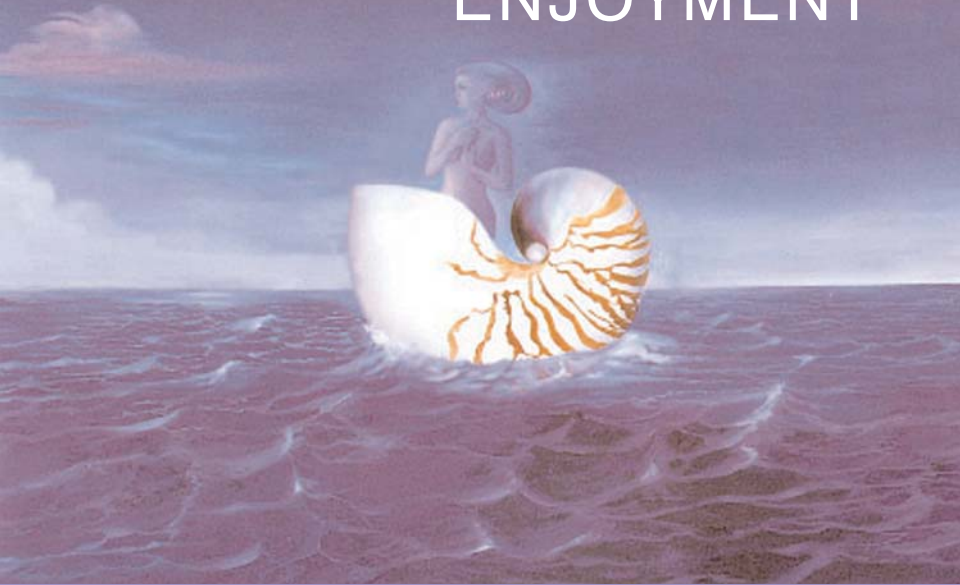




Beyond ENJOYMENT



Presented by
NANDA KISHOR DASA
in the service of gurn and gauranga

Beyond ENJOYMENT



*Any success of this booklet is due to the causeless mercy of my
spiritual master*

OM VISNUPADA PARAMAHAMSA PARIVRAJAKACARYA
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Introduction

The purpose of this small booklet is to outline three distinct paths that people follow in order to achieve happiness in life. Most people seek pleasure from what is in front of them, in other words in the external world of objects and by satisfying the bodily demands for all kinds of pleasure. The second proposition is to renounce the external material world completely and take shelter of the peace found within one's soul. And the third, much more rarely followed path is that by which the awakened soul seeks his eternal relationship with God.

The following simple story illustrates that seekers of any of these goals requires one to follow a specific process, just as if we choose to be a lawyer we must qualify by studying certain texts and going through the proper channels to achieve our qualification.

Beyond Enjoyment

CAN YOU SHOW ME GOD ?

Once in India there was a king who desired to see God. Calling for his chief minister, he asked, “Can you show me God? And can you clearly tell me what God is doing?” The minister, although highly learned, could not immediately think of an appropriate answer to the King’s question, so he requested the King to grant him three days in which to determine a suitable reply. The King agreed, but cautioned him that an unsatisfactory answer would drastically reduce his faith in him as a minister.

The minister returned to his residence and with much intensity researched all the books in his library with the hope of finding an acceptable answer to the king’s question. Two days later, he had not met with success. As he sat lamenting in his library, his five-year old son wandered over to him. “Father, why do you look so unhappy?”

“I am unable to find a reasonable answer to a question

the King has asked me and as a result, I may lose my post in the court.”

“What was the king’s question?” the boy inquired.

“It is too lofty a question for you to understand, my son. Don’t worry your little mind about it.”

His son was persistent, however, and finally the minister told him. “The King wants to see God and know what He is doing. I have scrutinised all the scriptures but cannot find a conclusive answer to this question.”

