

## Instructions of Lord Rāma from the Kiṣkindhā Kāṇḍa of the Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa in Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa

---

After Rāma killed the lord of Tārā, the vānara chief Vālī, she was overcome by sorrow and begged Rāma to end her life too as He did Vālī's. But Rāma consoled her with words filled with wisdom and compassion. Thereafter, Tārā, desirous of knowing more about jīva and ātman (the Self), questioned Rāma as follows:

देहोऽचित्काष्ठवद्राम जीवो नित्यश्चिदात्मकः ।  
सुखदुःखादिसम्बन्धः कस्य स्याद्राम मे वद ॥

deho'citkāṣṭhavadrāma jīvo nityaścidātmakaḥ |  
sukhaduḥkhkādisambandhaḥ kasya syādrāma me vada ||

*O Rāma! The body is without consciousness (insentient) just like a piece of wood. But the jīva (individual soul) is eternal and of the nature of Consciousness. Whose is this relation to happiness and sorrow? Please tell me, O Rāma!*

श्रीराम उवाच ।  
अहङ्कारादिसम्बन्धो यावद्देहेन्द्रियैः सह ।  
संसारस्तावदेव स्यादात्मनस्त्वविवेकिनः ॥

śrīrāma uvāca |  
ahaṅkāradisambandho yāvaddehendriyaiḥ saha |  
saṁsārastāvadeva syādātmanastvavivekinaḥ ||

*Śrīrāma said:*

*As long as there is the relation of "I and mine" with the body and senses, there will exist saṁsāra (phenomenal existence) for the person who lacks viveka (discrimination between eternal and non-eternal things).*

मिथ्यारोपितसंसारो न स्वयं विनिवर्तते ।  
विषया ध्यायमानस्य स्वप्ने मिथ्यागमो यथा ॥

mithyāropitasamsāro na svayaṁ vinivartate |  
viṣayā dhyāyamānasya swapne mithyāgamo yathā ||

*This saṁsāra is falsely superimposed (on the Self) and does not go away on its own for a person who broods over the objects of the senses. This saṁsāra is just like a dream which too does not end on its own (but ends when one wakes up.)*

अनाद्यविद्यासम्बन्धात्तत्कार्याहङ्कृतेस्तथा ।  
संसारोऽपार्थकोऽपि स्याद्रागद्वेषादिसङ्कुलः ॥

anādyavidyāsambandhāttatkāryāhaṅkṛtestathā |  
saṁsāro'pārthako'pi syādrāgadveṣādisaṅkulaḥ ||

*By the relation (association) with beginningless avidyā (ajñāna, ignorance) and with the effect of avidyā – ahaṅkāra (ego), the saṁsāra, characterized by attractions and aversions, exists even though it is meaningless.*

मन एव हि संसारो बन्धश्चैव मनः शुभे ।  
आत्मा मनः समानत्वमेत्य तद्रतबन्धभाक् ॥

mana eva hi saṁsāro bandhaścaiva manaḥ śubhe |  
ātmā manaḥ samānatvametya tadgatabandhabhāk ||

*The mind (manas) alone is (subject to) saṁsāra and bondage, O Auspicious One! The ātman gets identified with the mind and shares the bonds affecting the mind.*

यदा विशुद्धः स्फटिकोऽलक्तकादिसमीपगः ।  
तत्तद्वर्णयुगाभाति वस्तुतो नास्ति रञ्जनम् ॥

yadā viśuddhaḥ sphaṭiko'laktakādisamīpagah |  
tattadvarṇayugābhāti vastuto nāsti rañjanam ||

*Just as a clear crystal placed near red dye, etc., appears to be tainted with colour, but in reality there is no stain (in the crystal),...*

बुद्धीन्द्रियादिसामीप्यादात्मनः संसृतिर्बलात् ।  
आत्मा स्वलिङ्गं तु मनः परिगृह्य तदुद्भवान् ॥  
कामान् जुषन् गुणैर्बद्धः संसारे वर्ततेऽवशः ।  
आदौ मनोगुणान् सृष्ट्वा ततः कर्माण्यनेकधा ॥  
शुक्लोहितकृष्णानि गतयस्तत्समानतः ।  
एवं कर्मवशाज्जीवो भ्रमत्याभूतसम्प्लवम् ॥

buddhīndriyādisāmīpyādātmanah saṁsṛtirbalāt |  
ātmā svaliṅgam tu manah parigrhya tadudbhavān ||  
kāmaṇ juṣaṇ guṇairbaddhaḥ saṁsāre vartate'vaśaḥ |  
ādaу manoguṇān sṛṣṭvā tataḥ karmaṇyanekadhā ||  
śuklalohitakṛṣṇāni gatayastatsamānataḥ |  
evaṁ karmavaśāj्jīvo bhramatyābhūtasamplavam ||

