

Bhaja Govindam

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A thirty-one-verse call to devotion, discrimination, and freedom from delusion, traditionally attributed to Adi Shankaracharya.

Bhaja Govindam - •i&"ò 6•) " >'©>" M'ò 8"r " !É> "iM" @ "Y?"yM'9A–B 3 6"ù2"¹ : Devanagari, IAST, English meaning, Hindi

Verse 1

'ù 'yK"Y?"%M'i 'ù 'yK"Y?"%M'i
'yK"Y?"%M'i 'ù 'éB').IG –@
"%."ù*"ù0"é*"ù\$"r 8'%M'%"?"TM?"IG 'Y>")G
'%9"ò ("TM? " "ù7'I? ' A'YC'TMM'Y0'9G –Yg–P

bhaja govinda C bhaja govinda C
govinda C bhaja m ±àÖ† Ö FR Å
sampr FR 6 ææ–†—FR ± le
nahi nahi rak cati uk [Ekara Ge ||1||

"TMG 'éB"<'é(, 'yK"Y?"%M'b "â -É('Y0; 'éC'IM'ùA "%." * •i("r * 5"ù/"é " # 'YG '©& '%9" 'É "é • "yd

The refrain redirects anxious learning toward remembrance of Govinda. When death nears, no amount of grammatical scholarship substitutes for devotion to the Lord who is the Self.

Verse 2

'éB"" "TM@"TM? 'y("é 'é\$"97"ù#"é
'YA" A "%&"ù," &"ù""ù 'é("%?" "Y?"IC"yM'9>'éM –@
'ù2"ù2'ù8"r ("ù 'Y0"ù."¹*"é\$"ù\$•
"Y?"IM'I 'IG', 5"ù("¹&"ò "ù\$"ù\$'éM –Yh–P

m ±àÖ† | •+hi dhan v Ö Aâ±æ1äq C
kuru sadbuddhi C manasi vit [c G Ö Å
yallabhase nijakarmop GF ä0
vitta C tena vinodaya cittam ||2||

Craving for ever more wealth is opposed to contentment with what comes through one's own action. True peace arises when the mind rests in what is earned rightly, not in endless accumulation.

Verse 3

'%>" @"%M'I('ù0'%>'ù@'iG"i
'iC"yM'ùM"Y>'é>'y>'éK"TM>"YG"i."ò d
•ù\$"%M'é>•)8"Y8"é&"ù5"ù "é0•
'é("%?" "Y?"©?"%M'I/ "Y>" "Y>" . "ò e–TM e

n !+stanabharan &•+de ¶ ä0
d [c mv Ñ g Öö•ve ¶ Ö Å
etanm ä76 vas F—f–± ra C
manasi vicintaya v a C v am ||3||

The verse interrupts objectifying fascination by recalling the body's impermanent materiality. Discrimination turns the gaze from surface attraction toward the truth that form is passing appearance.

Verse 4

'%2"ù(" &") 'I ").'I?'I0")
'I&"ù5'ÉM'É@ "Y?"I.'I?"i/'©*")."ò d
"Y?"iM'y? "YM'ù>'yM'ù-"ù."é('yM" 8"ù\$•
")K'Y "iK'Y9'I '¢ 8'é8"ù\$'éM –Yj–P

nalín ¶F Æ v F | Æ Ö F—F ala C
tadvajj ·f—F Ö F[ayacapalam |
viddhi vy Fëyabhim æ prasta C
loka C ¶ö¶ † F ä2 6 6 Ö 7F Ö ÇÄGÇÄ

Water on a lotus leaf becomes the image of precarious life amid illness, pride, and grief. Seeing the world's fragility loosens the grip of worldly attachment.

Verse 5

'ù>"Y&"ù5"ù\$"ù\$"¹*"é0"ù '%8'YM'I
'I>"Y("ù("ù '©0"ù5"é0"² 0'YM'I –@
'©6"ù "é "ù " 5'I? 'É0"ù " &"y9"p

“Y>“ M’I>•” ”1=’©? ’, *”9 ”Ù ’I? ‘yG“™G –Yk–P

y `advittop &| æ 6 ·F âP
t `annijapariv &ð akta % |
pa ¶1 jj ·`ati jarjaradehe
v t â2 °o’pi na p [cchati gehe ||5||

Conditional social affection is exposed by the decline of earning power and bodily strength. What seemed loyal devotion was often tied to utility, revealing the need for a refuge beyond shifting relationships.

