

O Mind! Meditate Upon the Lotus Feet of Shri Radha Rani

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One with true spiritual knowledge addresses his mind, "Listen, mind! Meditate on the lotus feet of Radha Rani." Every sense organ performs its respective function. The tongue performs the function of speaking; ears perform the function of hearing; eyes perform the function of seeing; the nose performs the work of smelling; skin performs the function of touching, and the mind performs the function of thinking. But here the devotee is asking the mind to listen. He is telling not the ears, but the *mind* to listen. Imagine someone asking his eyes to listen attentively. Eyes cannot hear. Since the mind is told to meditate, the question arises – How will the mind hear? The only function of the mind is to think. Ears cannot see or perform any other work besides hearing. Every sense organ performs its own independent work. One sense organ cannot perform the work of another. No matter how sophisticated an instrument you come up with, you cannot make the eyes or the nose perform the work of hearing.

If you consider this matter superficially, it would seem that indeed the mind cannot hear. However, this is not so. The mind is such an organ that it performs the work of all other organs. All sense organs are contained within the mind. At night, you dream. At night all your sense organs are on the bed. None of them is performing its work at that time. And yet all the functions of the organs are being performed. In your dreams you see in the same way as you see while in the waking state. You hear everything in the same way. You taste delicacies in the very same way. You experience pleasure in the very same way. You experience sorrow in the very same way. You experience fear in the same way as you do while waking. Is there anyone who realizes in the dream state that he is dreaming? No! He feels that he is awake; he experiences that he is seeing with eyes wide open. How does this happen? All the sense organs are unconscious at that time. Even if there is a theft at home while we are dreaming, we remain completely unaware. Despite the fact that we are performing the work of seeing, hearing and smelling, we remain unaware of the outer world. So, if the sense organs were not included within the mind, the mind would be able to only think. How would it be able to see, hear and smell the world? How would it manage to perform all the functions of all the sense organs in the state of dreaming?

Now, I shall explain to you in layman's language. Everyone makes a statement such as, "I saw it with my own eyes" and "I heard it with my own ears." If someone's mind is preoccupied somewhere else, then having heard something with the ears would be like having heard nothing at all. Having seen something would be equal to not seeing anything at all.

Some time ago, the *Rath Yatra*, i.e. Chariot Festival was underway in Orissa. Hundreds of thousands of people participate in *Rath Yatra* with great fanfare, playing various instruments. Ramkrishna Paramhans had also gone to participate in it, but he was delayed. On his way he saw an artist doing some delicate artwork. Ramkrishna Paramhans asked him, "Did a procession pass by here?" The artist replied, "No." His neighboring shopkeeper said to him, "You fool! Don't you know this is Ramkrishna

Paramhans? You are *lying* to him!" The artist said, "No, I am not lying." Ramkrishna Paramhans sat down right there. He went into the state of *samadhi* and discovered that the artist was not lying. The artist's mind had been so engrossed in his work that he had neither seen nor heard anything. He had not even raised his eyes. This is *your* daily experience also. If there is too much salt in the food two days in a row, the husband asks his wife, "Where is your mind wandering these days? You are putting in more and more salt every day!" This implies that if the mind is preoccupied elsewhere, the sense organs don't function properly, even if you are fully awake.

Each sense organ functions with the association of the mind, not by itself. The senses do not perform their function without the mind, whereas the mind performs its function without the senses. This is why we shouldn't wonder how the mind can see and hear, or question why it is being said, "O mind! Listen. Meditate on Radha Rani."

So the mind may listen, or pretend as if it didn't hear anything. But the mind first heard and only then ignored what it had just heard. The mind may say, "Forget it. Why do you talk of Radha Rani all day long? Do you expect me to sit and think of Radha Rani instead of focusing on the important task of looking after my family and my work?"

No action can be performed without the mind. The mind governs all the senses; all ten of them.

Indriye bhayah param manaḥ

The most important thing is that in the realm of God, actions performed by the mind are the only ones that are counted as actions. Understand this philosophy clearly. Once, Bhagvan Ram requested His Guru, Vashishth to impart knowledge. Vashishth said:

Manasaiva kṛtaṁ Rāma, na śarīra kṛtaṁ kṛtaṁ

"The works performed by the body alone are not considered actions." Those works do not bear fruit. Since they are not considered actions, there will be no consequence. Actions performed by the mind are the only ones considered to be true actions.

Actions performed by the mind cannot be seen, whereas physical actions are visible. This is the reason people of the world consider actions performed by the body to be true actions. They are not aware of the actions of someone's mind; so they do not consider these to be actions at all. A man invites his enemy, planning quietly in his mind that he will give the guest poisoned milk which will cause him to die. And when the guest arrives, the host says, "Welcome, welcome...You never come this way." He acts friendly and gives his enemy poisonous milk to drink, causing him to die. Had the visitor known what was in the host's mind, he would not have drunk the milk.