*... (So) due to the proximity of the ātman with the intellect (buddhi), senses, etc., It (ātman) is forced into saṁsāra. The ātman identifies Itself with Its own reflection (in) the Manas, and enjoys the desires arising from that (i.e. the mind). It (the ātman) thus becomes bound by the guṇas (qualities) and remains helpless in saṁsāra. First the mind creates the guṇas white (sattva), red (rajas), and black (tamas), and then creates the works and their results according to those guṇas. Thus, under the control of karma, the jīva revolves (in the cycle of transmigration, i.e. repeated births and deaths), from the beginning of creation to the end of the cosmic cycle (pralaya).*

सर्वोपसंहृतौ जीवो वासनाभिः स्वकर्मभिः ।  
अनाद्यविद्यावशगस्तिष्ठत्यभिनिवेशतः ॥

sarvopasaṁhṛtau jīvo vāsanābhiḥ svakarmabhiḥ |  
anādyavidyāvāśagastiṣṭhatyabhiniveśataḥ ||

*When the whole cosmic cycle winds up, the jīva along with its latent tendencies (vāsanās) and karmas (which are yet to fructify) remains submerged in the beginningless avidyā (ignorance) and under its control.*

सृष्टिकाले पुनः पूर्ववासनामानसैः सह ।  
जायते पुनरप्येयं घटीयन्त्रमिवावशः ॥

sṛṣṭikāle punaḥ pūrvavāsanāmānasaiḥ saha |  
jāyate punarapyeyaṁ ghaṭīyantramivāvaśaḥ ||

*At the time of the cosmic creation, this jīva, once again, is born along with its prior vāsanās and the mind. The jīva thus keeps revolving in saṁsāra helplessly like the bucket that is used to draw water from a well.*

The simile here is explained as follows. In India, where there is only well water available, but no electricity, water is lifted out of the well by means of a bucket attached to a rope. Just as the bucket is repeatedly immersed in water and then pulled out to draw water, the jīva too revolves in the universe alternating between being submerged in avidyā with its latent vāsanās and karmas, and being thrust into the transmigratory process again at the time of cosmic creation.

Up to this point Śrīrāma explained, like a true Guru would, the process of superimposition, known as adhyāropa or adhyāsa, of the non-Self consisting of the body, senses, etc. on the ātman (Self), caused by avidyā or ajñāna. Ācārya Śaṅkara deals with and explains this adhyāsa right in his introduction to the commentary on the Brahma Sūtras.

Next, Śrīrāma proceeds to explain and remove by His grace, this avidyā that is afflicting Tārā. Such removal of avidyā is

called apavāda. This adhyāropa-apavāda technique is adopted by a Guru or by the śruti with the aim of removal of the veil of ajñāna. There is no other purpose of such instructions. Surely, all instructions, be they from a Guru or God or śruti, cannot give us the Self; the Self is something that we always have. Nobody can give It to us as a gift or boon.

But somehow we are unable to ascertain or realize the Self fully, due to avidyā or ignorance. So it must necessarily be the case that all instructions serve the purpose of only removing this ignorance. The Self then reveals Itself and shines in all Its glory, just as the sun shines brilliantly when all clouds that were obscuring it have disappeared.

More specifically, Rāma next explains how the jīva caught up in saṁsāra gets liberated by first becoming pure in mind by bhakti, and then getting the intuitive understanding of the Self.

(Śrīrāma said:)

यदा पुण्यविशेषेण लभते सङ्गतिं सताम् ।  
मद्भक्तानां सुशान्तानां तदा मद्विषया मतिः ॥

yadā puṇyaviśeṣeṇa labhate saṅgatiṁ satām |  
madbhaktānām suśāntānām tadā madviṣayā matiḥ ||

*As a result of merit (puṇya), when (the jīva) earns the company of My pious and peaceful devotees, then he/she turns the mind towards Me.*

मत्कथाश्रवणे श्रद्धा दुर्लभा जायते ततः ।  
ततः स्वरूपविज्ञानमनायासेन जायते ॥

matkathāśravaṇe śraddhā durlabhā jāyate tataḥ |  
tataḥ svarūpavijñānamanāyāsena jāyate ||

*Afterwards, he/she gains faith in listening to My glories, which faith is hard to obtain. Then the true knowledge of his/her real nature dawns without any effort.*

तदाचार्यप्रसादेन वाक्यार्थज्ञानतः क्षणात् ।  
देहेन्द्रियमनः प्राणाहङ्कृतिभ्यः पृथक्स्थितम् ॥  
स्वात्मानुभवतः सत्यमानन्दात्मानमद्वयम् ।  
ज्ञात्वा सद्यो भवेन्मुक्तः सत्यमेव मयोदितम् ॥

tadācāryaprasādena vākyaṛthajñānataḥ kṣaṇāt |  
dehendriyamaṇaḥ prāṇahankṛtibhyaḥ pṛthaksthitaṁ ||  
svātmānubhavataḥ satyamānandātmānamadvayaṁ |  
jñātvā sadyo bhavenmuktaḥ satyameva mayoditaṁ ||

