

॥ श्रीशंकर ॥

## मनोबोध-विवरण

### Exposition of Manobodh

We are presently going to have a detailed deliberation on the discourse titled ‘मनोबोध’ (guidance for mind) written by Samarth Ramadas Swami. This is a somewhat small discourse comprising two hundred and five verses. Yet it is the essence of the entire literary creations of Samarth. This discourse is also known as ‘मनाचे श्लोक’ (literally verses of mind, but essentially the verses written for educating the mind). Literary creations of Samarth are enormous as also vast in scope. Samarth literature provides clear guidance on all the necessities of (human) life starting from (mundane matters like) salt / pickles in the household kitchen right up to the sublime spiritual experiences of the highest order. The scope of this literature is astonishingly vast.

Although the literary creations of Samarth are in verse form, they resemble prose from the viewpoint of style and content. Qualities like soft spoken language, juicy content, tenderness of composition etc. apparently do not seem to gel with Samarth’s natural liking; however, this discourse ‘मनोबोध’ mentioned as the essence of the entire literature of Samarth is superlative from the point of view of juicy content as well. It is very difficult to select excerpts from this discourse. ‘अमृत’ (Divine Nectar) cannot be boiled down to half (or so); it need not and must not be done. The two situations are identical.

Shri Vinobaji has selected excerpts, drawn according to his own liking, from the educative literature of Shankaracharya, Jnyaneshwar, Namdev, Eknath etc., and published them in the form of small booklets with various titles. However, he has published this complete discourse titled ‘मनोबोध’ written by Samarth in totality. He has not drawn excerpts from it. In its introduction, he has stated to the effect that the literary work of Samarth is a gold mine with copious yield of gold, but ‘मनोबोध’ is not (just) a gold mine; it is like gold bullion or it can be said to be a treasure full of gold. This remark of Shri Vinobaji is precisely to the point.

Let me tell you my own experience. The booklet being small enough for keeping in a pocket and the price also being very little, I purchased a new copy almost every time for reading while on tour. While reading the book I kept on marking those verses, which were felt appealing to my liking at that point of time. This was repeated at least five or six times. At a later date, out of curiosity, when all these copies were checked together, it was found that, out of a total of two hundred and five verses, about hundred and sixty five or so had the markings.

To sum up, the entire ‘मनोबोध’ is very much readable, educative and rich in content. It is such a beautiful discourse that more the number of times we read it, we (might) find that every time, different set of verses are attractive and appealing.

Our Dada (Sadguru Shri Dasaganu Maharaj) actually belongs to the Samarth commune; however, he had special affection towards the Gatha of Shri Tukobarai and Jnyashwari, to the

extent that he used to nearly lose the sense of worldly matters while being engrossed in them. However Tirthaswaroop Dada had very strong liking towards the ‘मनोबोध’ discourse as well.

In the entire literature of Samarth the verses of ‘मनोबोध’ stand out because of being full of their simplicity, meaningfulness, clarity and earnest guidance of the highest class. Samarth stands out with his full strength in this single discourse. Further, one gets the satisfaction of meeting Shri Jnyaneshwear, Shri Tukobarai and Shri Kabir as well and hence the verses of ‘मनोबोध’ have their own distinct sweetness.

Occurrences of Samarth’s somewhat loose language and resemblance to prose are found in many verses of ‘मनोबोध’. Grammatical errors are also found quite frequently. These verses do not stand to the test of grammatical accuracy. However, Samarth alone cannot be singled out for this lacuna. The literary styles of Wamanapandit, Raghunathapandit, Ramajoshi and Prabhakar are also grammatically loose. Our Tirthaswaroop Dada also paid very scant attention towards grammar. All these authors have taken considerable liberty in flouting rules of grammar. There is only one exception of Shri Moropant. His entire literary work has highest degree of accuracy from the viewpoint of grammatically correct composition. It is not certain whether it would be possible to locate even 4 or 5 grammatical mistakes in his entire poetry. Even कविकुलगुरु (literally the head of the university of poets; figuratively grandfather of all the poets) Kalidas has, at many places, written compositions which do not conform to (rules of the grammar authored by the celebrated ancient grammarian) Panini. While it is a fact that creative poets have not really insulted grammar; however, they have not allowed their language to become dull because of strict regulations of grammar. The language of Samarth is ‘आर्ष’ that is that of a ‘ऋषी’ (a scholarly personality who is detached from worldly passions and desires, totally dedicated to meditation in search of absolute truth, yet concerned about the welfare of the humanity) and fits beautifully to a ‘ऋषी’.

Slight grammatical slackness also appears to adore the literary style of a creative author commanding respect. At least it can be said with certainty that it does not adversely affect the original beauty. For good appearance, hair need not necessarily have to be tightly set; one or two locks waving freely with wind also add to the original beauty. As against this, hair should (certainly) not be totally unruly. Same (principle) applies to language.

The lacuna of grammatical slackness is not of that much importance. What comes first, language or grammar? Grammar has emerged from language. Therefore, creative poets and saints like Samarth who are genuinely concerned about welfare of the people cannot be taken to task on the issue of grammar. Although the language of the verses of ‘मनोबोध’ might be occasionally loose from the viewpoint of grammar and verse composition, it has bubbling life, virility, valor, sublime enlightenment, genuine concern for the welfare of the people at large, and precise guidance on all matters; and therefore, it cannot be refuted that the discourse ‘मनोबोध’ is very much attractive and impressive.

However, I would urge that one should not think that these verses have become impressive only because of grammatical slackness.

The discourse ‘मनोबोध’ mainly comprises 200 verses. The first verse of prayer and the last four verses of summary add up to a total of two hundred and five verses. Somewhere in literature there is a mention of two hundred and ten verses. However, most available editions contain two hundred and five verses only. I have seen one edition of two hundred and ten verses. However, not being a scholar, I am not interested in this kind of research.

If ‘मनोबोध’ is a discourse comprising the essence (of the entire literary work of Samarth), then why should it be so much lengthy i.e. extending to some 200 verses? Why should it not be abridged, comprising 25 or 30 verses? It is possible to think on these lines. It is not as if this (abridged ‘मनोबोध’ comprising 25 or 30 verses) would not be acceptable. Many articles written by Shri Shankaracharya are short yet very much impressive. ‘मनोबोध’ is not so short, and considering human nature and attitude, too short articles do not suffice as discourses. Human intellect, human nature and the surrounding environments are so full of diversions that it requires somewhat detailed guidance for progress towards sublime enlightenment. If one has to go to an unknown destination, it is essential to learn the detailed address. A single statement discourse like ‘get rid of ‘षट्कृष्ण’ (six vices) and know the ‘ब्रह्म’ (the Supreme Being regarded as the cause of the universe) does not work. If such single sentences were sufficient to get knowledge, then well known statements like ‘तत्त्वमसि’ (‘ब्रह्म’ and you are one identical) from the ‘उपनिषद्’ (literal meaning sitting close and learning; articles at the end of the Veda’s devoted to philosophy) would have been sufficient to completely satisfy all (the spiritual) needs of mankind for all the time. (This would have been so) because the original thesis only that much. Then lacks of treatises (on this topic) written by many greats personalities followed by critiques and discourses (would have been unnecessary and) would not have evolved at all. However, it is not sufficient for the mankind to be so much brief. Human intelligence is not that focused and sharp. It has hundreds of diversions due to ignorance, attachment, expectations, ego etc. Therefore whatever might be the strength of the human intelligence even that is divided. Thus the situation of mankind becomes like “एक थड ना भाराभर त्या चिंध्या कशाला?” (which literally means, ‘If it is not possible to weave a single useful piece of cloth, what is the use of a large bundle of rags?’ The English proverb nearest to this Marathi proverb is, “Jack of all trades, but master of none”).

Another issue is that, even though achievement of absolute truth appears desirable, there is little conviction, urgency or best efforts towards achieving it unlike that in case of the worldly matters. The entire abbreviation, economy, compromise, postponement of efforts and resources is reserved for the attainment of absolute truth. (Everyone) has (enough) time for worldly matters, but not for the achievement of absolute truth. Therefore many kinds of doubts are all the time entering the human mind as a consequence of this situation. It is not possible to have sincerity without clarification of these doubts. There cannot be conviction, urgency or dedication without sincerity. It is necessary to explain in detail in order to clarify these doubts. Too much of detailed explanation might become boring, felt as a burden. The original thought might even get nearly obliterated in the expansion of explanation, discourse, attempts to convince and humor etc. Therefore, while stating the code of conduct of speech, the ancient scholars have directed, “नातिसंक्षेपविस्तरम्” (“There should neither be too much of details nor too much of brevity.”) It is clear that Samarth has kept in mind the specific essence of this directive (guideline).

What is the utility of these ‘मनाचे श्लोक’ or ‘मनोबोध’? What is फलश्रृति (the reward or incentive as has been heard from the knowledgeable people) of this treatise? Ramdas Swami himself has stated (the answer to this question) in the last verse at the end of the epilogue. Samarth says,

मनाचीं शतें ऐकतां दोष जाती ।  
मतीमंद ते साधना योग्य होती ॥  
चढे ज्ञानवैराग्य सामर्थ्य अंगीं ।  
म्हणे दास विश्वासतां मुक्ति भोगी ॥ 205 ॥

manaaChii shate aikataa doshha jaatii .  
matiima.nda te saadhanaa yogya hotii ..  
chaDhe GYaana vairaagya saamarthy a.ngii .  
mhaNe daasa vishvaasataa mukti bhogii

These two hundred verses addressed to the mind, listened to with faith, will result in dispelling all the deficiencies. Even the slow-witted will become fit to perform propitiation. Knowledge, dispassion, and strength will increase. Thus says this servant of Ram, faith will bring enjoyment of the ultimate liberation.

Vices of human beings can be got rid of as a result of listening to ‘मनाचे श्लोक’. These vices are of various types. Root causes of these vices are fickleness of intelligence, desires and indecisions of mind, attachment of the body organs towards worldly comforts and in the context of these attachment undesirable movements of body organs at undesirable place and time. ‘कामक्रोधादि’ (vices like lust, anger etc.) ‘षड्गुप्त’ (six major vices) are also included in these. All these vices gradually get eliminated when one listens to ‘मनोबोध’. In the beginning one understands what has gone wrong. Then one realizes where and how the lapses occur. When the reasons for calling them as lapses are understood the measures for avoiding them are also found. It is realized that it is necessary to avoid the lapses and the urgency for avoiding them emerges.

Samarth says that those with low intelligence can also achieve this. It is possible that there is variation in the amount of sharpness, purity and abundance of human intelligence among different persons. However, once born, a human being is invariably blessed with some amount of intelligence. That (intelligence) might be more or less, but it can never be totally absent. Therefore it is possible for everyone to achieve one’s own progress and hence human knowledge starts gradually increasing. Human being also gets convinced that it is necessary to ensure absence of worldly desires for preserving this (knowledge), and then the ability to practice this conviction also gradually increases.

There is no doubt that all this (progress) does take place. However, (in order to ensure this) it is necessary to have faith of the (individual) person (very) strong. Whether it is science, educative literature of saints or teaching of ‘सद्गुरु’ (literally a good teacher, spiritual guide), all these are essentially for the welfare of people at large. However, if there is lack of strong faith in this principle, there is no conviction or sustenance in any human effort, and hence neither good educative teaching nor individual worth is of any utility. On the contrary, doubts result in degeneration instead of progress and this downfall can lead to total destruction. Therefore

Samarth says, “Even if you have some vices, you have low intelligence, still you can get measures, you can achieve progress, you can experience ‘मुक्ती’ (liberation from worldly matters), ‘मोक्ष’ (ultimate liberation), and ‘कैवल्यसुख’ (absorption into divine essence). But (for this to happen) you must follow this path with very strong belief and faith”.

The progress has to take place through a series of various stages and all human beings cannot be on the same stage at the same level. Whether it is the beginning of (the journey towards) ‘परमार्थ’ (absolute truth) or the progress towards the absolute truth, it has to happen in a manner – move further from wherever you are (at present). And then the selected path has to be followed without getting weary and avoiding subsequent false satisfaction resulting from indolence. There is excessive need of faith for this (to happen).

‘परमार्थ’ (absolute truth) is for everybody. Everyone has a right there (to attain absolute truth). This might be certainly true; however, it is wrong to assume that those who do not even have capability to carry out the worldly tasks will be successful in attaining the absolute truth. Intelligence is required for attaining the absolute truth in the same way as it is necessary for carrying out worldly business. It can be said that attaining absolute truth needs little more intelligence. However the human being does not have as much of faith in absolute truth as he has in worldly matters and therefore his efficiency is apparent in (efforts towards) worldly matters but not in (attaining) absolute truth. Human being has got two gifts (from nature), intelligence and sentiment. Intelligence is very much useful in maintaining balance of sentiment. However, progress of mere intelligence proves barren. Natural characteristic of water is to flow on; it keeps on flowing until reaching the ocean. However, it is necessary to ensure that its flow is continuous. Similar is the case of human sentiment.

Persons with exceptionally high intelligence are (occasionally) seen to have gone mad due to frustration. However, such ill effects of overflow of sentiments are not apparent, at least in that proportion. Highly sentimental persons are considered unpractical from the viewpoint of common man and often people call them mad. However, their madness is (essentially) madness in good sense of the term for achieving (noble) aim. Further, only such persons, mad towards aim, become successful and can trade on the path of success.

Belief (faith) is a healthy form of sentiment. Whoever has that belief does not fall short of efforts and hence he can enjoy the festivity of ultimate liberation ‘याचि देहीं याचि डोळा’ (in his own lifetime).

