



Reach

Oz Mountain, Glenlee, NSW

SAYINGS AND TEACHINGS

Sri Ramakrishna on Positive Thinking

He who thinks that he is a Jiva (bound human), verily remains as a Jiva; but he who considers himself to be God, verily becomes a God. As one thinks, so does one become.

Source: *Great Sayings: Words of Sri Ramakrishna, Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda*; The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture; Calcutta; page 6.

Sri Sarada Devi on Helping Erring Humans

To err is human; but how few know (how) to lead an erring man (person).

Source: *Great Sayings: Words of Sri Ramakrishna, Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda*; The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture; Calcutta; page 23.

Swami Vivekananda on Women

Women must be put in a position to solve their own problems in their own way. No one can or ought to do this for them. And our Indian women are as capable of doing it as any in the world.

Source: *Great Sayings: Words of Sri Ramakrishna, Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda*; The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture; Calcutta; page 40.

IN THIS ISSUE

1. News from Australian Centres

- ◆ Adelaide
- ◆ Brisbane
- ◆ Canberra
- ◆ Melbourne
- ◆ Perth
- ◆ Sydney

2. Bhakti Yoga: Prayer and Definition of Bhakti

We welcome you all to the Vedanta Movement in Australia, as epitomized in the lives of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda, and invite you to involve yourselves and actively participate in the propagation of the Universal Message of Vedanta.

1. NEWS FROM AUSTRALIAN CENTRES 11 JUNE 2024 TO 10 SEPTEMBER 2024

ADELAIDE

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Daily Activities

- The Centre functioned from 7.30am-12.30pm and 4.00pm-8.00pm. The evening vesper service to Sri Ramakrishna was performed from 7.00-7.30 pm followed by bhajans, devotional reading and meditation.

Regular Activities

- Observance of *ekadasi* with *Ramanama Sankirtana* every lunar fortnight.
- Swami Manyananda conducted a class on the *Vedanta Sara* or 'Fundamentals of Vedanta' every Wednesday from 11:00 am to 12:00 noon.
- Swami Manyananda also conducted classes on the *Narada Bhakti Sutras* on Sundays from 11:00 am. From 11 August 2024 *Bhagavad Gita* classes replaced the *Narada Bhakti Sutras* classes.
- Every alternate Saturday, Swami Manyananda read *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* followed by a discussion before the evening *aratrikam*.
- On Sundays Swami Manyananda conducted classes on the *Vivekachudamani* from 5:30 to 6:30 pm.
- Bala Sangha or spiritual classes for children are held on Sundays from 4 to 5 pm. It is conducted by Swami Manyananda and volunteers, and includes mantra chanting, meditation, yoga, singing, reading from spiritual texts, value-based lessons and arts and crafts. The programme concludes with refreshments.

Celebrations

- Guru Purnima is an important day when devotees worship and remember their spiritual teachers. Guru Purnima was celebrated on 21 July 2024. The morning program included puja, bhajan, a talk by Swami Manyananda, pushpanjali and distribution of prasad.



Guru Purnima in Adelaide

- Krishna Janmashtami was celebrated on 26 August 2024. The evening program included aratrikam, puja, bhajans, reading and discussion on the life of Sri Krishna, pushpanjali, and distribution of prasad.



Krishna Janmashtami in Adelaide

Visiting Swamis

- Swami Bodhasarananda, Assistant General Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, Kolkata (India) visited the Vedanta Centre of Adelaide. An evening satsang was held on 31 August 2024. The program included aratrikam, a talk by Swami Bodhasarananda, meet-and-greet with the visiting Swami, and distribution

of prasad. Swami Bodhasarananda was accompanied to Adelaide by Swami Dhanyananda, from the Vedanta Centre of Sydney.



Swami Bodhasarananda, Assistant General Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, in Adelaide

BRISBANE

96 Vedanta Drive, (next to 2 Poppy Crescent),
Springfield Lakes, QLD 4300

Email: info@vedantabrisbane.org

Contact: Swami Atmeshananda (07) 3818 9986

URL: <http://vedantabrisbane.org>

Daily Activities

- Daily meditation and the chanting of hymns were conducted between 6:30 am and 7:15 am.
- Aratrikam, bhajans, and readings from *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* were held between 6:30 pm and 7:15 pm.