Look at some simple examples. We have read in history that so many great Saints, and even God Himself, are seen performing actions, but they do not reap fruits of their actions. At the beginning of the Geeta, this was the main question Arjun asked Shri Krishna. "I will have to kill all of these people. This will result in sins and lead me to hell." Shri Krishna gave a lengthy response to Arjun in the Geeta, as you all are aware. Lord Krishna explained to Arjun repeatedly,

Tasmāt sarveṣu kāleṣu māmanusmara yuddhya ca

"Think of Me at all times and fight the battle." Meaning..."O Arjun! If your mind is not attached to the battle - either favorably or unfavorably - and is attached to Me instead, then you won't taste the fruits of your actions since they are not actions at all. They are a mere act."

Actions that are performed with intention – good or bad – are called *karm*, i.e. fruit-bearing actions. You see, lots of pranks are played all over the world on April 1st. These are just jokes. The day is known as April Fools' Day. Suppose someone files a lawsuit based on a harmless prank played on this day. The one playing the prank testifies in court, "Your Honor, it was April 1st yesterday and I was just pulling a prank." The judge would say, "Oh, I see! Okay, okay," and he would tell the plaintiff to leave the court because he knows that everyone commonly plays harmless pranks on each other on April 1st. All kinds of mockeries and jokes are played out amongst friends and close relatives, including hurling abusive words towards one another. However, no one gets upset because everyone knows that none of this is done with ill intention. The mind is certainly involved, but it is not attached (with good or bad intentions). It is one thing to be involved and another to be attached.

There is a big difference between involvement and attachment. Let's say your wife, mother or sister is preparing food for you. While cooking the mother is thinking, "My son is going to eat, so let me make good food." She is attached to you. On the other hand, if you have hired a cook, he also prepares food, but out of fear. He thinks, "I must make good food, with the right amount of salt; otherwise the boss may get upset and fire me." There is no love in this work. You people also work all day long like this at your job.

So; actions that are performed when the mind is attached, either with affinity or hatred, are called *karm*. That is why the physical senses were ignored here. The mouth is not being told to utter the holy name. Feet are not being asked to go to God's temple. None of the physical senses is being asked to do anything. They are not addressed at all. Why? God says, "Look, my government considers only those actions that are performed by the mind to be actions." Moreover, what if someone can't see; what if he is blind from birth? What if someone is deaf? How can he listen to spiritual discourses? Some may be blind, deaf, and lame. There are all kinds of people in the world. Those who are

disabled physically in one way or the other could demand God realization without any effort on their part since their physical senses are not functioning properly.

The laws which God has established for Divine attainment and which Saints have explained, stress the importance of the mind alone when it comes to performance of actions. However you describe the method – whether you call it devotion, knowledge, detachment or something else – the method has to be practiced by the mind.

In reality, there are only two types of actions; and no more than that. One is to become neutral towards the world, and the other is to attach your mind to God. That's it! This brings an end to all spiritual discourses. Whether you study the Geeta, the Vedas or the Purans, they will all lead you to this conclusion: become neutral towards the world. Who should become neutral? Your mind! Not your hands or your feet! It will not do to become neutral outwardly while continuing to harbor wrongful thoughts in your mind. This will not work. This is prevalent, as you are well aware. There is an empire of such hypocrisy amongst so-called holy people and also lay people. Mostly everyone behaves in this way in the world, according to their capacity. People deceive one another through outward acts. And the poor individual controlled by *maya*, is incapable of gauging others' true intentions and feelings. He is helpless. As such, he considers the outward hypocritical acts of the physical senses as being genuine, and is easily deceived.

Thus, only the actions performed by the mind are considered true actions in the spiritual world. Which action is considered the most gruesome? Murder. For which crime does the Indian government hand out the severest penalty? For committing murder, as specified under section 302 of the Indian Penal Code, it is the death penalty. All other penalties – be it life imprisonment, or 10-20 years behind bars – are subservient to the penalty for murder. A murderer is given the death penalty. And what about the one who murders openly? Well, in that case, there would be no need for testimonies. He is murdering someone at a busy crossroad in plain sight of everyone. Like Arjun did in the Mahabharat war! Everyone is witnessing him commit murder. He would release one arrow, and hundreds would die. Arrows were propelled by a special power of *mantras* in those days. When released, one arrow would turn into a thousand arrows along the way and would kill a thousand people. Everyone, including outsiders, was witnessing this. God, however, did not note in his register that Arjun even thought of committing these murders in his mind, let alone that he actually committed murder. Arjun did not even involve his mind; a task that is required before committing such an action. Shri Krishna noted, "Arjun is only thinking of Me." To our mind, this seems like an extremely difficult task to do. Yes, it is difficult. But it is not impossible.