It is very difficult to describe liberation, ultimate liberation, absorption into sublime essence. It is said that even Saraswati (Goddes of knowledge) would not be able to describe it. Such ultimate liberation, which is beyond (i.e. not related to) human organs, form of ultimate joy, not perceived by human senses, is a matter of experience. Samarth says that ‘मनाचे श्लोक’ have such a strength that the enable one to enjoy this ultimate liberation (in real life).

Without entering into very serious controversy, it can be said that there is a strong possibility that human life would become great, divine, sublime, peaceful, contented, free from indolence and bright because of ‘मनाचे श्लोक’. However, it is essential to have strong faith; mere reading or listening (to chanting or discourse) is certainly not enough. Just as there is absolutely no possibility whatsoever of curing a disease by reading advertisements of medicines or by drinking

an essence of the paper of advertisements, mere reading or listening (to chanting or ‘मनोबोध’) is not likely to result in anything (i.e.desirable progress); listening or reading must be followed by thinking, reflecting upon and practicing. This is precisely implied when it is said that one must have faith. Many people say that in a way they do believe in God, but that amounts to cheating. Progressively increasing restraint and good conduct must be apparent in the (worldly) behavior of anyone who claims about having faith in God. Whenever there is real faith, human being is indeed diligent with a do or die kind of urgency.

However, behavior based on some assumption without giving sufficient thought or focussed deliberation does not amount to a faithful life. A person does not intend to see (or accept) unbearable truth; this is not (or cannot be equated to) faith. Refusing to undergo a systematic physical checkup by an expert physician and (as no ailment or disease is apparent without such a checkup) assuming oneself to be healthy cannot be said to be having faith (in ones good health). This is (sheer) cowardice. The topic of faith and belief is going to be deliberated in due course in ‘मनाचे श्लोक’. The last verse about reward has been mentioned here with the purpose of understanding what kind of mindset is necessary for listening to ‘मनाचे श्लोक’.

‘मनाचे श्लोक’ is a lake of clear, cold (pleasant), sweet water. It is a lake full of live streams. We can take out as much water as we please from it. Our strength, intelligence, power, and urge are very much limited. You must remember that my position will be the same as is the case of a small pot which can hold only that much amount of water as its own volume. However, just because a small pot is going to hold only a small amount of water, one should not say, “Why bother going to a lake?” and further, just because the pot is small one should not dip it in a pond. Let me say, by a small variation of a statement of Jnyaneshwar Maharaj, ‘तरी अवधान एकले दीजे । मग सर्वं सुखासी पात्र होइजे । हे प्रतिशोत्तर समर्थाचें । उघड ऐका ॥’ (“Please pay undivided attention. Then you will enjoy all the happiness. This is the promise with a vow of Almighty. Please listen as being elaborated.”) (Jnya. 9/1).

गणाधीश जो ईश सर्वं गुणांचा ।  
मुळारंभ आरंभ तो निर्गुणाचा ॥  
नमूं शारदा मूळ चत्वार वाचा ।  
गमूं पंथ आनंत या राघवाचा ॥१॥

gaNaadhiisha jo iisha sarvaa guNaa.nchaa  
muLaaraMbha aaraMbha to nirguNaachaa  
namuu.n shaaradaa muuLa chatvaara vaachaa  
gamuu pa.ntha aana.nta yaa raaghavaachaa

Ganesh, the God of all virtues, from whom the transcendent truth originates, and Sharada, the origin of quadruple – परा (at the level of inspiration), पश्यन्ती (visual), मध्यमा (audio), वैखरी (articulate) - (faculty of) speech, to them we bow in reverence, and begin walking on the unending (i.e. we can never reach the level of Ram, yet we continue to pursue towards the standard set by Him) path of Raghav (who has demonstrated that by setting his own example).

There is etiquette of singing मंगलाचरण (a poem in praise i.e. a prayer) of a deity at the beginning of any good work. There are two - three ways of singing prayer. Explaining the subject of the treatise should also be regarded as a kind of prayer. Bowing (by way of a verse) to the desired deity in the prayer is more popular. Samarth has performed bowing (to the deities) in the first three lines and given an indication of the subject in the fourth line.

The purpose of the prayer is to ensure that the undertaken task should be completed without any obstruction, and as Ganesh is by nature the God who eliminates obstructions, Samarth has bowed to Him in the prayer at the beginning of the treatise. We say ‘श्रीगणेशाय नमः’ (Bow to Shri Ganesh, at the start of any good work). We use the phrase ‘कार्यचा श्रीगणेशा ज्ञाला’ to indicate that the auspicious start of the work has taken place (while mentioning about the beginning of a good work). This (custom) enables understanding of the greatness of Ganesh. Worship of Ganapati, at least remembering Him invariably takes place at the beginning of worship (of any deity) and any sacred work (business or festive occasion). The reason behind this is sentimental as also cultural and social. These days the principle reason for which we hail peoples power in a healthy sense, is essentially represented as a deity in the form of Ganesh. This deity is the master of people. He is the leader of Gana's / collection / people, as also their protector and ruler. However, he is not a leader who has become so by technically winning an election. He is the God of virtues. Thus he has all the good qualities like intelligence, learnedness, minute vision, industriousness, compassion, firmness, valor, courage, capability, strength, popularity, selflessness etc. abundant in an eminent way as is necessary for rising on the leadership of collection / society / people / Gana's. All these good qualities remain with Him like a polite servant as though He is their master and hence He has become Ganadhisht. The ancient (first) sacred syllableॐ in whose form the desire of attribute-less (almighty – transcendent truth) to transform into concrete (with attributes) form has materialized, is essentially a representation of Ganesh. Shri Jyaneshwar has explained it as, “अकार चरणयुगुल । उकार उदर विशाल । मकार महामंडळ । मस्तकाकारे ॥” “A represents pair of feet, U represents large tummy and M represents great circle or the shape of the head” (Jnyaneshwari 1/19). We usually draw ॐ in horizontal form. Its resemblance with the countenance of Gajanan is easily observed if ॐ is drawn vertically. Therefore, Samarth calls this form of Ganesh as मुळरंभ (the fountainhead) of attribute-less (transcendent truth).

He is the origin as also God of all sentiments of nature or all sentiments in nature.

Samarth uses the term (...God of) all virtues to suggest that whatever good – bad, taboo – acceptable, at our level has no relation with Him. Originally nothing is (intrinsically) good or bad. Its goodness or badness takes shape depending on subsequent utilization in the context of mutual relationship as to where, how much, what, how, to whom and why etc. It is not possible to carry out (normal worldly) business with only sentiments and devotion, and (total) abstinence about (six vices like) lust, anger etc. Opium and arsenic also have their own place in God's world just like wheat and rice. Many substances which are usually rejected as poisonous are effective in curing (some) disease. Therefore a poison which has to be rejected in a kitchen becomes a medicine (when) used by a doctor. (This is so because) the doctor decides how, what, and how much by considering to whom, when and why, and hence even a poison works like divine nectar. There is guidance of (ancient) original principle, which is beyond good-bad, acceptable-taboo, in calling it origin of attributeless (transcendent truth), and Samarth bows to Ganesh in precisely this form. In saying the beginning of origin it is suggested that the absolutely pure principle

(almighty) is focused on the living world. The (supreme) principle must be in this form for the purpose of bowing, devotion, aim of progress and support of sentiment with (good) attributes.

After Ganesh, Samarth bows to Sharada, well known as the deity in whom the knowledge dwells. The term नम् which suggests bowing implies bowing to both Ganesh and Sharada. Just like a lamp placed on the under crosspiece of the door (between two rooms) illuminates both the rooms, similar threshold-lamp logic should be understood in this case. Sharada, the origin of strength, the origin of creation-illusion (of the appearance of universe as distinct from the eternal monad Brahma), who is the origin of quadruple – परा (at the level of inspiration), पश्यन्ती (visual), मध्यमा, (audio), वैखरी (articulate) – speech. (The faculty of) speech, (spoken) words or sounds are spontaneous realizations of vibrations. In other words, it can also be said that these are first (or original) results of vibration or inspiration. Some ancient philosophers say that there was sound at the time of initiation of the world because that was the inspiration of the eternal monad Brahma. According to some thinkers, the science aiming at the search of the origin of the world has reached (to the concept of) initial vibrations. There is a conviction in our Vedic tradition that chanting of the Veda appeared at the beginning of the world.

ॐकारश्च शब्दश्च द्वावेतौ ब्रह्मणः पुरा ।  
कण्ठं भित्त्वा बहिर्यतौ तस्मान्मांगलिकावुभौ ॥

The syllables ॐ and अथ, both have broken the boundaries of the throat of Brahma and emerged out and hence both of them are sacred.

This view also is an indication of the theory that sound was the most ancient (initial entity in the world). If articulate speech is divided into sequential stages like intention, feeling, thought, the (spoken) word, the ancient initial inspiration can include “एकोऽहं बहुःस्याम् प्रजायेय” (unity in diversity) intent-feeling-thought of the eternal monad Brahma. Sharada is the origin of all these, hence Samarth is explaining inseparable strengths of Brahma like the power of mind, illusion, the origin of living world etc.

Why bow to the (ancient) original principles? The purpose (of bowing) is that the undertaken task should be completed without any obstruction. What is this task? (The task) is to start progressing on the unending path of Raghav (who has demonstrated by setting his own example). All the verses of ‘मनाचे श्लोक’ have evolved for persuading the human being for the journey on this path and encouraging the one who is moving further on it. This path is unending. It is not going to be completed any time. A thought that we have arrived / reached (the destination) proves to be an obstacle on this path. As Shri Jnyaneshwar Maharaj says, even Mahesh – Lord Shankar – is still a traveler of this path. (Jnya. 6/153). The path is continuous and the individual remains a traveler. This path does not end anytime. The reason (for this unending journey) is that the aim / objective of this path i.e. eternal monad परब्रह्म is without any ends or bounds. Raghav as mentioned by Samarth is not the historical character known as the son of Dasharath. It is only that eternal monad परब्रह्म has appeared for us in the form of Raghav / Ramachandra. It is desired to reach this (eternal monad Parabrahma appeared for us in the form of) Raghav. The path elaborated by ‘मनाचे श्लोक’ is one which will ensure reaching there. It is as if Samarth is telling, “Please bow to Ganesh, the material realization of परब्रह्म, and to Sharada, the inspiration for articulate speech as also life”, and seeking the blessings of Ganesh and Sharada

for the disciples and then he says, “Let us start working. We have to pursue the endless path demonstrated by Raghav. Let us start moving ahead on that path”.

It is as if the destination (Raghav), where it is desired to go, that itself is standing in front of Samarth, and therefore Samarth is pointing a finger at Raghav in front of him and saying, “Let us pursue the path demonstrated by Raghav”.

Samarth is completely knowledgeable about and totally faithful to the eternal monad Brahma, his deity is all the time with him and therefore many a time he has mentioned as if his deity is as if personally before him in this discourse ‘मनोबोध’ : “करी रे मना भक्ति या राघवाची ।” (26) Oh my mind, offer devotion to Rama, “करी रे मना ध्यान या राघवाचें” (66) Oh my mind dwell in the thought of Rama, “धनश्याम हा राम लावण्यरूपी” (67) Complexioned like a cloud, Rama's form is Lovely, “करी काम निःकाम या राघवाचें” (77) Service of Rama will kill the craving, “नभासारखे रूप या राघवाचे” (197) Rama's form is similar to the sky.

This is the reason why we should listen to a great personality like Samarth. His knowledge is not mere literal knowledge; it is a representation of scholarship. It has emerged out of an experience of साक्षात्कार (the divine vision); it provides guidance about the sum and substance of the material to follow. Now, after the initial prayer in praise of the deities, the teaching follows..

मना सज्जना भक्तिपंथे चि जावे ।  
तरी श्रीहरी पाविजेतो स्वभावे ॥  
जनीं निंद्य तें सर्व सोडूनि द्यावे ।  
जनीं वंद्य तें सर्व भावे करावे ॥२॥

manaa sajjanaa bhaktipa.nthechii jaave  
tarii shriiharii paavijeto svabhaave  
janii.n ni.ndya te sarva soDuunii dyaave  
janii.n va.ndya te sarva bhaave karaave

Oh, gentle Mind, follow the path of devotion, Then by His own nature Shrihari will bless you. When among people, all actions of calumny should be abjured and adorable actions should be adopted with all strength of heart.

All these ‘मनाचे रळोक’ are set to a meter known as भुजंगप्रयात्. In this meter, every line has twelve letters and four ‘य’ ‘ganas’. A group of three letters forms one ‘gana’. The structure of ‘य’ ‘gana’ is such that the first letter is short and next two letters are long. Because of this speciality of composition, a poetry set to भुजंगप्रयात् meter has an attractive accent and rhythm / rhythmic pattern, and therefore the teachings narrated through the medium of this verse become more effective.

Samarth used to go from house to house and seek alms so as to mingle with the people at large. This methodology of seeking alms must have proved very much superior from the viewpoint of being in touch with peoples homes as also for the purpose of (peoples) awakening. (In this methodology) there is no compromise with the detachment from worldly affections and passions, no forced burden (of livelihood of the sage) on any one (householder), nor does it result in

starvation of the workers (sages seeking alms). There is (natural and) easy connectivity with individuals and observation of families, and as a result it would be easy to awaken the people at large. It is said that these verses have been composed by Samarth for the people (his disciples) to sing at the time of seeking alms.

At the time of Samarth, the Muslim rule had taken firm roots (in Maharashtra). Muslim Fakirs used to move from house to house seeking alms. They used to sing accentuated Gazals and attract the minds of gullible poors while propagating their religion. These (gullible) people used to become their devout followers, seek boons from Darga/Pir (in return for a solemn promise), participate with pride in their Urus festivals. Self respect (about own Hindu religion) had (virtually) vanished. Self identity (of being a Hindu) was a matter of the past. There was utmost necessity to liberate the people at large from this calamity in a delicate manner. It was impossible for a great personality like Samarth, who had direct experience of contemporary social situation of the country, to remain neutral or indifferent at such a time. “बुडत हे जन देखवेना डोळा । म्हणून कळवळा येतो मज ।” (I cannot idly see the people sinking; therefore I get yearning of compassion). Samarth would have got the inspiration of the highly effective poetry like ‘मनाचे श्लोक’ from this feeling of utmost care and compassion. It is also possible that he would have selected a rhythmic measure like भुजंगप्रयात् for the purpose of effectively combating the propaganda of (Muslim sages singing) Gazals.