Regular Activities

- Sunday mornings:- (a) Yoga class from 8:30 am to 9:45 am. (b) *Srimad-Bhagavad Gitā* Class (10:00 am—11:00 am). (c) Bala sangha or children's classes and Yuva sangha (10:00 am—11:00 am during school term as a 5 weekly course). (d) Hindi language classes fortnightly from 9:00 am to 10:30 am.

- A class on the *Brahma Sutras* was conducted on Tuesdays from 11 am to 12 noon. In the evening, Yoga classes were conducted from 6:30pm to 7:45 pm.
- A monthly satsang was held at Sunnybank Hills on the first Monday of every month at 19, Scribbly Gum Street.
- Fortnightly on Thursdays there was a study of the *Vivekachudamani*, online, from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. organized by Shakti Global, Gold Coast.
- A monthly satsang was held at the Centre on the 3rd Sunday of each month. The programme consisted of chanting, bhajans, a talk on a special subject and serving of lunch prasad.
- A reading from the lives of the direct monastic disciples of Sri Ramakrishna was conducted on their birth anniversaries after the evening aratrikam.
- Chanting of the *Ramanama Sanskritanam* was held fortnightly at the Centre on ekadashi days (7:00 pm — 8:00 pm).
- Devotees took turns in decorating and worshipping Sri Ramakrishna's image every week at the Sri Selva Vinayakar temple, South Maclean, Qld.
- Swami Atmeshananda conducted *Vivekachudamani* classes for the Vedanta Group at Toowoomba on the first Wednesday of every month at the Toowoomba Council Library .
- A class on the *Ashtavakra Gita* was conducted at 101 Sharpless Drive, Springfield Lakes, on a fixed day of the month.
- Monthly, the Vedanta group on the Gold Coast studied the *Bhagavad Gita* from 5.30 pm to 6.30 pm
- The Centre facilitates the granting of No Interest Loans (NILS) for people who need emergency help towards payment of white goods, vehicle repairs and similar expenses. A maximum of \$2000 is given out as loan for persons who fulfil the criteria. This is an initiative by the Good Shepherd Charities in conjunction with the National Australia Bank. Mr. Ron Mitchell and Mrs. Ferdous Mitchell volunteered at our Centre on Wednesdays to run this service. This is an ongoing activity.
- The Central Queensland University's Chiropractic College conducted a free Chiro consultation and treatment clinic at the Centre on al-

ternative Fridays. Along with their supervisors, the advanced students at the College delivered this service free of charge to people. This service began on 19 April 2024.

- On Fridays, the Centre's volunteers cooked food at the Centre's soup kitchen for the needy. An average of 300 meals per week is packed into containers and frozen. They are distributed free of cost through the Westside Community Centre and Serving Our People (SOP). Many needy people come to the Centre and avail themselves of the free meals as well.
- Every Friday the Centre's food bank distributed groceries to the needy. An average of 10 families receive grocery hampers along with cooked food and free bread.
- The Maa Sarada's kitchen prepares and sells food at a reasonable cost to people on Saturdays. On an average, about 120 persons avail themselves of this service. The kitchen is efficiently managed by volunteers.
- Two Justices of the Peace (JP) render their services at the Centre on Fridays and Saturdays on demand.
- The Centre, in association with the Namdhari Sikh Association, conducted 'Kirtan and Langar' on the last Sunday of every month. After meditation and singing of kirtans, the Sikh brethren cooked and served delicious meals to anyone who could come and partake of it.

Celebrations

- Guru Purnima was celebrated on 21 July 2024. The programme consisted of worship, chanting and devotional songs. A talk on the 'Significance of the Guru' was delivered by Swami Atmeshananda. All were served with prasad.
- Krishna Janmashtami was celebrated on 25 August 2024. The programme included: chanting of the *Vishnu sahasranama*, Purusha and Narayana Suktas; worship; bhajans; a talk by Dr. Ashim Majumdar on the 'Life and Teachings of Sri Krishna'; and prasad distribution.

Other Activities

- During the monthly satsang on 16 June 2024, Dr. Mahalingam Sinnathamby gave a special talk on the subject 'Influence of Spirituality in Professional Life'. He recounted his



Krishna Janmashtami in Brisbane

life's journey and impressed the audience with quotations from Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda who inspired him to face the struggles with patience and perseverance.