The small boy smiled sweetly and replied “Father, this is so simple. When you go to court tomorrow tell the King that the answer to this question is so easy that even your small son can tell him how to see God and explain what He is doing.” The forlorn minister looked at his son in disbelief, but his son assured him saying “Don’t worry Father, I promise I will not let you down.”

The minister, now desperate, had no alternative but to place his hope and faith in his small boy. The next morning they went to royal court together. The King received his minister and again inquired, “My dear minister, can you show me God and tell me what He is doing?”

The minister humbly replied, “Oh King, this question is so simple that even my small son can answer it.”

Although he was surprised, the King turned to the boy and said, “Very good. Well, my dear boy, can you show me God and tell me what He is doing?”

The small boy said “Dear King, please bring me a large pot of milk.”

The king, although somewhat taken aback at this request, complied.

“My dear king, is butter in this milk?” the boy asked.

The king thought for a moment. “Yes, of course there is butter in the milk,” he said.

“Then can you show it to me?” inquired the small boy.

“Yes,” replied the King, “but in order for the butter to be seen first we must churn it.”

“Exactly” replied the boy “Similarly, there is a process by which we can see God. When we follow that divine process God will surely manifest before us. Without this process of devout practice, God will be hidden from our direct sight, just as butter is hidden within milk until the milk is churned.”

The King was fully satisfied upon hearing this wonderfully logical explanation, and asked the minister’s son his second question. “Now, then, can you tell me what God is doing?”

“Well,” said the small boy, “you are inquiring from me just as a student inquires from his guru, but you are sitting upon a high throne and I am sitting before you on the ground. According to etiquette you should be sitting in the humble position and I should be sitting on the elevated seat.”

Seeing the truth in the boy's words, the king rose from his throne and seated himself on the floor. The small boy ascended the throne.

“And this is what God is doing,” said the boy “Sometimes He puts us in a high position and sometimes in a low one, according to the results of our activities. Sometimes we take a seemingly exalted birth and sometimes we take a lowly one. God is arranging these changes and awarding these different results. This is what He is doing.” The King was so satisfied with these answers that he proclaimed these truths throughout his kingdom. He handsomely rewarded the minister and his brilliant son with many valuable gifts.

SO WHERE ARE WE TO PLACE OUR LOVE AND TRUST?

As in the story, we understand the need to follow a process to achieve our goal, but the next question is how are we to decide which process to follow?

We all are guided and follow some sort of instruction through life. Social customs, national laws, national sentiments and parental instructions govern us. In our educational years our teachers guide us. We adhere to traditional values, and we accept the knowledge presented in various textbooks. If we choose not to listen to any of these

guides and instead listen to our flickering minds, we may find ourselves in a position where we are condemned by the administrating government and dealt with accordingly.

We are free souls in the sense that we are free to choose which authority we want to place our love and trust in.

It is only really worth following the purest knowledge and the highest authority because only they can successfully guide us to a higher, more peaceful state of consciousness. Philosophers throughout the ages have presented numerous solutions to life's difficulties. As astute as their philosophies may be, none of them have offered a path as conclusive or as broad as the path presented in India's ancient Vedic scriptures. From these scriptures we find that all other philosophies and religions of the world have their roots. The original language of the Vedas is Sanskrit, which is understood to be the most ancient language. For millions of years, since the very beginning of time, these scriptures, which have their origin in God Himself, have been carefully passed down, and unchanged, from teacher to student. It is from these very scriptures that we will now present an analysis of the highest goal to be attained by a human being, a destination well beyond all the inebriates of this world.

The Vedic scriptures have analysed that all persons, consciously or unconsciously, pursue one of three goals. These three goals and the practices required to achieve

them are clearly described as follows:

- 1) Most of us are following a path by which we hope to attain happiness through satisfying our material senses. Such material external enjoyment is called *bhukti* in the language of the Vedic scriptures, Sanskrit.
- 2) A few of us pursue the path of liberation from the sufferings of this world desiring to taste the pleasures of our inner self. This liberation is called *mukti*.
- 3) Fewer still yearn to serve God, with pure, loving devotion. This devotional service is called *bhakti*, or bhakti-yoga, which literally means, “*linking with the Supreme Person*”.

