

Bhaja Govindam

by

Adi Sankara

Transcribed

by

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आदिशङ्कराचार्यस्य भजगोविन्दम्

वालकृष्ण शर्मणा विरचितम्

आगस्त 2006



Preface

Adi Sankara burst forth spontaneously the song Bhaja Govindam after seeing an old man in Varanasi assiduously memorizing the grammar rules. Among the thirty-one slokas, it is presumed that the first twelve and the last five are by Sankara and the middle fourteen are by his disciples. The English translation adheres to the Sanskrit text as closely as possible resulting in the translation being somewhat hackneyed.

Slightly different renditions of Bhaja Govindam exist but the one presented here is what is deemed appropriate. A brief life history of Adi Sankara is given along with some of the controversies and an attempt has been made to clarify the period of his life.

Most of the material presented here has been obtained from the Internet and some of the sources are shown.

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Bhaja Govindam by Adi Sankara

About Sankara

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥
परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ॥

Sri Krishna in the Bhagavad-Gita says that whenever righteousness and all that are dependent upon Dharma are on the decline, God will descend on the earth to protect the just and destroy the wicked thereby reestablishing righteousness. Jagatguru Adi Sankaracharya seems to have appeared on the Indian scene at a time when moral and religious chaos had overtaken India.

Sankaracharya is indisputably among the greatest philosophers that India, or the world, has ever produced. He strode like a colossus on the Indian if not the world scene. He is unique in the history of the world as he combined in himself the attributes of a philosopher, a devotee, a mystic, a poet and a religious reformer. Though he lived only for thirty-two years about twelve hundred years ago, India and the world feel the impact of the life and work of this spiritual genius even today.

To establish the birth of Sankara according to the modern calendar is a difficult problem. The Kanchi Matha claims that Sankara lived during 509-477 BC. This will place Sankara as a contemporary of Buddha (563-483 BC) well before Alexander the Great (356-323 BC), Asoka (207-230 BC) and Kanishka (78-144 AD). If this date is to be believed, the entire Indian history has to be rewritten. Panini was supposed to have written the grammar around 400 BC. Bhaja Govindam was the exposition of Sankara after hearing Panini's grammar rules (डुकृक्करणे) recited by an old man. If Sankara's period 509-477 BC is to be accepted, then he must have died 77 years before Panini wrote the grammar rules! The official period accepted currently is 788-820 AD, which seems more realistic. The Government of India celebrated the 1200th anniversary of Sankara's birth in 1988. This difficulty is experienced for almost all personalities in Indian history, due to paucity of proper records and conflicting traditions current in different parts of the country. The problem of dating Sankara's birth can only be conjectured from Sankara's works and the traditional records kept by the four Advaita Mathas in India.

A lot of scholarly work has been done in the recent past, analyzing the internal evidence from Sankara's works. The period now seems to be well established on the 8th century AD. The most

important internal evidence comes from Sankara's verbatim quotation of Dharmakirti (~635 AD), the great Buddhist logician. The fact that Sankara has quoted from Dharmakirti's work is confirmed by Suresvara, a disciple of Sankara and the first head of the Sringeri Matha. Hsuan Tsang, (603-664 AD) the Chinese Buddhist monk, who visited (629-645 AD) India at the time of

Harshavardhana, king of Thaneswar (606-647 AD) and studied at the Nalanda University, refers to Dharmakirti but does not refer to Sankara at all. The evidence of Hsuan Tsang concerning Dharmakirti is too strong to be neglected. Hsuan Tsang may have also visited Kanchi in 642 AD and wrote that the Pallava country was more than thousand miles in area and that it was 6 miles in circumference: its people were famous for bravery and piety as well as for their love of justice and veneration for learning. Some of his other comments were: there were 100 viharas and 10,000 Buddhist monks: though the king was of Brahmanical faith, he provided equal patronage to all religions. He further recorded that Buddha had visited Kanchi but there is no mention of Sankara in his writings. Therefore, it may follow that Sankara must have been born after Dharmakirti and after Hsuan-Tsang. Critical academic scholars have established the period 700 - 800 AD for Sankara's birth.