Verse 6

’ù>“Y\$”Ù*“Y(”2 (“ù5“%\$“ð &”y9”p
’I>“Y\$”Ù*”9 ”Ù ’I? ‘YA“i2•” ”y9”r d
‘y\$“Y\$“ð 5“é/”Â &”y9“é*“é/”p
’Ù>“ M’ù> ’É?‘ÙM’ù\$“ð \$“%M’é?‘%M’Y>’ùG –YI–P

y `atpavano nivasati dehe
t `atp [cchati ku ¶ Æ â2 vV†R À
gatavati v •au deh ye
bh y &–&ÿati tasmink •e ||6||

The departing life-breath reveals the difference between a living person and a body treated as an object. What the world loved was the presence of consciousness, not the corpse left behind.

Verse 7

’É>”)8”Ù\$“é5’IM‘YM“ @’ >“% ”Ù\$•0
’I0” #“%M’I>“Y\$”Ù\$“ A’9@“% ”Ù\$•2 d
“YC’iM’y8”Ù\$“é5‘©M‘©?‘%M’I>“% ”Ù\$•0
’©0‘éG ‘ÉM“ 9”Ù.‘9? ‘YK“Ù*“ð (“% ”Ù\$•2 e–Ùe

b Æ 7A vatkr ±âÑ sakta %
taru Gast `attaru G ·6 ·F âR À
v [ddhast `accint 6 ·F âP
parame brahma Gi ko’pi na sakta % ||7||

Childhood, youth, and old age each have their absorption; Brahman is repeatedly postponed. Each life-stage offers its distraction while the one eternal aim remains neglected.

Verse 8

‘Y> ‘IG ‘Y>%M’I> ‘Y8”Ù\$”r *” \$”Ù0•0
“% “%>“ K“Ù/‘é\$” 5 “Y?’©?’IM“ –@
‘Y8”Ù/ ‘IM“Y ‘Y ‘YA’B ‘ù>’I
’I\$”Ù\$”Ù5•” “ù(“Ù\$”ð \$’i?” –”Ù0“é\$•2 e–ée

k FR ± nt ¶ 7FR WG a %
sa Cs &òw•amat ·`a vicitra % |
kasya tva C ka % kuta ‘ ta %
tattva C cintaya tadiha bhr F âR ÇÃ±ÇÀ

Questions about kinship and origin become an invitation to investigate the Self. When relationships are seen as contingent, the seeker turns toward the unchanging 'I' behind all roles.

Verse 9

“%\$”Ù8‘™M’y\$”Ù5”r (“ù8”Ù8‘™M’y\$”Ù5•
’%?“%M“% ”Ù ‘IM“YG ’%?“ M’éK“™\$”Ù5‘ém –@
’%?“ M’éK“™\$”Ù5”r (“ù6”Ù “)\$’IM‘IM“Y
’%?“iM‘©2’I\$”Ù\$”Ù5”r ” 5%M’éA‘YM’I?•2 e–ùe

satsa Egatve nissa Egatva C
nissa Egatve nirmohatvam |
nirmohatve ni ¶6 Æ F GG`a C
ni ¶6 Æ F GG`e j ·`anmukti % ||9||

Good company is traced as a practical sequence toward freedom while living. Each step - satsanga, detachment, clarity, steadiness - leads the mind from confusion to the state of jivanmukti.

Verse 10

“Y/“%?“ ‘y\$”r •2 “é.“Y?’Y>“
“iA“yM‘YG ’%@“ G ‘Y ‘Y>“%>“ –@
‘YM“y@’9G “Y?’IM‘IG ‘Y ‘©0“ù5“é0•0
‘ÉM’é>’IG ‘I\$”Ù\$”Ù5”r •2 8•)8“é0•2 e–yf–P

vayasi gate ka % k Ö vik a %
·Qæ6°e n ·&R ¶ âR ± s a % |

k c ±ävR f—GFR ¶ âR iv a %
jñ FR F GG'e ka % sa Cs a % ||10||

When supports vanish, the verse asks what remains once truth is known. Each worldly anchor dissolves in turn, leaving only the reality that survives every loss.