If we carefully contemplate the above analysis, we will appreciate that every human being is striving to achieve one of these goals.

CAN MATERIAL GAIN BRING THE MOST HAPPINESS?

To achieve happiness through material prosperity is the first and most popular goal of life mentioned in the Vedic scriptures. By acquiring wealth, fame or sensual pleasure we strive to enjoy our lives in this world of physical experience. Anyone in this world can acquire all such temporary, material pleasures if his ambition is sufficiently

intense, and the Vedic scriptures clearly give the process to achieve this. These scriptures are compared to a wish-fulfilling cow that can fulfil all of our desires. There are specific scriptures that deal exclusively with helping persons thus inclined to achieve these material objectives. These scriptures delineate every variety of material pleasure that we could possibly strive to attain, pleasures found not only on this planet, but on higher planets also.

Many of us in this world, who have not been fortunate enough to hear about higher, spiritual goals, will naturally seek the gross pleasures of the body and basic sensual enjoyment. This material world is designed to facilitate such enjoyment through the material senses, such as the eyes, tongue, ears, belly and genitals. Chasing these flickering pleasures is occupying the minds of most of the world today. But what is the level of success achieved by anyone? Do we know anyone who is happy all the time? Sometimes people are so oppressed by material miseries they can only think of basic survival needs, food clothing and shelter; still they will experience some happiness on attaining a loaf of bread, for instance. A wealthy man may experience the same degree of happiness by purchasing a new yacht. Both rich and poor alike enjoy the same movies or television shows. Ultimately the happiness of a wealthy man is not greater than that of a poor man. Unfortunately whichever situation we find ourselves

in life we want to increase our happiness; we can very seldom be satisfied with the way things simply are. The reason for this is that fundamentally we can never satisfy the material body and senses, because they are not eternal and will perish sooner or later. But the soul, which is our real identity, is eternal and is prompting us to go deeper within ourselves to connect with our higher natures. Only in that realm may we find some real happiness.

MATERIAL GAINS ARE NOT THE ULTIMATE PATH

By good fortune, some begin to understand the futility of chasing such ephemeral material goals and begin to inquire and seek some authority that may help and guide them to a deeper level of awareness. At this time one may hear scriptures such as the Bhagavad-Gita that explain, “An intelligent person does not take part in the sources of misery, which are due to contact with the material senses. O son of Kunti, such pleasures have a beginning and an end, and so the wise man does not delight in them.”

Realising that our pursuit of material pleasure will not actually bring any real, lasting happiness, a desire may enter our hearts to become completely freed these nagging material desires. We therefore seek liberation from this cycle of constant activity in which all of our activities create pleasurable and unpleasurable consequences. For

every action there is an equal and opposite reaction, just as a pendulum swinging one way must eventually swing the other way. For whatever seemingly happy state we may achieve a miserable one is never far behind it. Just as we see a small child is happy one minute and crying the next. Even if our performance of worthy acts brings some pleasurable results, the happiness we experience will only be temporary, and when that passes again misery ensues. We thus conclude that liberation from this cycle of performing actions and receiving their reactions is the only goal worth pursuing and that the material external path does not bring any lasting pleasure and is simply a cause of actual bondage.

Whatever is subject to decay is material, not spiritual. Material gain only ever brings temporary, flickering happiness. The Vedic scriptures inform us that we are more than just these temporary bodies; we are the eternally blissful souls within these bodies. Temporary external pleasures, therefore, will not be able to bring us (the soul) any real happiness.

If we simply contemplate these topics our outlook will be broadened, and we may choose to turn to a path of inward contemplation. As intelligent beings why should we settle for less?

THE PATH OF LIBERATION

Why does no one wish to die? The Vedic scriptures state that by nature the soul is eternal and therefore never dies. They also proclaim that the soul is full of bliss, so it is inherent within our minds to seek out our higher real nature, which is our real wealth.