Pleasant time of (early) morning, homeground, clean swept, sprinkled with cowdung wash, and decorated with colorfull drawing of (powdered soft stone), and a glorious, detached from worldly passions and attachments, king of ascetics like Samarth addressing in a solemn compassionate voice like (thunder of) clouds, there is no doubt whatsoever, that every one would have been awakened with respect of once own religion and self welfare, and prepared for whatever sacrifice (necessary to reach the desired aim). The alms offered would be a small representation of the preparedness of that sacrifice.

Instead of taking an indifferent attitude and saying, “If they need (their own betterment) they will behave nicely. If they want to, they will approach me”, Samarth used to carry out the task of peoples awakening himself or through his disciples, just like a mother wakes up her lazily fast asleep child by vigorously shaking or sprinkling water. At a time when the entire Indian subcontinent was being crushed under the feet of outsiders, freedom (struggle followed by our own kingdom under king Shivaji) emerged in Maharashtra; this must have been ably supported by the divine sayings of Tukaram Maharaj and Samarth reaching each and every home in this region.

Even though all the saints are equal to each other in their stature, in view of their specific individual lifetime aim, they have adopted some natural differences (of style). Instead of saying why bother telling if there is no desire to listen, two saints have pursued the task of educating the people at large in Maharashtra, sometimes with fond caress of chin (the way a mother lovingly teaches her child) and sometimes slapping in face with harshness emerged from love. One was Tukaram Maharaj and the other was Samarth Ramdas Swami. Both are short tempered and outspoken, and both are (figuratively) wielding a stick. This is like a cloud full of compassion (water, essential for life) having lightening which strikes with a thunder.

I think Ramakrishna Paramahansa has divided सदगुरु (spiritual guides) into three categories. The first kind of teacher just shows the path and tell some signs (for understanding the correct direction) without leaving their own place. The second kind of teacher describes the minute details of the path like obstacles, turns, facilities, places of rest etc., and give a precise idea of the entire journey. The third kind of teacher does provide all the necessary instructions as mentioned above, in addition he also occasionally grabs the disciple by ear and straightens him and drags (further) on that path; and once in a while (figuratively) carries him. The third kind of teachings are very rare. In such cases it is essential that the teacher has extraordinary confidence in his own capability and the disciple also must be totally faithful (to the teacher). If the disciple (is so fickle minded that he) is ready to resign the moment teacher raises his voice or does something against the wishes of the disciple, then why would the teacher bother grabbing the disciple by ear, and why should he (take that risk and be blamed by others)? (It must be understood that) in spite of teacher grabbing the disciple by ear, the disciple has to pursue the path and that too with his own legs, and further, this ear grabbing is only in the initial stages and that too is in a figurative sense. It (the act of teacher) is not a vehicle for pursuing the path. This point has been deliberated (in detail) so that it should be understood that in spite of several great spiritual teachers descending (on the earth) the proportion of salvation / enlightenment of human race is minuscule. To sum up, Tukaram Maharaj and Samarth Ramdas Swami belong to the third category of spiritual teachers.

No one wants to hear (unpalatable) truth whether it is a matter of spirituality (trying to seek absolute truth) or ordinary (worldly) business. If there is someone who supports one's own opinion (conviction) or behaviour, he only gets every ones approval as a good (desirable) person. Personally I feel that the first kind of spiritual teachers who (just) show the (correct) path, or at most the second kind of spiritual teachers are better (suited for the attitude of the people at large in today's context). I do not think that at present the time would be favorable for the third kind of spiritual teachers. Should a teacher attempt grabbing the disciple by ear, the teacher is most likely to be insulted. The role of the guide should be like a signboard indicating the road going to Pandharpur. Whether to go to Pandharpur or not should be decided by the traveler according to his own will. Once in a while, the pole holding that signboard is surrounded by garbage, yet the signboard does carry out its function of showing the (correct) road.

Even though people pretend humility, mostly they are not willing to abandon their insistence (of behaving in the same way as before). Some patients enquire with anyone they meet about medicines and dietics, and then follow medication suggested by one and dietics suggested by another. Most people behave in the same manner in the matter of the path of spirituality (or seeking the absolute truth). In reality no one has (genuine) respect about anyone. Nor is anyone afraid (Godfearing) of one ((like teacher, saint or even God). If at all the feelings like respect / reverence or fear become apparent, there is (some kind of) self interest hidden at the bottom (of their mind). By saying that one has respect or fear about someone, the speaker evidently becomes humble and (consequently) the target of the feeling of respect and fear assumes greatness. This results in publicity of greatness (of the person who is respected and feared). If respect and fear were really there in the heart (of a person about someone, teacher, saint or deity), then any deed, not approved (or liked) by this respected personality would have never been performed by any human being. As a result of pride in one's own humility, human being does not like it, even if told, (in a polite manner) "listen (and accept) if you feel like", nor does he approve, if told with specific urgency. Therefore, in practice, it is not possible to grab

someone by ear. That becomes (a kind of) compelled salutation (outward expression of respect as a result of fear, not respect). Samarth does not have attitude of keeping quiet of someone who does not listen to him. He will take into consideration all the circumstances and persist on telling whatever is right with all the urgency. Samarth has given guidance to the (human) mind and he has addressed the mind as ‘gentleman’ just like one fondly persuades a naughty child and gets the work done by him.

The true fact of life is that (human) mind is the root cause of all the obstacles in the path towards the absolute truth. This is the reason why Shri Dasganu Maharaj has said: “करुं कायी करुं कायी । मन हें ऐकत नाहीं । बुद्धि कराया पुण्य जाय । परि मन खेंची अघडोहीं ॥” (What can I do, what can I do? This mind does not listen to good advice. The intelligence tries to do holy - virtuous - deed, but mind pulls it down into deep pond of sin).

This is probably the experience of all the people for all the times. (Our) ancient (Hindu) lawmakers / philosophers also say, “मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बन्धमोक्षयोः” (The mind is essentially the cause for being bound to the worldly passions as also for the liberation). Even a person of exceptional capability like Arjun has to say,

“चंचलं हि मनः कृष्ण प्रमाणि बलवद्दृढम् ।  
तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम् ॥” (Gita. 6/34)

Because the mind, indeed, is very unsteady, turbulent, powerful, and obstinate, Oh Krishna, I think restraining the mind is as difficult as reining the wind.

As it is hard, powerful, turbulent, obstinate like a mischievous child, therefore, if it is said, ‘My child, you are wise (good boy)’, then it gives some chance of (his) listening (to the teaching and subsequent improvement). There is not much possibility of its yielding to force; one has to take into consideration its inclination (while teaching). If the mind were really good natured (as Samarth has said while addressing the mind), there would have been no reason whatsoever of telling with so much of urgency to follow the path of devotion.

Even then the human mind has a very good virtue. Shri Jnyaneshwar Maharaj says, “कां जे या मनाचें एक निकें । जें हें देखिले गोडीचिया ठाया सोके । म्हणून अनुभवसुखचि कवतिकें । दावीत जाईजे ॥” (Jnya. 6/420) When the human mind develops strong liking for something (like devotion to a deity, good work etc.), it remains permanently attached to it. Therefore one should fondly demonstrate the joy of experience (of devotion) to the mind. The entire human race is devotional by nature. “देखे मनुष्यजात सकळ । स्वभावतः भजनशील—” (Jnya. 4/67) However, the original divine, pure and spiritual nature of human mind is (almost) extinct as a result of the influence of passion, lust and anger for several life cycles (birth and death). Human life is under the (degenerating) influence of (the six vices described in the Hindu tradition viz.) lust, anger, greed, passion, ego, envy. The same influences impress on the human mind. The human mind has degenerated to the level of crookedness by its own deeds. When the surrounding environments are not amenable to good influence, this degeneration goes on increasing; and reaches damaging level. Unfortunately, (in our country), the line of thinking, that good influences have to be specifically incorporated, has been thought to be outdated. (Subjects like) history-geography must be taught as also mathematics. However, the lessons on morality were ridiculed and dropped from the textbooks

with question, what is the need for teaching morals at all. The guidance on morality was subjected to mockery. The result was that the young generation got derailed (from the natural tendency of human mind to follow the path of devotion, good work etc.). They (young generation) did not have influence of morality in spite of education. Tender youths at the doorstep of youth are progressively getting affected by most detestable kind of venereal diseases. Is this fact not heartbreaking? Most households are becoming devoid of good moral influence. (This phenomenon being contiguous) even if some households do have (possibility of) good moral influence, there is no guarantee that children would be good natured. If the daily routine of the household is going to be, the father busy in smooth shave and mother busy in make up before the mirror, the elderly people in the house using a language full of ridicule and contempt about everyone from school teachers right up to highly placed political leaders, no regret whatsoever about betrayal of own vices and dishonesty in business before children, the how it is possible to have influence of good morals on children?

If (persons of) extreme good and bad natures are left out, about 80-90 percent people are affected by संस्कार (moral influence) and their behavioral pattern becomes good or bad (according to influence). Even if the parents are good natured and very well behaved, it is not as if the children never become bad. However (because of such obscure instances) it does not contradict the saying that good moral influence has to be imparted. Sometimes a child does not gain weight (improve health) in spite of plentiful diet. (Apparently) the food does not give any benefit to the child. Can we say why to give any food at all to such a child? Some disease does not get cured even after medication. However, is it not essentially the benefit of medication that while the medication is continued, the disease does not increase? Same is the case of good moral influence. Therefore one must continue to impart good moral influence, and virtuous guidance. If imparting good moral influence is not possible, one must make efforts to create environment which would make it possible; as far as possible remain alert with that viewpoint (to grab the earliest opportunity of imparting good moral influence). Samarth is guiding the mind with the same (objective in) view. The mind is originally (made up) of purity and benevolence. Therefore, while addressing the mind as gentle mind, it may be understood that Samarth is reminding the mind of its good nature, or one may assume that Samarth is fondly coaxing a mischievous mind.

Samarth says, 'O Mind, you are (originally) good natured and virtuous (gentleman). Therefore, a gentleman must behave like a gentleman. You are entangled in selfishness, merrymaking, greed, cunningness, crookedness, etc.; this is not good. This is unbecoming of your virtuousity. True sign of gentlemanship is essentially being devoted and to pursue the path of devotion. Please follow this path of devotion, then you will receive (its) natural reward – Shri Hari, the Almighty, without any difficulty. This is because the path of devotion is the easiest, shortest, most certain and resolute way to reach the Almighty, as compared to all other remedies, measures or paths. A detailed description of various aspects of this path of devotion is to follow in all the verses of 'Manache Shlok'.

In the first verse Samarth says that let us begin walking on the path of Raghav, and in the next verse says that, one meets with Shrihari by following the path of devotion. This proves that Samarth finds no difference between Raghav and Shrihari i.e. Ram and Krishna. I feel sad that inspite of this (evidence that Samarth had as much reverence about Shrihari or Vishnu – Vitthal is regarded an incarnation of Vishnu – as he had about Ram in his heart), some pilgrims

(devotees of Vitthal) show hatred towards Samarth. This reference has been mentioned so that the young generation should refrain from this divisive attitude. The paths of Raghav and Shrihari are not different; they are identical. When intelligence is purified by worship and the mind is absorbed in deep and devout meditation, whatever is seen is only self realization (that God is within), revelation of the inner self (divine visualization of one self – according to Hindu philosophy God exists everywhere, in every creature, the only problem is that most human beings do not understand this principle). Great personalities (saints, philosophers) gifted with literary talent describe this (inner self) in diversified ways for the purpose of achieving progress of various devotees (intending to achieve revelation). Thinkers should not get confused because of this diversity in nomenclature. I think that Samarth must be deliberately referring to God as Ram at one place and Shrihari at other place so that the directive of Veda's that there is एकता (unison) behind the diversity in nomenclature (of God), is firmly imprinted on mind. Even though singular dedication is the natural duty of a devotee, he should not abandon discretion, nor should he become obstinate. Samarth is saying this so that it must be kept in mind while on the path of devotion.

Samarth deliberately says, 'Pursue the भक्तिमार्ग (path of devotion). He does not mention the other three paths available (for unison with Almighty) viz. कर्म (duty), योग (abstract meditation), and ज्ञान (knowledge). The most important reason (for this omission) is that the path of devotion has the most attractive situation in view of the mindset of common people which is conspicuously absent in the other three paths. In the other three paths there is little scope of correcting mistakes. The path of devotion has more opportunities for correcting errors as compared to any other path. Therefore, Samarth, in the same way as other saints, insists that (every) soul should pursue the path of devotion.

Samarth is going to explain, in a step-by-step manner, as to what (exactly) should be done when it is said that one should pursue the path of devotion. The first step of this path of devotion is to abandon whatever is bad and harmful, and accept with conviction whatever is good and beneficial. How to discern between good and bad? Resorting to logic and standards of religion, (directives of ancient lawmakers) would be similar to entering thick forest. Therefore Samarth is telling a practical way (of discerning between good and bad). Whatever is classified as bad by respected good people should be regarded as bad and be abandoned and whatever is considered as good by them should be regarded as good and should be accepted with effort; (further,) one should assiduously make efforts to implement it (such good principles) in one's own behavior.

