tasmai namaste
//

Tr. By reflecting on the true nature of things, it is recognised that even when this world of multiplicity is perceived, it is only Thy non-dual Self (as their material cause) that is apprehended, just as gold is seen when ornaments are perceived, and clay, when mud-pots are seen. When knowledge dawns, what happens is that this fact becomes crystal clear (through the total sublation of the objective world into Thyself, their substratum) just as the true nature of dream objects becomes evident on awakening, and of the worn-out rope, on the disposal of darkness. To that Self, Oh Krishna, my salutations!

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

Comment. The right vision is that which sees the one-ness amidst the plurality of experience. 'sarva bhUteShu yenaikaM bhAvam-avyayam-ikShate' (Gita XVIII – 20). Perception of difference arises because of the recognition of name and form. The enlightened one sees the tile, the stone and the golden brick, all in the same way. This equanimity of vision is the ultimate goal of spirituality. When a wooden elephant is presented to a child the child is carried away by imaginations about the elephant. But we shall be only children spiritually if we cannot see the wood for the elephant. The normal human being is distracted by the multiplicity of appearances and is still, as it were, in a dream state, where he refuses to believe there is a more real world outside of his dream. Because, no dreamer realizes, while dreaming, that he is dreaming. He cannot rise beyond the glamour of plurality that confronts him and does not perceive there is an essential unity in all that he sees. This kind of knowledge sees the multiplicity of things only in their separateness and variety of operation. It looks at the jumble of pieces of knowledge as if they are forcefully put together. The scriptures prescribe, on the other hand, that perception wherein

Whatever you see, you see only the Lord's presence in it;
Whatever you hear, it is the melody of His music,
Krishna-flue-like;
Whatever you taste, it is the sweet nectar flowing from His
Grace;
Whatever you smell, it is the fragrance of the dust of His feet;
and
Whatever you touch, it is the touch of the divine hand of
Fearless-ness (abhaya-hasta).
This is the advaita-bhakti. The contemplation of this sloka can
be expected to lead to such advaita-bhakti.

Sloka No. 30 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 94 - 6):

jlvan-muktatvam-evam-vidham-iti vacasA kiM phalaM dUra-dUre
tannAmAshuddha-buddher-na ca laghu manasaH shodhanaM
bhaktito'nyat /
tan-me viShNo kR^iShIshTAs-tvayi kR^ita-sakala-prArpaNaM
bhakti-bhAraM
yena syaM mankShu kimcid-guru-vacana-milat
trvat-prabodhas-tvadAtmA //

Tr. Of what good are mere words defining the condition of one
liberated in the embodied state itself, that is, even when

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

alive? It is only a name as far as a person of impure mind (is concerned). Other than bhakti there is no easy way of attaining to purity of mind (needed for attaining to that state). Oh Vishnu! May Thou therefore deign to bestow on me intense devotion characterized by absolute surrender of all deeds to Thee. With the purity of mind gained thereby and the instructions of the guru I shall soon attain to true enlightenment and union with Thee.

Comment. The concept of jivan-mukta is central to advaita. The blessed soul whose ignorance has been destroyed by the realization of Brahman in the nirvikalpa-samadhi becomes liberated at once from the body if there is no strong momentum of past actions (prArabhda-karma) left. But if there is, it has to be exhausted by the body experiencing it. Such a person is called a jivan-mukta (liberated when alive). Though associated with the body he is ever untouched by ignorance or its effects. He is established in Brahman and recognizes no bondage. He has got the 'dawn of knowledge' mentioned in sloka #s 28 and 29 above. His physical body may experience anything. His sense-organs may be affected by blindness, weakness, incapacity, etc. His mind may be subject to hunger, thirst, grief, delusion, etc. Yet he does not consider any of these 'experiences' as real, for he has already known their nothingness. He is like the magician who knows that his performance is all magic and has no real validity. Sankara describes this state in his upadesha-sAhasri (Metrical Section 10 Sloka 13): 'He does not see anything in the waking state as in sound sleep; though seeing duality, he does not really see it as he sees only the Absolute; though engaged in work, he is really inactive; he and none other, is the knower of the Self':

suShuptavaj-jAgrati yo na pashyati dvayam na pashyan-napi
cAdvayatvataH / tathA ca kurvan-napi niShkriyash-ca yaH sa
Atmavin-nAnyatItIha nishcayaH //

Only a Sankara, a Ramakrishna, a Ramana, a Sadasiva Brahmendra, can describe this state; because theirs is a first-person-experience.