- The Centre celebrated International Yoga Day on 22 June 2024 with a half-day immersive retreat featuring surya namaskar, yoga nidra, pranayama, and talks on 'Yoga in Everyday Life' and 'Ayurvedic Diet' by Dr. Madhavi Kathiria. A large number of people participated in this event.



International Yoga Day in Brisbane

- Unni Nair, committee member of the Vedanta Centre, participated in a Multi Faiths Prayer Vigil on 8 September 2024, organized by the Queensland Faith Communities Council at the Multi Faiths Centre, Griffith University, Nathan Campus. The event was to pray for peace in the Middle East.

Visiting Swamis

- Swami Sridharananda visited the Centre from 26 to 29 June 2024. He addressed the devotees on 27 June 2024. The programme was attended by a large number of devotees.
- Swami Medhasananda from the Vedanta Society of Japan visited the Centre from 2 to 5



Multifaith Prayer Vigil at Griffith University

September 2024. Swami Bodhasarananda, Assistant General Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, accompanied by Swami Sunishthananda of the Melbourne Centre, visited the Brisbane Centre from 3 to 5 September 2024. Both Swami Medhasananda and Bodhasarananda met and spoke on 4 September to a large group of devotees on spiritual topics.



Swamis Bodhasarananda, Medhasananda and Sunishthananda

Upcoming Events

- On the occasion of the Queensland Mental Health Week, various programmes including Yoga and Relaxation techniques, a workshop on Mental Health etc will be conducted.

- During Navaratri, Sri Durga Saptashati will be chanted everyday from 4 to 12 October. Sri Durga Ashtami puja will be performed on the 11 October and the Vijayadashami programme will be held on 13 October 2024.

CANBERRA

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Contact: Mr Jaishankar Venkataraman 02 6258 7612 /0433 593 860

Regular Activities

- Evening aratrikam and prayers are now conducted every evening at the centre.
- Swami Sridharananda began his talks on the Mundaka Upanishad on 19 July 2024.

MELBOURNE

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URL <http://www.vedantamelbourne.org>

Regular Activities

- Aratrikam, bhajans, readings from the Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda literature, and meditation were conducted between 7:00 pm and 8:00 pm daily.
- A scriptural class was conducted on Sundays from 10:30 am to 11:30 am on the *Bhagavad Gita* by Swami Sunishthananda.
- A guided meditation session was conducted by Swami Sunishthananda on Sundays from 10:00 am to 10:30 am.
- A class on *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* was conducted on the second and fourth Thursday from 7:30 pm to 8:30 pm by Swami Sunishthananda.
- A *Vivekachudamani* class was conducted by Swami Sunishthananda on Tuesdays from 7:30 to 8:30 pm.
- A children's class was conducted on Sundays from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm.



The Children's Participation during Guru Purnima in Melbourne

Celebrations

- On 21 July 2024, Guru Purnima was celebrated. The programme included worship, talk and bhajans. The Children's Group sang bhajans and made a PowerPoint presentation. Devotees shared prasad after the event.
- On 25 August 2024, Krishna Janmashtami was celebrated at the Centre. The program included worship, *Shyama-nama sankirtana*, and bhajans. Swami Sunishthananda delivered a talk on 'Shrimad Bhagavatam and Shri Krishna'. Devotees shared prasad after the event.



Krishna Janmashtami in Melbourne

Other Activities

- A satsang was organized at the Centre on 30 June 2024 from 10 am to 2 pm on the topic 'The Mind and its Control'. Forty five persons attended the satsang. Discussion on the topic was conducted in two sessions followed by a question-answer session. Lunch was provided at the end of the programme.



Satsang on the Mind and its Control in Melbourne

- Swami Sunishthananda was invited to conduct the prayers at the Maroondah Council Meeting on the evening of Monday, 22 July 2024.
- On Sunday, 8 September 2024, at 3 pm, members of the Maroondah Interfaith Network vis-



Members of Maroondah Interfaith Network at the Melbourne Centre

ited the Centre as a part of their program to explore various places of worship. Swami Sunishthananda briefed the group, sharing the ideas and ideals of the Ramakrishna Organization. Members of the Managing Committee also attended. Tea and snacks were served. Around 30 people visited.

