



गुरु अष्टकम्
**GURU
ASTAKAM**

Lecture by Swami Paramarthananda

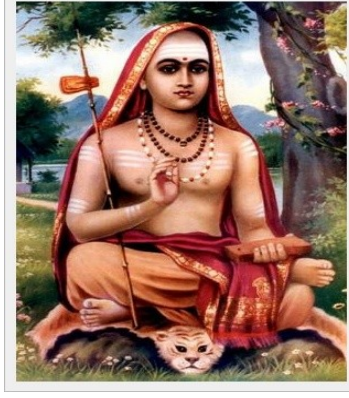
Class notes by Sri Harihara Ganesh

Swamiji has not verified this class notes, but has been done by his disciple with his blessings

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Shri Adi Sankaracharya's Guru Ashtakam

श्रीमद् आद्य शंकराचार्यविरचितम्

गुर्वष्टकम्

शरीरं सुरूपं तथा वा कलत्रं
यशश्चारु चित्रं धनं मेरुतुल्यम्।
मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरंघ्रिपद्मे
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ 1 ॥

śarīraṁ surupaṁ tathā vā kalatraṁ
yaśāścārū citraṁ dhanam mērutulyam|
manaścēna lagnaṁ gurōraṁghripadmē
tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kim || 1 ||

कलत्रं धनं पुत्रपौत्रादि सर्वं
गृहं बान्धवाः सर्वमेतद्धि जातम्।
मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरंघ्रिपद्मे
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ 2 ॥

kalatraṁ dhanam putrapautrādi sarvaṁ
gr̥ham bāndhavāḥ sarvamētaddhi jātam|
manaścēna lagnaṁ gurōraṁghripadmē
tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kim || 2 ||

षडंगादिवेदो मुखे शास्त्रविद्या
कवित्वादि गद्यं सुपद्यं करोति।
मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरंघ्रिपद्मे
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ 3 ॥

ṣaḍaṅgādivēdō mukhē śāstravidyā
kavitvādi gadyaṁ supadyaṁ karōti|
manaścēna lagnaṁ gurōraṁghripadmē
tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kim || 3 ||

विदेशेषु मान्यः स्वदेशेषु धन्यः
सदाचारवृत्तेषु मत्तो न चान्यः।
मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरंघ्रिपद्मे
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ 4 ॥

vidēśēṣu mānyaḥ svadēśēṣu dhanyaḥ
sadācāravṛttēṣu mattō na cānyaḥ|
manaścēna lagnaṁ gurōraṁghripadmē
tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kim || 4 ||

क्षमामण्डले भूपभूपालवृन्दैः
सदा सेवितं यस्य पादारविन्दम्।
मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरंघ्रिपद्मे
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ 5 ॥

kṣamāmaṅḍalē bhūpabhūpālavṛndaiḥ
sadā sēvitaṁ yasya pādāravindam|
manaścēna lagnaṁ gurōraṁghripadmē
tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kim || 5 ||

यशो मे गतं दिक्षु दानप्रतापात्
जगद्वस्तु सर्वं करे सत्प्रसादात्।
मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरंघ्रिपद्मे
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ 6 ॥

yaśo mē gataṁ dikṣu dānapratāpāt
jagadvastu sarvaṁ karē satprasādāt|
manaścēna lagnaṁ gurōraṁghripadmē
tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kim || 6 ||

न भोगे न योगे न वा वाजिराजौ
न कान्तासुखे नैव वितेषु चित्तम्।
मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरंघ्रिपद्मे
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ 7 ॥

na bhōgē na yōgē na vā vājirājau
na kāntāsukhē naiva vittēṣu cittam|
manaścēna lagnaṁ gurōraṁghripadmē
tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kim || 7 ||

अरण्ये न वा स्वस्य गेहे न कार्ये
न देहे मनो वर्तते मे त्वनर्घ्ये।
मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरंघ्रिपद्मे
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ 8 ॥

araṇyē na vā svasya gēhē na kāryē
na dēhē manō vartatē mē tvanarghyē|
manaścēna lagnaṁ gurōraṁghripadmē
tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kim || 8 ||

