

## **Dr S. Bhagavadpada's Introduction to the Atmajnana Yajnas:**

### **I.1.The Ultimate Spiritual *Goal* of the Hindus:**

Self-knowing is *atmajnana*. Put simply, *Atma* is the *imperceptible inner self* and *jnana* is profound understanding of *our true self, as the imperceptible inner Self*. This profound understanding, which is actually wisdom, is also referred to as realization. The mature form of this self-knowing is self-realization or *moksha*, which has always been & still continues to be the ultimate esoteric *goal* in the spiritual life of the Hindus.

Paradoxically, however, it is also the subtlest *non-goal* in the sense that those actually reaching that *goal* will have an inherent difficulty in perceiving their attainment of this *goal*, to be in the nature of a personal achievement. This situation is wholly different from our pursuit of all other goals in the spheres of *artha & kama*, for in these mundane spheres, the reaching of the goal, invariably would tantamount to *some enrichment for the individual self*, whereas in self-realization, there is implied *a loss of the illusion of the individual self*.

Another peculiar fact is that this *goal* cannot be reached by the conventional means of seeking, for it is this very seeking which will act like a hindrance and prevent the reaching of the *goal*. For these reasons, it may be considered to be a subtle *non-goal*.

Therefore, even serious spiritual seekers who have been conscientiously walking on the road of a traditional spiritual life (*dharma*) will initially find it hard to have a clear understanding of what it is and what it is not. Not only that, they may even possibly

have some strange fear of the unknown *moksha* & a consequent erroneous understanding born of that fear.

To dispel such misunderstanding, it will be proper for us to approach the old problem of *atmajnana* & *moksha* anew, through a *comprehensive understanding* based on the assimilation of the various essential principles from traditional sacred texts, as well as from the teachings of many modern self-realized masters. Such a broad new understanding will moreover have the merit of being free of the taint of a narrowly circumscribed framework. A taint that usually arises, when an approach is confined exclusively to one school of philosophic thought, or limited by its insularity & allegiance to the teachings of only a single self-realized master.

After all, we have got to bear in mind that in nature's ever-expansive way, different masters have always been manifesting on the stage of the world, for throwing light on specific aspects of *moksha*, for the benefit of specific kinds of seekers of *moksha* (called *mumukshus*) - only because in the course of an entire lifetime, a single master is usually able to throw into full relief, no more than one or two specific aspects of these esoteric teachings.

## **I.2. What is the Ground from which this Ultimate *Goal* Springs?**

From very ancient times, because of man's never-ending mental conflicts and confusions, he has always sought an ever-lasting peace & understanding as a panacea for all his ills. A profound understanding that will at once put an end to all his travails and miseries; an ever-lasting peace that will annihilate his

*painful sense of separation from all life, animate, as well as inanimate.*

Such an ultimate spiritual *goal* need not baffle us unduly. *If we were to go by our long religious history, we may go so far as to say that this is something for which man could well have been even genetically programmed. It is a culminating milestone in his biological-physical-mental evolution that he is fated to cross, just as the entire species was genetically programmed to get beyond the well-known rudimentary milestone of puberty and sexual awakening.* After all, historical recordings of this ultimate esoteric quest, which constitute an integral part of the religious and spiritual traditions of the various peoples of the earth, do exist and they offer us substantial testimony that this too is very much a part of man's evolutionary destiny, *even though, in the present 'season'(yuga) of our human civilization, it may appear to be somewhat of an esoteric nature.*

The Hindus and later Buddhists & even the Jains, developed an obsession with this ultimate esoteric *goal*, as it appears to have held an irresistible fascination for their innate spiritual appetites, and these appetites in turn are probably rooted in the peculiar geographical positioning of the Indian sub-continent.

### **I.3. Liberation from *all Tyrannies in Consciousness is Moksha:***

They called this ultimate spiritual *goal* of man, *moksha*. Though it meant an *all-pervasive liberation*; initially at least it invariably manifested as a palpable freedom from *every kind of*

*tyranny in consciousness*, a tyranny perpetrated by the notorious gang of demons or *asuras*, as they are called in Hindu mythologies. Of course, these have been well-identified in the scriptures for thousands of years and represent the cosmic malevolent life energies, *which anyhow have no option but to co-exist, side by side*, with the cosmic benevolent life energies, which have also been identified as the godly *devas* in ancient mythologies.

*Moksha* in the next stage also ought to mean freedom from *every kind of suffering that every demonic tyranny inevitably created*. The tyrannies perpetrated by the *asuras*, invariably resulted in every kind of painful and undesirable negative manifestations in consciousness; namely, conflict & emotional confusion; fragmentation of consciousness; dissipative wallowing in the experiences of the past or incessant day dreaming into make-believe futures; anger, utter insensitivity & violence; lust, greed, jealousy, hatred, cruelty, enmity & every kind of perversity, etc.