Verse 11

'é> 'YA" A 'y('É('ùL"Y('y0"ù5•
"TM0'I? '%%?'éG"y>'IM'Y>") "%%0"ù5'ém —@
'é>'ù>'é/'é?'i.'i?") "TM?'IM"Y>
'ÉM" 9"ù.'@&•" \$"ù5•" **ù0"Y?"b 5"ù&"ù\$"ù5"â e—yg—P

m ·W u dhanajanayauvanagarva C
harati nime c F± la % sarvam |
m ' mayamidamakhila C hitv
brahmapada C tva C pravi ¶ f—F—Ga ||11||

Time swiftly removes wealth, followers, and youth; knowledge points beyond their enchantment. Pride in passing gifts blinds the mind to the abiding Brahman that is one's true home.

Verse 12

'i?'%/"é. "ù("ù/"â 8"é/•" **ù0"é\$•0
"i?"i?" 5"%%("ù\$"â ** (" >'ù>'I —@
'Y>") 'YM" @' \$"ð '©M'1\$"ù/"é/"
'I&'©? ', ." "ù 'IM'ù>"i>"Y>'ùA•2 e—yh—P

dinay Ö—âyau s •a C pr F âP
¶|iravasantau punar ' ta % |
k Æ âR ·!+ ati gacchaty —QâP
tadapi na muñcaty [a yu % ||12||

Recurring days and seasons conceal the dwindling of life while hope continues to pull the mind. The calendar repeats but the lifespan does not; only awakening breaks the cycle of deferred liberation.

Verse 13

'Y> 'IG 'Y>'%M'I> 'y('y\$'©?'%M'I>
"Y>'IA"" "ù 'I5 '%>"%M'I? '%%?'ù("ù\$"â d
'IM" ?'É 'I? "%% "ù '%8"TM"y\$"ù0"y "à
'ù5'I? 'ù5"é0"ù#"Y\$" #r ("É "â e—yi—P

k FR ± nt F† æ v F 6—çA
v GVÆ ¶'â2 F va n 7F' æ—•ant À
trijagati sajjanasa Egatirek
bhavati bhav !äv vatara Ge nauk ÇÃ 7ÇÀ

The companionship of the wise is offered as a boat across the ocean of becoming. When worldly supports fail, satsanga steadies the mind toward the shore of freedom.

Verse 14

'É "ù2"2 ." #""ù!" 2" "ù "ù\$"YG"i
'Y>"y>'ù>'ém'É0'É9" "9\$"YG"y —@
'©6"ù/'%M'%*""ð ', **"IM'ù\$"ð .")"•0
•TM&" ("ù."ù\$"ù\$•" , "TM"AYC'I5"y7•2 e—yj—P

ja milo mu G ² Ç_ 6†—F °e ¶ âP
k æ1 y Ö& abahuk [tave ca % |
pa ·annapi ca na pa ·ati m ±àÖ† âP
udaranimitta C bahuk [tave ca % ||14||

External ascetic costumes are questioned when they serve livelihood rather than insight. Outward renunciation without inner transformation is mere performance for bodily sustenance.

Verse 15

•Y "ù •" ")?'I '©2"ù\$•" ." #""ù!•
'i6"%5"ù9" (•" "é\$•" \$" #""ù!ém —@
"YC"iM'yK 'ù>'I? 'yC"TM@'IM"Y> 'i#"ù!•
'I&'©? ', ." "ù 'IM'ù>"i>'©?'9M' ."Ö e—yk—P

a Ega C galita C palita C mu G a C
da ¶ æ vih ¶æ ä2 j ta C tu G am |
v [ddho y F' qâ¶•+tv F äqàÖ ä0
tadapi na muñcaty ['äqàÖ Ö ÇÃ WÇÀ

Physical old age does not itself release the knot of expectation. The body declines but the mind's clinging persists until true

knowledge cuts the root of desire.