Visiting Swamis

- Swami Bodhasarananda, Assistant General Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, visited our Centre from 1 to 3 September 2024, accompanied by Swami Manyananda from the Vedanta Centre of Adelaide. A satsang with Swami Bodhasarananda was held on the evening of Sunday, 1 September 2024, attended by 50 people.



Satsang with Swami Bodhasarananda in Melbourne

PERTH

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Regular Activities:

- Aratrikam was conducted each night by a person or family taking the responsibility for it. A monthly satsang was held on 21 April 2024.

Celebrations

- Guru Purnima was celebrated on 21 July 2024 with prayers, aratrikam and distribution of prasad.

Other Activities

- A bhajan morning was held on 16 June 2024. A few of the devotees, like Mousumi Chaudhury, Shanta Banerjee, Laljibhai and Sarvesh were very kind in leading the congregation in singing the bhajans. Laljibhai's guests from the U.K. very kindly offered to play the tabla.

Visiting Swamis

- Swami Bodhasarananda, Assistant Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, visited Perth from 28 to 30 August 2024. He met the devotees and also gave a talk on Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, on 29 August 2024. Swami Dhyanananda accompanied him on his trip to Perth and Adelaide.



Swami Bodhasarananda in Perth

SYDNEY

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Daily Activities

- The shrine was open from 7:00 am to 1:00 pm and 4:00 pm to 8:30 pm seven days a week.
- Aratrikam, bhajans, and readings from *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* were conducted from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm. The times change on special occasions.

Regular Activities

- Swami Sridharananda teaches the *Bhagavad Gita* every Sunday from 10:30 am to 11:30 am.
- *Ramanama Sanskritanam* was conducted on ekadashi days after the vesper service.
- Devotees also received spiritual counselling and guidance.
- The quarterly newsletter entitled *Reach* is compiled and published by the Vedanta Centre of Sydney.
- Yoga Classes are conducted by Sudhir Mooray on Saturdays from 9:30 am to 11:00 am.

Celebrations

- Guru Purnima was celebrated on 21 July 2024. The programme included a performance by the children of the Bala and Yuva Sangha on the five persons who adorn the shrine of the Vedanta Centre of Sydney. There was also a talk by Swami Dhyanananda, and puja, pushpanjali and prasada distribution.
- Krishna Janmashtami was observed on 26 August 2024. The evening programme included aratrikam, *Shayama nama Sankirtana*, bhajans, puja, pushpanjali and prasada distribution.

Visiting Swamis

- Swami Medhasananda, the head of the Vedanta Society of Japan, visited the Vedanta Centre of Sydney from 28 August to 2 September



Children of the Youth Group on Guru Purnima in Sydney



Krishna Janmashtami in Sydney

2024. On 1 September, he lectured on the Vedanta movement in Japan and on the important hallmarks of spiritual life.

- Swami Bodhasarananda, Assistant General Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, visited the Vedanta Centre of Sydney from 7 October to 10 October 2024. While in Sydney, he spoke about the Mayavati Advaita Ashrama which he was associated with before taking on his current responsibilities at Belur Math.



Swamis Sridharananda and Bodhasarananda

2. Bhakti Yoga: Prayer and Definition of Bhakti —SWAMI VIVEKANANDA (From The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda)

In this issue of Reach we begin serializing Swami Vivekananda's Bhakti Yoga. Bhakti Yoga was included in the 3rd volume of 'The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda'. These classes begin with a prayer. This is followed by a chapter entitled 'Definition of Bhakti'. Some of the important ideas discussed in this chapter are intense love for God is Bhakti; bhakti or devotion to God has constantly been discussed by our sages; there is no real difference between the four yogas and they converge on the same point; the advantages and disadvantages of bhakti; preparatory (gauni) and supreme (para) bhakti; harmony and importance of the yogas; bhakti as the means and end; Vedantic commentators on bhakti; and remembering God is as good as seeing.

PRAYER

"He is the Soul of the Universe; He is Immortal; His is the Rulership; He is the All-knowing, the All-pervading, the Protector of the Universe, the Eternal Ruler. None else is there efficient to govern the world eternally. He who at the beginning of creation projected Brahma (i.e. the universal consciousness), and who delivered the Vedas unto him--seeking liberation I go for refuge unto that Effulgent One, whose light turns the understanding towards the Atman."

Shvetashvatara-Upanishad, VI. 17-18.

