



ध्यान मूलं गुरोर्मूर्तिः पूजामूलं गुरोः पदम् ।  
मंत्रमूलं गुरोर्वाक्यं मोक्ष मूलं गुरोः कृपा ॥

The focal point of meditation is Guru's form, the core of worship are Guru's feet,  
the soul of mantra is Guru's utterance, the source of salvation is Guru's grace.

# Realization

Vol. 10, No. 2

February 2021

An e-magazine of Sri Aurobindo Ashram-Delhi Branch

तदेतत्सत्यं यथा सुदीप्तात्पावकाद् विस्फुलिङ्गा सहस्रत्रशः प्रभवन्ते सरूपाः।  
तथाक्षराद् विविधाः सोम्य भावाः प्रजायन्ते तत्र चैवापि यन्ति॥१॥

This is That, the Truth of things: as from one high-kindled fire thousands of different sparks are born and all have the same form of fire, so, O fair son, from the immutable manifold becomings are born and even into that they depart.

— Mundak Upanishad 2-1-1

Sri Aurobindo Ashram-Delhi Branch

Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi 110 016

011-2656 7863; www.sriurobindoashram.net

# Ongoing & Forthcoming Events

February 2021

**Meditation & Satsang venue : Meditation Hall**

**Monday – Saturday**

**7 –7:30 pm**

**Collective Meditation**

**Sunday Meditation & Discourses 10:00 – 11:30 am**

Corona Virus (COVID-19) outbreak has forced all regular Ashram activities in abeyance. Please make a status-check on the Ashram website, [www.sriaurobindoashram.net](http://www.sriaurobindoashram.net)

Note: Hence entry to the Ashram premises is severely restricted.

## Sri Aurobindo Ashram – Delhi Branch'S SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS

YouTube	:	<a href="https://youtube.com/sriaurobindoashramdelhibranch">https://youtube.com/sriaurobindoashramdelhibranch</a>
Facebook	:	<a href="http://facebook.com/sriaurobindoashramdelhibranch">http://facebook.com/sriaurobindoashramdelhibranch</a>
Instagram	:	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/sriaurobindoashramdelhibranch">https://www.instagram.com/sriaurobindoashramdelhibranch</a>
Twitter	:	<a href="https://twitter.com/saadelhibranch">https://twitter.com/saadelhibranch</a>
Website	:	<a href="http://sriaurobindoashram.net/">http://sriaurobindoashram.net/</a>
Micro Website	:	<a href="http://sriaurobindoashram.net/Mirra100/">http://sriaurobindoashram.net/Mirra100/</a>

## Ashram Library (Knowledge)

**Tuesday to Sunday Timings : 10:00 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.**

**(Monday closed)**

**Contact : 2656 7863**

Note: Corona Virus (COVID-19) pandemic has forced all Ashram activities including Library in abeyance. Please make a status-check on the Ashram website, [www.sriaurobindoashram.net](http://www.sriaurobindoashram.net).

## Matri Kala Mandir (MKM) CLASSES

Corona Virus (COVID-19) outbreak has forced all **Matri Kala Mandir** classes in abeyance. Please make a status-check on the Ashram website, [www.sriaurobindoashram.net](http://www.sriaurobindoashram.net).

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## The Mother's Integral Health Centre Activities

Phone 011-2685 8563, Sanjeeb: 88005 52685, Mrs. Bhatia: 93122 65447 ; <[tmihc2000@gmail.com](mailto:tmihc2000@gmail.com)>

### Ongoing activities venue: ONLY on SKYPE (ID: tmihc2000)

Monday	4:00-4:45 pm	Vivekachoodamani	Discourse	Dr. Tarun Baveja
Tue/Thu	4:00-4:45 pm	Aparoksanubhuti	Discourse	Dr. Tarun Baveja
Wed/Fri	4:00-4:45 pm	Vidyas in the Upanishads	Discourse	Dr. Tarun Baveja
Saturday	4:00-4:45 pm	Bhagvad Gita <i>Sadhana</i>	Discourse	Dr. Tarun Baveja
Sunday	4:00-4:45 pm	<i>Satsang</i>	Discourse	Dr. Tarun Baveja

Contact: 011-2685 8563; Ms. Swati Kohli <[swatikohli3@gmail.com](mailto:swatikohli3@gmail.com)>

Corona Virus (COVID-19) outbreak has forced other **Health Centre** activities in abeyance. Please make a status-check on the Ashram website, [www.sriaurobindoashram.net](http://www.sriaurobindoashram.net).