Generally (a person even if he is) a crook does not openly justify sins, or you may say that in past he did not use to justify sin. Even robbers are required to have trust on each other's honesty. Charvak is regarded as the promoter of unrestrained behavior in our ancient (Hindu) literature. However, the time has arrived when one has to say that he (Charvak) is far better than the promoters of (so called) new thoughts of these days. According to Charvak, the ultimate manifestation of unrestrained behavior is to drink ghee by availing a loan. He considers this as happy life. Consumption of ghee helps the intelligence to grow and becomes pure, body to becomes stronger, and lifespan to grows longer. In order to get loan, one has to improve one's credibility. (Ultimayely) all these deeds are likely to prove beneficial (to the person as also to the society). Charvak also does not say that one should drink liquor by stealing. Nor does he promote

cruelty and addiction. When the body and mind get used to getting rid of bad and accepting good, the ability of discretion of the person improves. Restraint becomes habitual.

Concepts about good and bad prevalent among the society are based on experience of several generations and therefore are more honest and more reliable than the ideas considered good or bad by a single individual, and therefore Samarth says that the popular viewpoint should be respected, at least in the initial stages.

प्रभाते मनीं राम चिंतीत जावा ।  
पुढें वैखरी राम आधीं वदावा ॥  
सदाचार हा थोर सांडूं नये तो ।  
जनीं तोचि तो मानवी धन्य होतो ॥३॥

prabhaate manii.n raama chi.ntiita jaavaa  
puDhe vaikharii raama aadhii vadaavaa  
sadaachaara haa thora saa.nDuu naye to  
janii.n tochi to maanavii dhanya hoto

One should focus on thoughts of Rama (immediately after waking up) in the early morning; then the first (audible) word spoken should be of Rama; noble truthful conduct must never be abandoned; then he (who regularly follows this routine) will be one of the blessed among the people.

This verse makes one think about what (precisely) should be done when advised to follow the path of devotion. Samarth is suggesting measures which appear very much commonplace and technical. The specialty of Samarth is to suggest those ideas which are in a way easy to achieve and simple to implement in practice for any one (common man with ordinary capabilities and intelligence), and help continued progress if persistently practiced with conviction.

Samarth has given a directive to think about Ram with a focussed mind the first thing in the early morning immediately after waking up. In a way this directive has awakened one who is fast asleep. What should be done immediately after waking up as also what is the (precise) meaning of waking up has been explained. Early morning indicates a specific period. About 48 to 72 minutes before the sunrise is called early morning. (In Hindu tradition the unit of time is ghatika which equals 24 minutes. India being a tropical country, the time of sunrise can be taken at about 7 o'clock in the morning). Normally the time period between 4:30 to 6:00 or 6:30 in can be called as early morning. A person who goes to sleep at about 9:30 or 10:00 o'clock at night gets fully awake at this time (4:30 o'clock in the morning) after 6-7 hours of sleep. As per Ayurved, this period corresponds to air (as one of the three humors of the human body, the other two being bile and phlegm). Waking up in this period is more useful from the viewpoint of clearing bowels. The body becomes clean, light and enthusiastic after clearing bowels, mouthwash, freshening up etc., and this period is better suited for serious thinking. The atmosphere is (usually) quiet, pleasant, and comfortably cold (in tropical countries cold atmosphere where natural temperature is around 21 degrees Celsius is considered pleasant) during this period. (As a result of all these conditions of the human body as also the surroundings, during this period) the intelligence (of the person) is bright and the mind is enthusiastic. The effect of remembering God at this time is

certainly beneficial to body, mind and intelligence. (It is suggested that for this purpose) one should sit upright with crossed legs (on the ground) on animal skin (in India it is customary to use the skin of wild animals like deer, tiger etc., softened by tanning, spread on ground as a seat at the time of meditation, worship or any religious function), woolen cloth, or even hard bed facing the east or the north. The hands should be kept open and placed either below the naval, one on the other, or on the knees, and then one should remember the name (chanting in mind without uttering the words) of the desired deity with a focussed mind.

This routine of remembering the name of the deity should be accomplished through the three forms of वाणी (the speech faculty) viz. मध्यमा (audible), पश्यन्ती (visual) and परा (at the level of inspiration) as told by the ancient lawmakers before the वैखरी (articulate) form. Remembering the deity's name through परा form of speech is extremely difficult from the viewpoint of common people. This could be and would have been achieved by only a great personality (mistic or saint). Para form of speech becomes effective only when the concentration (of body and mind) becomes complete and attains the level of abstract contemplation of meditation, intelligence becomes steady, mind abandons fickleness and becomes free of desire. This cannot be achieved without long term persistence, purity of body and mind and mighty efforts. It is better not to attempt it, at least in the initial stages. (I would suggest that in the initial stage of progressing on the path of devotion) one should remember the deity's name in the inner mind for some time (in the early morning) and also chant it for some time with articulate speech before starting other usual business (of daily routine). There was a custom of singing various kinds of early morning hymns of praise of deity or songs (specifically composed for singing in the early morning). This discipline was ubiquitous in the society until the previous generation (first half of the twentieth century). Even folk artists have composed early morning songs. However, at present it has become necessary to explain this afresh. This custom has almost become extinct among the young generation. On the contrary, questions like 'What is the purpose of this (custom)?', 'Why is it there at all?', 'What is its utility?', are being asked under the pretext of बुद्धिवाद (intellectualism i.e. following the principle of one's own intelligence as the supreme standard) and an atmosphere (of mistrusting the tradition) has been created wherein many good codes of conduct which are still prevalent (in the society) would become extinct from lifestyle. (Promoters of this kind of misplaced intellectual freedom have) destroyed many old traditions but have not created new ones to prevail in their places. This has resulted in a kind of vacuum thereby increasing frustration (among the people at large).

Is it possible to prove the utility of many customs which have encroached in the lifestyle of new generation in the name of fashion? However, there is no scope left (by the promoters of intellectual freedom) for asking this kind of question.

Our (Hindu) tradition has stated, “संदिग्धे परलोकेऽपि त्यज्यमेवाशुभं जनैः । नास्ति चेत् नास्ति का हानिः अस्ति चेत् नास्तिको हतः ॥ (Eventhough there is ambiguity about life after death, people must abandon the inauspicious. If the life after death indeed does not exist, still there is no harm in abandoning the inauspicious; however, if it does exist, the nonbelievers, who would have indulged in the inauspicious, would be ruined). This is very much important from the viewpoint of practical worldly business. Is there God or not? Should one waste time in remembering / chanting the name of the deity? What is the benefit of it (chanting the name of deity)? Even though these issues are not (conclusively) decided, what is the specific loss in spending 10-15 minutes of

morning in remembering / chanting name of deity? My limited intelligence feels that, if in reality there were no God, 10-15 minutes spent in remembering His name would be a waste of time. Of course, we do know how much time is wasted (almost every day over matters which have been conclusively proved as useless). However, if as told by great personalities and thinkers like Jnyaneshwar, Tukaram, Ramdas, if God happens to be a reality, and I am not able to give even 10-15 minutes (of my daily routine), then would it not mean that I have caused great self damage from the viewpoint of my spiritual benefit? Therefore, the routine of remembering / chanting the name of deity will result in, if at all, some benefit only. One should indeed follow the daily routine of remembering the name of deity considering that the loss, (due to supposed waste of 10-15 minutes) if at all, would be negligible. This is the policy guideline called 'To err on the safer side'.

In this context, let me narrate my own experience of a different kind. While staying at Lonavala during the summer, every day I used to come to Pune. The train used to start from Lonavala at about 10 or 10:30 in the morning and I used to reach Pune at about 11:30 or 12 noon. I used to return in the evening after completing the work in the college. I had a habit of taking early lunch (at about 9 in the morning) and then start the journey. Every day Tirthaswaroop Dada (Shri Dasganu Maharaj) used to force me to carry शिदोरी (tiffin box). I used to argue, "This journey is a daily routine. I take my lunch (before starting the journey). Then why to keep tiffin with me every day?" Dada used to rejoin, "Is it (tiffin box) so heavy that you are required to engage a coolie? Our custom is that one should carry some food during the journey. You yourself find out whether there is any statement to this effect in our scriptures". Every day he used to remind this and force me to carry tiffin box. Once there was some problem with the train and it stopped somewhere in between (two stations). We had to keep waiting (in the stationery train) for 4-5 hours and torture undergone by those who had no provision (of food) is beyond description. However, having observed a rule of carrying the tiffin box, a small child among the fellow travelers and me were saved from the ordeal. In the same manner, it is possible that the amount of time spent in remembering name of deity, even if felt unnecessary (today) might (ultimately) prove useful.

With the kind of life we are living today, body, mind and intelligence are subjected to various types of tensions. As a result of these tensions the proportion of minor and major ailments like indigestion, constipation, acidity, insomnia, (high or low) blood pressure, diabetes, heart trouble etc. (The habit of) remembering the name of the deity with a peaceful mind performed during the pleasant period of early morning is likely to be of great help in obliterating the damages caused by these tensions. Even mechanical performance of remembering the name of the deity and similar rituals do have some benefits. If performed with heartfelt faith and conviction, it will not be without enhanced benefits in return as per the principle of 'अधिकस्य अधिकं फलम्' (more work gives more return benefit). It is not that the remembering the name should be performed only during the early morning period. One should keep on remembering or chanting name of deity according to ones ability throughout the day. Then it has (favorable) effect on pronunciation of मध्यमा (audible), and पश्यन्ती (visual) forms as well. Therefore the verse, "अहो येतां जातां उठत-बसतां कार्य करितां" has asked people at large to continue thinking about God, "समस्तांची लज्जा त्यजुनि भगवत्चिंतन" abandoning all kinds of shame, while moving around, sitting or getting up, doing any work etc.

If practice (of remembering the name of deity) is not sufficient, the lifestyle is not pure, benevolent and sacred, then even remembering the name of deity may create (mental) tension. Therefore, (in such cases) name of the deity should be chanted aloud. It has been said specifically for this reason, “अती आदरें गद्य घोषे म्हणावे” The name of the deity should be chanted loudly with high respect, sometimes along with accompaniment of musical instruments like jingles, drums etc. Out of all these, whatever is possible should be performed regularly, with respect, love and faith, for as much of time as possible.

Having said this much about remembering deity's name, now Samarth also tells as to how the behavior should be during the remaining period of the day. There is a famous dictum of (some unknown) saint, “जेणे विठ्ठलमात्रा ध्यावी । तेणे पथ्ये सांभाळावी ।” One, who intends to take the medication of chanting the name of Vitthal, should observe (necessary) restraints. It must be clearly understood that any religious deed like remembering name of deity or ritualistic worship does not yield the desired benefit unless one progressively accepts more and more sacredness in thinking as also behavior. Therefore, after telling to perform remembering / chanting the name of deity, in the first two lines of the above verse, in the third line Samarth tells that one should be well behaved; should never abandon good behavior. Good behavior is noble, superior, revered, respectable (and hence universally) acceptable; it must be brought into practice and must never be abandoned. Now, what is the (precise) meaning of good behavior? The meaning of this term can be explained in two ways. सत्तां आचारः = सदाचारः: The behavior of good people should be called as good behavior; or सत् आचार = सदाचारः: Behavior which is true, i.e. behavior based on the principle of truth, is also good behavior. Here it is necessary that the meaning of (the term truth) must be (properly) understood, for practicing truth or maintaining one's behavior according to the principle of truth (all the time). This is not so easy. Virtues and vices of the intelligence of the person (trying to discern what is truth) usually conceal the reality and show the facts in a totally different form, the extent of difference being more or less (depending on the quality of intelligence). This (bizarre situation) could be understood after observing a number of different ways (even contradicting each other) in which the same incident is described by different persons. Therefore, understanding precise truth is always very difficult. It is essential to have intelligence extremely clear, devoid of prejudice, sharp and steady for the purpose of knowing the truth. (It is well known that) the balance which is used for weighing firewood, even though is indeed a balance, is not useful for weighing gold or important chemicals in a laboratory (for the simple reason that the latter two must have far more precision of measurement than the former). I have seen one chemical balance in a national laboratory which was installed on a concrete platform built on a foundation deeper than the foundation of the building, and stronger construction right from the base. It was enclosed safely in a glass cabinet in order to protect it from possible adverse effect of the breathing of the technician measuring the weights. How to acquire such microscopic quality for our (ordinary) intelligence? (It is not possible). Saints are used to availing this (figurative) balance. Therefore, the interpretation ‘practicing truth’ of the term ‘good behavior’ is of no use for us (ordinary people), and hence futile as well. The behavior of personalities who are truly great, is indeed good behavior. “महाजनो येन गतः सः पन्थाः ।” This interpretation of the term good behavior is really useful for us.

However, one must be carefully guarded while deciding about greatness of a person. Greatness can be understood if a little discretion is used. Even though this discretion is difficult, it is not as rare as the microscopic intelligence necessary for seeking the absolute truth. It is not appropriate

to decide greatness of a person just because he has got elected, is rich, speaks pleasant language, is a learned orator, his public meeting draws large crowd of even educated people etc. It is possible (and desirable) to regard one as much great as high is the level of his selflessness and efficiency. One great person could be different from another (perhaps equally) great person. However, the other person is still (to be regarded as) indeed great (provided the criterion mentioned above is satisfied). Tilak and Gokhale were (distinctly) different from each other. Their opposition (to each other on principles) is also well known. Yet they (both) were great. They had even fought with each other on the issue of (social and political) work, still Tilak had accepted Gokhale's greatness. This position of Tilak has been very well expressed in the obituary of Gokhale (written by Tilak). Same is the case of (opposition between) Ranade and Tilak, Bhandarkar and Tilak. Both (Ranade and Bhandarkar) were well aware of Tilak's greatness. It is no ordinary feat to acknowledge greatness in spite of being an opponent.