At that time, Buddhism had widely spread in the country in a much-changed form from that of the pure and simple ethical teachings of the Goutama, the Buddha (563-483 BC) who was born in Lumbini in the foothills of the Himalayas. Jainism reformed by Vardhamana Mahavira (599-527 BC), born near Mysore, also had its influence with a local following. Both these religions strayed away from the teachings of the masters and became bereft of the concept of God, resulting in atheism that was becoming the general creed of the people. Hinduism also became segmented into a number of sects and denominations, each intolerant of the other. The religious coherence in the land was lost and many unwholesome practices were corrupting the purity and spirit of the religion. What the times needed was an integration of all thoughts to arrest the religious decadence, disharmony, and discord among the various sects of the Hindus and reestablish the eternal principles of Dharma. Such a mighty and stupendous task was undertaken by Sankara and he was able to accomplish it in a very short span of life!

During the brief span of thirty-two years, Sankara established firmly the Advaita (non dualism) Vedanta philosophy as the essential unifying basis of the Hindu way of life. He brought religious harmony, spiritual coherence and moral regeneration of the country.

Sankara's Life Profile

Sankaracharya was born towards the end of the eighth century AD, at Kaladi, a village in Central Kerala. He was the only son of a devout Nambudri Brahmin couple, Sivaguru and Aryamba. It is believed that he was born as a result of their long prayers to Lord Siva of the famous Vrishabhachaleswara (Vadakkunathan) temple at Trichur. Siva is said to have appeared to the couple in a dream and gave them a choice of one son who would be short-lived but the most brilliant philosopher of his day, or many sons who would be mediocre at best. The couple opted for a brilliant, but short-lived son, and so Sankara was born. He was an infant prodigy and completed his Vedic studies by the age of eight. He lost his father when he was 3 years old, and his mother performed his upanayana and other ceremonies with the help of her relatives. He excelled in all branches of traditional Vedic learning. A few miracles are reported about the young Sankara. As a brahmachari, he went about collecting alms from families in the village. A lady who was herself extremely poor, but did not want to send away the boy empty-handed, gave

him the last piece of Amla fruit she had at home. Sankara, sensing the abject poverty of the lady, composed a hymn (Kanakadhara Stotra) to Sri Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, right at her doorstep. As a result, a shower of golden Amlas rewarded the lady for her piety. On another occasion, Sankara is said to have re-routed the course of the Purna River, so that his old mother would not have to walk a long distance to the river for her daily ablutions.

The boy exhibited ascetic tendencies and the mother felt very upset. Yet, the divine mission for which that great genius was born had to be fulfilled, and so something of miracle had to happen to set Sankara free from worldly ties. It happened when the son was bathing in the nearby Purna River, while the mother was watching on the bank, a crocodile caught hold of the boy's leg and was dragging him into deeper waters.

When death was (seemingly) near, Sankara asked permission of the mother to enter the 'Ashrama of Sanyasa,' which every Hindu was supposed to enter before his death. Formal renunciation at such a critical situation, "Apat-Sanyasa", was a common practice. Very reluctantly, Aryamba gave her consent and mysteriously the crocodile let go the boy! Emerging from the river, the bala-sanyasi decided to become a wandering monk, and left his village after consoling and assuring his mother that he would be at her side during her last days, and perform her funeral rites, even though he would be a sanyasi then. Thus, Sankara set forth on his divine mission at the very young age of eight.

After leaving Kaladi, the young sanyasi-scholar wandered through South India in search of a Guru and ultimately reached the banks of Narmada. There, he met Govinda Bhagavatpada, a prominent disciple of the great Gaudapada of Mandukya Karika reputation. Govindapada graciously accepted this boy-sanyasi as his disciple and initiated him into the paramahansa order of sanyasa, the highest kind of renunciation. After about seven years, Sankara completed his Vedantic studies. Seeing the intellectual acumen of his disciple, Govindapada commanded Sankara to expound the philosophy of Vedanta through commentaries on the principal Upanishads, the Brahmasutras and the Gita throughout India. Sankara took leave of his guru and traveled to various holy places in India, composing his commentaries. Barely a teenager, he attracted many disciples around him, prominent among whom was Sanandana, who was later to be called Padmapada. In this period, Sankara wrote commentaries on Badarayana's Brahmasutras, the various Upanishads and the Bhagavad-Gita. These commentaries, called Bhashyas, stand at the pinnacle of Indian philosophical writing, and triggered a long tradition of sub-commentaries known as Varttikas, Tikas and Tippanis. He also commented upon the Adhyatma-Patala of the Apastamba sutras, and on Vyasa's Bhashya to Patanjali's Yogasutras. In addition to these commentaries, Sankara wrote independent treatises called "Prakarana Granthas", including the Upadesasahasri, Atmabodha, Bhaja Govindam, etc.