The end result was a very debilitating condition in consciousness bereft of all vitality, with an almost continuous distortion in perception, to such an extent that sorrow, which was created by these illusions, becomes a tragic way of life for the species as a whole. *Maya is the Hindu name given to these illusions or false perceptions in consciousness*.

The first important stride in the spiritual life ought to concern itself with the patient observation, study and understanding of the perpetually ongoing conflict between the *devas* & *asuras* in our

consciousness. The second stride ought to consist of becoming intimate with the demonic energies, the *asuras*, and then going on to pacify them, so that, they become deflated by our very non-judgmental observation of their activities, and become rested and peaceful in this process. This again is another important stage in *moksha*.

The mature form of *moksha* was found to be possible, *only when man discovered his true Self or true nature*-which was neither the body, nor his ego nor even his consciousness, nor his learning, nor his capacities, *but something entirely different, more in the nature of a sovereign Divinity*, that was imperceptible and hidden away and yet ruled the totality of man's life and the whole of creation.

#### **I.4. *Tat Tvam Asi*. Inward Discovery of the True Self is *Atmajnana*:**

The *Upanishadic* aphorism: *Tat Tvam Asi*, means that if you could but tear asunder all the *mayaic* illusions, you would find that you are indeed one with that universal spirit, that sovereign Divinity. That is, *Tat* stands for that sovereign Divinity, *Tvam* stands for you, and *Asi*, stands for are. *For the Hindus, such an understanding and realization as to who we actually are, namely, the imperceptible inner Self, the Atma, has been the ultimate esoteric goal in their spiritual spheres of life, called, dharma & moksha.*

The seemingly impossible *inward discovery* or *astounding irrevocable understanding*, or realization, that *the true nature of our Self*, which is represented in our languages by the first personal

pronoun I; is the *imperceptible inner Self* or *Atma*, is *atmajnana* or self-realization. *Jnana*, becomes irrevocable understanding or realization.

The *goal* itself is of such inconceivable simplicity and subtlety, that thought contemplating this mystery *in the post-realization phase*, will no more have the old egoistic arrogance to perpetuate its own self-conceited activity. Rather, it is likely to suffer an introversion through a recoiling shock, abnegating itself spontaneously in this process, and freeing itself naturally, from the heavy burden of a nagging past as well as, from the idle wanderings into a make-believe future.

### I.5. Is there 'An Appropriate Season of Time' for *Moksha*?

When there is not a single ray of hope on the horizon, when persistent failures have been staring us in the face, when sickness, old-age or death are near at hand, when we have lost our cherished world, through recurring blows of fate, when every cunning planning in thought has come to naught, when dishonor and disgrace are a plenty; that is probably the ripe time, when the *mumukshu* in us will take birth, when the ultimate quest for *moksha* may become a burning question, a matter of life and death.

On the other hand, if we would have travelled the spheres of *artha & kama*, consciously and slowly, tasting and savoring one fulfillment after another, *also one disappointment after another*, then too, we might have had a chance to suddenly ripen and make a spontaneous transition to the spiritual spheres of *dharma &*

*moksha* - especially, when some sudden life-crisis was present to trigger off this transition.

There is in fact, no unique blueprint for graduating as *mumukshus* and truly embarking on the ultimate quest of *moksha*-this may happen in a hundred different ways, though the natural season of time for it, in the Hindu view of life, is after 60-because it takes this long for *maya* to substantially lose its bewitching hold on our consciousness and on our desire for sense-gratification.

### **I.6. Many Sages, Teachings and Sacred Texts:**

A number of Indian teachers & masters in the past had brought the Hindu teachings on *moksha*, out into the world, for the spiritual fulfillment of all *mumukshus* - regardless of their nationality, language and culture. Some of them were traditionalists, sticking closely to the religious texts and never deviating from the classical interpretations; while others made an impact on the world as original, fearless & therefore even radical teachers. Sri J. Krishnamurti and Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj, are particularly striking examples of this latter class of teachers. And because these masters had directly realized who they were, they expounded the truth of realization, as seemed proper to them, from their own profound realization, *but never attempting or bothering to bridge the gulf, between their own insights and teachings, on the one hand and what the religious texts had to say on the other, and also in this whole process, decisively turning their backs on all previous traditional religious authorities.*

Still another kind of self-abnegating sages, like Sri Ramana Maharshi, took all the trouble to explore into the ancient sacred texts, *in the post realization phase* and tested their own experience, against what the sacred texts had to say about so unusual a realization. In this way their teaching underwent, refinement, perfection & brought in line with the ancient teaching on *moksha*, a teaching, that was the distilled essence of the realizations of countless sages in the long spiritual & religious history of the land.