Now comes Bhattatiri's punch-line: 'So what? What is it to me?!' And Bhattatiri rightly says 'Let me have the bhakti; and let the Lord decide whether I deserve this state of jivan-mukta or not'. And the strategy of action that he describes is the classical surrender of all our deeds to the Lord. 'nimitta-mAtraM bhava' - be just My instrument of action' – says the Lord. That is the recipe for us, says Bhattatiri.

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

(For reference to earlier posts in this series, see #s 15207, 15231, 15250, 15282, 15299, 15312, 15313, 15328, 15361).

(To be continued)

=====
Message 15373 of 15373 | Previous | Next [Up Thread] Message
Index Msg #

From: "V. Krishnamurthy" <profvk@yahoo.com>
Date: Tue Dec 3, 2002 11:00 am
Subject: 'Ignorance itself gets transformed into Knowledge' -
Vidyaranya.

Namaste.

The following is in fact a supplement to my ABCPN – 10 , under
Comments to Sloka No.28. It is taken from Vidyaranya's
introduction to the study of Upanishads. The English
translation is by Alladi Mahadeva Sastry.

“ A thing is said to be unknown, as the Vedantic authorities
declare, when veiled by ajnana or ignorance; and it is said to
be known when illumined by the organ of knowledge. And both
these facts are illumined by the Witness, by the unfailing
Consciousness. Every thing always presents itself to the
Witness, to Consciousness, either as known or unknown. Such is
the main truth taught in the scriptures. Thus it is
Consciousness by which a thing is realized as unknown; and by
all organs of knowledge we cognize what has remained unknown.
The result of a thing being unknown is the veiling of the thing
and nothing else. The inert unconscious matter being in itself
veiled and dark, how can there be a new veiling of it? On the
other hand, Consciousness, which is luminous, is affected by
something else veiling it, just as, a white cloth is affected
by the dyeing ink. Rahu may darken the moon, never the dark
clouds. Thus it is Consciousness that is the unknown and the
inert matter is formed of ajnana. Whatever is the cause or the
effect should be regarded as the inert matter”

(I do not quite comprehend the inclusion of the words 'the
cause or' in this last sentence. I am happy with the sentence
without these three words! -- VK)

“By the whole of that inert matter the self-luminous

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

Consciousness is veiled. By Consciousness thus veiled, both itself and the inert matter shine forth, just as both the moon and Rahu – the shadow eclipsing it – shine by the moon. Thereby Consciousness neither becomes extinct nor loses its light, any more than the moon. If the moon becomes absorbed by the shadow of Rahu, it is only to our vision that it appears to be so absorbed. Similarly, to the vision of the ignorant alone, Consciousness appears to be unknown. Thus it is the one self-existent Consciousness which is the thing unknown before by the senses etc., and on whose becoming known by them afterwards, they constitute the sources of knowledge. Though all organs of knowledge proceed to grasp only the pure Consciousness, still, all of them apprehend it only in association with some inert material forms in virtue of their many blemishes. Though the eye proceeds only to perceive the mother-of-pearl, still, owing to its blemishes, it perceives but partially the mother-of-pearl in association with silver. The eye and all other organs of knowledge, except the Upanishads, are defective. The knowledge to which they give birth apprehends Consciousness only in association with colour etc. Accordingly, just as the deluded man thinks his own perception of illusory silver as an authority to its existence, so men think with regard to colour and other material forms which they perceive. Philosophers agree that every cognition is true as far as the substratum is concerned; it is only with regard to its mode, -- as for instance, when the mother-of-pearl is perceived in the mode of silver, -- that illusion occurs. So all cognitions are right so far as the One Existence – the one substratum of all attributes – is concerned; they are wrong so far as they concern the colour etc., which is perceived along with the One Existence. Thus, by sound reasoning, it is to be concluded that all organs of knowledge are such only as regards Brahman; while the ignorant regard them as such with regard to the colour etc., in the same way that the deluded man thinks that his vision, which is right only as far as the basic substance – viz., mother-of-pearl – is concerned, is right in perceiving silver. Those who know how to reason hold that the senses etc., are right as far only as they grasp Brahman, whereas the unreasoning men declare that they are right as far only as they perceive colour. In short, because Consciousness is the thing before unknown, it is the thing to be known by all organs of perception, which operating, the thing ceases to be unknown.”