Sankara went on to Varanasi, so called because it is situated at the confluence of the two tributaries of Ganga, Varuna and Assi. There, within a short time, he established himself as the greatest champion of Advaita Vedanta philosophy. He won many debates; and disciples came to him in large numbers. Padmapada, Hastamalaka and Totaka were the chief among them. Thus, by the age of sixteen, Sankara had established himself as a great philosopher in the city of Varanasi.

Sankara sought out leaders of other philosophies including the Buddhists and the Jains, and engaged them in debates. According to the accepted philosophical tradition in India in those

days, such debates not only helped to establish a new philosophy but also win disciples and converts from other schools. It was also traditional for the loser in the debate to become a disciple of the winner. Thus, Sankara debated with Buddhist philosophers, followers of Samkhya, Purva-Mimamsakas and the followers of Vedic Ritualism, and defeated them. He sought out Kumarila Bhatta, the foremost proponent of the Purva-Mimamsa but since Bhatta was on his deathbed, he directed Sankara to his disciple Mandana Misra sometimes identified as Visvarupa.

Sankara's debate with Mandana Misra was unique. The referee at the debate was Mandana Misra's wife, Ubhaya Bharati, who was very well learned, and regarded as an incarnation of Goddess Sarasvati. At stake was a whole way of life. The agreement was that if Mandana Misra won, Sankara would consent to marriage and the life of a householder, whereas if Sankara won, Mandana Misra would renounce all his wealth and possessions and become a disciple of Sankara as a sanyasi. The debate is said to have lasted for 18 days and in the end, Mandana Misra had to concede defeat. Ubhaya Bharati was a fair judge, but before declaring Sankara as the winner, she contended that since Mandana Misra and she were a couple Sankara has only half won and that he has to win over her also for her to declare him a complete winner. She challenged Sankara

with questions about various philosophies and he answered all of them. She shifted gear and asked him questions about Kamasutra, which as a brahmachari he knew nothing about. Sankara therefore requested some time, and using the subtle yogic process called Parakaya-Pravesha, he entered the body of a dying king and experienced the art of love with the queens. Returning to Mandana Misra's home, he answered all of Ubhaya Bharati's questions on the Kamasutra and he was declared the winner unequivocally. Mandana Misra was ordained as a sanyasi by the name of Suresvaracharya. He was to become the most celebrated disciple of Sankara, writing Varttikas to Sankara's Bhashyas on the Yajurveda Upanishads, in addition to his own independent texts on various subjects and was the first head of the Sringeri Matha.

After establishing himself at Varanasi as the invincible champion of the Advaita Vedanta philosophy, Sankara started on tour of this vast country for a "Dig-Vijaya" or spiritual conquest, under specific instruction from sage Veda Vyasa who blessed him with a vision while Sankara was writing the Brahma Sutra Bhashya. Wherever he went, he won over eminent leaders of the other existing systems of philosophy including the Sunyavadins of Buddhism and firmly established Advaita Vedanta. None could stand against his erudition, dialectical skill, spiritual insight and logic.

The victory over Mandana Misra gave a new impetus to Sankara's spiritual conquest. Sankara and his disciples traveled all over the land refuting false doctrines and purifying objectionable practices that were in vogue in the name of religion. He also established mathas in four places, in Sringeri in the south, Badri in the north, Dwaraka in the west and Jagannath Puri in the east. He chose these places for the beauty of their natural environments amidst snow-clad mountains, or forests and rivers or on the shores of the ocean; places where heaven and earth met and transported man's thoughts to sublime heights. He placed Sri Suresvaracharya at the head of the matha in Sringeri, Sri Padmapada in Dwaraka, Sri Totaka in Badri and Sri Hastamalaka in Puri. Among these mathas, only Sringeri has an unbroken record of the continuity of mathathipathis.