### **I.7. Who Are the So-Called *Mumukshus*?**

From whatever has been said above, one may have the feeling that *mumukshus* may only be in very small numbers everywhere, even hard to find among the ubiquitous spiritual seekers. Upon closer examination however, we may find that, a shockingly large number of seekers in our societies, who may not have as yet successfully crossed a certain threshold of spiritual maturity; *could well be trapped in a condition of spiritual stagnation*. This arresting of the process of spiritual flowering, could still be continuing to happen in our own day, as a general concomitant of our all too materialistic approach to life.

If a way out of this spiritual stasis is offered in convincing ways to these seekers whose spiritual growth has been arrested, there will certainly be the new possibility that large number of such seekers may actually suddenly graduate upwards as a current, becoming full-fledged *mumukshus* in this process. Where then are these potential *mumukshus*?



They may be in any station in life, even sometimes among the young, *but certainly in larger numbers among the older generation-especially those who are inwardly still very much alive, notwithstanding the chronological age of their bodies.* In fact all those who are looking for *ever-lasting peace and understanding, because of a series of blows of fate and endless sufferings in the wake of these blows, and who are therefore now feeling the urgency to know themselves with a view to end their long standing suffering are all potential mumukshus, par excellence.* The *atmajnana yajnas* though intended for seasoned *mumukshus*, will also be rewarding for the potential *mumukshus* - simply because it will be an opportunity for them to spiritually graduate and ascend to the level of the seasoned ones.

### **I.8.The Master Sri J Krishnamurti's 'Medicinal Decoction' of Choiceless Awareness:**

In every age, authentic masters have always approached the problem of *moksha* in their own inimitable way. It is true that the master Sri J Krishnamurti (1895-1986), never directly drew attention to the goal of *Moksha per se.* *Instead, he only sought to clear away - the piles of debris of conflict in consciousness; the veiling obstacles created by the power of maya; by avidya, or real ignorance; and by ahankara, or the individual demonic ego; through the very potent 'medicinal decoction' of the choiceless awareness of what is.*

*To him, this was true meditation, and even this could not be achieved because of the self-seeking will of a seeker, an*

*‘imaginary individual’; it just had to happen, whenever the conditions for the same became favorable. He had always stressed the importance of learning about the obstacles and becoming intimate with them, for in his view, it was this that held the real key and could therefore open the door to freedom.*

Now, what indeed is this *choiceless awareness*? And secondly, what is this so-called *what is*? Our true Self is actually timeless, and once we realize that *we have always been irrevocably perched in this seat only*, all that we are capable of doing, is to be an unconcerned witness of every happening in consciousness, as well as every happening, out there in the world. For Krishnamurti, this alone was meditation. It is easy to be poised here, as *the true Self, if the ceaseless effort of becoming, which has become our second nature is renounced, through wise understanding. To be an unconcerned witness is to be choicelessly aware. This also means, we have given up our foolish egoistic desires ‘to improve ourselves’. To be choicelessly aware, all we have to do is simply renounce the habit of pursuing an illusory ‘self-improvement’, yes, ‘illusory’ because this so-called self-improvement never ever happens, as we sadly remain only the same old mediocre individuals, that we have always been!*

### **I.9. Choiceless Awareness Awakens Intelligence, i.e.; *Prajna*:**

In our starting conditions of *maya*, *avidya* and *ahankara*; *what is*, will be all the *asuric* or demonic goings-on in our consciousness, whereas, when the light of *choiceless awareness* has illuminated all these *asuric* goings on without the least sense of

judgment, guilt, condemnation or suppression; then the *asuras* are, so to speak, laid to rest, *through a spontaneous deflation of their life energies*. And once this cleansing happens and conflict has vanished, then *what is*, will shine as *prajna* or that *new awakened intelligence* at first and also much later as *Parabrahma*, the unmanifest & unknowable sovereign Divine source.

*Krishnamurti's 'medicinal decoction' of choiceless awareness, also implies the presence of the ingredient of detachment*, for without this vital ingredient, the witnessing awareness, will never acquire the pure quality of being choiceless. When ingested, this 'medicinal decoction' of choiceless awareness, leads automatically to the awakening of intelligence or *prajna*; provided firstly, conflict has vanished *through the non-judgmental acceptance of duality within ourselves*, and secondly, as a consequence of the vanishing of all conflict, *there also occurs, the very important stilling of consciousness and a condition of consciousness being relatively empty and devoid of activity, but quiescent and poised in the timeless present*.

It will be worthwhile for us to remember at this stage that in Krishnamurti's view, all we may possibly do is 'only to keep the window open'. For, 'whether the breeze will actually come in or not', is not certainly in our hands-it may come in, if we are lucky, or it may not. For one in whom, this *prajna* is awakened, his concomitant state of unperturbed equanimity will be so rock-like, that this whole question of whether the breeze will come in or not, will be quite meaningless to him - because, he anyhow has no

‘future’ which he has with self-interest architected, and no aspirations either, for the gratification of his petty self.