=====
Message 15393 of 15394 | Previous | Next [Up Thread] Message
Index Msg #

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

From: "V. Krishnamurthy" <profvk@yahoo.com>
Date: Thu Dec 5, 2002 11:49 pm
Subject: Re:Advaita Bhakti thro. Contemplative Practice of
Narayaniyam (ABCPN - 11)

ABCPN - 11

Note: Please read the Introduction
– post #15182 - if you have not already read it)

Namaste.

Sloka No. 31 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 94 - 7):

shabda-brahmaNy-ap-lha prayatita-manasas-tvAM na jAnanti kecit
kaShTaM vandhya-shramAste cirataram-iha gAM bibhrate
niShprasUtiM /

yasyAM vishvAbhirAmAH sakala-malaharA divya-IIIAvatArAH
saccit-sAndraM ca rUpaM tava na nigaditaM tA na vAcaM bhriyAsaM
//

Tr. There are some with mind wholly absorbed in Sabda-brahman
(or study and exposition of the Vedas and other scriptures). But
they have no knowledge of Thee (in spite of all their learning).
Alas! Their efforts are therefore sterile, and they are like
owners of cows that never calve. May I not therefore indulge in
the study, exposition or composition of works alien to the
description of Thy blissful form and Thy sportive Incarnations,
which are universally inspiring and destructive of all mental
impurities.

Comment. There is a beautiful sloka in Sivananda-lahari (Sloka
6) of Sankara, which carries the same thought, however, in the
Master's inimitable style.

ghaTo vA mR^it piNDo'pyaNurapi dhUmo'gnir-acalaH
paTo vA tantur-vA pariharati kiM ghora-shamanaM /
vR^ithA kaNTakShobhaM vahasi tarasA tarka-vacasA
padAmbhojaM shambhor-bhaja parama-soukhyaM vraja sudhIH //
meaning, Whether it is the lump of clay (that is the truth) or
the mud-pot,

or the atomic fragment of it, whether it is the smoke beyond the
mountain (that is the reality) or the fire, whether it is the
cloth (that is the ultimate) or the threads (of cotton), how
does it remove (man's) suffering? You are wasting your throat on

such questions of logic, Oh! Man of intellect! Worship the lotus feet of Lord Shambhu and attain the highest bliss!

Sloka No. 32 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 94 - 8):

yo yAvAn yAdR^isho vA tvamiti kimapi naiv-AvagacchAmi bhUman-
nevam-cAnanya-bhAvas-tvad-anu-bhajanam-ev-Adriye caidya-vairin /
tval-lingAnAM tvad-anghri-priya-jana-sadasAM
darshana-sparshanAdir-
bhUyAn-me tvat-prapUjA-nati-nuti-guNa-karm-Anuklrty-Adaro'pi //
Tr.: Oh All-pervading Being! Oh Destroyer of Sishupala! I am not
able to comprehend Thy greatness or Thy nature even in the
least. But despite my imperfect understanding of Thee, I shall
continue to serve Thee wholeheartedly, depending on Thee as my
sole support. May I be always blessed with opportunities of
seeing Holy Images and contacting congregations of Thy devotees,
and be endowed with devotion to the worship, salutation and
praise of Thee as also the recital of the deeds and excellences
of Thy Divine Self.

Comment. The greatness (yAvAn - who, what?) of the Lord is
shown by the Lord Himself by opening out His cosmic form through
a divine vision to Arjuna in the 11th chapter of the Gita. The
nature (yAdRsho - how, of what nature?) of the Lord is
described by Himself in the tenth chapter of the Gita. Both
chapters are difficult to understand, says Bhattatiri.