There is also a controversy whether Sankara established (482 BC) a fifth matha at Kanchipuram. The city was very famous at that time being the capital of the Pallava kings during 300-900 AD. Before that, it was occupied by the Chola kings during 300 BC-300 AD and again during 900-1300 AD. It is exemplified by the verse: the best among flowers is jasmine; the best among men is Sri Vishnu; the best among women is the celestial courtesan Rambha; and the best among cities is Kanchi.

पुष्पेषु जाति पुरुषेषु विष्णु ।
नारीषु रम्भा नगरेषु काञ्चि

Sankara is traditionally said to have organized the *Dasanami Sampradaya* and established four mathas (monasteries) at Sringeri (in Karnataka), Puri (in Orissa), Dvaraka (in Gujarat) and Jyotirmath of Badrinath (in Uttar Pradesh). It is inconceivable that this *Dasanami Sampradaya* could have overlooked the fifth matha at Kanchi. It is possible that some other Sankara could have established a matha in Kanchi. He did consecrate the Kamakshi temple; the only temple in Kanchi dedicated to Parvathi and established a Sri Chakra. The fact that it is very active today does not mean that it has always been so, nor does such activity lend any special credibility to its claims of antiquity. The political influence and prestige that this matha enjoys today may not necessarily confer legitimacy to such claims of antiquity. Moreover, in addition to the four mathas and this fifth matha at Kanchipuram, there are numerous other mathas in India, whose traditions are at least as valid as those of the Kanchi matha are. To be impartial, the traditions of all these other mathas in India should also be taken into account, but such a study has not attracted any scholarly attention. However, the establishment of these mathas indicates Sri Sankara's realization of the physical and spiritual unity of India. He wrote in Sanskrit, the *lingua franca* of cultured India of those times, which alone could appeal to all the intellectuals all over the land.

After an extended stay in Sringeri, he hastened to the bedside of his dying mother in his ancestral home at Kaladi. The story goes that none of the other Brahmins wanted to participate in the last rites of his mother since he was a sanyasi. Undeterred by the opposition of his pharisaic (strict religious formalist) kinsmen, he cremated his mother's body by himself on the riverbank in the backyard of her house without any help from his kinsmen and consigned her soul to the 'immortal realms of light' to the strains of mellifluous hymns in praise of Siva and Vishnu. That spot has since become hallowed as a place of pilgrimage.

He visited all the sacred shrines of the land around which have gathered the cultural traditions of the people, purifying the forms of worship. In addition to the Kamakshi temple in Kanchi, he established Sri Chakras in many other temples such as those of Nara Narayana of Badri and Guhyesvari in Nepal, etc.

This "best of peripatetic teachers" (Paramahansa Parivrajakacharya) crowned his triumphal tours and ascended the "Sarovajnapitha" located at the Saradha (Sarasvati) temple in Kashmir as the symbol of recognition by the world of his scholarship and undisputed mastery in all the (then known) branches of learning by vanquishing the great scholars. Kanchi Matha claims that the "Sarovajnapitha" is located in Kanchi.

During his last visit to Nepal, he had a vision of Sri Dattatreya and from there he went to Kedarnath at which place, at the age of thirty two, he is said to have disappeared from his mortal

existence. A spot not far from the shrine of Kedarnath is said to be the place of his disappearance. Kanchi Matha claims that he merged with Mother Kamakshi at the Holy Kanchi, which may not be believable. He had accomplished a monumental task by any standards in his thirty-two short years.

Sankara made the edifice of Hindu philosophy strong by his rational and logical exposition of the Upanishads so that Sanatana Dharma could face all the challenges during the vicissitudes of history until modern times. His contribution to Hindu philosophy is so great and lasting that all the later philosophers, Ramanuja (1017-1137 AD) (qualified nondualism) and Madhwa (1238-1317 AD) (dualism), have only tried either to expand his ideas or refute him.