Note: Hence entry to the Ashram premises is severely restricted.

## Important Days in the Ashram

**12 February Foundation Day anniversary of Sri Aurobindo Ashram-Delhi Branch**

**Mother's message for the foundation day**

<p>12-2.56 <i>Opening of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram Delhi branch</i></p> <p><i>Let this place be worthy of its name and manifest the true spirit of Sri Aurobindo's teaching and message to the world. With my blessings</i></p> 	<p>12.2.56 <b>Opening of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram Delhi Branch</b></p> <p><b>Let this place be worthy of its name and manifest the true spirit of Sri Aurobindo's teaching and message to the world. With my blessings</b></p> <p><i>The Mother</i></p>
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**21 February 143rd Birth Anniversary of the Mother – Darshan Day**



The Mother is always with you. Put your faith in her, remain quiet within and do with that quietude what has to be done. You will become more and more aware of her constant Presence, will feel her action behind yours and the burden of your work will no longer be heavy on you.

– Sri Aurobindo

**दर्शन (Darshan)**

**Program details will be available on <[www.sriarobindoashram.net](http://www.sriarobindoashram.net)>**

## The Philosophy of the Upanishads

### Discovery of the Absolute Brahman (1)

The idea of transcendental Unity, Oneness & Stability behind all the flux and variety of phenomenal life is the basal idea of the Upanishads: this is the pivot of all Indian metaphysics, the sum and goal of our spiritual experience. To the phenomenal world around us stability and singleness seem at first to be utterly alien; nothing but passes and changes, nothing but has its counterparts, contrasts, harmonised and dissident parts; and all are perpetually shifting and rearranging their relative positions and affections. Yet if one thing is certain, it is that the sum of all this change and motion is absolutely stable, fixed and unvarying; that all this heterogeneous multitude of animate & inanimate things are fundamentally homogeneous and one. Otherwise nothing could endure, nor could there be any certainty in existence. And this unity, stability, unvarying fixity which reason demands & ordinary experience points to, is being ascertained slowly but surely by the investigations of Science. We can no longer escape from the growing conviction that however the parts may change and shift and appear to perish, yet the sum and whole remains unchanged, undiminished and imperishable; however multitudinous, mutable and mutually irreconcilable forms and compounds may be, yet the grand substratum is one, simple and enduring; death itself is not a reality but a seeming, for what appears to be destruction, is merely transformation and a preparation for rebirth. Science may not have appreciated the full import of her own discoveries; she may shrink from an unflinching acceptance of the logical results to which they lead; and certainly she is as yet far from advancing towards the great converse truths which they for the present conceal,—for instance the wonderful fact that not only is death a seeming, but life itself is a seeming, and beyond life and death there lies a condition which is truer and therefore more permanent than either. But though Science dreams not as yet of her goal, her feet are on the road from which there is no turning back,—the road which Vedanta on a different plane has already trod before it.

Here then is a great fundamental fact which demands from philosophy an adequate explanation of itself;—that all variations resolve themselves into an unity; that within the flux of things and concealed by it is an undefinable, immutable Something, at once the substratum and sum of all, which Time cannot touch, motion perturb, nor variation increase or diminish; and that this substratum and sum has been from all eternity and will be for all eternity. A fundamental fact to which all Thought moves, and yet is it not, when narrowly considered, an acute paradox? For how can the sum of infinite variations be a sempiternally fixed amount which has never augmented or decreased and can never augment or decrease? How can that whole be fixed and eternal of which every smallest part is eternally varying and perishing? Given a bewildering whirl of motion, how does the result come to be not merely now or as a result, but from beginning to end a perfect fixity? Impossible, unless either there be a guiding Power, for which at first sight there seems to be no room in the sempiternal chain of causa-

tion; or unless that sum and substratum be the one reality, imperishable because not conditioned by Time, indivisible because not conditioned by Space, immutable because not conditioned by Causality,—in a word absolute & transcendent and *therefore* eternal, unalterable and undecaying. Motion and change and death and division would then be merely transitory phenomena, masks and seemings of the One and Absolute, the as yet undefined and perhaps indefinable It which alone *is*.

