



The Holy Science (Excerpts)

Swami Sri Yukteswar Giri

Title

The Holy Science

(Excerpts)

By

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Forget the past ...

*... Everything in future will improve
if you are making a spiritual effort now.*

Swami Sri Yukteswar

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THE HOLY SCIENCE (Excerpts)

Forward by Paramahansa Yogananda

Prophets of all lands and ages have succeeded in their God-quest. Entering a state of true illumination, nirbikalpa samadhi, these saints have realized the Supreme Reality behind all names and forms. Their wisdom and spiritual counsel have become the scriptures of the world. These, although outwardly differing by reason of the variegated cloaks of words, are all expressions - some open and clear, others hidden or symbolic - of the same basic truths of Spirit.

My gurudeva, Jnanavatar ("Incarnation of Wisdom"; from Sanskrit jnana, "wisdom," and avatara, "divine incarnation.") Swami Sri Yukteswar (1855-1936) of Serampore, was eminently fitted to discern the underlying unity between the scriptures of Christianity and of Sanatan Dharma. Placing the holy texts on the spotless table of his mind, he was able to dissect them with the scalpel of intuitive reasoning, and to separate interpolations and wrong interpretations of scholars from the truths as originally given by the prophets.

It is owing to Jnanavatar Swami Sri Yukteswar's unerring spiritual insight that it now becomes possible, through this book, to establish a fundamental harmony between the difficult biblical book, Revelation, and the Sankhya philosophy of India.

As my gurudeva has explained in his introduction, these pages were written by him in obedience to a request made by Babaji, the holy gurudeva of Lahiri Mahasaya, who in turn was the gurudeva of Sri Yukteswar. I have written about the Christlike lives of these three great masters in my book, Autobiography of a Yogi.

The Sanskrit sutras set forth in The Holy Science will shed much light on the Bhagavad-Gita as well as on other great scriptures of India.

Introduction by Sri Yukteswar

This Kaivalya Darsanam (exposition of Final Truth) has been written by Priya Nath Swami, son of Kshetranath and Kadambini of the Karar family (family name of Sri Yukteswar).

At the request in Allahabad of the Great Preceptor (Mahavatar Babaji) near the end of the 194th year (1894) of the present Dwapara Yuga, this exposition has been published for the benefit of the world.

The purpose of this book is to show as clearly as possible that there is an essential unity in all religions; that there is no difference in the truths inculcated by the various faiths; that there is but one method by which the world, both external and internal, has evolved; and that there is but one Goal admitted by all scriptures. But this basic truth is one not easily comprehended. The discord existing between the different religions, and the ignorance of men, make it almost impossible to lift the veil and have a look at this grand verity. The creeds foster a spirit of hostility and dissension; ignorance widens the gulf that separates one creed from another. Only a few specially gifted persons can rise superior to the influence of their professed creeds and find absolute unanimity in the truths propagated by all great faiths.

The object of this book is to point out the harmony underlying the various religions, and to help in binding them together. This task is indeed a herculean one, but at Allahabad I was entrusted with the mission by a holy command. Allahabad, the sacred Prayaga Tirtha, the place of confluence of the Ganges, Jamuna, and Saraswati rivers, is a site for the congregation of worldly men and of spiritual devotees at the time of Kumbha Mela. Wordly men cannot transcend the mundane limit in which they have confined themselves; nor can spiritual devotees, having once renounced the world, deign to come down and mix themselves in its turmoil. Yet men who are wholly engrossed in earthly concerns stand in definite need of help and guidance from those holy beings who bring light to the race. So a place there must be where union between the two sets is possible. Tirtha affords such a meeting place. Situated as it is on the beach of the world, storms and buffets touch it not; the sadhus (ascetics) with a message for the benefit of humanity find a Kumbha Mela to be an ideal place to impart instruction to those who can heed it.