#### I.10. The *Sthitha Prajna*’s State of Unperturbed Equanimity:

This is the *sthitha prajna*’s state of unperturbed equanimity, described so aptly in Ch II of the Bhagavad Gita. A *sthitha prajna* is one in whom, *the awakened intelligence, prajna* has become steadily aflame & stabilized (*sthitha*). The meditative journey of the *choiceless awareness of what is*, followed by abidance in ‘I amness’, culminates in the consolidation of the *sthitha prajna*’s state of consciousness, and this is what I have identified as Part I of the *sadhana or spiritual practice*, for knowing, discovering & even being *the imperceptible inner Self, the Atma*.

#### I.11. The Master Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj’s ‘Medicinal Decoction’ of Abiding in the ‘I-am-ness’:

It has been made abundantly clear by Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj (1897-1981) in his *satsangs* that as *moksha* is not anything, which can be grasped by our intellects or our customary mental activities, *there is absolutely nothing our intellects can possibly do by way of sadhana as a mental effort to get at moksha-except to have that irrevocable understanding*. The reason is that through their ceaseless involvement in one kind of mental activity or the other, all they can possibly do is to sustain this ceaseless activity and as such activity is the very mechanism of the veiling force of *maya*, which prevents us from knowing who we really are, *no sadhana, which implies an activity in consciousness, can be a fruitful means in the quest for this realization*.

So, like all true *advaitic* masters, this master too negates the activity of thought, and asks us to *just sink in and abide in the state of 'I-am-ness', which is just the simple and pure feeling of being*, in contrast to our incessant *becoming*-which is ever fraught with every kind of mental activity. In this master's perception as 'I -am-ness' is the portal, extremely proximate to *Parabrahma*, the unmanifest & attribute less sovereign Divinity; our being poised at this portal, *bereft of all ulterior motives*, is the best we may possibly accomplish, by way of a '*sadhana*', and it is important to note that even this, is more in the nature of an *inaction and negation*, rather than any positive action or activity, that may be inspired by self-seeking, in howsoever subtle a form.

After Krishnamurti's 'medicinal decoction' has resulted in the slowing down of thought and later, even in the relative stilling of mental activity, *at that stage, it will be relatively easy to drink the draught of the more potent medicine, that Sri Maharaj is recommending, as a means to our realization. If, of course, one undertakes this sadhana, even with the slight contamination of some desire or ulterior motive, or sense of agency, that one is doing something, then one is finished, one loses all spiritual merit in the process. Abidance in 'I-am-ness', has to be motiveless, for it to be truly spiritually pure, meritorious and fruitful. In Maharaj's view, nothing more is necessary than abidance in I-am-ness - because according to him, once this happens, and this is actually what people on the Bhakti path call surrender, Parabrahma will 'get us', rather than we questing for Parabrahma, through an act of extroverted seeking.*

## I.12. Sri Ramana Maharshi's 'Medicinal Decoction' of *Atmavichara*:

The spiritual inner enquiry into this unusual & rather unheard of question of who we really are? is *atmavichara* [*vichara* meaning enquiry]. In the last century, world-wide spiritual attention was drawn to this spiritual-philosophical question, by *Sri Ramana Maharshi* (1879-1950), after this self-realization just happened to him one fine day, suddenly & most unexpectedly, without his ever having sought after this illumination. Hindu sacred texts consider such illumination to be the highest blessing, and call it *moksha*, meaning, 'liberation'. By this was meant liberation *from the maya* (ignorance) that 'one is the body', or *from the maya that* 'one is the consciousness, or the ego', etc.

In the *maharshi's* view, one way to approach *atmajnana* was through the sustained enquiry into the whole question of who we really are? So he enjoined *atmavichara* to *mumukshus* as a means to *atmajnana*, or self-realization. The *maharshi* was just one, but a particularly illustrious example, of the long line of succession of great sages (*maharishis*) from the Hindu world, who were fortunate enough to secure this highest blessing of self-realization.

The other endlessly creative and illustrious progenitor in the Hindu world, on this path of *atmavichara* and *atmajnana* was *Adi Sankaracharya* - recognized also to be one of the founding fathers of Hinduism [8<sup>th</sup> Century, CE].