The nature of the soul is to peacefully reside in the eternal present, becoming free from the dualities of past and future and the burden of material desires. The nature of the uncontrolled mind though is exactly the opposite. It is always restless and full of desires, making so many plans for our future enjoyment. Therefore the path of liberation from the sufferings and sorrows of worldly life appears very attractive. In fact millions of us pursue this goal and often perform rigorous practices to attain its end.

Liberation from the cycle of activities and the resultant effects are certainly a higher and nobler goal to pursue than the path of endeavouring to enjoy material pleasures. To be liberated from trying to enjoy the material world is an eternal aspect of the soul. It can be obtained by following four types of practices:

1. To discriminate between what is temporary, or perishable, and what is eternal, or spiritual.
2. To renounce the desire for the temporary rewards and

pleasures of this world and even those of the higher planets (which have been clearly described in the Vedas).

3. To develop control of the mind and senses.

4. To attentively cultivate the desire to become a liberated person.

As we said earlier the Vedic scriptures are like a wish-fulfilling cow that can give us anything at all we may desire. They illuminate life's different goals and clearly define the practical method to achieve those goals.

Liberation has been described as a state of purified consciousness wherein the soul realises his individual nature. He thus becomes self-realised. The nature of the liberated soul is to be completely self-satisfied and fulfilled. He resides internally in a blissful state. He is beyond and freed from any desire to enjoy anything within this world.

One can imagine such a state of consciousness with the use of a material example. Suppose we have just completed eating a healthy meal. As we lie back on a comfortable bed and peacefully enjoy the company of our family members, all of our senses feel satisfied. Because they are pacified at this point, our consciousness is able (because we were not suffering) to dwell in the present moment. We are neither hankering nor making plans to achieve some future happiness, nor are we remembering

anything from the past. Instead we are relishing the present moment by experiencing some cessation from suffering in the material world. The inward “thought generator,” the talkative demanding mind, has been momentarily switched off. In this condition we consider ourselves to be happy or peaceful. Such a condition is likened to the consciousness of one who is liberated from desires, because momentarily he has no desires. Being satisfied we appreciate for a moment the essential present. This example is mundane, because the moment of satisfaction is flickering and brief. That fortunate soul, however, who has achieved liberation from the bondage of material desires experiences a satisfaction millions of times more blissful than this. Furthermore, that bliss is of an everlasting nature.

CONTEMPLATING TIME

Within this world there are three stages of time: past, present and future. Generally we find it difficult to reside in the present moment because it is too painful, being filled with the harsh “close up” of our seemingly overwhelming responsibilities. Also the suffering of various inevitable miseries caused by others, or by adverse weather conditions or simply by our own minds. We usually imagine there to be a happier situation further on in life

than this present difficult one, so the mind will reach out to conceive of a plan, a future dream, to escape this present unhappy condition. The mind's constant engagement is contemplating how to manipulate the material situation to our advantage, how to exploit external resources for our own personal satisfaction. The mind only wants to enjoy. All of us want to enjoy—it is our nature—and throughout our lives we try to solve the mystery of not just how this can be done, but how to enjoy at every moment. This is our constant struggle.

The nature of the material mind and that of the spiritual soul are quite different. The mind is only an instrument for reaching the soul. The soul has no desires to fulfil and is always joyful, whereas the mind is the opposite being full of desires. Since, in this material state of consciousness we tend to identify more with the mind than with the soul, we suffer frustration when these desires are not fulfilled. Only then, and only if we are fortunate, do we begin to grasp the concept that there is a deeper truth. At this time one turns inward towards the light of the soul.

BEYOND LIBERATION

Now, at this point in our development we find an amazing concept to consider. The scriptures encourage us to journey deeper still into a higher state of consciousness

that is even beyond this apparently blissful state of liberation from this world. In fact being free from all the sufferings is only the negative aspect of real liberation. The positive aspect is that the opportunity to develop a deeper loving relationship with God is available. If in this state of liberation we still retain our previous identity as people of this world, and not that of a pure servant of God then we have not reached our final destination. This type of liberation is known as “impersonal liberation.” Hence, this type of liberation is not the highest position to aim for.