A message of such a nature was I chosen to propagate when I paid a visit to the Kumbha Mela being held at Allahabad in January 1894. As I was walking along the bank of the Ganges, I was summoned by a man and was afterwards honored by an interview with a great holy person, Babaji, the gurudeva of my own guru, Lahiri Mahasaya, of Banaras. This holy personage at the Kumbha Mela was thus my own paramguruji maharaj, though this was our first meeting.

During my conversation with Babaji, we spoke of the particular class of men who now frequent these places of pilgrimage. I humbly suggested that there were men greater by far in intelligence than most of those then present, men living in distant parts of the world - Europe and America - professing different creeds, and ignorant of the real significance of the Kumbha Mela. They were men fit to hold communion with the spiritual devotees, so far as intelligence is concerned; yet such intellectual men in foreign lands were, alas, wedded in many cases to rank

materialism. Some of them, though famous for their investigations in the realms of science and philosophy, do not recognize the essential unity in religion. The professed creeds serve as nearly insurmountable barriers that threaten to separate mankind forever.

My paramguruji maharaj Babaji smiled and, honoring me with the title of Swami, imposed on me the task of this book. I was chosen, I do not know the reason why, to remove the barriers and to help in establishing the basic truth in all religions.

The book is divided into four sections, according to the four stages in the development of knowledge. The highest aim of religion is Atma-jnanam, Self-knowledge. But to attain this, knowledge of the external world is necessary. Therefore the first section of the book deals with (veda) the gospel, and seeks to establish fundamental truths of creation and to describe the evolution and involution of the world.

All creatures, from the highest to the lowest in the link of creation, are found eager to realize three things: Existence, Consciousness, and Bliss. These purposes or goals are the subject for discussion in the second section of the book. The third section deals with the method of realizing the three purposes of life. The fourth section discusses the revelations which come to those who have traveled far to realize the three ideals of life and who are very near their destination.

The Gospel

I:1

Parambrahma (Spirit or God) is everlasting, complete, without beginning or end. It is one, indivisible Being.

I:2

In It (Parambrahma) is the origin of all knowledge and love, the root of all power and joy.

I:3

Parambrahma causes creation, inert Nature (Prakriti), to emerge. From Aum (Pranava, the Word, the manifestation of the Omnipotent Force), come Kala, Time; Desa, Space; and Anu, the Atom (the vibratory structure of creation).

I:4

The cause of creation is Anu or the Atoms. En masse they are called Maya or the Lord's illusory power; each individual Anu is called Avidya, Ignorance.

I:5

The Omniscient Love aspect of Parambrahma is Kutastha Chaitanya. The individual Self, being Its manifestation, is one with It.

I:6

The Atom, under the influence of Chit (universal knowledge) forms the Chitta or the calm state of mind, which when spiritualized is called Buddhi, Intelligence. Its opposite is Manas, Mind, in which lives the Jiva: the self with Ahamkara, Ego, the idea of separate existence.

I:7-10

Chitta, the spiritualized Atom, in which Ahamkara (the idea of separate existence of Self) appears, has five manifestations (aura electricities).

They (the five aura electricities) constitute the causal body of Purusha.

The five electricities, Pancha Tattwa, from their three attributes, Gunas - Sattwa (positive), Rajas (neutralizing), and Tamas (negative) - produce Jnanandriyas (organs of sense), Karmendriyas (organs of action), and Tanmatras (objects of sense).

These fifteen attributes plus Mind and Intelligence constitute the seventeen "fine limbs" of the subtle body, the Lingasarira.

I:11-12

The aforesaid five objects, which are the negative attributes of the five electricities, being combined produce the idea of gross matter in its five forms: Kshiti, solids; Ap, liquids; Tejas, fire; Marut, gaseous substances; and Akasa, ether.

These five forms of gross matter and the aforesaid fifteen attributes, together with Manas, Mind, sense consciousness; Buddhi, discriminative Intelligence; Chitta, the Heart or power of feeling; and Ahamkara, the Ego, constitute the twenty-four basic principles of creation.

I:13

This universe is differentiated into fourteen spheres, seven Swargas and seven Patalas.

I:14

Purusha is covered by five koshas or sheaths.