Verse 16

•Y "Ù0"r 5"™M'‰?•2 *"97"Ù "r -"é("
 " >"IM" L '©A'ÉA'Y8'é0"Ù*"ù\$'É>'‰A•2 d
 'Y0'I2'Ù?'YM"y8"Ù\$ A'I2"Y>"‰
 'I&'©? ', ." "Ù 'IM'ù>"i>'©>"i -Yg-Ée

agre vahni % p [c mhe bh àu %
 r G au cubukasamarpitaj àu % |
 karatalabhik castarutalav 6 âP
 tadapi na muñcaty [¶ âR ÇÃ gÇÀ

Even severe hardship and renunciation need not undo the rope of longing. Extreme austerity without Self-knowledge leaves the core of bondage untouched.

Verse 17

'YA" A'IG 'y "Ù "é8"é " 'é(•
 "YM" \$'©0"ù*"é2'‰.'Y5"â &"é('ÉM -@
 'ÉM'é>'‰5"ù9" (•2 8" M"Y.'IG'€
 'Ù 'I? ', ." "Ù\$ "ù 'É("Ù."i\$"y(-Yg-Ùe

kurute ga Eg 1 garagama na C
 vrataparip Æ æ Ö F† v A nam |
 jñ æ vih ¶æ âR 6 vamatena
 bhajati na mukti C janma ¶ FVæ ÇÃ wÇÀ

Pilgrimage, vows, and giving are insufficient when they are disconnected from liberating knowledge. Ritual merit without jnana cannot uproot the ignorance that binds the soul to rebirth.

Verse 18

"‰A" . '‰M'i? " \$" A'éB")("ù5"é8•0
 "i/"Ù/"â -")\$").'É?'‰ "Y>"‰ -@
 "‰0"Ù5'©0"ù "Ù0"™."1 'IM'ù>'y
 'Y8"Ù/ "‰A'i ', " K'I? "Y?" >'y -Yg-ée

suramandiratarum ¶Æ æ—a sa %
 ¶ yy &•ktalamajina C v 6 âR À
 sarvaparigrahabhogaty v âP
 kasya sukha C na karoti vir v âR ÇÃ ±ÇÀ

Simplicity and letting go are praised for the happiness of dispassion. True vairagya frees the mind from the anxiety of acquisition and opens the heart to inner joy.

Verse 19

'ùK'y0'IK "Y> 'ùK'y0'IK "Y>
 "‰ "Ù " \$"2 5"â 8'™M'y5"ù9" (•2 d
 'ù8"Ù/ 'ÉM" 9"Ù.'9? " . 'IG '©?'IM'I
 '‰("Ù&'I? '‰("Ù&'I? '‰("Ù&'IM'ùG"R e-yo-P

yogarato v &†öv ato v
 sa Egarato v 6 äVv vih ¶æ âR À
 yasya brahma Gi ramate citta C
 nandati nandati nandatyeva ||19||

Joy belongs to the mind that delights in Brahman, regardless of outer lifestyle. External conditions change but the bliss of abiding in the Self is constant.

Verse 20

'Ù "Y&"Ù " \$"â "ù "Ù "ù&'y@'I>
 'y "Ù "é ")2"Y '9?'Y> '©@'I> -@
 "‰ "9&'©? 'ùG', ." 0"é0"ù8'é0"Ù "à
 'YM" ?'ù\$r \$"‰M'ò /'éG', ('©0"Ù "â e-‰f-P

bhagavadg ·A kiñcidadh ·A
 ga Eg ¦ Æ Æ vaka Gik +t À
 sak [dapi yena mur isamarc
 kriyate tasya yamena na carc ÇÃ# ÇÀ

Even small, sincere contact with scripture, sacredness, and worship is valued over spiritual display. A single genuine turning toward the Lord outweighs a lifetime of empty ritual.

Verse 21

'©A'‰0'©? 'É('‰ '©A'‰0'©? 'é0'9
 '©A'‰0'©? 'É('‰@'É " G "i/'‰."Ö d
 •y9 "‰ "‰>" G 'É9" &" 8"Ù\$"é0"p
 'YC'©/'é="©>" G '©>"™? 'éA" >" G –Yh–ye

punarapi janana C punarapi mara Ga C
 punarapi janana | æÖ† &R [ayanam |
 iha sa Cs &R & ‡VGW7A re
 k [pay w re p †' Ður &R ÇÃ# ÇÀ

The repetition of birth and death becomes a direct cry for Mura's enemy, Vishnu, to save. Recognising the horror of samsara, the devotee surrenders to the Lord who alone can ferry the soul across.