Shankaracharya might prove great in view of somebody while in someone else's view Madhvacharya would prove great. However, he (one who argues about greatness of one against another) does not follow either of them. (His position is) first to decide who is greater and only then we would consider who is the one to be followed in our behavior; until then I would follow (some) actor (film star etc.). This way the person (in general) keeps on avoiding good behavior. This situation is certainly not good.

(In view of all the above) it is indeed the best (policy) to have faith on great personalities and follow their dictum in letter and spirit. While it is true that once the mind gets rid of evil, body also would be free from it, one must remember that reduction of evil in mind is not likely (to be successful) unless one make determined efforts to drive out evil from the body. Customs and traditions have evolved specifically for this purpose. Perhaps it might not be possible to explain the reasoning behind (customs like) one should not sit on the door step, one should not sneeze in the door step, one should not drink water while standing, one should not sleep with feet pointing towards the south etc. Even (modern) science cannot provide an answer to the question why (all these customs are there at all). These rules might be there so that there is some kind of organization and discipline in life and every action is done with full knowledge and awareness. However, these days indiscipline is considered as a synonym of freedom. A question is being asked (by promoters of such unruly behavior) with utmost smugness, 'What is your authority to peep into our private life?' This is essentially an effort to cover up bad behavior and still gain reputation. (In the field of literature) if one accepts felicitation of good literary contribution, then why is he not prepared to receive brickbats for writing trash?

This is indeed the reason why Samarth calls a person of good (and right) conduct as the blessed one. There is no real blessedness in (achievements like) getting elected, getting honor and recognition, becoming wealthy etc. The real blessedness is in bringing in one's own conduct the characteristic criteria of good conduct like being afraid of (committing sin), not coveting others' wealth, not viewing other woman with lust, helping others as much as possible, not troubling others for achieving selfish aims, not encroaching other's rights, not reviling or abusing others etc. Only that person who has this kind of lifestyle should be (considered) worthy of praise. (This is possible only in a society where majority of population has good conduct). It might be very true that nobody's personal life be peeped in; however personal life being unfit to be seen (by others) is essentially a degeneration of life.

मना वासना दुष्ट कामा न ये रे ।  
 मना सर्वथा पापबुद्धि नको रे ॥  
 मना धर्मता नीति सोडूं नको हो ।  
 मना अंतरीं सार वीचार राहो ॥4॥

manaa vaasanaa dushhTa kaamaa na ye re  
 manaa sarvathaa paapabuddhii nako re  
 manaa sarvathaa niiti soDuu nako ho  
 manaa a.ntarii saara viichaara raaho

Oh, Mind! Evil desires will not yield any benefit. Oh, Mind! Please wholly abandon sinful thoughts. Oh, Mind! Please do not ever cast aside moral character. Oh, Mind! Thoughts of the essence of Existence may abide in your innermost heart.

Have you ever analyzed the waves of thoughts entering the mind? The kind of thoughts which one would be scared to analyze keep on entering the mind in a very large proportion (as compared to healthy and innocuous thoughts). Even most detestable thoughts keep on entering the mind. As one makes more and more efforts to prevent entry of such thoughts in mind, it becomes more and more obstinate like a mischievous child. If mischiefs of a child are viewed with fondness, they go on increasing; (on the other hand) if opposed, they tend to soar even higher. There is a saying (in Marathi) to the effect that the mind imagines (something so frightening) what (even) an arch enemy cannot imagine. The real situation is such that anyone would accept aptness of this saying. (It is possible that) such terrible thoughts about someone very close enter our mind which even an arch enemy would not think of. Therefore Yajurveda has prayed with utmost urgency, “तन्मे मनः शिवसंकल्पमस्तु” (My mind should hold only sacred conceptions). The evil thoughts entering the mind have such a terrible speed that escape (from such thoughts) is possible only if God shows mercy; not otherwise. Therefore it is necessary to pray to God , “मदीय हृदयीं सदा शुभ विचार देवा स्फुरो” (Oh God! My heart should always produce auspicious thoughts).

There is a belief in our (Hindu) tradition that some deities in invisible form are moving about in space, saying, तथास्तु तथास्तु (so be it, so be it). (Therefore, one should take care and keep away from evil thoughts as far as possible so that) it should not happen that entry of evil thought in the mind coincides with deities saying, तथास्तु. Therefore one should not see to it that evil thoughts do not enter the mind; at least one should not speak evil. It is necessary to make continued efforts and inculcate good discipline to the mind. No evil thought entering the mind is indeed the ideal of good behavior.

It does happen many a time that a person feels sad because of the sorrow of other person, but a person becoming happy because of other persons happiness is not so common. When one sees someone else having a good time while he himself is not, then sin enters his mind. His ego gets hurt and he abuses the person who is having good time, does not feel comfortable unless he tells (advertises) flaws of the person (having good time) in public. It is very interesting (however sad) to listen to the criticism and fault finding showered by relatives and friends after successful completion of a family celebration like wedding ceremony. Had it been within his capability to

do so, man would never have hesitated in damaging others. However, there are limitations to his capability because of several reasons, and hence he is not able to carry out the damaging act. Still the sin does enter his intelligence; but that erudition appears in the form of abuse. Abuse is essentially an offspring of envy. Therefore one must make continued efforts so that sinful desires and crooked thoughts do not have any place in the mind.

The task of disciplining one's own mid has to be done with lot of efforts by the person himself, no other person can be of help in this matter. The sequence of this task is as follows: first the thought, then determination and finally the action. Crooked desire (always) results in sinful intelligence. The thinking process does not have as many constraints as there are for the actual action, and therefore dangers of evil thoughts are not apparent at least in the initial stages. As a result one stops repenting about evil intention and sinful intelligence goes on getting more and more strength; and once it starts getting strength the restraints on the behavior start becoming progressively slack. Finally the person starts doing immoral deeds. Reining the mind is not within ones control, yet reining the body is mostly possible. Therefore Samarth is educating the mind as follows: 'Please do not abandon religion and moral. We know that there is not much possibility of your being able to control evil desires entering the mind. However, if you really feel that evil thoughts entering the mind should progressively be eliminated, then please be alert so that at least your behavior does not transgress the boundaries of religion and morality'. This is precisely what Samarth is telling the mind.

A pronunciation of Kabir is worth thinking about in this connection. Kabir says, "मन गया तो जाने दे मत जाने दे शरीर । नहीं खींची कमान तो कहाँसे छूटेगा तीर ॥" "If the mind indulges (in evil thoughts) so be it, at least do not allow the body to do so. If the bow is not pulled, how an arrow would be shot?"

However evil it might be to have a thought entering one's mind about causing injury to someone, the real act happens only when the string of the bow is pulled after setting an arrow on it; (or) after a trigger of a gun is pulled. At least do not do that (final act of pulling the string of the bow or pulling the trigger of the gun). If good conduct is not possible for the mind, at least the body should follow good conduct. Acts like worship, religious meditation accompanied by chanting of mantras and sipping water, religious discourse with devotional songs, chanting verses of praise of the deities, donating food to poor, pilgrimage etc. should be performed immediately after their thought enters the mind. Even if thoughts of such acts do not enter the mind and one is getting bored about them, still one should perform these as far as possible and continue to make efforts so that these are performed in the best possible manner. However. One should not say, 'we will perform these acts only if it is possible to do them in the best way, not otherwise'. If the mind enjoys good acts, it is certainly the best (that can happen), but just because the best does not happen, the body at least should not be withdrawn out of these good acts. Let the body remain in (the environment of) good acts. The mind (normally) does not enjoy religious discourses accompanied by devotional songs and religious lectures; yet it is not correct to watch movies all the time. Even if the thoughts of the movies keep on entering the mind, it is indeed beneficial to go to the temple with urgency at least sometimes and listen to religious discourses with devotional songs as also religious lectures. It is essentially for this purpose that the saints have said, "असो नसो भाव । जो हा देखे पंढरीराव". Irrespective of whether there is any (sacred) feeling or not, do see the King of Pandharpur (Vithal). Even if there is no faith in the mind, still do go to

Pandharpur. (Every particular) place does have some influence and everything has a value (importance). All these provide scope for efforts.

While behaving according to (the directives of) religion and moral standards, one must take into consideration one's own nature, inclination and environment. Taking into consideration the literal meaning of the directives of our ancient scriptures is not correct (as it does not yield the desired results). Therefore Samarth has told that one should think about and discern as to what is the essence, what is vital, what is secondary, what must be invariably practiced etc. Human nature is very strange. If a distinction is not made between what is the essential and what is unsubstantial, even good principles might get distorted. Monasticism (code of conduct of a monk) is usually very strict. However Vivekanand has given some concessions to a mystic. One of these concessions is consuming tobacco. If a human being is allowed no concessions whatsoever, it is likely that he will throw away all the restraints. Therefore, in this context he (Samarth) has suggested a thought that concession (if necessary) should be allowed for less harmful acts and one should be instructed to categorically avoid more dangerous acts. Let me give an example (of an incident) known to me. Son of a Vedic scholar was brought up from his childhood in very strict discipline like do not eat this, do not do this and so on. The poor fellow was not allowed to eat not only onion or garlic but even carrot, brinjal etc. Later on he came to a city for his college education and started behaving in such an unruly manner that not only onion-garlic, but even consuming liquor or nonvegan food was no longer forbidden for him. When the entire society behaves strictly yet naturally within the boundaries of (some) rules and regulations, the rules being followed by oneself are not felt oppressive, on the contrary following even more rules is felt (considered) graceful only. However when the society around the individual is not following any rules whatsoever, insisting on strict rules (for some particular individual) proves to be resulting in degeneration. (If one has to choose) between onion and meat, it is desirable to give concession for (eating) onion. Some strict rules in our (Hindu) tradition were for the purpose of preserving मंत्रशक्ति (the power of mystical verses). (Code of conduct about some edible being) fit or unfit for consumption, (people from a section of society being) touchable or untouchable, etc. is essentially a part of those rules. It does not appear that Brahmins, as a community have retained the basis of the power of mystical verses for last thousand years or so. From this viewpoint, it is necessary to give thought as to whether those do's and don'ts (about eating certain edibles, untouchability etc.) should be categorically followed. Many a time it proves desirable to think about (and accept) a lesser evil so as to avoid worse evil. It is true that one should not be totally without any rules, at the same time one must remember that too many rules should not be imposed. However good anything (like food) might be, it has to get digested. It must not be allowed to cause indigestion. It is better to (begin with a lesser good and) move further from lesser good to better than (be forced to) going (retrograde) from better to lesser good.

A gentleman from business industry decided to perform daily 12 chantings of Vishnusahasranam. One chanting requires 8 to 10 minutes. He thought that he could easily find about two hours every day (for this purpose). However, this arithmetic could get translated into reality. After an experience of 12 chantings (too frequently) not getting completed, the routine of chanting itself was obliterated. Had he decided to perform a single chanting per day, perhaps the routine could have become regular. The essential conclusion here is that one should design the routine with

due consideration as to how much (of discipline) one can sustain. One must give a thought to this (fact of life).

मना पाप संकल्प सोडूनि घावा ।  
मना सत्य संकल्प जीवीं धरावा ॥  
मना कल्पना ते नको वीषयांची ।  
विकारें घडे हो जनीं सर्व ची ची ॥५॥

manaa paapasa.nkalpa soDuuni dyaavaa  
manaa satya sa.nkalpa jiivii dharaavaa  
manaa kalpanaa te nako viishhayaa.nchii  
vikaare ghaDe ho janii.n sarva chii chii

Oh, Mind! You should abandon sinful intent. Oh, Mind! Truth-inspired resolves should cherish in the heart. Oh, Mind! (Even) ideas of indulgence, should not be cherished; (because, it should be understood for sure, that their) ill-effects will indeed create disgust about you among the people at large.

When one thinks about the actions of a human being, it is seen that the sequential order is बुद्धि-इच्छा-क्रिया (intellect-wish-action). Therefore if a thought as to what is proper and what is not proper remains firmly imprinted in the heart of a person before the action is realized or even after the beginning of the realization of action, the behavior of the person falls in line or begins to fall in line with the directives of religion and morality.

In this verse Samarth is giving more elaboration on the religion and moral standards mentioned in the previous verse. Try religion and good moral standards get imprinted on one's heart only as a result of abandoning sinful intent, going on cherishing good intent and not getting entangled in the desires of worldly pleasures; and if this does not happen, it results in contempt of the person among the people at large. Therefore, Samarth says, one must be alert (about the kind of thoughts entering the mind).

Concepts of पाप and पुण्य (sinful and virtuous act) and धर्म and नीति (religion and moral standards) are essentially interdependent. Concepts of sin and virtuous act are there all over (the world) and in every society in some form or other. They (concepts of sin and virtuous act) might be diverse, perhaps even contradictory to each other, but it is a fact that they are indeed there (firmly imprinted on the mindset of the people at large).

There are chemical differences between (each of the following pairs viz.) black-white, bitter-sweet, salty-astringent etc. and the differences are well defined. There is not much likelihood of a difference of opinion about the knowledge of black and white, bitter and sweet etc. However the knowledge about good and bad is neither definite nor globally uniform. (It is almost universally acknowledged that) hair are good if black, teeth are good if white, कडूलिंब (chinaberry) is bitter hence fit to be rejected, कारळे (bitter gourd) is bitter yet tasty, hence acceptable. However, taste of bitter gourd is not ubiquitous. Sweetmeats are indeed sweet, yet there are people who would not touch these. Which कैरी (unripe mango) is good? Sour enough to sting or one known as खोबरी which tastes like coconut with a sour flavor? Sour mango is good for making pickles. खोबरी

unripe mango is good for eating as it is. (Concepts of) good and bad are altered, even interchanged in the context of relations, environment, diversities of individual taste, country, period of timeframe etc. Under this situation, how to discern between good and bad that is virtuous act and sin from the viewpoint of the religious legal system? What we regard as sin may not be considered as sin, perhaps even regarded as a virtuous act, in some other society. These days we are having a closer contact with distant societies as a result of ease of communication. Consequently, it is now possible to make close observations of customs, social system, concepts of good and bad etc. of many (distant societies). It is essentially for this reason that we have started observing the behavior and way of thinking of other societies and comparing them with ours. Some संस्कारहीन (devoid of good moral impressions) persons, originally addicted to unruly behavior ask, 'If a particular kind of behavior is regarded as good and regarded as respectable, in some particular society, nobody says that it is sinful and should be shunned, why should we regard it as detestable? This is the reason why concepts of sinful and virtuous act are being considered as fictitious.