To such a conclusion Indian speculation had turned at a very early period of its conscious strivings—uncertainly at first and with many gropings and blunders. The existence of some Oneness which gives order and stability to the multitudinous stir of the visible world, the Aryan thinkers were from the first disposed to envisage and they sought painfully to arrive at the knowledge of that Oneness in its nature or its essentiality. The living Forces of the Cosmos which they had long worshipped, yet always with a floating but persistent perception of an Unity in their multitude, melted on closer analysis into a single concept, a single Force or Presence, one and universal. The question then arose, Was that Force or Presence intelligent or non-intelligent? God or Nature? “He alone” hazarded the Rigveda “knoweth, or perhaps He knoweth not.” Or might it not be that the Oneness which ties together and governs phenomena and rolls out the evolution of the worlds, is really the thing we call *Time*, since of the three original conditions of phenomenal existence, Time, Space and Causality, Time is a necessary part of the conception of Causality and can hardly be abstracted from the conception of Space, but neither Space nor Causality seems necessary to the conception of Time? Or if it be not Time, might it not be *Swabhava*, the essential Nature of Things taking various conditions and forms? Or perhaps *Chance*, some blind principle working out an unity and law in things by infinite experiment,—this too might be possible. Or since from eternal uncertainty eternal certainty cannot come, might it not be *Fate*, a fixed and unalterable law in things in subjection to which this world evolves itself in a preordained procession of phenomena from which it cannot deviate? Or perhaps in the original atomic fountain of things certain *Elements* might be discovered which by perpetual and infinite combinations and permutations keep the universe to its workings? But if so, these elements must themselves proceed from something which imposes on them the law of their being, and what could that be but the *Womb*, the matrix of original and indestructible Matter, the plasm which moulds the universe and out of which it is moulded? And yet in whatever scheme of things the mind might ultimately rest, some room surely must be made for these conscious, thinking and knowing *Egos* of living beings, of whom knowledge and thought seem to be the essential selves and without whom this world of perceivable and knowable things could not be perceived and known;—and if not perceived and known, might it not be that without them it could not even exist?

— *Sri Aurobindo*

To be contd.

## Ashram Activities



*Smt. Rekha Sen*

1924-2020

Smt. Rekha Sen, an ashramite of long standing, left her body in the early morning of 23rd December, 2020, at the age of 96. She will always be remembered for her motherly affection. In a prayer meeting held in her memory on 4th January, 2021, Km. Srila Basu chanted slokas from the Bhagvad Gita as well as other mantras, while Smt. Vijay Bharti read several passages from Sri Aurobindo's epic *Savitri*, specifically from Book 2, Canto 12 (The Heavens of the Ideal).

**DESCENT OF LIGHT, 25 DECEMBER 2020:** Christmas was celebrated in the Ashram as 'Athletics Day' in which a variety of sports such as shot-put, 100m race, 400m relay, long jump, etc. were organized. Not only the Ashram's young-



sters but many not so young also participated in the activities with energy and enthusiasm. In the afternoon, teacher trainees of Mirambika organized sensory games at



the Hall of Grace aiming at stimulation of senses to help participants develop cognitively, linguistically, emotionally and physically. Winners were awarded gifts and prizes. Later in the evening, Ashram community kindled lamps of aspiration at and around Sri Aurobindo's Shrine, followed by musical offering by the

Ashram Choir interspersed with readings of relevant passages from ‘The Descent of Light’ by Tara Didi in the Meditation Hall. Prasad was distributed at the end to all attendees.

#### ADVENT OF THE NEW YEAR, 31 DECEMBER 2020 - 1 JANUARY 2021:

“Savitri is a mantra for the transformation of the world.” - *The Mother*



To usher in the New Year, vocalized reading of *Savitri* (an epic poem of 23,837 lines by Sri Aurobindo) began in the afternoon of 31 December 2020 in the Meditation Hall and continued till the evening of 1 January 2021. The reading was interrupted only at 11.45 p.m. on the New Year’s Eve for meditation and distribution of the New Year calendar. Earlier in the evening the Ashram community had games and watched a film. Subsequently, lamps of aspiration were

kindled and a special midnight meditation was held in which Tara Didi also read passages from *Savitri*. New Year calendar and prasad were distributed to all attendees.