## I.13. The Master Sri Sri Bhagavan's 'Medicinal Decoction' of the Bhagavad Gita & the Hindu Spiritual Ethos:

In my life, the first five ‘medicinal decoctions’ have been drawn from the following sources. Firstly, from the ancient Hindu spiritual ethos, the Bhagavad Gita & the Upanishads, given to me as a very potent initiation in boyhood days itself, between the years, 1963-1967, by the beloved master Sri Sri Bhagavan. Secondly from, the master Sri J Krishnamurti’s *choiceless awareness* as meditative seeing. Again, initially seeded into my consciousness between the years, 1966-1970, by the beloved master Sri Sri Bhagavan. Thirdly, from the ‘abidance in I am ness’ of the *advaitic* master Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj. This was a discovery I came upon in 1994. Fourthly, from the *atmavichara* of Sri Ramana Maharshi. Again I was introduced to Sri Ramana Maharshi by Sri Sri Bhagavan in 1964. And, fifthly, the ‘medicinal decoction’ of *Jyotisha*, or *Vedic* astrology, that fully manifested for me in 2000, through the work of the *Jyotishis*, Prof V K Choudhry, Pandit Vamadeva Shastri, and several others.

*After having ingested the five ‘medicinal decoctions’, in the way they came into my life, and after having internalized, understood & realized the same in my life, these atmajnana yajnas emerged, as an expression of my realizations.*

#### I.14. The Place of the Bhagavad Gita as a *Moksha Shastra*:

The Bhagavad Gita was introduced to me by the beloved master Sri Sri Bhagavan in 1966-1967, probably with a view to seed into my consciousness, a comprehensive Hindu world-view, that the Gita so eminently provided. Those potent seeds of initiation turned into a prodigious tree of my realization, after I

turned 60. There are many learned commentaries on the Bhagavad Gita already and so the question naturally arises whether any additional new commentary is now called for? These *atmajnana yajnas* are not certainly commentaries in the traditional sense, *for I bring the Bhagavad Gita alive in an entirely new way, as a moksha shastra. This will be evident to us, as the atmajnana yajna unfolds part by part.*

### I.15. *Jyotisha* in this Approach, as the 5<sup>th</sup> ‘Medicinal Decoction’:

In this new approach, *Jyotisha* [Vedic astrology], also provides another Hindu ‘medicinal decoction’ that has the potency to dispel the demons in man’s consciousness—demons such as *maya*, *avidya*, *ahankara*, and a whole host of other kindred ones.

I had been studying *Vedic* astrology, for twelve years, moving rather unsuccessfully & restlessly back and forth, many a time, between the classical astrological works in the Hindu world, and the works of modern *Jyotishis* like Pandit Vamadeva Shastri, and several others, for I was in search of a self-consistent and comprehensive understanding of *Jyotisha*, as a *Vedic* discipline of learning. *All too suddenly, when I stumbled upon the Systems Approach to Hindu Astrology, founded by Professor V K Choudhry; masses of pervasive black clouds of confusion were instantaneously dispelled, leaving me in a profound state of learning and seeing; to such a remarkable extent that for me verily, Jyotisha now began to serve me as the third eye, it has given me a new darsana, or world-view, of which moksha is an integral part.*



## I.16. Broadly, Two Traditional Paths to *Moksha*:

### The Path of *Bhakti*, & the Path of *Jnana*:

In the *Vedic* or Hindu spiritual tradition, there are available two distinct paths suitable to *mumukshus* of two widely different temperamental inclinations. The path of devotion or *bhakti*, in which the object of devotional adoration is the formful aspect of *Isvara* (referred to as *saguna Brahman*, or God with auspicious attributes); and the path of enquiry & understanding, in which the object of enquiry & understanding is the unmanifest, attributeless & formless sovereign Divinity, i.e.; *nirguna Brahman*. The exoteric path of *bhakti* takes ultimate Reality to be ‘God or *Isvara*’, as we can conceive Him, in our deluded state of duality, in which the taints of *avidya*, *maya* & *ahankara* are all admittedly present.

In this path, God or *Isvara* is conceived as an ‘All Mighty’ external power, set apart from our self, which we erroneously consider to be ‘petty & puny’. It is understood that one’s supposition that one is the body or the *manas*, or the *ahankara* is permitted on this path; for so long as *maya* and *avidya* remain, how can these perceptions ever vanish? And naturally then, ‘God’ becomes a perceived ‘All Mighty’ sense object, or at any rate a ‘Sacred Object’, in the eyes of the subject, the devotee. Its culmination is ‘God-realization’, or frequent mystic communions with God, as an ultimate Reality, but different from our petty self.

Wholly different from this populist stream of *bhakti* and duality is the *esoteric path of jnana* or self-knowing, self-realization, *atmavichara*, & *atmajnana*, in which, as there is no

scope for duality right from the very inception, ultimate Reality can only be the formless *Parabrahma*, which is also our *imperceptible inner Self rather than any external 'All Mighty' power, highly appealing to our limited sense perceptions.*

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### **Dr S Bhagavadpada's Atmajnana Yajna in Mexico City**

[This is ideal as a 'self-paced *Atmajnana Yajna* at home']:

#### **II.1. After Twelve Years of *Antarmukha*:**

In 2011, Bhagavadpada yielding to a new inner inspiration, moved away from his erstwhile *long period of 12 years of withdrawal, solitude and contemplative study. This spiritual phenomenon of withdrawal from the world followed by a subsequent return to it is well known in both Eastern as well as in the Christian (as also in the other) religious traditions.* For, without such a protracted withdrawal from an active life in the outer-world of sensory perceptions, earnest seekers may not find it easy to come upon that final astounding understanding or inward discovery (called self-realization, or *atmajnana*).