Consider a task such as riding a bicycle or a motorcycle, or driving a car. There is a lot involved in performing these tasks. Someone is flying an airplane. Yes...How many switches are there in the cockpit? If you pay attention to what the pilot is doing in a

helicopter, you will see that he tends to so many buttons and switches, and only then is he able to fly the helicopter. And he is pressing those buttons rapidly. Look at the many people who operate a keyboard and type so fast with both hands.

You ride a bicycle...yes. Your legs are moving. Your hands are carefully holding onto the handle bar. You are aware of where you have to go. A car is coming from this side; another is coming from the other side. The one behind you is honking in order to alert you. You are observing all of this. And your legs are working! Yes. Your hands are also doing their work. All of them are working simultaneously now! Yes. The traffic is heavy, yet you ride your bike or drive your car and safely reach your destination. This is all due to practice.

Great feats are performed through practice. A tight rope walker ties a rope at such a great height, and you see how skillfully he walks on it carrying only a balancing stick. If you start thinking – Oh, there is nothing in this; even I can do it; I am very muscular – you will fall down and die. This is not something you are capable of doing. The circus performer has spent a lot of time training for it.

Shri Krishna had told Arjun -

Abhyāsenā tu Kaunteya vairāgyena ca grihyate

Through repeated practice, the yogis perform great feats. They achieve great powers through disciplined practice. And they do it using the same mind you have. Their mind is not imported from somewhere else. At one point, they had the same fickle, impure mind as the one we have right now, whether we speak of Tulsidas, Soordas, Meera, Shankaracharya, Nimbarkacharya or any other Saint.

In my opinion, no one can compare with Tulsidas in shamefulness. Why? Think for a moment. He had gone to his in-laws to meet his wife. He was so anxious to meet her that he mistook a snake for a rope. First of all, doesn't Tulsidas know that all houses are equipped with at least one door? You can't find a house without doors. And secondly, he went to meet his own wife. He should have knocked at the door. He could have shouted, "Open the door!" It is not a crime to meet one's wife. It is also not considered an immoral act.

Tulsidas, who was that much under the grip of lust, heard just one sentence from his wife, "If you had this much love for God, you would have met Lord Ram by now." These words opened his eyes. He immediately turned away from the world and towards God. He didn't turn just a little. He turned fully towards God. And he actually attained Lord Ram in that very life. Not just amongst you but, in my opinion, in the whole world one would not find a person who is as obsessed with his wife as Tulsidas was.

Through repeated practice, everything becomes possible. All of you have also done great practice in the past due to which you are sitting here. Otherwise, no one has even a moment to spare. Why have only a handful of people come here? Why haven't the others come? They think, "Forget it! These people, who keep talking about God the whole day, are a nuisance. They are all insane. Only I am sane. What is all this about Divine abode, God, sins and pious deeds? All of this is nonsense." When such people are being punished for their sins after death, they think, "Oh! I used to think all that talk about God was nonsense. If only I could get a human birth one more time, then I will sincerely practice devotion to God." And then when he is granted human birth, he once again decides all Godly talk to be nonsense.

This is what many have been doing since beginningless time. The few, who have faith in the Vedas and the scriptures, develop their faith further in their next human life. Then they develop it further in the following human birth. They are the ones who come and practice devotion like you are doing. After a considerable amount of practice, one can do this - through practice alone.

Arjun performed very delicate and precise task of shooting arrows at the enemy, but after lots of practice. If someone is aiming at a target 600 feet away and miscalculates by even a fraction of a centimeter, he will miss the target by four feet. Precision is essential in archery. But Arjun is aiming perfectly. And he is not doing it in a state of anger. If an ordinary person were to kill someone, he would get angry first. He would grind his teeth; his eyes would become red and he would hurl abusive words at the victim. Once he has reacted like this, he will then attack. To commit murder would be the final step. And Arjun is killing not just one or two, but hundreds of thousands of men. Arjun had seen all of these men at the beginning of the war and trembled. He thought, "Oh God! I have to kill these people! No, I won't do it. I won't fight. I prefer to go to hell instead." The same Arjun is killing them now and Shri Krishna is seeing him do it. But He is not noting any of Arjun's actions. He is instead saying Arjun has not performed any action.

'Actions' mean the ones that have consequences, ones which are performed with feelings of love or hatred. Arjun did not perform such action. But the entire world is bearing witness to the actions Arjun has performed. God says, "You silly! What do you know?"