On the occasion of the New Year, a special refreshment was given to all the helpers of the Ashram as a token of gratitude. Lunch, fully planned and executed by the youngsters of the Ashram, was organized in the open air.

#### 158<sup>TH</sup> BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND NATIONAL YOUTH DAY

In 1984 the Government of India declared 12th January, the birthday of Swami Vivekananda, as National Youth Day and it has been celebrated as such since 1985. The Government of India quoted that ‘the philosophy of Swamiji and the ideals for which he lived and worked could be a great source of inspiration for the Indian Youth Day.



To pay homage to the advent of Swami Vivekananda, group meditation was held on the evening of 12 January 2021 in the spacious Meditation Hall, followed by a talk by Dr. Ramesh Bijlani. In his inspiring talk, he recounted the short but illustrious & eventful life of Swami Vivekananda who not only was one of the foremost contributors to the resurgence of India itself but who also dramatically changed the image of India in the

world beginning with his momentous address at the Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in 1893. His talk continued on 13 January 2021, highlighting interactions of Sri Aurobindo with Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa and Swami Vivekananda on the occult plane, and with Sister Nivedita on the physical plane. Please visit Ashram’s YouTube channel for the video of the lectures.

**LOHRI, 13TH JANUARY 2021** : “Lohri is the celebration of the arrival of longer days after the winter solstice. According to folklore, in ancient times Lohri was celebrated at the end of the traditional month when winter solstice occurs. It celebrates the days getting longer as the sun proceeds on its northward journey.” In the Ashram Lohri was celebrated with distribution of the traditional groundnuts and *revadi*.

**NEW YOUTUBE POSTINGS** : During this period following were posted on : <<https://youtube.com/sriaurobindoashramdelhibranch>>

- \* Reading from the Mother’s *The Great Adventure* by Tara Didi
- \* Videos on Sri Aurobindo’s *Savitri*, incorporating paintings by Italian artist Aghni
- \* Devotional songs by Km. Karunamayee and other artistes
- \* Talks by Dr. Aparna Roy, Dr. Alok Pandey, and Dr. Ramesh Bijlani

## Editor's Note

“Serialization of *The Message of the Gita* in ‘Realization’ began from February 2017. The book was compiled by Shri Anil Baran and first published in 1938 by Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry. Commentary text in the book derived from *Essays on the Gita* was no intellectual undertaking by Sri Aurobindo but rather “... whatever spiritualisation and divinisation it [his own intellect] attained was through the descent of a higher supra-intellectual knowledge into that silence. The book, *Essays on the Gita*, itself was written in that silence of the mind, without intellectual effort and by a free activity of this knowledge from above.”

Text has been rearranged to suit the magazine format, and phonetic rendering of Sanskrit text in Roman Script has been incorporated.

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Sri Aurobindo considers the message of the Gita to be the basis of the great spiritual movement which has led and will lead humanity more and more to its liberation... escape from falsehood and ignorance... From the time of its first appearance, the Gita has had an immense spiritual action; but with the new interpretation [*Essays on the Gita*] that Sri Aurobindo has given to it, its influence has increased considerably and has become decisive.

– *The Mother*

\* \* \* \* \*

The world abounds with scriptures sacred and profane, with revelations and half-revelations, with religions and philosophies, sects and schools and systems. To these the many minds of a half-ripe knowledge or no knowledge at all attach themselves with exclusiveness and passion and will have it that this or the other book is alone the eternal Word of God... It may therefore be useful in approaching an ancient Scripture, such as the... Gita, to indicate precisely the spirit in which we approach it and what exactly we think we may derive from it that is of value to humanity and its future... In the Gita there is very little that is merely local or temporal and its spirit is so large, profound and universal that even this little can easily be universalised without the sense of the teaching suffering any diminution or violation; rather by giving an ampler scope to it than belonged to the country and epoch, the teaching gains in depth, truth and power. Often indeed the Gita itself suggests the wider scope that can in this way be given to an idea in itself local or limited... the principal ideas suggestive and penetrating which are woven into its complex harmony, are eternally valuable and valid; for they are not merely the luminous ideas or striking speculations of a philosophic intellect, but rather enduring truths of spiritual experience, verifiable facts of our highest psychological possibilities...