There are two categories of people in the world: firstly, those
who grant the supernatural status (10th and 11th chapters of the
Gita) of Krishna and therefore all his miraculous deeds, but
find it difficult to follow his spiritual teachings in the rest
of the chapters of the Gita because of its philosophical
nuances; secondly, those who seem to be comfortable in studying
and learning the philosophy embedded in the Gita, but find it
difficult to swallow his divine mischief-like miraculous doings.
To both these types of people Bhattatiri addresses this sloka.
He says whether you understand Him or not, whether you can
imbibe His philosophy or not, worship Him with all the sincerity
you can command. Go through any one of (if possible, all of)
the nine forms (described in the Bhagavatam 7-5-23 by Prahlad)
in which bhakti might be expressed:

- Listening to recitals of the names and glories of God (shravaNa) as did King Parikshit;
- Oneself reciting the names of God (nAma-sankIrtana) as did Narada, Chaitanya, Mira and Thyagaraja;
- Recalling Him and His excellences (smaraNa) as did the sage Suka;

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

- Waiting on Him (pAda-sevana), as did Lakshmana;
- Worshipping Him (archana), as did King Ambarisha;
- Prostrating before Him (vandana), as did Akrura and Uddhava;
- Serving Him (dAsya), as did Hanuman and Garuda;
- Befriending Him (sakhya), as did Arjuna and Sugriva; and
- Dedicating oneself to Him (Atma-nivedana) as did King Bali and Kannappa Nayanar.

Sloka No. 33 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 98 - 10):

satyaM shuddhaM vibuddhaM jayati tava vapur-nitya-muktaM nirIhaM

nirdvandvaM nirvikAraM nikhila-guNa-gaNa-vyanjan-AdhAra-bhUtaM /
nirmUlaM nirmaIM tan-niravadhi-mahim-ollAsi nirIInam-antar-
nissangAnAM munInAM nirupama-paramAnanda-sAndra-prakAshaM //

Tr. There shines Thy Being – eternal, immaculate, ever awake, ever free, desireless, transcending the pairs of dualities, changeless, conserving and manifesting all values, causeless, free from the taint of ignorance, inconceivably great, latent in noble hearts free from attachments, dense with the luminosity (of Consciousness) and inimitable supreme bliss.

Comment. Now we are starting to wind up our selection of 36 slokas. So here comes an exhaustive-looking listing of the ‘attributes’ of the attributeless Brahman, as conceived in the Upanishads. A fitting sloka for meditation purposes.

Transcendence (T), Immanence (I) and Perfection (P) - - the T, I and P, constituting the TIP of the Iceberg, that is God – are all three in this sloka. One may refer to the following web page on this topic of ‘TIP of the Iceberg, that is God’:

<http://www.geocities.com/profvk/gohitvip/31.html>

(For reference to earlier posts in this series, see #s 15207, 15231, 15250, 15282, 15299, 15312, 15313, 15328, 15361, 15372).

(To be continued and concluded in the next post)

=====
Message 15412 of 15413 | Previous | Next [Up Thread] Message
Index Msg #

From: "V. Krishnamurthy" <profvk@yahoo.com>

Date: Tue Dec 10, 2002 1:08 pm

Subject: Re:Advaita Bhakti thro. Contemplative Practice of
Narayaniyam (ABCPN - 12)

ADVERTISEMENT

ABCPN - 12

**Note: Please read the Introduction
– post #15182 - if you have not already read it)**

Namaste.

Sloka No. 34 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 1 - 7):

**kaShTA te sR^iShTi-ceShTA bahutara-bhava-khedAvahA jIva-bhAjAm-
ity-evaM pUrvam-Alocitam-ajita mayA naivam-ady-AbhijAne /
no cej-jIvAH kathaM vA madhura-taram-idaM
tvad-vapush-cid-rasardraM
netraiH shrotraishca pltvA parama-rasa-sudh-Ambhodhi-pUre
rameran //**

Tr. Oh Supreme Being! Once I thought that Thy creative activity is a tragic sport, as it inflicts various forms of suffering on embodied beings involved in the cycle of births and deaths, but now I do not think so. For, if there were no creation and therefore no embodied beings, who would have been there to revel in the ocean of unparalleled joy derived from the experience of seeing this Form of Thine replete with Consciousness and of hearing descriptions of Thy glory?