*Afterwards, by the grace of the Guru, he realizes the true import of the (Vedic) sentences (such as “tattvamasi”) instantly. Experiencing firsthand the nondual ātman that is the Truth and Bliss, different from the body, senses, mind, prāṇa (vital airs), and the ego, he is liberated immediately (sadyomuktiḥ). What I have told you is the truth.*

एवं मयोदितं सम्यगालोचयति योऽनिशम् ।  
तस्य संसारदुःखानि न स्पृशन्ति कदाचन ॥

evaṁ mayoditaṁ samyagālocayati yo’niśaṁ |  
tasya saṁsāraduḥkhāni na spr̥śanti kadācana ||

*Anyone who incessantly contemplates on these sayings of Mine correctly, will never be affected by the sorrows of saṁsāra.*

त्वमप्येतन्मया प्रोक्तमालोचय विशुद्धधीः ।  
न स्पृश्यसे दुःखजालैः कर्मबन्धाद्विमोक्ष्यसे ॥

tvamapyetanmayā proktaṁālocaya viśuddhadhīḥ |  
na spr̥śyase duḥkhajālaiḥ karmabandhādvimokṣyase ||

*(O Tārā!) You too contemplate on these teachings of Mine with a pure mind. You will not be affected by the snare of sorrows and you will be liberated from the bonds of karma.*

पूर्वजन्मनि ते सुभ्रू कृता मद्भक्तिरुत्तमा ।  
अतस्तव विमोक्षाय रूपं मे दर्शितं शुभे ॥

pūrvajanmani te subhrū kṛtā madbhaktiruttamā |  
atastava vimokṣāya rūpaṁ me darśitaṁ śubhe ||

*O Beautiful Lady! In your previous birth you had practised staunch devotion to Me. (Pleased with) that I have shown you My form so that you may be liberated, O Auspicious Lady!*

ध्यात्वा मद्रूपमनिशमालोचय मयोदितम् ।  
प्रवाहपतितं कार्यं कुर्वन्त्यपि न लिप्यते ॥

dhyātvā madrūpamaniśamālocaya mayoditam |  
pravāhapatitaṁ kāryaṁ kurvantyapi na lipyate ||

*Meditate on My form always, thinking about what I have said. Even if you are engaged in activities that you may do due to the force of saṁsāra, you will not be bound by them and you will not be affected.*

श्रीरामेणोदितं सर्वं श्रुत्वा तारातिविस्मिता ।  
देहाभिमानजं शोकं त्यक्त्वा नत्वा रघूत्तमम् ॥

आत्मानुभवसन्तुष्टा जीवनमुक्ता बभूव ह ।  
क्षणसङ्गममात्रेण रामेण परमात्मना ॥

अनादिबन्धं निर्धूय मुक्ता सापि विकल्मषा ॥

śrīrāmeṇoditaṁ sarvaṁ śrutvā tārativismitā |  
dehābhimānajaṁ śokaṁ tyaktvā natvā raghūttamaṁ ||  
ātmānubhavasantuṣṭā jīvanmuktā babhūva ha |  
kṣaṇasaṅgamamātreṇa rāmeṇa paramātmanā ||

anādibandham nirdhūya muktā sāpi vikalmaṣā ||

*After listening to everything that Śrīrāma said with great amazement, Tārā gave up the sorrow that had arisen due to her identification with the body. She prostrated herself before Rāma, the best of Raghu's clan. Being filled with the Bliss of Self-realization, she indeed became a jīvanmuktā, liberated then and there while still alive. She became liberated from the bonds of the beginningless avidyā and from all impurity. She could become liberated thus because she had the association of Śrīrāma, the Supreme Self, for just a few moments!*

सुग्रीवोऽपि च तत् श्रुत्वा रामवक्त्रात्समीरितम् ।  
जहावज्ञानमखिलं स्वस्थचित्तोऽभवत्तदा ॥

sugrīvo'pi ca tat śrutvā rāmavaktrātsamīritam |  
jahāvajñānamakhilam svasthacitto'bhavattadā ||

*Sugrīva too who heard what Śrīrāma said, gave up all his ignorance and his mind became calm.*

Śrīrāma says that by learning the true import of the Vedic sentences through a Guru, one becomes a jīvanmukta. But, as may be noted, Tārā did not have to actually learn the import of such Vedic sayings. Yet she became a jīvanmukta by means of her devotion to Rāma, that she had shown not so much in her present birth but in her previous birth.



Compiled and translated from Sanskrit by  
Shri Anand Hudli,  
anandhudli@hotmail.com