I:15-16

Just as the objects seen in our dreams are found, when we awake, to be insubstantial, so our waking perceptions are likewise unreal - a matter of inference only.

I:17

What is needed is a Guru, a Savior, who will awaken us to Bhakti (devotion) and to perceptions of Truth.

I:18

Emancipation (Kaivalya) is obtained when one realizes the oneness of his Self with the Universal Self, the Supreme Reality.

The Goal

II:1

Hence there is desire for emancipation.

II:2

Liberation is stabilization of Purusha (jiva, soul) in its real Self.

II:3

Then there is cessation of all pain and the attainment of the ultimate aim (true fulfillment, God realization).

II:4

Otherwise, birth after birth, man experiences the misery of unfulfilled desires.

II:5-6

Troubles are born from Avidya, Ignorance. Ignorance is the perception of the nonexistent, and the nonperception of the Existent.

II:7-12

Avidya, Ignorance, having the twofold power of polarity, manifests as egoism, attachment, aversion, and (blind) tenacity.

The darkening power of Maya produces egoism and (blind) tenacity; the polarity power of Maya produces attachment (attraction) and aversion (repulsion).

Egoism results from a lack of discrimination between the physical body and the real Self.

Tenacity is a result of natural conditioning (belief in Nature and her laws as final, instead of belief in the all-causative powers of the Soul).

Attachment means thirst for the objects of happiness.

Aversion means desire for the removal of the objects of unhappiness.

II:13

The root of pain is egoistic actions, which (being based on delusions) lead to misery.

II:14-15

Man's purpose is complete freedom from unhappiness.

Once he has banished all pain beyond possibility of return, he has attained the highest goal.

II:16-21

Existence, consciousness, and bliss are the three longings (of the human heart).

Ananda, bliss, is the contentment of heart attained by the ways and means suggested by the Savior, the Sat-Guru.

Chit, true consciousness, brings about the complete destruction of all troubles and the rise of all virtues.

Sat, existence, is attained by realization of the permanency of the soul.

These three qualities constitute the real nature of man.

All desires being fulfilled, and all miseries removed, the achievement of Paramartha (the highest goal) is made.

II:22

All fulfillments of his nature attained, man is not merely a reflector of divine light but becomes actively united with Spirit. This state is Kaivalya, oneness.

The Procedure

III:1-4

Yajna, sacrifice, means penance (Tapas), deep study (Swadhyaya), and the practice of meditation on Aum (Brahmanidhana).

Penance is patience or evenmindedness in all conditions (equanimity amidst the essential dualities of Maya; cold and heat, pain and pleasure, etc.).

Swadhyaya consists of reading or hearing spiritual truth, pondering it, and forming a definite conception of it.

(Meditation on) Pranava, the divine sound of Aum, is the only way to Brahman (Spirit), salvation.

III:5-6

Aum is heard through cultivation of Sraddha (heart's natural love), Virya (moral courage), Smriti (memory of one's divinity), and Samadhi (true concentration). Sraddha is intensification of the heart's natural love.

III:7-8

Moral courage (Virya) arises from Sraddha, directing one's love toward the guru, and from affectionately following his instructions.

III:9-11

Moral courage is strengthened by observance of Yama (morality or self-control) and Niyama (religious rules).

Yama comprises noninjury to others, truthfulness, nonstealing, continence, and noncovetousness.

Niyama means purity of body and mind, contentment in all circumstances, and obedience (following the instructions of the guru).

III:12-18

Hence bondage disappears.

The eight bondages or snares are hatred, shame, fear, grief, condemnation, race prejudice, pride of family, and smugness.

(Removal of the eight bondages) leads to magnanimity of heart.

Thus one becomes fit to practice Asana, Pranayama, and Pratyahara; and to enjoy the householder's life (by fulfilling all one's desires and so getting rid of them).

Asana means a steady and pleasant posture of the body.

Pranayama means control over prana, life force.

Pratyahara means withdrawal of the senses from external objects.

III:19-22

Smriti, true conception, leads to knowledge of all creation.