We do not belong to the past dawns, but to the noons of the future. A mass of new material is flowing into us; we have not only to assimilate the influences of the great theistic religions of India and of the world... but to take full account of the potent though limited revelations of modern knowledge and seeking... All this points to a new, a very rich, a very vast synthesis; a fresh and widely embracing harmonisation of our gains is both an intellectual and a spiritual necessity of the future. But just as the past syntheses have taken those which preceded them for their starting-point, so also must that of the future... proceed from what the great bodies of realised spiritual thought and experience in the past have given. Among them the Gita takes a most important place.

– Sri Aurobindo in *Essays on the Gita*

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## Preface to *THE MESSAGE OF THE GITA*

The Gita is a great synthesis of Aryan spiritual culture and Sri Aurobindo's luminous exposition of it, as contained in his *Essays on the Gita*, sets out its inner significances in a way that brings them home to the modern mind. I have prepared this commentary summarising its substance with the permission of Sri Aurobindo. The notes have been entirely compiled from the *Essays on the Gita* and arranged under the slokas in the manner of the Sanskrit commentators.

Sri Aurobindo Ashram,  
Pondicherry, 21<sup>st</sup> February, 1938

– ANILBARAN, Editor

# THE MESSAGE OF THE GITA

With Text, Translation and Notes AS INTERPRETED BY

**SRI AUROBINDO**

Edited by **ANILBARAN ROY**

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## EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER (CONTD.)

श्रीभगवानुवाच -

धृत्या यया धारयते मनःप्राणेन्द्रियक्रियाः।  
योगेनाव्यभिचारिण्या धृतिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी॥१८-३३॥

**Dhrityaa yayaa dhaarayate manah praanendriyakriyaah;**  
**Yogenaavyabhichaarinyaa dhritih saa paartha saattwikee. 18-33**

That unwavering persistence by which, through Yoga, one controls the mind, the senses and the life, that persistence, O Partha, is sattwic.

यया तु धर्मकामार्थान्धृत्या धारयतेऽर्जुन।  
प्रसंगेन फलाकांक्षी धृतिः सा पार्थ राजसी॥१८-३४॥

**Yayaa swapnam bhayam shokam vishaadam madameva cha;**  
**Na vimunchati durmedhaa dhritih saa paartha taamasee. 18-34**

But that, O Arjuna, by which one holdeth fast right and justice (Dharma), interest (Artha) and pleasure (Kama), and with great attachment desires for the fruits, that persistence, O Partha, is rajasic.\*

\* The rajasic will fixes its persistent attention on the satisfaction of its own attached clingings and desires in its pursuit of interest and pleasure and of what it thinks or chooses to think right and justice, Dharma. Always it is apt to put on these things the construction which will most flatter and justify its desires and to uphold as right or legitimate the means which will best help it to get the coveted fruits of its work and endeavour. That is the cause of three-fourths of the falsehood and misconduct of the human reason and will. Rajas with its vehement hold on the vital ego is the great sinner and positive misleader.

यया स्वप्नं भयं शोकं विषादं मदमेव च।  
न विमुंचति दुर्मेधा धृतिः सा पार्थ तामसी॥१८-३५॥

**Yayaa swapnam bhayam shokam vishaadam madameva cha;**  
**Na vimunchati durmedhaa dhritih saa paartha taamasee. 18-35**

That by which one from ignorance doth not abandon sleep, fear, grief, depression, and also pride, that persistence, O Partha, is tamasic.

सुखं त्विदानीं त्रिविधं शृणु मे भरतर्षभ।  
अभ्यासाद्रमते यत्र दुःखान्तं च निगच्छति॥१८-३६॥

**Sukham twidaaneem trividham shrinu me bharatarshabha;**  
**Abhyaasaadramate yatra dukkhaantam cha nigacchati. 18-36**

**Yattadagre vishamiva parinaame'mritopamam;**  
**Tatsukham saattwikam proktam aatmabuddhiprasaadajam. 18-37**

And now the threefold kinds of pleasure hear thou from Me, O bull of the Bharatas. That in which one by self-discipline rejoiceth and which putteth an end to pain; which at first is as poison but in the end is as nectar; that pleasure is said to be sattwic, born of the satisfaction of the higher mind and spirit.