#### **II.2. The Learning and Teaching Pilgrimage in 2012:**

In Sep 2012, he embarked on a new 'learning & teaching pilgrimage', for seeing and understanding the ethos of the mundane & spiritual life of the Western world, for knowing the nature of their spiritual quests, & for learning from their spiritual traditions, their modern masters and the institutions they founded,

etc. In this process of learning from the West, it was also his *samkalpa* to share his own spiritual realizations and understanding with kindred *mumukshus* in the West, whenever such opportunities would arise for him, without his having to exert himself unduly to seek them out.

### II.3. *Atmajnana* in Latin America: Invited & Organized by Ricardo Bravo:

Through a remarkable unforeseen coincidence, as though Bhagavadpada's *samkalpa* was already in the ears of *Parabrahma* he received an invitation from Ricardo Bravo [a spiritual leader in Latin America] to conduct *atamajnana yajnas* in both Punta del Este [Uruguay] as well as in Mexico city [Mexico]. During this Sep-Oct 2012 pilgrimage, he was also offered the opportunity to hold *satsangs* or spiritual gatherings and provide a number of personal *gyotish* consultations,(not only in Toronto, Canada), but also in Punta del Este and Mexico city for deepening and broadening the new understanding, seekers had already secured in his *atamajnana yajnas*.

### II.4. Ricardo Bravo's Spiritual Work in Latin America:

The *atamajnana yajnas* were organized by the spiritual leader, Ricardo Bravo[from Chile], founding director of Oneness Flower, an organization dedicated to the practice and dissemination of tools for personal and spiritual development in Latin America. He had received *upadesha*[spiritual teachings] as well as practical training in Eastern methodologies for self-

knowledge, health, & quality of life by the foundation for world awakening[USA] and also directly from Sri Sri Bhagavan, the founder of the Oneness spiritual movement. He has taught courses in these areas in Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, Mexico, USA, Spain, Denmark & Hungary since 1997. Today he is devoted to the teachings and dissemination of the ancient *Vedic* systems of knowledge-through the Oneness Flower Academy.

### II.5. Ricardo's Magical Spanish Translation of the *Yajna*:

Ricardo Bravo had already become deeply familiar with the *darsana*[world-view] and *atmajnana* teachings that Bhagavadpada desired to deliver in those countries - through intense email dialogues with him in the preceding several months, ever since the beginning of 2012. *Because of this deep familiarity, his intelligence, sincerity and single-minded dedication, Ricardo acquired the rare intuitive gift of being able to instantaneously translate Sankara's discourses into Spanish.* The efficacy and intelligibility of this *almost magical Spanish translation* was spectacularly evident in the very fruitful and bountiful number of questions with which the seekers spontaneously came up, during every hour of the unfolding discourses.

### II.6. Supporting Teams and Hosts in PDE, and Mexico City:

In the city of Punta del Este, Ricardo Bravo was ably assisted by his two co-organizers: Juan Pablo Diaz and Silvia Vila. Analia Suarez, came forward to help Ricardo's mission by firstly, graciously hosting Sankara Bhagavadpada and Kannan

Subramanian and secondly, by putting her ethereal AWA hotel, at his disposal for making the *atmajnana yajna* a pleasant experience. Joachim Hua also warmly offered his selfless services.

In Mexico city, Ricardo Bravo was again ably assisted by a number of seekers, who had been inspired by him. His main organizers were Gabriel Vidal and Monica Gutierrez, while Maggie Haddad graciously hosted Sankara, Kannan and Ricardo in her own palatial home. She also spontaneously and warmly offered her premises for holding the *atmajnana yajna*. There were other team mates who offered either very valuable technical support or selfless service: Sebastian, Elvira, Marco, Roselba, Pipe, Jime, Pepe, Humberto and Al Noor.

### II.7. Kannan Subramanian:

Kannan Subramanian who has been offering his selfless services to Sankara Bhagavadpada in the course of more than 20 yrs, accompanied him on this learning pilgrimage to N & S America. In the very beginning he is seen reading the invocatory prayers, before Ricardo Bravo begins to translate the prayers into Spanish.