Sankara symbolizes the great “Rishi-culture” and is its greatest exponent. The message of Sankara is a message of hope and optimism for the human race irrespective of caste or creed. As he epitomizes at the end of Bhaja Govindam, *every person* has vested divinity that has to be discovered only through self-conscious search and righteous living:

गुरुचरणांबुज निर्भरभक्तः संसारादचिराद्भव मुक्तः ।
सेन्द्रियमानसनियमादेवं द्रक्ष्यसि निजयहृदयस्थं देवम् । ।

The kingdom of peace, fullness and joy is within each one of us, says Advaita and we will have to realize them. As his very name suggests (Samam karoti iti Sankara, शम् करोति इति शङ्कर) “He who blesses is Sankara”).

Sankaracharya was one of the greatest benefactors of mankind because he expounded the Advaita Vedanta philosophy- the essence of Vedas - which is a pathway to bliss and Immortality. What he also did was to bring all the various streams of Indian thoughts, diverging in his time in different directions, under the common roof of Advaita, thus resolving the widespread confusion arising out of the multiplicity of opinion.

About Bhaja Govindam

Bhaja Govindam is one of the minor compositions of Adi Sankaracharya, compared to his monumental works called “Bhashyas,” commentaries on Indian Scriptures and Bhagavad Gita. Bhaja Govindam, along with Atma Bodha, etc., comes under the category of “Prakarana Granthas,” introductory manuals for spiritual studies. They are like primers, explaining the philosophical terms for the spiritual novitiates. The elementary spiritual truths are brought to fore in these booklets and make a person think, "Ah, this is life; I must seek escape from this prison and may God guide and help me." A person is thus drawn out of mired bylanes of life in which he or she is stuck and put on the royal road of spirituality, the pathway to God!

A popular story describes the circumstances in which this great poem burst forth from the lips of Sankara. It is said that once in Varanasi when he, together with his fourteen disciples, was going along on his daily rounds, he overheard a very old Pandit cramming Panini's grammar rules. Sankara was touched with sympathy at the ignorance and folly of the old man to be wasting away the most precious evening of his life on a mere memorization instead of spending it on the contemplation of the Lord, praying for spiritual enlightenment and for release from the bondage of Samsara. He knew that this was not the state of that particular man, but was the general state

of most of the people. It is presumed that the first twelve verses came spontaneously from Sankara and that each of the fourteen disciples contributed one verse each. Sankara finished the last five verses.

People waste and while away their lives in many futile ways, groveling in the mire of earthly attachments forgetting God who is the only goal in life. In compassion for the person's plight, he burst forth into these stanzas, famous as MOHA MUDGARA, now popularly known by the refrain of the song, "BHAJA GOVINDAM". In this poem, the essence of Gita seeps through.

भजगोविन्दं भजगोविन्दं भजगोविन्दं मूढमते ।
सम्प्राप्ते सन्निहिते काले नहि नहि रक्षति डुकृञ्करणे । ।

"Oh, Fool! Grammar rules (in fact all your secular learning) will not come to save you when the appointed time (death) comes. Instead of wasting away the precious span of your life, seek Govinda, who alone can save you from the "Samsara".

In thirty-one simple, sweet and lucid slokas, giving homely analogies and illustrations for our easy understanding, Sankara and his disciples tell us about the fallacy and futility of our life. In sloka by sloka he removes veil after veil, dispelling our ignorance, illusions and delusions (MOHA) and showing us where the remedy for all our misery lies. The poem is, therefore also called MOHA MUDGARA. Mudgara means hammer in Sanskrit and Moha Mudgara means smashing of lust and delusion. He touches only aspects of our life that blind and bind us, plunging us deeper and deeper into the abyss of ignorance and misery. He wants each one of us to cultivate a discerning and discriminating eye (VIVEKA) to distinguish the permanent from the transitory, the real from the unreal, to practice dispassion (VAIRAGYA) for worldly attractions and distractions, to cultivate devotion for realizing God (Govinda), and thus getting released from the misery of the cycle of birth and death (samsara).