Comment. God 'descends' from His pedestal of perfection and assumes an imperfection in terms of a name and form so that we mortals may be guided from our extremities of imperfection onto the path towards perfection. This descent of the Divine from its divine pedestal is called an Avatara. The complete such Avatara is Krishna. What appears before us as a deity in the form of an image is not just an image but it is itself the personification of that Transcendental Absolute. Such divine Images for worship in temples are called 'archAvatAras' in Vaishnava theology. Great saints and seers (from Prahlada and Ambarisha of yore down to Sage Ramakrishna of modern times) have actually experienced the presence of the Absolute in such 'archAvatAras'.

Sloka No. 35 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 1 - 1):

sAndr-Anand-Avabodh-Atmakam-anupamitaM kAla-desh-AvadhibyAM

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

nirmuktaM nityamuktaM nigama-shata-sahasreNa nirbhAsyamAnaM /
aspaShTaM dR^iShTa-mAtre punar-uru-puruShArth-AtmaKaM
brahma-tattvaM
tat-tAvad-bhAti sAkShAd-guru-pavana-pure hanta bhAgyaM janAnAM
//

Tr. In the temple of Guruvayoor there shines in truth and in reality what appears at first to be a mere image but on contemplation reveals itself to be the condensed essence of Consciousness-Bliss – the veritable Brahman Supreme – who is the ultimate end of all human endeavours, to whom there is none comparable, who is ever beyond the limitations of time and space, who is eternally free, and whose nature the numerous texts of the Vedas seek to reveal. Fortunate indeed, is mankind (that such a manifestation of Divinity exists in its midst as the image of Krishna)!

Comment. The Lord of Guruvayoor, is no distant exclusive deity. He is famous as the One deity accessible to all devout, of whatever condition and degree, learned and unlearned. The rituals performed daily and the many temple festivals, round the year, all confirm this impression. There is a fascinating legend about the origin of rituals in the temple. For this, see my separate posting entitled : ‘Fascinating legend about Sankara and Guruvayoor’.

This first sloka of Narayaniyam has been hailed by many as pregnant with meanings, devotional, philosophical and esoteric. Brahman Supreme is impersonal according to Upanishadic accounts but Bhattatiri believes that it is also simultaneously personal. And because of this conviction he begins to rapturously pour out, in the presence of that deity, his devotional thoughts that have become the now-immortal poem. The very first word ‘sAndra’ is notable. ‘sAndra’ means thick, dense, violent, intense, soft, bland; crowded with, full to the brim of. This inimitable word is so powerfully expressive that Bhattatiri uses it very often. Not being derived from any other root word, it stands alone as an adjective by itself. In our selection of 36 verses, it occurs in Sloka nos. 3, (the Gopis reached the heights of bliss), 31 (full to the brim with consciousness), 33 (intensely brilliant with incomparable extreme bliss) and here in 36 (condensed essence of consciousness-bliss).

In the beginning, that is, in the early stages on the spiritual ladder, one does not see Him at all. Or, even if one happens to see Him, the vision is all vague and diffuse. This is what the word ‘aspaShTam dR^iShTa-mAtre’ implies. The truth is not easily

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

perceived, because, everything is mixed up everywhere. 'nAhaM prakAshas-sarvasya yoga-mAyA-samAvR^itaH' (Gita VII – 25) – I am not manifest to all (as I am) veiled by the yoga-mAyA, says the Lord. That is why the initial pictures and images are all blurred, if at all. But if we persist in our sAdhanA, in our pursuit of the search for Truth, He reveals Himself as our own Self. The word 'nitya-muktaM' (eternally free) is significant. The Almighty, by the very definition, is eternally free. Why was it necessary to call Him eternally free? It is the self which is mistakenly thought to be bound and needing release from bondage. So it is necessary to say of the self, that it is eternally free, it is in fact the Self that is nothing but the Brahman-principle (brahma-tatvaM).