अनर्घ्याणि रत्नादि मुक्तानि सम्यक्
समालिंगिता कामिनी यामिनीषु।
मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरंघ्रिपद्मे
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ 9 ॥

anarghyāṇi ratnādi muktāni samyak
samāliṅgitā kāmīnī yāmīniṣu|
manaścēna lagnaṁ gurōraṁghripadmē
tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kim || 9 ||

गुरोरष्टकं यः पठेत्पुण्यदेही
यतिर्भूपतिर्ब्रह्मचारी च गेही।
लभेत् वाञ्छितार्थं पदं ब्रह्मसंज्ञं
गुरोरुक्तवाक्ये मनो यस्य लग्नम् ॥ 10 ॥

gurōraṣṭakaṁ yaḥ paṭhētpuṇyadēhī
yatirbhūpatirbrahmacārī ca gēhī|
labhēt vāṁchitārtha padaṁ brahmasamjñam
gurōruktavākyē manō yasya lagnaṁ || 10 ||

गुरुवष्टकम्

ततः किम् means "So what?". गुरुभक्ति is symbolic of शास्त्रभक्ति. Guru's greatness is only because of the शास्त्र ज्ञानम् that he has got and not the person himself. Minus शास्त्र ज्ञानम्, he was not respected. गु means darkness, ignorance. रु stands for eliminator. Every गुरुः has to be a ज्ञानी. A spiritual prodigy can never be a गुरुः as he has not had a systematic learning and does not know to transfer the wisdom – only a शिष्यः can be a गुरुः. A ज्ञानी cannot be a गुरुः unless he transfers his knowledge & removes someone else's ignorance. Knowledge can be transferred via a सम्प्रदायः which is available only in the शास्त्रम्.

गुकारस्तु अन्धकारः रुकारस्तन्निवर्तकः।
अन्धकारनिवर्तित्वात्गुरुरित्यभिधीयते ॥

Initially a person cannot develop respect for शास्त्रम्. So, we start with गुरुभक्ति. गुरुः gradually tells the शिष्यः that his glory is because of the knowledge gained from शास्त्रम्. The गुरुभक्ति then gets shifted to शास्त्रम् and from there to आत्मज्ञानम् which represents मोक्षः. Glorification of गुरुभक्ति is glorification of आत्मज्ञानम्. Without आत्मज्ञानम्, life is useless.

शरीरं सुरूपं तथा वा कलत्रं
यशश्चारु चित्रं धनं मेरुतुल्यम्।
मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरंघ्रिपद्मे
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ 1 ॥
śārīraṁ surupam tathā vā kalatram
yaśāścārū citraṁ dhanam mērutulyam|
manaścēnna lagnaṁ gurōraṁghripadmē
tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kim || 1 ||

Even if you have a pretty body, a beautiful wife,
Great fame and mountain like money,

If your mind does not bow at the Guru's feet,
What is the use? What is the use? And What is the use?

The 1st and 2nd line will talk about accomplishments. A person may have a very handsome body. He may be Mr./Miss Universe. So what? After few years, it will be gone. He might have an equally attractive wife. So what? He might have great fame in the world. (चित्रं) He might be famous in different fields – science, arts etc. He might have amassed wealth equal to Himalayan Mountains (legitimately earned). So what? गुरोःअघ्नपद्मे मनःनलग्नंचेत् when the mind is not absorbed in lotus feet of the teacher, they are worthless

कलत्रं धनं पुत्रपौत्रादि सर्वं
गृहं बान्धवाः सर्वमेतद्धि जातम्।
मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरंघ्नपद्मे
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ 2 ॥

kalatram dhanam putrapautrādi sarvam
gṛham bāndhavāḥ sarvamētaddhi jātam|
manaścēnna lagnaṁ gurōraṁghripadmē
tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kim || 2 ||

Even if you have a wife, wealth, children grand children.
House , relations and are born in a great family,
If your mind does not bow at the Guru's feet,
What is the use? What is the use? And What is the use?

A person may have a good wife, plenty of wealth, sons & grandsons etc., house, relatives. What is the use of these when the mind is not absorbed in lotus feet of the teacher.