Sankara's Works

Some of the works of Sankara are:

Viveka Chudamani, one of his most famous works summarizing his ideas of non-dual Vedanta

The Bhashya on the Brahma Sutra

The commentary on Bhagavad-Gita called Sankara Bhashya

The Bhashya on Brihadaranyaka Upanishad

The Bhashya on Taittiriya Upanishad

The Thousand Teachings or Upadesasahasri

A hymn to Krishna as the Herder of Cows, known as Bhaja Govindam

Benedictory invocation to Shiva called Shivanandalahari and to Shakti called Saundaryalahari

The commentary on Vishnu Sahasranama

The commentary on Gaudapada's Karika to the Mandukya Upanishad

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1. भजगोविन्दं भजगोविन्दं भजगोविन्दं मूढमते ।
सम्प्राप्ते सन्निहिते काले नहि नहि रक्षति डुकृञ्करणे । ।
Worship Govinda; worship Govinda; worship Govinda; Oh fool!
When the appointed time (for departure) comes, the repetition of grammatical rules will never never save you.
2. मूढजहीहि धनागमतृष्णां कुरुसद्भुद्धिं मनसि वितृष्णाम् ।
यल्लभसे निजकर्मोपात्तं वित्तं तेन विनोदय चित्तं । ।
Oh fool! Abandon the thirst for hankering after wealth; create in your mind thoughts about good deeds devoid of passion.
With what you have obtained through hard work, satisfy your mind.
3. नारीस्तनभरनाभीदेशं दृष्ट्वा मा गा मोहावेशम् ।
एतन्मांसवसादिविकारं मनसि विचिन्तय वारं वारम् । ।
Seeing the breasts and the navel of a woman, do not get excited with possessing her.
That (female form) is (but) a modification of flesh and fat. Think of this in your mind repeatedly.
4. नलिनीदलगतजलमतितरलं तद्वर्ज्जवितमतिशयचपलम् ।
विद्धि व्याध्यभिमानग्रस्तं लोकं शोकहतं च समस्तम् । ।
The water on the lotus-leaf is very unsteady, so also life is very unstable.
Know that the entire world is disease ridden with lack of understanding, and tormented with sorrow.
5. यावद्वित्तोपार्जनसक्तस्तावन्निजपरिवरो रक्तः ।
पश्चाज्जीवति जर्जरदेहे वार्ता कोपि न पृच्छति गेहे । ।
As long as you have the capacity to earn money, your group will be attached to you.
After that, when you are living with an infirm body, no one will bother to ask for news about your well-being.
6. यावत्पवनो निवसति देहे तावत्पृच्छति कुशलं गेहे ।
गतवति वायौ देहापाये भार्या विभ्यति तस्मिन्काये । ।
As long as there is breath in the body, everybody asks about one's welfare.
Once the breath leaves the body, even the wife dreads that very same body.
7. बालस्तावत्क्रीडासक्तस्तरुणस्तावत्तरुणीसक्तः ।
वृद्धस्तावच्चिन्तासक्तः परमे ब्रह्मणि कोपि न सक्तः । ।

As a boy, he is attached to sport; as a young man, he is attached to a young woman;
As an old man, he is attached to worry and anxiety; but to the Brahman, no one is attached.

8. का ते कान्ता कस्ते पुत्रः संसारोयमतीव विचित्रः ।
कस्य कः कुत आयतस्तत्त्वं चिन्तय तदिह भ्रातः । ।
Who is your wife? Who is your son? Exceedingly wonderful, indeed, is this Samsara (transmigratory process).
Of whom are you? Who are you? Where have you come? Think of that truth here, oh brother!
9. सत्सङ्गत्वे निस्सङ्गत्वं निस्सङ्गत्वे निर्मोहत्वम् ।
निर्मोहत्वे निश्चलतत्त्वं निश्चलतत्त्वे जीवन्मुक्तिः । ।
Good company results in non-attachment; non-attachment results in freedom from covetousness,
Freedom from covetousness results in clearness of the mind, and finally clearness of the mind results in liberation in life.
10. वयसि गते कः कामविकारः शुष्के नरे कः कासारः ।
क्षीणे वित्ते कः परिवारो ज्ञाते तत्त्वे कः सम्सारः । ।
When age advances, where is lust? When water has evaporated, where is a lake?
When money has become less, where are the followers? When truth is known, where is samsara?
11. मा कुरु धनजनयौवनगर्वं हरति निमेषात्कालः सर्वम् ।
मायमयमिदमखिलं हित्वा ब्रह्म पदं त्वं प्रविश विदित्वा । ।
Do not pride yourself of wealth, family and youth; All these can be taken away in a moment's time.
Instead, you leave this entire illusory world and enter into the known state of Brahman.
12. दिनयामिन्यौ सायं प्रातः शिशिरवसन्तौ पुनरायतः ।
कालः क्रीडति गच्छत्यायुस्तदपि न मुञ्चत्याशावायुः । ।
Day and night, dusk and dawn, winter and spring come repeatedly;
Time plays, life moves along; but one does not leave the winds of desire.
13. का ते कान्ता धनगतचिन्ता वातुल किं तव नास्ति नियन्ता ।
त्रिजगति सज्जनसंगतिरेका भवति भवार्णवतरणे नौका । ।
Who is your wife? Why worry about your wealth oh crazy one? Don't you ever think that there is one who ordains?