### II.8. *Atmajnana Yajna* intended for *mumukshus*:

This *atmajnana yajna* comes as a set of 14 DVDs. The *yajna* is conducted in the English language, but for those who wish to listen to the Spanish translation, all they need to do is to press the audio button in the DVD remote. It is intended primarily for

*mumukshus*. Such *mumukshus* go after *moksha* in the same way and with the same intensity, as worldly people go after wealth, name or fame.

### II.9. What is expected of the *mumukshus*?

No previous knowledge of the Bhagavad Gita, or of the teachings of the masters Sri J Krishnamurti, Sri Ramana Maharshi and Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj is assumed, but if some seekers have walked on one or more of these paths of self-knowing or self-realization, that will definitely be a decided advantage. ‘No previous knowledge’, because here a systematic understanding of *atma & moksha* is built up from first principles so that, all that the seeker has to do is to think and feel along the lines suggested by this teacher at every unfolding moment in the *Yajna*.

*Indeed the mumukshus must be capable of deep listening, thinking and contemplating. As the mumukshu is one who has given his heart to this quest, these appear to be reasonable expectations.*

### II.10. Goals of the *Yajna*:

The goals of this *atmajnana yajna* are self-knowing, inner contentment and finally self-realization. Bhagavadpada’s approach in these *yajnas* is to sequentially administer to our distraught and deluded consciousness, in a meticulously structured manner, different permutations & combinations of basically *five very potent, Hindu ‘medicinal decoctions’*( which are actually potent teachings), for understanding, dispelling and laying at rest the

various ‘demons’: of *maya* or primordial delusion; of *avidya* or ignorance, of *ahamkara* or sense of individual self, and many other kindred ones, such as greed, lust, avarice, jealousy, hatred, violence, killer-instinct, etc. ‘Demons’ because, they distort our true perceptions, and spiritually blind us by projecting truth as illusion and illusion as truth.

*The arduous process of self-knowing, would consist of our becoming first of all aware of these demonic energies in our thought, word, deed and in life circumstances as well, and we have to know ourselves in this way, without sitting in judgment, without projecting ideals, without wishing to get rid of these demons, without being ashamed of them & without feeling a sense of guilt, because of their very presence, etc. This is indeed the very first goal of the yajna. As awareness transcends these demons, abiding in awareness may be the sure and only means to understand these demons and thereby withdrawing their life energy, so that they spontaneously exhaust their life energies and thus give up their demonic activities.*

### II.11. Structure and Content of the *Yajna*:

He presents the *yajna* in 7 Parts, spanning some 14 DVDs running for 14 hrs, with the present introductory audio CD, running for about an hour. In every Part, he explains the etymology of the important *Sanskrit* vocabulary, which he systematically introduces at every stage and then goes on to throw new light on the *sutras*, showing, how a *mumukshu* may work his/her way to *moksha*. Lest Westerners and new comers to *Sanskrit* should feel

discouraged, he emphasizes that a knowledge of *Sanskrit per se* is not really important or necessary, *but that it is much more important to grasp and internalize this self-realization teaching, which is presented in English first and then translated into Spanish.*

He also relies on Hindu mythic pictures and symbols to appeal to our intuitive right hemisphere. Each *sutra* in the Gita is clearly brought alive with rich content and meaning, approaching the same, from the point of *moksha*, so as to make it easy for us to, then and there, discover its stunning pertinence and utility in our daily spiritual life.

He uses no more than 20 *sutras* from the Gita, in all the 7 Parts:

In Chapter II, he relies on the *sutras*: 23, 24, 25, 29, 58, 67 & 70.

In Chapter VI, he relies on the *sutras*: 5, 6, 34 & 35.

In Chapter VII, he uses the *sutras*: 14, 16 & 27.

And in Chapter XIII, he uses the *sutras*: 7, 8, 12, 15, 16 & 22.

The 7 Parts of the *yajna* went in this order:

Part I: Introduction to *Tat Tvam Asi* and *Atma*.

Part II: Recognizing *maya* and duality and overcoming the same.

Part III: *Pratyahara* [Withdrawal of the Senses from their Sense objects].

Part IV: Understanding *Atma tattva*.

Part V: Perfection in the Understanding of *Atma tattva*.



Part VI: Realizing the already existing connection to the unmanifest Divine.

Part VII: Summing up, thanks giving and the road beyond.

### II.12. *Sravana, Manana, Nidhidhyasana & Samalochana:*

Hindu tradition on the path of *jnana* lays down that the first step or beat of *atmavichara* has to be *sravana*, which is an initial *careful listening to the truth with undivided attention*. This will be possible in the first instance, only when all prejudice has been set aside, and all chattering in consciousness has subsided. This first beat of *atmavichara* must be followed by the second beat of *manana*.

What indeed is this *manana*? *It is simply clear thinking for oneself, and thinking with feeling, also feeling the truth which has been listened to, so that one is convinced, and one no more has any doubts*. By implication, believing blindly, or investing one's faith in a theory or principle, and 'following' masters, however erudite, convincing or self-realized they may be, will not constitute *manana*.