DEFINITION OF BHAkti

Bhakti-Yoga is a real, genuine search after the Lord, a search beginning, continuing and ending in love. One single moment of the madness of extreme love to God brings us eternal freedom. "Bhakti", says Narada in his explanation of the Bhakti-aphorisms, "is intense love to God"; "When a man gets it, he loves all, hates none; he becomes satisfied for ever"; "This love cannot be reduced to any earthly

benefit", because so long as worldly desires last, that kind of love does not come; "Bhakti is greater than Karma, greater than Yoga, because these are intended for an object in view, while Bhakti is its own fruition, its own means and its own end."

Bhakti or Devotion to God has Constantly been Discussed by our Sages

Bhakti has been the one constant theme of our sages. Apart from the special writers on Bhakti, such as Shandilya or Narada, the great commentators on the *Vyasa-Sutras*, evidently advocates of knowledge (Jnana), have also something very suggestive to say about love. Even when the commentator is anxious to explain many, if not all, of the texts so as to make them import a sort of dry knowledge, the *Sutras*, in the chapter on worship especially, do not lend themselves to be easily manipulated in that fashion.

There is no real difference between the four Yogas and they Converge on the Same Point

There is not really so much difference between knowledge

(Jnana) and love (Bhakti) as people sometimes imagine. We shall see, as we go on, that in the end they converge and meet and end at the same point. So also is it with Raja-Yoga, which when pursued as a means to attain liberation, and not (as unfortunately it frequently becomes in the hands of charlatans and mystery-mongers) as an instrument to hoodwink the unwary, leads us also to the same goal.

The Advantages and Disadvantages of Bhakti

The one great advantage of Bhakti is that it is the easiest and most natural way to reach the great divine end in view; its great disadvantage is that in its lower forms it oftentimes degenerates into hideous fanaticism. The fanatical crew in Hinduism, or Mohammedanism, or Christianity have always been almost exclusively recruited from these worshippers on the lower planes of Bhakti. That singleness of attachment (Nishtha) to a loved object, without which no genuine love can grow, is very often also the cause of the denunciation of everything else. All the weak and undeveloped minds in

every religion or country have only one way of loving their own ideal, i.e. by hating every other ideal. Herein is the explanation of why the same man who is so lovingly attached to his own ideal of God, so devoted to his own ideal of religion, becomes a howling fanatic as soon as he sees or hears anything of any other ideal. This kind of love is somewhat like the canine instinct of guarding the master's property from intrusion; only, the instinct of the dog is better than the reason of man, for the dog never mistakes its master for an enemy in whatever dress he may come before it. Again, the fanatic loses all power of judgment. Personal considerations are in his case of such absorbing interest that to him it is no question at all what a man says—whether it is right or wrong; but the one thing he is always particularly careful to know is who says it. The same man who is kind, good, honest, and loving to people of his own opinion, will not hesitate to do the vilest deeds when they are directed against persons beyond the pale of his own religious brotherhood.

Preparatory (Gauni) and Supreme (Para) Bhakti

But this danger exists only in that stage of Bhakti which is called the *preparatory* (Gauni). When Bhakti has become ripe and has passed into that form which is called the *supreme* (Para), no more is there any fear of these hideous manifestations of fanaticism; that soul which is overpowered by this higher form of Bhakti is too near the God of Love to become an instrument for the diffusion of hatred.

Harmony and Importance of the Yogas

It is not given to all of us to be harmonious in the building up of our characters in this life; yet we know that the character is of the noblest type in which all these three—knowledge and love and Yoga—are harmoniously fused. Three things are necessary for a bird to fly—the two wings and the tail as a rudder for steering. Jnana (knowledge) is the one wing, Bhakti (Love) is the other, and Yoga is the tail that keeps up the balance. For those who cannot pursue all these three forms of worship together in harmony and take up, therefore, Bhakti alone as their way, it is necessary always to remember that forms and ceremonies, though absolutely necessary for the progressive soul, have no other value than taking us on to that state in which we feel the most intense love to God.

Bhakti as the Means and End

There is a little difference in opinion between the teachers of knowledge and those of love, though both admit the power of Bhakti. The Jnanis hold Bhakti to be an instrument of liberation, the Bhaktas look upon it both as the instrument and the thing to be attained. To my mind this is a distinction without much difference. In fact, Bhakti, when used as an instrument, really means a lower form of worship, and the higher form becomes inseparable from the lower form of realisation at a later stage. Each seems to lay a great stress upon his own peculiar method of worship, forgetting that with perfect love

true knowledge is bound to come even unsought, and that from perfect knowledge true love is inseparable.