In these three worlds, only the association with good people can serve as the boat that can steer across the ocean (birth and death).

14. जटिलो मुण्डी लुञ्छितकेशः काषायंबरबहुकृतवेषः ।

पश्यन्नपि च न पश्यति मूढो ह्युदरनिमित्तं बहुकृतवेषः । ।

With knotted hair, or with shaven head, or with hair randomly cut, and disguising himself variously with the ochre colored robes

This fool though seeing does not really see. Indeed, the various disguises are for the sake of the stomach.

15. अङ्गं गलितं पलितं मुण्डं दशनविहीनं जातं तुण्डम् ।

वृद्धो याति गृहीत्वा दण्डं तदपि न मुञ्चत्याशापिण्डम् । ।

The limbs have become weak; the hair has turned gray; the mouth has become toothless.

The old man goes about grasping a stick. Even then, he does not let go the mass of desires,

16. अग्ने वह्निः पृष्ठे भानू रात्रौ चुबुकसमर्पितजानुः ।

करतलभिक्षस्तरुतलवासस्तदपि न मुञ्चत्याशापाशः । ।

With fire in the front and sun at the back, he (ascetic) sits at night with face huddled between the knees.

He receives alms in his palms and lives under the tree but does not leave the attachment to desire.

17. कुरुते गङ्गासागरगमनं व्रतपरिपालनमथवा दानम् ।

ज्ञानवहीनः सर्वमतेन मुक्तिं न भजति जन्मशतेन । ।

He goes on a pilgrimage to the confluence of Ganga and the ocean, observes the religious vows, or offers alms.

However, if he does these without self-knowledge, according to all opinions, he does not obtain salvation even in a hundred lives.

18. सुरमन्दिरतरुमूलनिवासः शय्याभूतलमजिनं वासः ।

सर्पापरिग्रह भोगत्यगः कस्य सुखं न करोति विरागः । ।

He lives in temples, or at the foot of trees and sleeps on the ground,

renouncing all possessions and their enjoyment -- to whom will dispassion not bring happiness?

19. योगरतो वा भोगरतो वा सङ्गरतो वा सङ्गविहीनः ।

यस्य ब्रह्मणि रमते चित्तं नन्दति नन्दति नन्दत्येव । ।

He who practices either concentration, indulges in sense enjoyment, or finds pleasure in company, or in solitude,
If his mind is occupied with Brahman, he alone is happy, happy, and revels indeed!

20. भगवद्गीता किञ्चिदधीता गङ्गाजललवकणिका पीता ।

सकृदपि येन मुरारिसमर्चा क्रियते तस्य यमेन न चचा । ।

If he has studied the Bhagavad Gita even a little, and drunk a drop of the Ganga water, and has performed the worship of the enemy of Mura (Shri Krishna) even once, he will have no discussion with Yama (the Lord of Death).

21. पुनरपि जननं पुनरपि मरणं पुनरपि जननीजठरे शयनम् ।

इह संसारे बहुदुस्तारे कृपायापारे पाहि मुरारे । ।

Repeated birth, repeated death, and repeated sleeping in the mother's womb
This transmigratory process (samsara) is extensive and difficult to cross,
Oh enemy of Mura (Shri Krishna), save me through your grace!