Samadhi, true concentration, enables one to abandon individuality for universality.

Hence arises Samyama ("restraint" or overcoming the egoistic self), by which one experiences the Aum vibration that reveals God.

Thus the soul (is baptized) in Bhakti Yoga (devotion). This is the state of Divinity.

III:24

In the dark state of the heart, man harbors misconceptions (about everything). This state is a result of Avidya, Ignorance, and produces a Sudra (a man of the lowest caste). He can grasp only ideas of the physical world. This state of mind is prevalent in Kali Yuga, the Dark Age of a cycle.

III:25-26

Passing beyond the first stage in Brahma's plan, man strives for enlightenment and enters the natural Kshatriya (warrior) caste.

He is propelled (by evolutionary forces) to struggle (for truth). He seeks a guru and appreciates his divine counsel. Thus a Kshatriya becomes fit to dwell in the worlds of higher understanding.

III:27

The worlds or Lokas of creation are seven: Bhu, Bhuvan, Swar, Mahar, Jana, Tapo, and Satya. (This earth, and the "earthy" stage of man's consciousness, are called Bhuloka.)

III:28

Entering Bhuvanloka ("air" or "the world of becoming") man becomes a Dwija or "twice born." He comprehends the second portion of material creation - that of finer, subtler forces. This state of mind is prevalent in Dwapara Yuga.

III:29

In Swarloka ("heaven") man is fit to understand the mysteries of Chitta, the magnetic third portion of material creation. He becomes a Vipra (nearly perfect being). This state of mind is prevalent in Treta Yuga.

III:30

Through true repentance man reaches Maharloka (the "great world"). No longer subject to the influence of ignorance, Maya, he attains a clean heart. He enters the natural caste of the Brahmanas ("knowers of Brahma"). This state of mind is prevalent in Satya Yuga.

III:31-32

Not merely reflecting but manifesting Spiritual Light, man rises to Janaloka, the kingdom of God.

Then he passes into Tapoloka, the sphere of Kutastha Chaitanya.

Abandoning the vain idea of his separate existence, he enters Satyaloka, wherein he attains the state of final release or Kaivalya, oneness with Spirit.

In this way, when the heart becomes purified, it no longer merely reflects but manifests Spirit.

The Revelation

IV:1-3

Adeptship is achieved by purification of man's three bodies. It is also attainable through the grace of the guru.

Purification comes through Nature, penance, and mantras.

Through Nature there is purification of dense matter (the physical body); through penance, purification of the fine matter (the subtle body); through mantras, purification of the mind.

IV:4-5

Through the holy effect of the mantra, the Pranava or Aum sound becomes audible.

The sacred sound is heard in various ways, according to the devotee's stage of advancement (in purifying his heart).

IV:6

One who cultivates the heart's natural love obtains the guidance of a guru, and starts his sadhana (path of spiritual discipline). He becomes a Pravartaka, an initiate.

IV:7

By the practice of Yama and Niyama, the eight meannesses of the human heart disappear and virtue arises. Man thus becomes a Sadhaka, a true disciple, fit to attain salvation.

IV:8

He progresses in godliness, hears the holy Aum sound, and becomes a Siddha, divine personage.

IV:9

Then he perceives the manifestations of Spirit, and passes through the seven Patala Lokas (or centers in the spine), beholding the seven rishis.

IV:10

Then, because of yoga knowledge and power, man obtains supremacy over the seven Swargas (heavens). He achieves salvation by dissolving the four original ideas (the "four manus" or primal thoughts by which creation sprang into being).

IV:11

Being thus victorious over the powers of Darkness and Ignorance, man becomes one with God.

IV:12

Knowledge of evolution, life, and dissolution thus leads to complete emancipation from the bonds of Maya, delusion. Beholding the self in the Supreme Self, man gains eternal freedom.

Conclusion

In the words of the illumined sage, Sankaracharya:

Life is always unsafe and unstable, like a drop of water on a lotus leaf. The company of a divine personage, even for a moment, can save and redeem us.

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