Vedantic Commentators on Bhakti

Bearing this in mind let us try to understand what the great Vedantic commentators have to say on the subject. In explaining the Sutra *Avrittirasakridupadeshat*, Bhagavan Shankara says, "Thus people say, 'He is devoted to the king, he is devoted to the Guru'; they say this of him who follows his Guru, and does so, having that following as the one in view. Similarly they say, 'The loving wife meditates on her loving husband; here also a kind of eager and continuous remembrance is meant.' This is devotion according to Shankara.

Remembering God is as Good as Seeing

"Meditation again is a constant remembrance (of the thing meditated upon) flowing like an unbroken stream of oil poured out from one vessel to another. When this kind of remembering has been attained (in relation to God) all bondages break. Thus it is spoken of in the scriptures regarding constant remembering as a means to liberation. This remembering again is of the same form as seeing, because it is of the same meaning as in the passage, 'When He who is far and near is seen, the bonds of the heart are broken, all doubts vanish, and all effects of work disappear.' He who is near can be seen, but he who is far can only be remembered. Nevertheless

the scripture says that we have to see Him who is near as well as Him who is far, thereby indicating to us that the above kind of *remembering* is as good as *seeing*. This remembrance when exalted assumes the same form as seeing. . . .

Worship is constant remembering as may be seen from the essential texts of scriptures. Knowing, which is the same as repeated worship, has been described as constant remembering. . . . Thus the memory, which has attained to the height of what is as good as direct perception, is spoken of in the Shruti as a means of liberation. 'This Atman is not to be reached through various sciences, nor by intellect, nor by much study of the Vedas. Whomsoever this Atman desires, by him is the Atman attained, unto him this Atman discovers Himself.' Here, after saying that mere hearing, thinking and meditating are not the means of attaining this Atman, it is said, 'Whom this Atman desires, by him the Atman is attained.' The extremely beloved is desired; by whomsoever this Atman is extremely beloved, he becomes the most beloved of the Atman. So that this beloved may attain the Atman, the Lord Himself helps. For it has been said by the Lord: 'Those who are constantly attached to Me and worship Me with love--I give that direction to their will by which they come to Me.' Therefore it is said that, to whomsoever this remembering, which is of the same form as direct perception, is very dear, because it is dear to the Object of such memory perception, he is desired by the Supreme Atman,

by him the Supreme Atman is attained. This constant remembrance is denoted by the word Bhakti." So says Bhagavan Ramanuja in his commentary on the Sutra Athato Brahma-jijnasa.

In commenting on the Sutra of Patanjali, Ishvara pranidhanadva, i.e. "Or by the worship of the Supreme Lord"--Bhoja says, "Pranidhana is that sort of Bhakti in which, without seeking results, such as sense-enjoyments etc., all works are dedicated to that Teacher of teachers." Bhagavan Vyasa also, when commenting on the same, defines Pranidhana as "the form of Bhakti by which the mercy of the Supreme Lord comes to the Yogi, and blesses him by granting him his desires". According to Shandilya, "Bhakti is intense love to God." The best definition is, however, that given by the king of Bhaktas, Prahlada: "That deathless love which the ignorant have for the fleeting objects of the senses--as I keep meditating on Thee--may not that love slip away from the heart!" *Love !* For whom? For the Supreme Lord Ishvara. Love for any other being, however great cannot be Bhakti; for, as Ramanuja says in his *Shri Bhashya*, quoting an ancient Acharya, i.e. a great teacher: "From Brahma to a clump of grass, all things that live in the world are slaves of birth and death caused by Karma; therefore they cannot be helpful as objects of meditation, because they are all in ignorance and subject to change." In commenting on the word Anurakti used by Shandilya, the commentator Svapneshvara says that it means Anu, after, and Rakti, attach-

ment; i.e. the attachment which comes after the knowledge of the nature and glory of God; else a blind attachment to any one, e.g. to wife or children, would be Bhakti. We plainly see, therefore, that Bhakti is a series or succession of mental efforts at religious realisation beginning with ordinary worship and ending in a supreme intensity of love for Ishvara.