Sloka No. 36 (Ref. nArAyaNIyaM : 1 - 2):

evaM durlabhya-vastuny-api sulabhatayA hasta-labdhe yad-anyat
tanvA vAcA dhiyA vA bhajati bata janaH kShudrat-aiva sphuTeyaM /
ete tAvad-vayaM tu sthiratara-manasA vishva-pID-Apahatyai
nishsheSh-AtmAnam-enaM guru-pavana-purAdhIsham-ev-AshrayAmaH
//

Tr. But alas! What a pity that in spite of the easy availability of this rarest of blessings right on hand, human beings, prompted by their base nature, overlook it and pursue worldly objects with all the powers of their body, mind or intellect! But we, devotees, however, shall, with unswerving devotion, serve the Lord of Guruvayoor, Sri Krishna, the soul of all beings, for the total eradication of all the (physical and spiritual) woes of the world.

Comment. The word 'nishsheSha-aatmAnaM' means He is the Self and there is nothing remaining. In other words He is the Self, period. This is the conclusion of advaita. The word 'vishva-pIDApahatyai' is to be noted. Vishva-pIDA is the disease of not recognizing vishvam (universe) as nothing but the Lord Almighty. The cure for it is contained in 'neti neti'. The very universe which is visible to us in our sensory experience should remind us that the Absolute is neither this nor like this. So vishvam has to be seen not as vishvam, but as the Ultimate itself. That is why it is the very first word in Vishnu sahasranama. Vishvam, with the meaning 'universe' really means 'that which has entered', the root word being 'vish' to 'enter'. In other words, the Almighty is in it, that is, it is immanent in it. This immanence in everything is the most important

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

concept of Vedanta. More, it defines this most ancient religion: 'God is everywhere; not only that, God is the ONLY ENTITY everywhere'.

Of course the ordinary meaning of vishva-pIDApahatyai is obvious. All the penance, all the rituals, all the worship – are all for the goal of the universal good of the universe.

lokAs-samastAs-sukhino bhavantu

May the entire universe be happy.

(Concluded).

(For reference to earlier posts in this series, see #s 15207, 15231, 15250, 15282, 15299, 15312, 15313, 15328, 15361, 15372, 15393).

I thank all the readers who have gone through this series of postings. My capsule summary of a gist of this series of 36 verses is already available under the heading: 'Devotion vis-à-vis non-Duality a la Narayaniyam', at <http://www.geocities.com/profvk/gohitvip/77.html>

=====
Message 15413 of 15413 | Previous | Next [Up Thread] Message
Index Msg #

From: "V. Krishnamurthy" <profvk@yahoo.com>

Date: Tue Dec 10, 2002 1:10 pm

Subject: Fascinating legend about Sri Sankara and Guruvayoor

Namaste.

This post is actually a supplement to my ABCPN – 12, where this matter was mentioned. The following is taken from 'Temples of South India' by N.S. Ramaswami. The expressions within brackets are mine.

“Here is a fascinating legend about the origin of rituals in this temple (of Guruvayoor). One Ekadasi day, which marks the occasion when Sri Krishna taught the truths of the Gita to Arjuna, Sri Sankara and Narada were travelling by air. Narada said that he proposed to alight in Guruvayoor. Disdainfully, Sri Sankara refused to follow him, thinking that (!) worship of images and recitation of the Lord's name were meant for the ignorant and not for him. But within a few minutes he had a fall and lay prostrate on the earth by the northern side of the

Narayaniyam-ProfVK.txt

temple. He then realised that he had erred grievously. He besought the Lord to forgive him. A hole in the ground near the temple is pointed out as the place where Sri Sankara had fallen down. The Lord told him that (as if he did not know!) temple worship, repetition of the Lord's name, listening to religious discourses and taking part in the temple festivals were all ways of expressing devotion. He also asked Sri Sankara to organise the daily worship in the temple. What Sri Sankara laid down is being followed to this day.”

Whether you believe in such stories or not, analogous stories abound in the folklore of each and every temple. As an advaitin we have to take them as the IIIA of the Lord to impress upon us the values of devotion as the sure path to spirituality.

praNAms to all advaitins
profvk

=====