Verse 22

"‰"Ù/'é " M'© "Y?" "ù\$'Y('Ù‰•0
 '©A'9M'ù>'©A'9M'ù5"ù5" M'É?'I*‰M'Y –@
 'ùK'y@ 'ùK'y("ù"¹ "ù\$'©?'IM'I
 " .'IG 'É>")K'‰M'é\$"Ù\$"Y&"y5 –Yh–‰e

rathy 6 pa maviracitakantha %
 pu Gy Qäw•avivarjitapantha % |
 yog ² •oganiyojitacitta %
 ramate b ÆöæÖ GF vadeva ||22||

The yogin's freedom is portrayed as childlike and unconstrained by the ledger of merit and demerit. Liberation is not solemn austerity but spontaneous joy beyond social judgment.

Verse 23

'Y8"Ù\$"Ù5•" "¹="™ 'YA'B 'ù>'I
 'Y> 'éG 'É('‰@ 'YK 'éG 'I>'I –@
 •y\$"ò * " ?'Ù>"Y/ "‰0"Ù5'é8"é0•
 "Y?"IM"Y 'IM'ù "Ù\$"Ù5"â 8"Ù5'©M'‰5"ù "é0'ém –Yh–™e

kastva C ko'ha C kuta ' ta %
 k ÖR | æ á+ ko me t F âR Â
 iti paribh `aya sarvamas a C
 vi `a C tyaktv 7`apnavic am ||23||

Self-inquiry questions inherited identity and compares worldly solidity to a dream. When the 'I' is traced to its source, the entire fabric of assumed relationships dissolves like sleep-vision.

Verse 24

'IM"Y/"ò . 'ù? '©>'‰M'ù\$"Ù0"‰ "² 5"ù7"Ù#"
 "YM'ù0"Ù‰•" " *'Ù/"‰? 'é/"‰9"ù7"Ù#" –@
 'Ù5 "‰.'©?'IM'I "‰0"Ù5'IM" \$"Ù5•
 "Y>'ém¹8"Ù/'©?" >'iM'ù&"ò 5"ù7"Ù#" \$"Ù5'ém –Yh–©e

tvayi mayi c àyatraiko vi c Gu %
 vyartha C kupyasi mayyasahi c Gu % |
 bhava samacitta % sarvatra tva C
 v 6† 7•acir G•adi vi c Gutvam ||24||

Seeing one Vishnu in self and other becomes the basis for equanimity. Anger and intolerance arise from forgetting the single Self that shines in every form.

Verse 25

"i\$"Ù0"Â . "ù\$"Ù0"r * " \$"Ù0"r , '‰M'yL
 'é> 'YA" A 'ù\$"Ù(•" 5"ù "Ù0"™8'‰M'yL –@
 "‰0"Ù5"‰M'é?'‰M'‰•"ò *"iM'ù>'IM'é>'‰
 "‰0"Ù5'IM" K'IM"‰C'Â –"y&"é "Ù "é('ém –Yh–¹e

¶ G au mitre putre bandhau
 m ·W u yatna C vighrahasandhau |
 sarvasminnapi pa · tm æ ä0
 sarvatrots [ja bheda nam ||25||

The instruction releases divisive fixation by seeing the Self in all relations. Friend and foe are alike appearances in the one consciousness; difference is ignorance, unity is truth.

Verse 26

'Y>'é 'YM" K'y ")K'Ù 'éK"™
 'IM'ù "Ù\$"Ù5"é="Ù\$"Ù."é(• *"iM'ù\$"ò 8"¹="™."Ö d
 •i\$"Ù."ÉM'é>'‰5"ù9" ("â .)"™é

'IG '© "Ù/'%M'IG '%0'Y("ù")""é –Yh–Ée

k Ö ä2 .&öF† ä2 Æö&† ä2 Öö† ä0
tyaktv rwFÑ na C pa .•ati so'ham |
FÖ – navih ¶á m ±àÖ• %
te pacyante narakanig ±àÖ• % ||26||

Abandoning lust, anger, greed, and delusion opens the recognition 'I am That.' Without this knowledge the soul remains trapped in the inner hell of its own passions.