This is why only the mind is being told to meditate on Radha Rani. And this very fact has not been understood by people of this world. People talk big about devotion and prayer, and even allocate time for it. Many are sincerely practicing devotion diligently, but they have not yet understood that only meditation done with the mind is considered to be true devotion. They consider the work of the physical senses – reciting scriptures, worshipping deities, and going on pilgrimage – as having practiced devotion.

They are striving to achieve a numerical goal. *I shall recite the scripture this many times. I shall chant God's name this many times. If there is a deity established on a mountain, I shall go there. The deity in the neighborhood temple is ordinary. But God who is sitting in Badrinarayan is an extraordinary God.* These days there are proper vehicles and facilities so that people can go and come back from places like Badrinarayan within days. In the olden days, people used to travel by foot. And quite a few of them would die along the way.

Thus, meditation done with the mind is what devotion is. It is good if the physical senses are involved alongside the mind and okay even if they are not. Just through loving remembrance of God with the mind, one will attain God despite being blind, deaf or mute. This is why we should also carefully practice devotion this way. But, we don't do it. Our mind forgets. We chant names of God. That is good. Something is better than nothing. If we chant the name of Radha instead of engaging in random talk, we will at least develop some loving feelings for Radha Rani. But this is carelessness. Since we are allocating so much of our time, we should at least practice devotion properly so that we may progress quickly towards our goal. Then we will truly start feeling, "Yes, I have made some progress. Now I don't get upset as much when someone insults me."

It is because of our faults that we cannot make progress towards God. We know fully well that even if one sin is committed in one life, everyone has committed uncountable sins. These are called *sanchit* karm (accumulated actions which have not yet borne fruit). But despite being such a sinner, there is such pride that we get upset thinking that someone has insulted us. Why do you feel insulted? Your body is made out of dirt; are you talking about this body being insulted? Or did someone insult your soul? And how can anyone insult the soul when the poor fellow doesn't even have an awareness of the soul?

If someone insults the body, why should we care? It is all the same. A child takes birth; he grows up and receives education till the age of 20 or 25. Thereafter, he enters family life, or goes on the wrong path and becomes a dacoit. This goes on for some time and then he dies. That's it. Even his body becomes completely useless at that point. At least animal skin is valuable; people pay money for it.

So, why worry about praise and insult? These feelings are just a weakness of the mind. Even the notion of being insulted becomes palatable through practice. A rogue and a scoundrel is called many insulting words throughout the day, but he keeps on laughing. He tells a friend, "Today a girl threw her sandal at me; I ducked and she missed me." He is happily narrating this to his friend. He doesn't feel bad about it. He is used to it. Similarly, a prostitute becomes accustomed to her way of life. People become accustomed to lying. The very first time we told a lie our inner conscience spoke to us, "Hey! What are you doing?" A small child was instructed by his mother, "If the neighbor

comes and asks for me, tell her I am not at home." The little child kept thinking, "My mommy is at home, yet she is instructing me to say that she is not here." The neighbor came and asked, "Where is your mom?" The child replied, "My mommy is at home, but she said that when the neighbor comes, tell her that mommy has gone out." The neighbor smiled and left. But the mother was listening. After the neighbor left, she slapped the child. What does this mean? The mother is teaching the first lesson to her child, "You are not supposed to say that your mom is at home." The child learns to tell lies. Thereafter, speaking one lie after another, the child grows up day by day and eventually lying becomes second nature to him. Similarly, people develop an addiction to alcohol. Whatever addiction it may be, once you adopt it, you get used to it through practice and stop feeling guilty about it after a while.

That is why you should pay careful attention to the instruction I am repeatedly giving you; to meditate on God with your mind. You should practice it with a firm resolve. It is understandable that you won't be able to imagine a form easily in the beginning. But keep practicing again and again. Then you will be able to easily meditate on the form of God, and you will start experiencing devotional bliss. The happiness you used to experience in the world will become tasteless. You will be able to remember God effortlessly while walking, sitting and standing. This will happen through practice.

When feelings of love or hatred increase to a great extent, they dance in your mind. In the same way, Radha Rani and Shri Krishna will also dance in your mind. Radha and Krishna are the ocean of Divine Bliss, after all. Even the objects and people of the world fully consume your mind once you become attached to them; then what to speak of Radha-Krishna! Even a glimpse will give you unlimited Divine bliss.

That is why you should take great care. Even if you sit for just two hours, you should practice devotion properly. Having done that, you will develop great devotional feelings in the following two hours. You will say to yourself, "Yes, I am receiving benefits of my practice, and I will practice like this more and more."

This is why the one with true spiritual knowledge is saying, "O mind! Meditate upon the lotus feet of Shri Radha Rani."