The cessation of all material suffering is the negative aspect of highest joy. The highest joy is in fact the awakening of our original relationship with God Himself in a loving affectionate way. The bliss derived from impersonal liberation is limited because the soul is only relishing a relationship with himself. This is something of a miserly affair where loving service to another being is not an important consideration. We have only tapped a blissful aspect of our inner self, not accessed the full—blown ecstasy of a loving relationship with the supreme soul.

The highest joy attainable is described as a pure loving relationship with God Himself. Millions of songs glorify the sweetness of relationships in this world, but neither the songs nor the flickering “loving” moments they describe seem to last. And even if they seem to, they are always finally terminated by inevitable death. The soul

constantly craves a more enduring, relationship to be fully satisfied.

Any loving relationship requires the participation of two persons. The word “love” is a verb, which means it has an active principal, to love someone or something. One type of bliss is the soul’s experience of joyous freedom from worldly sorrow. But a greater source of bliss comes from the soul reawakening his eternal loving relationship with God. This bliss has no boundaries at all.

WHAT IS TRUE LOVE?

Since the beginning of time, the soul has been crying piteously for love and affection. Love is the most powerful force in the universe, and we all crave to taste it somehow or other. We don’t want to just experience it, but relish it forever. This, in fact, is our birthright. We can experience so much of life but our most central need, the need to be loved, remains unfulfilled. Love’s power is unimaginable. The attraction of love is the most fundamental element found in every circumstance in this world. All else can be eliminated and forgotten if we come in touch with true love and affection. When one questions or challenges the principal of love one will have to accept defeat. It is the most substantial principal.

The key to understanding the difference between the

two types of bliss mentioned, impersonal liberation and devotion to God, is to appreciate the nature of love. “To love” is a verb, so it follows that we will consider whom to love. The bliss derived upon attaining impersonal liberation is only a cessation of misery, which provides a peaceful state of consciousness, free from gross material desires. It cannot be called love, or really have anything to do with love. In this state the heartfelt warmth of a loving relationship does not exist. That highest state of absolute pure love can only truly exist between the soul and God, which are both eternal personalities.

Our Western conditioning has denied us an acceptance of the personal form of God. This is because in the West man seeks his own power and glory in an endeavour to usurp the rightful place in our lives of that most wonderful personality, God. This misfortune has led us away from a spiritual, theistic path into an atheistic one where all—dominating love has been replaced by all—dominating fear. The inquiring soul, however, can only be misled and misguided for so long until he again raises his head to inquire as to the reality of eternal love.

THE PATH OF DIVINE LOVE

This path of devotion, or loving service to God (*bhakti*), has been thoroughly described by the Vedic scriptures.

The sages of the past understood man's heartfelt needs and have clearly shown how we can fully achieve complete satisfaction by again linking with our supreme master and beloved Lord. In the story of the King who wanted to see God, the King was asked if there was butter in the milk. He replied, "Yes, but a process must be followed." Similarly, if we desire to reawaken our eternal relationship with God we must follow the process outlined by the sages and follow their instructions. Without this divine instruction we can never awaken our spiritual relationship. It cannot be done on the strength of our own efforts. Strength other than that of this world is required.

WHERE TO FIND THAT STRENGTH?

To tread this exalted path we will need knowledge and strength from someone who is already situated on it. Just as a man who has fallen into a deep well can only be saved by one who is himself free and can lower us a rope being fixed himself on the safe, firm ground above. Similarly, we can only be saved from our suffering condition by one who understands and knows these essential truths of life. There is, in fact, no other way out of our dilemma! We must make it our priority to find such a person. With this desire in our hearts for sure that representative of God

will quickly come to us. Our only requirement is to be greedy enough to meet such a personality.

WHO CAN WE LOVE AND HAVE A RELATIONSHIP WITH?