It is a fact that strange diversity is found among the behaviors, thinking, dos and don'ts. Eating food tasted by each other (उष्टुप्) is not considered agreeable in Hindu culture. However, eating together in the same plate is considered respectable among the Muslims. Marriages between सगोत्र (sprung from one common ancestor) or even सपिंड (connected to seven generations of lineage) persons are forbidden among Hindus. However, it is said that one can marry a cousin-sister (daughter of father's brother) among the Muslims and Jews. Daughter of mother's brother is considered proper for marriage by ऋग्वेदी देशस्थ (a section of Brahmins of the Rigved tradition originally living in the plateau of Maharashtra but not by कौंकणस्थ (Brahmins originally living in the coastal region – Konkan – of Maharashtra) who call her मामेबहीण (daughter of mother's brother and being as close as sister, not proper for marriage). As माध्यंदिन देशस्थ (section of Brahmins of the Yajurved tradition originally living on the plateau of Maharashtra) regard even the girl from the गोत्र (lineage from the common ancestor of) मामा (maternal uncle) as also one's own as forbidden for marriage, the issue of marrying with a daughter of मामा is out of question. Similar is the issue of eating non-vegetarian food and consuming liquor. There is a belief based on the concepts of sinful and virtuous acts that one who commits sin goes to hell (after death). Then how can it be said that person from different society committing the same act goes to heaven? Further, can it even be said that because there are (this kind of) oppositions and contradictions, whatever one wants to do at whichever place must be regarded as good, acceptable and respectable? Sometime in the past, prohibition was strictly enforced in Maharashtra state. During the same period, in some other states of India there was no prohibition at all. Then, if someone says, 'since there is no prohibition at some particular place, I am going to consume liquor here as well', and translates this thought into action, is he not regarded as criminal? There is a rule in our country that vehicles are to be driven on the left side of the road. Therefore the steering wheels of the automobiles in our country are fitted on the right side. In some foreign countries, the rule is to keep right on the road. There the steering wheels of vehicles are fitted on the left side to suit their convenience. Once in a while those (left-hand-drive) vehicles (are required to) run on our roads. Even then the rule of driving the vehicle on the left side of the road cannot be broken.

A law prohibiting bigamy for Hindus has been enforced in our country. However, our secular government, which keeps on giving slogans of equality and justice, has unabashedly excluded

Muslims from this law; and yet a Hindu contravening this law does prove to be guilty. Notwithstanding our logical argument, we do follow the laws, in whatever form and wherever they are in force. The same logic should be regarded as applicable to the concepts of पाप and पुण्य (sinful and virtuous acts). Being a Hindu, living in Maharashtra, India, the (local) rules (laws of the land), which might not be similar elsewhere, are indeed binding on me, I cannot contravene them; similarly in the matter of पाप and पुण्य (sinful and virtuous actss), I must consider it essential to abide by the boundaries of the tradition in which I was born. It is difficult to decide as to whether something is intrinsically good or bad. It is also true that the concepts of sinful and virtuous acts do get interchanged, however, can the concepts of पाप and पुण्य themselves be regarded as bad? As there is no one to question and actual consequences are not (always) observed, we can break the concepts of पाप and पुण्य. But what can we do about the rules and regulations imposed by the government? Although it is true that the laws (of the land) can be modified the way one wants by creating a majority (of people supporting the modification) and acquiring power, still helplessness of (common) individuals is obvious and even unacceptable rule are required to be helplessly followed and grief has to be endured. We have enough of such experience during the last twenty five years. Therefore, it is indeed true (desirable) that बुद्धिवाद (intellectualism, i.e. regarding one's own intelligence as the supreme standard) should not promote the policy of ridiculing the concepts of पाप and पुण्य. Even if there is a scope for a difference of opinion (regarding the exact nature and form), social order cannot sustain without rules, regulations and governance. There we do follow the restrictions even enduring some personal inconvenience. The cases of पाप and पुण्य also should be regarded as similar. It is essentially so because the concepts of good-bad and पाप and पुण्य are still firmly imprinted on the hearts of the majority of population in the society, the government and rules and regulations (imposed by the government) continue to command at least some respect (in spite of the degeneration of overall moral standards).

It is impossible to live (normal) life if we say that the concepts of पाप and पुण्य themselves are intrinsically bad. You may very well shout (from the rooftops) about equality, but to claim that one will establish equality other than परमोच्च अवस्थेतील परमार्थ (the absolute truth in the supreme state of soul), it is either fabrication or daydreaming. The unity or equality in true sense of the term can sustain only under परमसत्य पारमार्थिक सत्ता (supreme governance of the absolute truth), the highest of the three governances acknowledged by वेदांत (the Vedic philosophy). In case of the other two viz. प्रातिभासिक (which exists only in appearance) and व्यावहारिक (the worldly governance), it is just not possible to accept equality. There is no way to avoid acceptance of diversity, good and bad based on contextual relations and opposition from the viewpoint of thinking and behavior.

Although it is true that the concepts of पाप and पुण्य are different in different societies in different countries during different timeframes, there is no unrestrained freedom. We do not accept coincidence, accident, chance (in our Hindu tradition). We (Hindu tradition) believe in the adherence to systematic planning of the nature, and something called destiny. Therefore it must be understood that there is a (well defined) policy and line of thinking behind the concepts of पाप and पुण्य. If my (personal) likes and dislikes are regarded as standard everywhere, it would be disastrous. My physic cannot endure hot sunshine, someone else's physic cannot endure cold weather, and I cannot decide this based on my own likes and dislikes or by observing others'

(preferences). There are advantages of being tall and hefty, yet a Japanese person can never become (tall and hefty) like a Punjabi person, whatever be the amount of efforts he might put in. We have to learn to contentedly accept the laws of culture and civilization just as we helplessly accept the laws of nature. As I am born in India and Hindu culture as a consequence of destiny, I cannot abandon the traditions therein just because I feel like doing so.

A person proven in a lower court guilty is (occasionally) proven innocent in higher court. Sometimes it is the other way round. Lawyers on both the sides are always argue; giving the reasoning based on law, that argument of only their client is proper. (Sometimes) a totally new law, distinct from the old one gets officially accepted (i.e. passed in the house of the people's representatives). However, the laws cannot be modified depending on individual likes or dislikes and conveniences from person to person. Similarly, even if some concepts of पाप पुण्य are felt to be childish, ridiculous, and meaningless or without any purpose, every individual (in authority) must ensure that the same (or similar) flaws are not created while modifying them. An ego, that I understand everything, is certainly futile; further, an ego that I will be able to understand everything will also not be proper. One should acquire knowledge, increase ones knowledge, and try to become a learned person with confidence; however, one should never show the arrogance of considering anybody as worthless. If this attitude is maintained, it would not be possible to disrespect the concepts of पाप and पुण्य the way we are doing now (as a result of pretension of secularism).

In principle it is possible to ensure justice for every person. However, it is impossible to frame a law which will be favorable to all, i.e. favorable to every individual. In our democracy, it is possible to create restrictions which would result in dishonoring (the principle of natural) justice. An individual, originally securing only a minority of votes can rule the majority in opposition as a result of a division of votes. Here the बुद्धिवाद (intellectualism) becomes helpless; under these circumstances, what is the point in taking an arrogant decision regarding many microscopic concepts like पाप and पुण्य (sinful and virtuous acts). Even though a hostile law or an unjust law is indeed painful, still it is essential to respect the law and it proves respectable as well. In this context, the example of Socrates is worth thinking about. His standpoint was indeed honest and well meaning to the root. It was also appropriate in a comprehensive sense. However, the then government of Athens did not want Socrates as he was (considered potentially) dangerous (for the rulers). That government ordered death sentence to him. Socrates accepted this sentence with devotion (of heart and mind). His friends and admirers had an earnest desire that he should not endure this sentence, (escape from the prison and) run away and save his life. However, Socrates accepted the (death) sentence as a true citizen of Athens. Jnyaneshwar Maharaj says that if the शास्त्र (ancient laws of Hindu tradition) so directs, one should abandon the kingdom and should not throw away poison just because it is harmful.

शास्त्र म्हणेल सांडावे । तें राज्यहि तृण मानावे ।  
जे घेववी तें न म्हणावे । विषहि विरुद्ध ॥ (Jnya. 16/460)

A वैद्य (physician practicing Ayurved) recommended अतिविष (literally the strongest poison, actually a medicinal plant called Aconitum Ferox) for a child suffering from fever. The mother of the child had a degree in Sanskrit. (As the anecdote goes further), she thought how such a small child can withstand strong poison and hence she brought poison from the market and gave it to the child. Then what would have happened to the child? Had she asked the physician, he

would have explained, ‘My lady, विषम् अतीतं-अति विषम् – even though from the viewpoint of botany, this belongs to the class of poisons like बचनाग (a poisonous plant) by birth, it has gone far beyond the poisonous quality from the viewpoint of its properties; and hence it is called as अतिविष. Please leave aside the humorous part of this (anecdote). However, one should not think about पाप and पुण्य (sinful and virtuous acts) applying one’s own (limited) intelligence (and information). The foundation of the thought process should be that of pure (unadulterated) science.

Generally पाप and पुण्य can be interpreted as follows: Whatever (act) is beneficial, not resulting in mere outward pleasures, but of welfare (in a comprehensive sense), that is (to be regarded as) पुण्य (virtuous). If it is more favorable to the (welfare of) of the mind than the body, to the intelligence than to the mind, to the soul than to the intelligence; accordingly it is (to be regarded as) more and more virtuous; पापमय (sinful) if it is the other way round. From this viewpoint the tendency of the (traditional Hindu) law is to give inspiration to individual human beings as also the society so as to rise from unruly behavior to restrain and from unlimited merriment to availing exclusively the minimal necessities. In this context, it is worthwhile to consider the definition of the religion as stated by the मीमांसक (the philosopher of the branch of Hindu philosophy मीमांसा which illustrates the practical aspects of devotion and religion including moral and legal responsibilities): “चोदनालक्षणोऽथर्वे धर्मः ।” (directives about practicing the Vedic philosophy is essentially a comprehensive, exclusive and nonrepudiatory definition of religion) This definition is aimed at edification and progress (of humanity). If it is decided to proceed to logical and scientific ideals from whichever present condition, it is necessary to conceptualize a number of levels or steps. Here it is possible that (various sections of) human societies could be initially at different levels. A lower step has to be considered as inferior to a higher step. The distinction between the interpretation of पाप and पुण्य (in the context of such societies as different levels) has to be considered from the point of view as mentioned above. There will certainly be a clear distinction between the laws framed for the purpose of strengthening the tendency of restraint of a section of the society at one level (of progress and edification) and those aimed at teaching restraint to a section of the society at another (somewhat lower) level. Let us consider an example of a (well known) fact. Considering the nature and physical constitution of human beings, nonvegetarian food is unnatural for human consumption. This is easily understood if one considers the structure of teeth in the mouth of human beings. The human teeth are wide and plane like those of horse or bullock; their fangs are not pointed and sharp like those of tiger, lion, dog, cat etc. All carnivorous animals pull out their tongue while drinking water. Human being drinks water with his lips just like a herbivorous animal, (and unlike a carnivorous animal). It is possible to illustrate some more differences of this kind. Just as it is unnatural for a lion to eat grass or hay, it is unnatural for a human being to eat meat. Therefore, for a human being, not eating meat is पुण्य (a virtuous act). In view of this (principle) eating meat is a sin. It is easy to convince a person with sacred thinking that in view of the killing of animals required one should refrain from consuming nonvegetarian food. Therefore, in the cases of circumstances like those wherein people are habituated to nonvegetarian food, particular situation or tradition (demands consumption of nonvegetarian food) etc., there are suggestions for dissuading a nonvegetarian person from consuming meat. These suggestions are like: perform a particular यज्ञ (a religious event in Hindu tradition where sacrifice of food items are offered to deities – actually the items are offered to sacred fire while chanting Vedic hymns in praise of deities) and then consume meat, do not consume only meat, eat at least some vegetarian food along with meat, do not

consume meat every day, do not eat meat in the month of श्रावण (the fifth month of Hindu calendar) etc. The वारकरी (pilgrims who regularly go on pilgrimage to Pandharpur every year) belonging to those casts which normally allow consumption of meat, do not consume meat when they wear the sacred garland of beads. It is urgently advised that at least a Brahmin should not consume meat so as to retain his pious nature. Unfortunately, instead of persuading others to refrain from consuming nonvegetarian food, Brahmins themselves are consuming nonvegetarian food (in increasing numbers); this is certainly a downfall (of social morality). Our efforts must be aimed at moving up from a lower level (of morality) and from unruly behavior to self restraint. Our (Hindu traditional social) conviction, right from the उपनिषद्काल (the period of Veda and उपनिषद् - the concluding portion of Veda dwelling on the Philosophy) states, “असतो मा सद् गमय, तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय” (Take me from evil to virtuous, from darkness to enlightenment).