This second beat must in turn, lead to the third more mature beat of *nidhidhyasana*, which is *deep contemplative meditation on what has been already thought about, so that an internalization, comes to pass, and this must be understood to be in the nature of a 'perfect understanding' which is in fact, realization*. Without graduating through these three steps or beats, the fruit of *jnana* cannot be realized.

In every Part of the *yajna*, Bhagavadpada has added a rewarding and culminating fourth beat, namely *samalochana*, which is a process of thinking, discussing, sharing and reflecting together, as this seemed natural to him in the context of the *yajnas*. All hungry seekers are likely to find astounding answers to many of their long standing perplexing questions, during these *samalochana* sessions.

### II.13. Parts I & II in the Path of *Jnana* [Path of Understanding]:

He selected only some 20 potent *sutras* from the Gita to get his teaching across. According to him, the vast majority of seekers on the path of *moksha* would have to go through two distinct Parts. In the first Part on the path of *Jnana*, there has to be an awakening to suffering and the consequent purgation of it, or the dying to it, in the sense meant by Sri J Krishnamurti. He says, that if this happens successfully, then *prajna* or intelligence is awakened and that this *prajna* which has come into manifestation, *will not rest till it successfully resolves the equation between the true Self of man and the unmanifest sovereign Divinity, Parabrahma.*

So, the pursuit of *Parabrahma*, the enquiry into the *Parabrahma* by the awakened *prajna* will constitute the second and the final Part on the path. The *atmajnana yajna* shows the path of *jnana* leading to *moksha*, for those diligent *mumukshus* who are inclined to walk on this path.

Throughout the *yajna*, in several places, Bhagavadpada repeatedly emphasizes that there are innumerable paths to understand and realize the unity with the Divine, so, for this

reason, he time and again, stresses that we should walk on a path that is naturally suitable to our spiritual inclinations, and asks us to explore and discover which among these is our natural path, and urges us to start walking on that path in all earnestness. In his view, this meditative journey to *moksha*, through the 4 beats of *sravana*, *manana*, *nidhidhyasana* and *samaloचना*, in every helical cycle of *atmajnana*; is something which each *mumukshu* has to himself or herself consciously inwardly seek, yet also very subtly, and non-willfully, because this goal is in a sense also a non-goal, for the initial seeking is itself, only a ‘wrong beginning’, so it has to burn itself out eventually, just as the goal itself has to also burn itself out.

Surprisingly, he takes the rather encouraging stand that even if *mumukshus* reach only the *sthitha prajna*’s state of unperturbed equanimity; which means that only *sadhana* in Part I, has been successfully completed; while the authentic discovery and total devotional anchorage to *nirguna Parabrahma* has not yet happened, which means that Part II of the *sadhana* is still left unfinished - *it must still be deemed a blessing of untold value*.

#### II.14. *Atmajnana* as a ‘Self-Paced Yajna at Home’:

For restless *mumukshus*, who are still in search of ‘That Light’, which they themselves truly are, this well structured *atmajnana yajna* in 7 Parts, can be an absorbing self-paced home study course that will give confidence & enormous clarity, probably, for the first time in their lives, so that they may now resume their quest for *moksha* - from that point, where they had

*left off, because of a lack of conviction or lack of clarity and understanding.*

### II.15. Dr S. Bhagavadpada's Background:

In his younger years, he was a researcher in theoretical nuclear Physics [doctoral research from TIFR, Mumbai (1971-1979)]; then an Alexander von Humboldt researcher in Germany (1980-1982). These were also meditative and introspective years, when he slipped into the *sthitha prajna's* state of unperturbed equanimity.....

He was deeply involved in the commencement of the mission work of his master Sri Sri Bhagavan in the inceptional stages and was the *paramacharya* for that movement, during the years 1995-1999, before he went into *antarmukha*, namely, withdrawal, solitude and contemplative study. The spiritual name 'Sankara Bhagavadpada' was given to him by his master Sri Sri Bhagavan in 1991. And through these *atmajnana yajnas*, shows a way for *mumukshus*, to build their spiritual life in the spheres of *dharma & moksha*. In his first published work, 'Sri Ramana Maharshi's Moksha', he has broken new ground in the inter-disciplinary field of *Jyotisha* in the spiritual spheres of *dharma* and *moksha*. He is also currently teaching a self-paced course in *Vedic astrology [jyotisha]* to a number of individual seekers through e-mail lessons. Presently, he lives in the outskirts of Chennai with his wife and daughter and offers consultations in *jyotisha*. His websites, [www.Hinduworldastrology.net](http://www.Hinduworldastrology.net); [www.Tat-Tvam-Asi.org](http://www.Tat-Tvam-Asi.org)

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