विषयेन्द्रियसंयोगाद्यत्तदग्रेऽमृतोपमम्।  
परिणामे विषमिव तत्सुखं राजसं स्मृतम्॥१८-३८॥

**Vishayendriya samyogaad yattadagre'mritopamam;  
Parinaame vishamiva tatsukham raajasam smritam. 18-38**

That which is born from the contact of the senses with their objects, which at first is as nectar, but in the end is like poison, that pleasure is accounted rajasic.

**यदग्रे चानुबन्धे च सुखं मोहनमात्मनः।  
निद्रालस्यप्रमादोत्थं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम्॥१८-३६॥**  
**Yadagre chaanubandhe cha sukham mohanamaatmanah;  
Nidraalasyapramaadottham tattaamasamudaahritam. 18-39**

That pleasure of which delusion is the beginning and delusion is the consequence, which arises from sleep, indolence and ignorance, that is declared tamasic.\*

\* Happiness is indeed the one thing which is openly or indirectly the universal pursuit of our human nature,—happiness or its suggestion or some counterfeit of it, some pleasure, some enjoyment, some satisfaction of the mind, the will, the passions or the body. Pain is an experience our nature has to accept when it must, involuntarily as a necessity, an unavoidable incident of universal Nature, or voluntarily as a means to what we seek after, but not a thing desired for its own sake,—except when it is so sought in perversity or with an ardour of enthusiasm in suffering for some touch of fierce pleasure it brings or the intense strength it engenders. But there are various kinds of happiness or pleasure according to the guna which dominates in our nature. Thus the tamasic mind can remain well-pleased in its indolence and inertia, its stupor and sleep, its blindness and its error. The mind of the rajasic man drinks of a more fiery and intoxicating cup; the keen, mobile, active pleasure of the senses and the body and the sense-entangled or fierily kinetic will and intelligence are to him all the joy of life and the very significance of living. What the sattwic nature seeks is the satisfaction of the higher mind and the spirit and when it once gets this large object of its quest, there comes in a clear, pure happiness of the soul, a state of fullness, an abiding ease and peace. This happiness does not depend on outward things, but on ourselves alone and on the flowering of what is best and most inward within us. But it is not at first our normal possession; it has to be conquered by self-discipline, a labour of the soul, a high and arduous endeavour. At first this means much loss of habitual pleasure, much suffering and struggle, a poison born of the churning of our nature, a painful conflict of forces, much revolt and opposition to the change due to the ill-will of the members or the insistence of vital movements, but in the end the nectar of immortality rises in the place of this bitterness and as we climb to the higher spiritual nature we come to the end of sorrow, the euthanasia of grief and pain. That is the surpassing happiness which descends upon us at the point or line of culmination of the sattwic discipline.

The self-exceeding of the sattwic nature comes when we get beyond the great but still inferior sattwic pleasure, beyond the pleasures of mental knowledge and virtue and peace to the eternal calm of the self and the spiritual ecstasy of the divine oneness. That spiritual joy is no longer the sattwic happiness, *sukham*, but the absolute Ananda. Ananda is the secret delight from which all things are born, by which all is sustained in existence and to which all can rise in the spiritual culmination. Only then can it be possessed when the liberated man, free from ego and its desires, lives at last one with his highest self, one with all beings and one with God in an absolute bliss of the spirit.

## II. SWABHAVA AND SWADHARMA

**न तदस्ति पृथिव्यां वा दिवि देवेषु वा पुनः।  
सत्त्वं प्रकृतिजैर्मुक्तं यदेभिः स्यात्त्रिभिर्गुणैः॥१८-४०॥**  
**Na tadasti prithivyaam vaa divi deveshu vaa punah;  
Sattwam prakritijairmuktam yadebhih syaat tribhiringunaih. 18-40**

There is not an entity, either on the earth or again in heaven among the gods, that is not subject to the workings of these three qualities (Gunas), born of nature.

**ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियविशां शूद्राणां च परन्तप।  
कर्माणि प्रविभक्तानि स्वभावप्रभवैर्गुणैः॥१८-४१॥**

**Braahmanakshatriyavishaam shoodraanaam cha parantapa;  
Karmaani pravibhaktaani swabhaavaprabhavaairgunaih. 18-41**

The works of Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras are divided according to the qualities (gunas) born of their own inner nature.