22. रथ्याचर्पटविरचितकन्थः पुण्यापुण्यविवर्जितपन्थः ।

योगी योगनियोजितचित्तो रमते बालोन्मत्तवदेव । ।

Wearing a dress created of rags that lie in the street and abandoning the path of merit or demerit,
The Yogi whose mind is fixed on Yoga revels (in Brahman) just as a child or as a mad man.

23. कस्त्वं कोऽहं कुत आयातः का मे जननी को मे तातः ।

इति परिभावय सर्वमसारं विश्वं त्यक्त्वा स्वप्नविचारम् । ।

Who are you? Who am I? Where do I come from? Who is my mother? Who is my father?
Thus, visualize, leaving aside the entire essenceless world, which is comparable to a dream..

24. त्वयि मयि चान्यत्रैको विष्णुर्व्यर्थं कुप्यसि मय्यसहिष्णुः ।

सर्वस्मिन्नपि पश्यात्मानं सर्वत्रोत्सृज भेदाज्ञानम् । ।

In you, in me, and elsewhere too, there is but one Vishnu (God). For no reason you get angry with me, being impatient.
See yourself in all things, and abandon everything of ignorance that causes difference.

25. शत्रौ मित्रे पुत्रे बन्धौ मा कुरु यत्नं विग्रहसन्धौ ।

भव समचित्तः सर्वत्र त्वं वाञ्छस्यचिराद्यदि विष्णुत्वम् । ।

Do not make any effort to either attack or in union with, enemies, friends, sons, or relatives.

If you wish to attain the status of Vishnu (Godliness) early, be equal - minded towards all beings

26. कामं क्रोधं लोभं मोहं त्यक्त्वाऽऽत्मानं भावय कोऽहम् ।

आत्मज्ञानविहीना मूढास्ते पच्यन्ते नरकनिगूढाः । ।

Leaving desire, anger, greed and delusion, inquire to yourself, who am I?
Without self-knowledge, they are fools who are cooked as captives in Naraka (Hell).

27. गेयं गीतानामसहस्रं ध्येयं श्रीपतिरूपमजस्रम् ।

नेयं सज्जनसङ्गे चित्तं देयं दीनजनाय च वित्तम् । ।

The Bhagavad Gita and the Sahasranama should be sung; the eternal form of the husband of Lakshmi (Vishnu) should be meditated upon;
The mind should be guided to the company of the good; and wealth should be given to the needy people

28. सुखतः क्रियते रामभोगः पश्चाद्धन्त शरीरे रोगः ।

यद्यपि लोके मरणं शरणं तदपि न मुञ्चति पापाचरणम् । ।

Easily one takes to enjoying women and afterwards the body becomes diseased.
In this world although death is the final refuge, even then one does not relinquish sinful ways.

29. अर्थमनर्थं भावयन्तित्यं नास्ति ततः सुखलेशः सत्यम् ।

पुत्रादपि धनभाजां भीतिः सर्वत्रिषा विहिता रीतिः । ।

Wealth causes ruin: Reflect this always. Verily, there is not the least happiness from it:
There is fear even from the son for the wealthy; everywhere this is the regular rule.

30. प्राणायामं प्रत्याहारं नित्यानित्यविवेकविचारम् ।

जाप्यसमेतसमाधिविधानं कुर्ववधानं महदवधानम् । ।

Breath regulation, sense control (from their respective objects), the inquiry into the discrimination between the eternal and the transient, and meditation with chanting of mantras should be performed with great reverence and care.

31. गुरुचरणाम्बुजनिर्भरभक्तः संसारादचिराद्भव मुक्तः ।

सेन्द्रियमानसनियमादेवं द्रक्ष्यसि निजयहृदयस्थं देवम् । ।

Being devoted without reservation to the lotus-feet of the Guru, become released soon from the samsara (transmigratory process).
Thus, through the discipline of sense and mind-control, you will behold the Godliness that lives in your heart.

आदिशङ्कराचार्यस्य भजगोविन्दम्
बालकृष्ण शर्मणा विरचितम्
शुभम्