The scriptures describe the name of Krishna to be the topmost name of God. Krishna literally means “the most attractive one”. This name gives us an understanding of His personality. Although Krishna is the cause of everything and the supreme ultimate truth, in His eternal spiritual realm Krishna relishes astonishingly affectionate relationships with an enormous number of family members and friends in the most beautiful and charming of all His abodes, Vrindavan. These eternal friends and relatives are with Him when He performs various amorous activities that are so wonderful they stun the mind and heart. These activities have been elaborately described by great personalities who in their meditation have witnessed these wonderful exchanges of loving affection between Krishna and those very close to Him.

Our eternal home is in this spiritual world with Krishna. There we experience the highest bliss and the most powerful and ecstatic sense of self in our eternal relationship with Him. Those who aspire for impersonal liberation ultimately aspire to be Krishna Himself, but that can

never be possible, just as you can never be me and I can never be you. The bliss of impersonal liberation is self-centred and without any personal exchanges it is thus limited. When, however, we enter a loving relationship with Krishna in a sincere mood of rendering service to Him, the bliss we experience is boundless. The goal of all our practices is to reawaken our dormant consciousness; that is, our true nature as Krishna's eternal loving servant.

By reading about Him and hearing about Him from others, especially those who are in knowledge of His glorious qualities, we will be constantly inspired to come closer and closer to Him. Then, at the time death when we leave this body, we can go to Him forever.

HOW TO MEDITATE

We are most fortunate that in this present age the process prescribed to attain that blissful relationship with realisation is simply to chant Krishna's holy names. Within these names He has implanted all His power and energy, as well as the opportunity for us to have the most fulfilling relationship with Him. This process is transcendental and as faith in it grows, the power of the holy name will illuminate our consciousness. We can, in fact, achieve any of the three goals described above simply by chanting. If you are not convinced of this, try it personally and taste

the effect of the chanting for yourself. The most powerful names of God in this universe are called the “*maha mantra*” (the great mantra of deliverance). By chanting this *mantra*, the process of linking ourselves with God forever, begins. It is as follows:

**Hare Krishna Hare Krishna
Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama
Rama Rama Hare Hare**

If we practise chanting this we will most certainly experience a higher state of consciousness. Although careful, meditative chanting is recommended, the chanting of it anytime, anywhere and in any condition will bring increasing bliss. This chanting when combined with the guidance of scripture and from those, whose loving relationship with Krishna is already developed, is assured to transport us into an ocean of love.

There are many names of God, such as Jehovah, Allah, Buddha, Yahweh, Rama and Krishna. Of these holy names the Vedic scriptures describe Krishna and Rama as the most prominent and the best names to chant for the greatest results.

CONCLUSION

Our aim and object in life is to become fully happy. The essential nature of the soul is to enjoy. We try to achieve this goal through three processes:

- 1) We will try to enjoy through our gross material senses;
- 2) Through our subtle senses by trying to become liberated;
- 3) Or by reawakening our original natures and offering our service and hearts to God, Krishna.

These three paths individually do not ultimately lead to the same goal. The first two paths, namely that of enjoying with the material senses and that of impersonal liberation, will not necessarily lead us to the third and highest truth, that of engaging in a pure unalloyed loving relationship with Krishna Himself.

The degree of pleasure derived from the first path is minuscule compared to the second one. And on the scale of bliss the second path does not even register when compared to the bliss of the third path, in which we reawaken our loving relationship with Krishna, God Himself. The truth of this can only be understood and realised by the practitioner.

The information provided in this little booklet is a fraction of the vast amount of knowledge available in the Vedic literatures. Here we have described a small portion of it in very simple words, but if, as a result of reading this, you have been inspired to inquire further from persons dedicated to serving Krishna, this booklet will be a success.

If you would like more information on these fascinating topics, the Hare Krishna movement has translated many of these literatures into English, as well as so many other languages, for our eternal benefit. These books are available everywhere; you only need to desire one. As if by magic, it will very quickly arrive in your hands.

Hare Krishna