Verse 27

'yG'ù 'y@'l>'%>'é8“™8”Ù0•
'yM'ùG'ù “iM” @'©\$“ù0”)*’é “%M” .”Ò d
'%G'ù “%” “Ù” %8’™M’yG ‘©?’IM'I
'iG'ù 'i@'%" %>'ð “Y?’IM'I.”Ò e–%m–P

geya C g .A n Ö 6 † 7 a C
dhyeya C .!+patir . Ö | 7 am |
neya C sajjanasa Ege citta C
deya C d ¶æ | á ya ca vittam ||27||

Singing, meditation, wise company, and generosity are integrated as a daily discipline. Devotional practice and ethical action together purify the mind for the dawn of knowledge.

Verse 28

“%A’i\$•2 ”Ù0“ù”IG ‘Y>’é>’ÙK’y
'©6”Ù “é&’%M’B 6” @“ G “ K’y –@
'ù&”Ù’©? “)K’YG ‘é0’9 “i0’9
'l&’©? ‘, .” “Ù” l? ‘©>’©>’©0’9.”Ò e–%n–P

sukhata % kriyate k Ñ bhoga %
pa ¶1 danta ¶ !+re roga % |
yadyapi loke mara Ga C ¶ a Ga C
tadapi na muñcati p cara Gam ||28||

The immediate pleasure of indulgence is contrasted with its bodily and ethical consequences. Knowing death is certain yet persisting in sin reveals the depth of delusion only knowledge can cure.

Verse 29

•Y0”Ù%’é(“ M’Y ‘Ù>“Y/’%?’IM’ù
'%>“%M’l? ‘l\$•2 8” “)G“i “%\$”Ù’ém –@
'©A’IM” >i*“ð ”%–“é “é ‘Ù@’l?•0
“%0”Ù5’IM” H“y> “Y?’™?’l> “ @’l?•2 e–%o–P

arthamanartha C bh `aya nitya C
n 7F' F F âR 7V¶† ÆQ[a % satyam |
putr F ' F† æ &• j ä2 &•+ti %
sarvatrai c f–†—A r .F'âR ÇÃ#—ÇÀ

Wealth is examined as a source of anxiety as well as a means of support. The very things meant to bring security become grounds for fear, exposing the futility of worldly refuge.

Verse 30

'©M” >’9>’ù>’é ‘©M” \$”Ù/“é9”é0•
'%?’IM’ù>’%?’IM’ù5”ù5”y “Y?’©>“ .”Ò d
'É>'©M’ù8’ég'l8’ég>y?’Y?’y>’%
'YA” M“Y5’y>’% “é9’i5’y>’%.”Ò e–™f–P

pr äq y Ö ä2 aty • ra C
nity æ—G•avivekavic am |
j yasametasam F†—f–F• na C
kurvavadh æ ä2 Ö † F vadh æ Ò ÇÃ3 ÇÀ

Breath discipline, sense-withdrawal, discrimination, recitation, and meditation demand sustained care. The classical aids to yoga require diligent practice until the mind rests in the Self.

Verse 31

'yA” A’©0’9>’ém’ÉA’É(“ù0”Ù–“ -’YM’l
“%” “%>” >i “ù0”é&”Ù–“R .” “Ù\$•2 d
“%G’%M’iM” ?’ù.“é(“%“(“ù/’é>’iG”Y
'iM” “Ù7”Ù/“%? %?’É9”9&”ù8”Ù%” &”y5’ém –Yi–ye

gurucara G Ö ujanirbharabhakta %
sa Cs ! dacir F&† va mukta % |

sendriyam æ 6 æ—•am FPva C
drak cyasi nijah [dayastha C devam ||31||

Devotion to the guru and discipline of mind and senses reveal the deity dwelling in one's own heart. The Lord sought outside is found within when the inner instruments are purified through grace and practice.

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