षडंगादिवेदो मुखे शास्त्रविद्या
कवित्वादि गद्यं सुपद्यं करोति।
मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरंघ्नपद्मे
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ 3 ॥

ṣaḍaṅgādivēdō mukhē śāstravidyā
kavitvādi gadyam supadyam karōti|

manaścēna lagnaṃ gurōraṃghripadmē
tataḥ kiṃ tataḥ kiṃ tataḥ kiṃ tataḥ kim || 3 ||

Even if you are an expert in six angas and the four Vedas,
And an expert in writing good prose and poems,
If your mind does not bow at the Guru's feet,
What is the use? What is the use? And What is the use?

He might be a knower of the 4 vedas & 6 angas (siksha – the science of pronunciation, kalpa – the science of rituals, vyakaranam – the science of vedic grammar, nirukta – the science of deriving vedic words, chandha – the science of meters, jyotisham – the science of astrology required for performing rituals & not the predictive astrology) also. Veda cannot be completely comprehended without the study of vedas. Inbrahmacharyaahsrama, from avaniavittam day, for 6 months, he is supposed to study the vedas. The next 6 months, he studies the vedaangas. Again in the next avaniavittam, he has to start study of the vedas. मुखे – in the tip of his tongue [in olden days, the text also was also memorized – writing facility was not there, knowing the text by-heart helped in the comprehending the text very well]. He may be able to write prose and poetry well. So what? When the mind is not absorbed in lotus feet of the teacher, they are worthless.

विदेशेषु मान्यः स्वदेशेषु धन्यः
सदाचारवृत्तेषु मत्तो न चान्यः।
मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरंघ्रिपद्मे
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् || 4 ||

vidēśēṣu mānyaḥ svadēśēṣu dhanyaḥ
sadācāravṛttēṣu mattō na cānyaḥ |
manaścēna lagnaṃ gurōraṃghripadmē
tataḥ kiṃ tataḥ kiṃ tataḥ kiṃ tataḥ kim || 4 ||

Even if you are considered great abroad, rich in your own place,
And greatly regarded in virtues and life,
If your mind does not bow at the Guru's feet,
What is the use? What is the use? And What is the use?

He might be respected abroad in various countries. He may be respected in his own country also. In the context of righteous conduct (सदाचारवृत्तम्=धार्मिकआचारः), there

may not be a second person (नच अन्यः) as great as me. So what? When the mind is not absorbed in lotus feet of the teacher, they are worthless.

क्षमामण्डले भूपभूपालवृन्दैः
सदा सेवितं यस्य पादारविन्दम्।
मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरंघ्रिपद्मे
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ 5 ॥

kṣamāmaṇḍalē bhūpabhūpālavṛndaiḥ
sadā sēvitam̐ yasya pādāravindam|
manaścēnna lagnaṁ gurōraṁghripadmē
tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kim || 5 ||

Even if you are a king of a great region,
And is served by kings and great kings,
If your mind does not bow at the Guru's feet,
What is the use? What is the use? And What is the use?

My lotus feet might be served by groups (वृन्दः) of emperors (king of kings) on the surface of the earth (क्षमा).So what? When the mind is not absorbed in lotus feet of the teacher, they are worthless.

यशो मे गतं दिक्षु दानप्रतापात्
जगद्वस्तु सर्वं करे सत्प्रसादात्।
मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरंघ्रिपद्मे
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ 6 ॥

yaśō mē gataṁ dikṣu dānapratāpāt
jagadvastu sarvaṁ karē satprasādāt|
manaścēnna lagnaṁ gurōraṁghripadmē
tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kim || 6 ||

Even if your fame has spread all over,
And the entire world is with you because of charity and fame,
If your mind does not bow at the Guru's feet,
What is the use? What is the use? And What is the use?

My fame might have reached far & wide because of the power of my charity. Because of this glory (यस्यप्रसादात्), the whole world might be under my control. So what? When the mind is not absorbed in lotus feet of the teacher, they are worthless.

न भोगे न योगे न वा वाजिराजौ
न कान्तासुखे नैव वित्तेषु चित्तम्।
मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरंघ्रिपद्मे
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ 7 ॥

na bhōgē na yōgē na vā vājirājau
na kāntāsukhē naiva vittēṣu cittam|
manaścēnna lagnaṁ gurōraṁghripadmē
tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kim || 7 ||

Even if you do not concentrate your mind,
On passion, Yoga, fire sacrifice,
Or in the pleasure from the wife
Or in the affairs of wealth,
If your mind does not bow at the Guru's feet,
What is the use? What is the use? And What is the use?