From the above deliberation, it is now settled that, even if there is diversity among the concepts of पाप पुण्य (sinful and virtuous acts), the principle of पाप पुण्य has to be accepted as a discipline. There could be some discretion in this. All the do's and don'ts are not of equal importance. In practical life, while the rules remain as they are, it is necessary to follow them with discretion. (It is seen that) traffic flows mostly in a routine manner on a road with 'No trespassing' sign. Signboards warning that those who cross the railway line would be prosecuted are there on most railway stations. We know how much heed they get. Some people even say in a lighter vein that such rules are made only to be broken. Even then no one says that such signboards should not be placed at all. The rule which forbids crossing the railway line is ultimately beneficial to the human beings. In the event of an accident, the railway authorities can deny the responsibility citing the rule. The person saying, 'No trespassing on this road' is in effect warning others about his possession (of the underlying area), as also suggesting that the others have no right to pass through. The (concepts of) पापपुण्य (sinful and virtuous acts) in religious laws and related do's and don'ts could be of this form.

Human beings do commit sins. There is a sinful intent behind this act. Hunger is felt; one feels like eating (something) and a thought comes to mind that it would be better if the item to be eaten is चिवडा (a popular spicy medley of various parched grains, cocoanuts etc. fried together). It is appropriate up to the stage that one feels like eating (something). The subsequently emerging desire of eating चिवडा is not as consistent with the state of feeling hungry as we think. Most of the times it is unnecessary and many a time it is unhygienic. This is a पापसंकल्प (sinful intent) in the matter of eating. First a sinful intent emerges and then a sinful act takes place. If there were no emergence of if sinful intent, the sinful act would not take place. Therefore, Samarth makes a more carefully guarded statement, 'One should abandon the sinful intent' rather than (a general statement like) 'One should abandon sinful act'.

There is no more any other (or natural) relationship at least in the case of human beings between the natural desires and actions necessary for satisfying those desires. Even if there is a basic apparent resemblance among the desires of various individual human beings, there is no more any similarity in the related actions or the adopted means as a result of (diversity of) individual thinking, liking, preferences, circumstances, moral culture etc. This is essentially the reason why it is necessary to ascertain the natural limitation of the desire and select the actions and means with a viewpoint of civilization and culture. There is not much of a requirement of this kind (of judicious selection of actions and means) in the case of animals. However, human beings indeed

have to accept the bindings (of civilization and culture). The reason for such restrictions is that the desires of human beings themselves are no longer natural. For example, sexual instinct of animals is mostly of natural proportion, and they do not have any kind of social life, nor do they have any need for it. Obviously, in the case of animals, there remains no cause to think beyond the purely natural distinction of male and female. Therefore an animal need not think about proper-improper for satisfying ones sexual instinct. Some people, who call themselves as thinkers, seriously ask, ‘Ultimately, is not a human being only a living creature just like an animal? Then why should there be any restrictions of do’s and don’ts for the natural instincts of human beings only?’ Majority of literary scholars have already assumed that there should not be any restrictions of this kind and they have been openly or covertly promoting all kinds of unrestrained behavior. In this matter it is worthwhile to ask a counter question: In the case of animals, the distinction of male and female (having necessary physical capabilities) is mostly sufficient for sex life. There the (sexual) attraction is not dependent on age, color, form, fatness or other such characteristics. It does not appear that the attraction of sex life among the animal depends on issues like, ‘What kind of horns are there?’, ‘What is the color of the skin?’, ‘Is the nose shapely?’. ‘What is the shape of the head?’ etc. There are no issues of age or relation either. However, in the case of human beings, every issue gets some kind of importance. Mere masculinity or femininity no longer remains the sole subjects of attraction, but the nature of attraction changes because of age, color, form, intelligence, power, wealth, achievements, scholarship, and arts like dance, drama, music etc.; it reduces or increases. What one gets is felt unwanted and what one does not get is felt coveted, and this is a result of some different feelings other than the natural instincts, and hence it is essential to have some kind of discipline for these feelings. Consideration of progress or downfall of animals is not necessary; for human beings this consideration is essential. Human beings do have to consider matters like society, government, civilization, culture etc. Each of these have explicit or implicit do’s and don’ts. Therefore it would not be wise to ignore the do’s and don’ts, i.e. पाप पुण्य (sinful and virtuous acts) of religion which is the best part of culture. A human being always has an attraction of some specific characteristics like color and form. He feels a strong desire for it and (as a result) his mind and intelligence is occupied by the thoughts about it (perhaps leaving no place for anything else), and therefore Samarth asks one to abandon thinking about sin which essentially implies to abandon sinful intent. Thinking about sin proves more dangerous than the actual sin committed by the body from the point of view of परमार्थ (absolute truth). Sinful acts do get committed again and again. The root-cause of this is पापसंकल्प (the sinful intent) of mind. Therefore, in the domain of a court of law there is a harsher punishment for the crimes committed with planning. It can be said that there is no sin in the body wherever it might be. Sin resides under the shelter of mind and intelligence. The real difficulty is that it is not possible to separate mind and intelligence from the body, and this is the reason for creation of do’s and don’ts. Our (Hindu) tradition states that there is no पाप पुण्य (sinful or virtuous act) for मुक्त (one who has attained the ultimate liberation) – his condition becomes like “भेदभेदै सपदि गलितौ पुण्यपापे विशीर्णे” (he has risen so high above all the worldly differences that his virtuous acts as also sins have been virtually destroyed). The real reason for this is that there is no possibility of sinful intent emerging from his heart. Therefore Samarth has urged (human beings) to abandon the sinful intent.

Now that the sinful intent has been abandoned; what should one do next? The answer is given in the following line: ‘मना सत्य संकल्प जीवीं धरावा’ (Oh, Mind! Truth-inspired resolves should cherish in the heart).

Mind cannot remain vacant. (This is the law of nature. Nature cannot sustain vacuum). Therefore, after telling what should be abandoned, it must be told what should be accepted. Samarth says, “Oh Mind, you go on making intents of truth, intents about truth. Do not make this intent of truth just because it is necessary to think about something or other. Do something so that the intent of truth gets firmly imprinted on your soul and at the bottom of your heart. The intent of truth should be a subject close to your heart and soul. There is a proverb in our (Marathi) tradition, ‘काशीस जावे नित्य वदावे’, (one should always say that I will go to Kashi – the holy city which houses the shrine of Shiva, the Supreme Hindu God – for a pilgrimage). (Occasionally) the good intentions cannot be immediately brought into reality as a result of weakness of the body and adverse circumstances. Therefore, at least thoughts (about good intentions) should be kept in mind (repeatedly remembered) all the time. Then sooner or later the affinity of mind about these intents goes on increasing and accordingly the mind becomes progressively more and more determined (about bringing the intent into reality). Then the body also contributes in providing enough strength to the behavior as is necessary for bringing the intent into reality, and then the action takes place. The body is sluggish. It cannot remain in step with the mind. It is necessary to have a regular habit or a strong inspiration from movements of the body. Therefore, in order that the body should do good acts, mind must always think about good intents. This is because whatever is good, survives. The original implication of the word सत्य (truth) is essentially the existence. Therefore, an interpretation emerges that whatever is truth by characteristics is good and thereby one can build a practically useful (converse of this) theorem that whatever is good is indeed the truth.

The सत्यसंकल्प truth-inspired intents could be different or at different levels depending on individual nature, behavior and circumstances.

The देव-मानव-दानव \*\* (the Gods, human beings and demons) heard a monosyllabic sound द-द-द (Da-Da-Da) from the heaven. ब्रह्मदेव (the Supreme God of creation) explained its meaning to these three in three different ways. ब्रह्मदेव asked Gods, who were addicted to uncontrolled merrymaking, to practice दमन (restraint); human beings, who were entangled in selfishness to practice दान (giving away alms to the needy), and demons, who were cruel and acting with vengeance, to practice दया (mercy). These directives are given, taking into consideration the specific tendency of the individual community. Human being is (naturally) selfish and unwilling to part with his possessions, nor does he (ever) consider his possessions to be sufficient. This attitude causes unrest in the family, society, country and ultimately a complete disaster. Hence there is no alternative other than motivating him for giving alms or donations. Being cunning he gives an excuse (for not giving away alms) saying, ‘You are telling me to give away alms, but I am not able to find a deserving person, so what can I do?’ Then he has to be told, ‘स्फूर्या देयं, भिया देयं, श्रद्धया देयं, अश्रद्धया देयं’ (Do give away alms with heartfelt compassion, fear, faith or even without faith). Therefore, in case of human beings, giving alms is natural सत्यसंकल्प (truth-inspired intent). Thinking about benevolence, sacrifice, service, pilgrimage, तप (religious mortification of the body), worship, study, remembering name of deity etc. are all virtuous intents. Many thoughts included in virtuous intent are, ‘I will always practice restraint, speak truth, behave according to justice, help others in whatever possible way, take proper diet, not speak or do anything which would hurt others, not praise anyone for selfish interests, not abuse anyone

because of hatred, resist injustice but not with vengeance etc. regularity, tidiness, discipline, industriousness, cleanliness also can be subjects of virtuous intent. Listening (to the teachings of the elders) is the most easily available means for virtuous intent, and it is effective as well. Therefore, care has been taken in our tradition from ancient times so that directives about virtuous intent would continuously get imprinted on the human mind in the form of सदुप्रदेश (beneficial teachings). They include, from (philosophical ones like), 'बरें सत्य बोला यथातश्च चाल' (Speak pleasant truth and behave in appropriate manner) up to mundane teachings like 'शाळेला जातांना मुलांनीं वाटेंत तमाशा पाहत थांबू नये' (Children should not wait on the way to school and watch fun on the road) or 'सदा दांत घासोनि तोंडा धुवावे' (Teeth should always be brushed and mouth should be washed). There used to be a system of including these in textbooks so that such discipline would become habitual right from the childhood. However, these days, under the pretext of the thinking that it is essential to protest against कर्मठता (insisting on scrupulous discharge of religious duties), घातक रुढी (customs prevalent in the society which have damaging consequences), शब्दप्रामाण्य (the doctrine of following religious laws to the letter, but not necessarily to the spirit), excessive restrictions, etc., there is a trend of ridiculing without any discretion the traditional religious directives giving a reason that they are there just due to tradition (i.e. they are not relevant today) and that the belong to the domain of religion and moral standards. A poet ridiculed one of मनाचे श्लोक - 'मना सर्वथा नीट पंथे न जावे'. (Oh Mind, do not always follow the right path). It is agreed that satire is a savory medicine for egoistic behavior. However, in order to be able to appreciate (the distinction between) ego and its satire, it is essential that intelligence (of the person) has considerably grown up and acquired ability to discern (this distinction). Is it possible for the intelligence of the child to understand all these (intricate issues)? Therefore, the literature likely to fall in the hands of a child must not be full of अन्यर्थ (meaning suggested other than the literal meaning) and लक्षणा (indication). It should be simple, straightforward and predominantly narrative. The प्रज्ञा (intelligence) is not as alert as the सृति (memory) during the childhood. Therefore (while preparing any literature for children one should take care to) give sufficient work to the memory without causing much disturbance to the intelligence. Should not those who call themselves as experts in education keep at least this much in mind? However, after looking at the many of the present days' textbooks, it is sad to say that those who call themselves experts in the field of education are victims of new idiosyncrasies, and also that they do not give deep thought. It is essential that maturity of a child of ordinary intelligence should have grown sufficiently to appreciate the sting in the (satirical) statement, 'तू फर शहाणा आहेस' ('You are indeed very wise')! Therefore, Anantfandi has told 'धोपटमार्गा सोडू नको' (do not stray away from the well trodden path). It is beginning to be felt that we are regarding only satire, obliqueness, sting etc. as (real) literature. While it might be agreed that this obliqueness would adore the creative literature, it is against the directive that one should always have सत्यसंकल्प (virtuous intent). Therefore, for the growth of सत्यसंकल्प, it is essential to resort to the literary merits like आर्जव (faculty of politeness), सरलपणा (straight-forwardness), प्रसाद (perspicuity), माधुर्य (sweetness) etc.

[\*\* Hindu tradition believes that Gods, Human beings and Demons are like three different communities or societies and heaven, earth and hell are their respective habitats. Here, Gods are not to be confused with the Supreme Almighty. Gods and demons are supposed to possess supernatural powers like abnormally higher physical strength, ability to appear in different forms, travel or fly faster than human imagination, be invisible etc. Heaven is supposed to be the natural habitat of the Gods where all the worldly pleasures are freely available. Hell is just the

opposite of heaven, i.e. a place where there is only pain and torture. The earth is, as we all know, the place where human beings live. They are supposed to go to heaven or hell depending on the balance sheet of their acts in their entire life. The Gods are supposed to support and help everything that is considered sacred in the Hindu religion. The demons are supposed to be cruel and always trying to create obstacles in all that is considered sacred in the Hindu religion].

One must think of good and abandon evil thoughts. These two actions are neither separate nor independent. It can be said that they are two sides of the same coin called सात्त्विकता (benevolence), complementary to each other, and hence it is necessary to make efforts on both the sides. Otherwise it will never be realized when intent turns evil under the pretext of necessity. Body, mind and intellect do have some natural needs at their individual levels and it is also desirable to satisfy them. There is nothing bad about satisfying the expectations within the strictly drawn boundary of necessity. However, this boundary gets transgressed knowingly or unknowingly because of infatuation. The expectation or intent, emerged originally out of necessity, starts gradually degenerating in the order – intent – imagination – passionate desire – and finally अधःपात (downfall) or completer distortion (of original intent) and ultimately results in disgust among the people about such person. This is not felt (by the person) because of arrogance resulting from wealth. In the present day urban lifestyle it is possible to shield oneself from the disgust (in the society) resulting from one's evil acts. In the past (first half of the twentieth century) it was not possible for a person involved in social life (a public figure) to keep (his private life) so much aloof from the society. There were rules (or conventions accepted by the entire society) regarding who should get, how much of privacy, at which place etc., and therefore any evil act used to immediately become public knowledge. Therefore instances of cheating like the Kazi-episode would not have happened (were unheard of). These days the attitude like, 'I will not look at your (private matters) and you do not look at mine', has gained respectability. Therefore, while it is true that the disgust in the society as a result of uncontrolled disorder (of individual moral character) is not felt as much (as would have felt some fifty years earlier), still well behaved gentlemen must remember the rule (abandon the sinful intent) explained by Samarth.