**शमो दमस्तपः शौचं क्षान्तिरार्जवमेव च।  
ज्ञानं विज्ञानमास्तिक्यं ब्रह्मकर्म स्वभावजम्॥१८-४२॥**

**Shamo damastapah shaucham kshaantiraarjavameva cha;  
Jnaanam vijnaanam aastikyam brahmakarma swabhaavajam. 18-42**

Calm, self-control, askesis, purity, long-suffering, candour, knowledge, acceptance of spiritual truth are the work of the Brahmin, born of his *swabhava*.

**शौर्यं तेजो धृतिर्दाक्ष्यं युद्धे चाप्यपलायनम्।  
दानमीश्वरभावश्च क्षात्रं कर्म स्वभावजम्॥१८-४३॥**

**Shauryam tejo dhritirdaakshyam yuddhe chaapyapalaayanam;  
Daanameeshwarabhaavashcha kshaatram karmaswabhaavajam. 18-43**

Heroism, high spirit, resolution, ability, not fleeing in the battle, giving, lordship (*ishwara-bhava*, the temperament of the ruler and leader) are the natural work of the Kshatriya.

**कृषिगौरक्ष्यवाणिज्यं वैश्यकर्म स्वभावजम्।  
परिचर्यात्मकं कर्म शूद्रस्यापि स्वभावजम्॥१८-४४॥**

**Krishigaurakshyavaanijyam vaishyakarma swabhaavajam;  
Paricharyaatmakam karma shoodrasyaapi swabhaavajam. 18-44**

Agriculture, cattle-keeping, trade inclusive of the labour of the craftsman and the artisan are the natural work of the Vaishya. All work of the character of service falls within the natural function of the Shudra.\*

\* These verses and the earlier pronouncements of the Gita on the same subject have been seized upon in current controversies on the caste question and interpreted by some as a sanction of the present system, used by others as a denial of the hereditary basis of caste. In point of fact the verses in the Gita have no bearing on the existing caste system, because that is a very different thing from the ancient social ideal of *chaturvarnya*, the four clear-cut orders of the Aryan community, and in no way corresponds with the description of the Gita. Agriculture, cattle-keeping and trade of every kind are said here to be the work of the Vaishya; but in the later system the majority of those concerned in trade and in cattle-keeping, artisans, small craftsmen and others are actually classed as Shudras—where they are not put altogether outside the pale,—and, with some exceptions, the merchant class is alone and that too not everywhere ranked as Vaishya. Agriculture, government and service are the professions of all classes from the Brahmin down to the Shudra. And if the economical divisions of function have been confounded beyond any possibility of rectification, the law of the *guna* or quality is still less a part of the later system. There all is rigid custom, *achara*, with no reference to the need of the individual nature. If again we take the religious side of the contention advanced by the advocates of the caste system, we can certainly fasten no such absurd idea on the words of the Gita as that it is a law of a man's nature that he shall follow without regard to his personal bent and capacities the profession of his parents or his immediate or distant ancestors, the son of a milkman be a milkman, the son of a doctor a doctor, the descendants of shoemakers remain shoemakers to the end of measurable time, still less that by doing so, by this unintelligent and mechanical repetition of the law of another's nature without regard to his own individual call and qualities a man automatically farther his own perfection and arrives at spiritual freedom. The Gita's words refer to the ancient system of *chaturvarnya*, as it existed or was supposed to exist in its ideal purity,—there is some controversy whether it was ever anything more than an ideal or general norm more or less loosely followed in practice,—and it should be considered in that connection alone.

— To be continued

In God concealed the world began to be,  
Tardily it travels towards manifest God:  
Our imperfection towards perfection toils,  
The body is the chrysalis of a soul:  
The infinite holds the finite in its arms,  
Time travels towards revealed eternity.

A miracle structure of the eternal Mage,  
Matter its mystery hides from its own eyes,  
A scripture written out in cryptic signs,  
An occult document of the All-Wonderful's art.

All here bears witness to his secret might,  
In all we feel his presence and his power.

A blaze of his sovereign glory is the sun,  
A glory is the gold and glimmering moon,  
A glory is his dream of purple sky.  
A march of his greatness are the wheeling stars.

His laughter of beauty breaks out in green trees,  
His moments of beauty triumph in a flower;  
The blue sea's chant, the rivulet's wandering voice  
Are murmurs falling from the Eternal's harp...  
His forms he has massed from infinitesimal dust;  
His marvels are built from insignificant things.

– Sri Aurobindo

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