

## I. The Introductory Audio Book & The Content of the *Yajna*:

Dr.S.Bhagavadpada presents the *yajna* in 7 Parts, spanning 14 DVDs running for 14 hrs, and an introductory audio book, running for about an hour. The audio book gives an important overview of the subject, thereby providing a framework for the *yajna*. The text narration in the audio book has been done by Dr.Prema Shanker and Sri Ramuji Nandiga. The musical creation and Vedic chanting has been done by Smt Uma Mohan, whereas the recording, voice and musical arrangement has been done by Kum. Kruti Mohan at RAMS ('Rhythms and Mystical Sounds'), Chennai.

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 also instantaneously translated into Spanish by Sri Ricardo Bravo... These 14 DVDs offer testimony to the remarkable initiative and organizing capacity of Bhagavadpada's warm-hearted host, Sri Ricardo Bravo.

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:

Chapter II : 23, 24, 25, 29, 58, 67 & 70;

Chapter VI : 5, 6, 34 & 35;

Chapter VII : 14, 16 & 27;

Chapter XIII : 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. *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.

Put differently, each Part of the *yajna* may be considered to be one helical cycle of *atmajnana* and in turn, each of these helical cycles consists of four beats. When a particular helical cycle is completed, the *yajna* advances to the succeeding helical cycle, and the 4 beats in that cycle start unfolding, etc. It is basically a time-tested & fool-proof process of understanding on the path of *jnana*, haloed in the *advaitic* tradition. On this path of understanding, it goes without saying that no short-cuts are possible.

### III. 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 *samalochana*, *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.*

#### IV. *Jnana Yoga* [Path of Enquiry and Understanding], through the Administration of Six Different 'Medicinal Decoctions':

You will see that Dr. S. Bhagavadpada is teaching *atma tattva* & *Parabrahma tattva* from Ch II, and Ch XIII of the Bhagavad Gita. Ch II, is *the yoga of understanding* and Ch XIII, is the differentiation of the 'known' from the 'knower'. He is obviously seeking to awaken us to our true nature, the *Atma*, the imperceptible inner self. Many great traditional spiritual masters have also deeply addressed this question in every age. Bhagavadpada approaches this time-honored problem of awakening and self-realization in the spheres of *dharma* & *moksha*, in his comprehensive, compassionate and systematic manner, using the Hindu 'medicinal decoction' of the Bhagavad Gita, but now in an original way as a *moksha shastra*, and blending this with the other equally potent 'medicinal decoctions' sourced in the teachings of all his four spiritual masters and in *Jyotisha*, the fifth 'medicinal decoction', as well. To these he has added the powerful sixth 'medicinal decoction' rooted in his own inward understanding and realization. *Thereby, he has certainly kindled a bold new line of enquiry or atmavichara in this atmajnana yajna, which according to him is the yoga of understanding.*

In breaking this new ground, he has moved away from the exoteric path of *bhakti*, in which duality is necessarily sustained between the seeker and 'God', the goal. In treading the path of *jnana*, he has also rejected the dangerous and irreligious approach of the modern faithless, skeptical rational enquirer, who bereft of devotion and sensitivity to spiritual traditions, veers headlong towards religious heterodoxy and ultimately even towards *maya*. He has also drawn parallel lessons in 'ultimate Reality' as understood in the quantum theory of particles & fields.

## V. *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.*

## VI. Dr. S. Bhagavadpada’s Background:

Bhagavadpada’s doctoral research & his spiritual-astrological work: 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 first decade and was the *paramacharya* (1995-1999) for that movement, before he went into *antarmukha* (withdrawal, solitude and contemplative study). The 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*. He is also currently teaching a self-paced course in *Vedic astrology [jyotisha]* to a number of individual seekers through e-mail lessons. His spiritual-astrological, interdisciplinary work, ‘Sri Ramana Maharshi’s Moksha’ breaks new ground in *dharma & moksha Vedic astrology*. It was published in 2009, by Yogi Impressions Books Pvt Ltd, Mumbai. Presently, he lives in the outskirts of Chennai with his wife and daughter and offers consultations in *jyotisha*. His website, [www.hinduworldastrology.net](http://www.hinduworldastrology.net)