I have understood the value of गुरुभक्ति and I am not interested in the other purusharthas (as गुरुभक्ति is the means for moksha). My mind is no more committed to sense pleasures. My mind is not interested in other yogas other than gyana yoga. My mind is not interested in row of horses (वाजिराजिः). I am not enamored by the face of a beautiful woman (standing for sense organs). Why? Because when the mind is not absorbed in lotus feet of the teacher, they are worthless.

अरण्ये न वा स्वस्य गेहे न कार्ये
न देहे मनो वर्तते मे त्वनर्घ्ये।
मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरंघ्रिपद्मे
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ 8 ॥

araṇyē na vā svasya gēhē na kāryē
na dēhē manō vartatē mē tvanarghyē|
manaścēnna lagnaṁ gurōraṁghripadmē

tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kim || 8 ||

Even if your mind stays away in the forest,
Or in the house, Or In duties or in great thoughts
If your mind does not bow at the Guru's feet,
What is the use? What is the use? And What is the use?

My mind is not interested with forest for the forest sake – if the guru is in forest, I am in forest and not because I like the forest. My mind is not obsessed with a particular house, work, body. Body is only a means and not an end in itself. Using a thing is one thing. Being obsessed with it is another. अनर्घ्यम् = worthless [in respect to infinite brahman]; अर्घ्यम् = value. Why? Because when the mind is not absorbed in lotus feet of the teacher, they are worthless.

अनर्घ्याणि रत्नादि मुक्तानि सम्यक्
समालिंगिता कामिनी यामिनीषु।
मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरंघ्रिपद्मे
ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् || 9 ||

anarghyāṇi ratnādi muktāni samyak
samāliṅgitā kāmīnī yāminīṣu|
manaścēna lagnaṁ gurōraṅghripadmē
tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kim || 9 ||

Even if you have priceless jewel collection,
Even if you have an embracing passionate wife,
If your mind does not bow at the Guru's feet,
What is the use? What is the use? And What is the use?

A person may be successful in the outside world with money, family life etc. He might have acquired wealth in the form of precious stones, pearls (here अनर्घ्यम् stands for priceless). In the evenings, he has the association of a loving wife. So what? When the mind is not absorbed in lotus feet of the teacher, they are worthless.

गुरोरष्टकं यः पठेत्पुण्यदेही
यतिर्भूपतिर्ब्रह्मचारी च गेही।

लभेत् वाञ्छितार्थं पदं ब्रह्मसंज्ञं
गुरोरुक्तवाक्ये मनो यस्य लग्नम् ॥ 10 ॥

gurōraṣṭakam yaḥ paṭhētpuṇyadēhī
yatirbhūpatirbrahmacārī ca gēhī
labhēt vāmchitārtha padam brahmasamjñam
gurōruktavākyē manō yasya lagnam ॥ 10 ॥

Phalasaruthi:

That blessed one who reads this ode to the Guru,
Be he a saint, king, bachelor or householder
If his mind gets attached to the words of the Guru,
He would get the great gift of attainment of Brahman.

Reciting a stotram produces punya - parayaman is a type of karma which has to produce a result. Every stotram has to have a phalashruti, an incentive so that the stotram will be taken up for recitation by a common man. पुण्यदेही – a blessed human being who believes in the teaching, training, tradition. यतिः – sanyasi; वाञ्छितम् – desired (dharma, artha, kama); गुरोः उक्तवाक्ये यस्य मनः लग्नम् = stopping not just at recitation, if his mind dwells on (लग्नम्) the teaching also and perform Vedanta vichara, he will attain the supreme goal known as brahman or moksha (ब्रह्मसंज्ञपदंभेत्) = moksha

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

omṁ pūrṇamadaḥ pūrṇamidaṁ pūrṇātpūrṇamudacyate
pūrṇasya pūrṇamādāya pūrṇamevāvaśiṣyate ॥
omṁ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ ॥



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