If a feeling that there should be no disgust among the society (about oneself) gets imprinted on the inner self of every individual person and the society becomes so much alert (about public morality) that a person with evil behavior will not get respect in the society under any circumstances whatsoever; then there is no doubt that there will be an improvement in the situation of corruption spread all over as seen today, and the happiness and peace in the society will continue to grow.

Great personalities in our history have indeed kept this in mind. In a way, Lord Ramachandra and Shri Jnyaneshwar Maharaj are illustrations incarnate of this concept.

We only keep on complaining that the society does not take liberal (enough) view (of persons with evil behavior without really thinking about welfare of the society). The practical rule told by Samarth viz. 'विकारें घडे हो जनीं सर्वं चीं चीं' (ill effects of evil intent will create disgust among the people at large) is very much important. If this fear is there in the mind of every person, there will not be any reason left for any evil behavior.

नको रे मना क्रोध हा खेदकारी ।

नको रे मना काम नाना विकारी ॥

नको रे मना लोभ हा अंगिकारूं ।

नको रे मना मछरू दंभ भारू ॥6॥

nako re manaa krodha haa khedakaarii

nako re manaa kaama naanaa vikaarii

nako re manaa sarvadaa a.ngikaaruu

nako re manaa matsaruu daMbha bhaaruu

Oh, Mind! Do not harbor anger because it will produce grief. Oh, Mind! Do not have lustful desires, as they constitute root of sickness galore. Oh, Mind! Do not shelter greed. Oh, Mind! Please avoid overwhelming jealousy, and hypocrisy.

The sequential order (of the six vices) as we are always told (by experts in the Hindu religion) is काम - क्रोध (lust, anger) i.e. anger after lust. However, here Samarth has mentioned anger in the beginning. Probable reason (for this change of order) might be that manifestation of the anger is more ferocious than that of the lust in the life of persons detached from worldly passions and desires, austere devotees and religious people. The nature of lust is to remain unsatisfied, and when it is not satisfied, it naturally gets translated into anger. (Sometimes in the life of normally good natured religious people), under the generic feeling that every kind of lust is evil, it gets suppressed without bothering to discern as to which lust is essential and desirable, as against which lust is against the religious norms. However, (irrespective of the amount of efforts to suppress), it cannot be totally destroyed and this suppressed lust becomes apparent in the form of anger or haltered, or (it can be said that suppressed lust) generates anger if it is decided to accept a separate existence for anger. Many a time it is seen that persons who are detached from worldly pleasures and passion, persons who are very restrained from enjoyment point of view, as also sages, mystics, ascetics, austere devotees, ascetics etc. from the point of view of religious doctrine, are unnecessarily very much irritable. Perhaps this might be the reason why Samarth has made a reference to anger in the beginning. Perhaps because anger is somewhat easier to master than lust, hence Samarth might have mentioned anger before lust in the order of vices to be overcome. Another possibility is that from social viewpoint anger is more notorious, more troublesome for the people in the vicinity, is capable of quickly destroying the amiability of environment and in general causes more harassment (to the society), and hence has been given priority (among the vices to be eliminated). It is seen that occasions of getting angry are more frequent in case of persons who are known to be religious and spiritually minded. As any kind of (spiritual) teaching is important for a person already on the साधनमार्ग (path towards attainment of मुक्ती - ultimate liberation), Samarth must have mentioned anger right in the beginning from this viewpoint as well. One school of thought considers anger to be more obstructive than lust in the परमार्थमार्ग (path towards absolute truth) or आध्यात्मिकता (spirituality). It is also appropriate according to the order of steps (in the path towards absolute truth). As the feeling of resistance is stronger in anger (than that in lust), as a result the ego gets strengthened and then it is natural that the progress gets obstructed.

In comparison to common man, persons who have (already) opted for परमार्थमार्ग (path towards absolute truth) or who are (regularly) doing spiritual meditation are (intellectually) more advanced and more developed. As a result, their ego also is somewhat more ferocious, and when they realize that nobody respects or listens to them, they blow up. (They feel), ‘Why people do not listen to me even when whatever I am telling them is beneficial to them and is aimed at their overall welfare?’ This awareness (of peoples’ apathy) results in blowing up of wrath in the human mind. Therefore Samarth says, ‘Oh Mind, please do not get angry; keep away from this vice’. This is because, even though the anger appears effective on the face of it, in reality it ultimately creates grief, brings home distress. Lack of enthusiasm, disappointment, disgust, despondence etc. are only different states of transition and various forms of grief. A person becomes more and more self-centered as a result of anger. He cannot properly understand the (true) condition of the (overall) situation, cannot take into consideration the other’s viewpoint, cannot have sympathy for anybody, and as a more and more doubts about him arise in the minds of people. The mind of the person who has opted for परमार्थमार्ग, as a result of noticing the peoples attitude, either gets depressed or becomes small-minded. How an eminent historian of previous generation used to become petty minded in (his public) life has been described by his biographers. This researcher had gone to a town as a guest. The host had given him a pleasant room with natural light for his stay. There was a playground just adjoining this house where several school children were playing. The researcher got disturbed because of their noise and he shouted at the children. (Instead of getting subdued) the children became even noisier. Then this eminent researcher thought that his opponents have deliberately instigated these children to harass him and left the town in a fit of anger abandoning his research work.

The (ill) effects of anger are also apparent in the derangement and contradiction of the thoughts. Therefore, Samarth says, ‘Oh Mind, please do not allow this anger, which causes depression to oneself as also to the surrounding atmosphere, to come anywhere close to you. At a commonplace practical level, for the purpose of getting some work done from someone (perhaps not very eager to do the work), just or even unjust anger seems to have some amount of utility in the same manner as real or imaginary incentives. Therefore the person, who has to get the work done and who has the overall responsibility of the underlying task, is required to create a situation wherein others would feel a fearful regard for him. This fearful regard is principally a result of the morality, character, skill (knowledge) and capability (of the person who has the responsibility of the task) of rewarding and punishing the associates (from whom the work has to be got done), and it is at least outwardly helped by irritation and anger. Thus, at a working level, anger, just like lust, does have its utility; however, it must be treated like a means (for achieving the aim). One should be able to treat it (i.e. the anger) like a servant. However, this is very tough. The persons who adopt anger as a means (to achieve some noble aim) have to be truly very great. The discerning capability of such great personalities is always very alert and therefore they never become captive of a vice like anger. In the literature of saints like Tukaram and Kabir, (a number of) examples are seen wherein they are angry, (even) furious; however, the form (of their anger) is like, ‘मातेच्या कोणीं थोकले । स्वेह आरी ।’ (Jnya. 2/88). Anger of an ordinary person arises from disappointment and ego. It no longer remains (like a) servant; it overwhelms the person, goes to his head and becomes master. It is difficult to tell how much effect such anger has on others. However, whoever gets angry and furious (because of disappointment and ego) has to endure many kinds of sorrows.

The anger which causes grief is never a means. In view of selfdefense, at least a disciple (opting for a path towards the absolute truth) should assiduously keep away from this kind of anger.

The original form of lust is indeed like a utility. The lust, controlled by the religion and faithfully obeying the directives of saint, noble personalities, श्रुति (Ved) सूत्री (ancient Hindu laws) is certainly acceptable. In the seventh chapter of Gita, Lord (Shri Krishna) regards lust as manifestation of himself. That lust is not (to be confused with) the lust mentioned here. The lust within the boundaries of essential necessities, and in its purest form, does not ever cause various kinds of distortions (or ill effects).

Normally काम (lust) is interpreted as the desire of relation between a man and a woman or sexual instinct. In view of the (prevailing social) standards and influences it is all right as well. In a true sense, all emotions like having any desire, feeling that something is wanted, feeling that one cannot tolerate not getting it etc., can be assumed implicit in the term काम (lust). However, this kind of lust is not (to be confused with) the feelings of wanting, desiring or wishing for something within the legitimate boundaries (as directed by our ancient legal system). No one criticizes this kind of lust (controlled by religion). It is essential for health, development, edification and progress of the body, mind and intellect. However, the desires arising for satisfying the essential needs do not (always) remain as natural (as it should have been). The sensory organs as also the mind gets addicted to enjoyment because of various kinds of reasons. Here this addiction is implied in the term lust. In such cases, the form of lust usually remains only as excessive, purposeless or occasionally downgraded enjoyment of worldly pleasures and it causes many physical and mental disorders. The western psychology is mostly focused on sexual lust and therefore the related sciences include description of many mental disorders arising from it. In our (Hindu) tradition, the term काम (lust) is used in a much more comprehensive sense. Many physical desires felt pleasant by the ज्ञानेन्द्रिये (sensory organs of the intellect i.e. the brain), कर्मेन्द्रिये (sensory organs of the body), as also the emotional desires for power, wealth, honor, reputation etc. are essentially the representations of काम (lust). When one takes into account the individual cases, the nature of the sexual desire is forceful and very well spread from person to person, and as a result, only this particular aspect initially comes to the mind whenever the term lust is mentioned. Even though this is true, still the desires for (physical pleasures of) शब्दस्पर्शरूपरसगंध (the five human senses i.e. hearing, touch, vision, taste and smell) as also greed for wealth, position, publicity etc. are more influential in personal and social life. It is necessary to assume the comprehensive implication of the term काम (lust) while saying that the lust gives rise to various kinds of disorders. Whatever (range of) disorders – from disease to war, from bad health to conflict, get created at the level of individual, family, society, or nation are caused by the (uncontrolled) lust of the specific individual or by the lust at that respective level. At least it (the uncontrolled lust) is the principal cause of the disorder (if not the only cause). All the (evil happenings like) brawls, conflicts, robberies, injustice, outrage etc. have काम (lust) as their root cause and the bodies and minds harassed as a consequence of this disorder create very big obstacles in the efforts aimed at परमार्थ (absolute truth). Therefore Samarth has told the mind not to avail itself of काम (lust) which creates various kinds of disorders.

In order that the human body should complete the lifespan without any obstructions (or by overcoming the inevitable obstructions) as also that the worldly commitments consequent to the

particular situation are properly fulfilled, sometimes (every) person has to avail काम-क्रोध (lust and anger) as means. However, the pleasure felt therein should not translate into attachment. Therefore Samarth says, ‘Please do not avail yourself of these (means) all the time’. It is very true that once the addiction of anger and lust is developed, it does not vanish so quickly (despite the best efforts). Even though it is very true that disorders of the body and mind should not increase, the disorders do increase because of several causes. Further, it is dangerous to suddenly abandon (काम-क्रोध) especially when the disorders (developed due to addiction of काम-क्रोध) are in such a high state. This might be the reason why Samarth has said, ‘Please do not avail yourself of these (means) all the time’ (implying that one should avail oneself of काम-क्रोध only when it is absolutely necessary). The third line of this verse is not self explanatory as against the other three lines. It must be interpreted in the context of the disorders mentioned in the first two lines as also the fourth line. However, since the disorders mentioned in the fourth line, viz. ego and envy have almost zero utility, it is desirable that the third line is interpreted in the context of disorders mentioned in the first two lines.

Some editions of ‘मनोबोध’ show a variant reading, ‘नको रे मदा सर्वदा अंगिकारू’ instead of ‘नको रे मना सर्वदा अंगिकारू’. Then it is difficult to explain the connectivity of ‘सर्वदा’ (all the time). In the case of मद (ego) one cannot say that it is not desirable all the time, indicating that it can be accepted sometimes (i.e. when the situation demands). It is possible to interpret सर्वदा as कर्थीच (ever) and then proper connectivity can be explained. (The connection of the two words नको and सर्वदा implies never and the complete line can then be interpreted as ‘Never accept ego’). (In this context), it would be appropriate to give some consideration to मद (ego) which has appeared in the third line as a पाठभेद (*varia lectio* i.e. a variant reading).

Ego means pride. Haughtiness, disdainfulness, insolence, rude nature etc. are essentially inflated and distorted forms of ego. The primary form of ego is to feel oneself to be much more than what people think about one’s stature, to insist that the people must know about it (i.e. one’s self proclaimed high stature), and also to consider it necessary to make the people know (about one’s self proclaimed high stature) in case they are not aware. The disorder of मद (ego) is mostly manifested among wealthy-powerful persons, artists-scholars-competent persons, leaders, social workers, orators, litterateurs, beautiful women, intelligent men, young persons especially those who have just entered youth etc. Therefore actions like viewing others with disdain, humiliating others, behaving rudely before those who should actually be respected, speaking arrogantly, showing churlishness, ignoring others’ virtues without giving a thought to one’s own flaws, looking for others’ faults etc. are various manifestations of ego. Jesting and pastime might occasionally appear graceful in company of people with similar status, authority and age; however, adopting jesting with persons who are senior by age, stature, authority and position is also a form of ego. In order to abandon vices, one must be very well aware of one’s own flaws. However, in this context, a person develops complete blindness as a result of ego. He cannot see his own flaws. He does not accept them if someone points them out, and hence the possibility of improvement becomes remote or extinct. As they (such egocentric persons) do not understand others’ virtues, they do not have any ideals (or role models) nor do they have anyone whom they could follow, and even that route of progress gets blocked. Therefore Samarth says, that (one should) never allow मद (ego) to come anywhere near (oneself). There is an aphorism:

वक्ता मीच, धनाढ्य मीच, जगती माझीच रीती बरी ।  
 कर्तृत्वास मदीय पार न कुणा बुद्धींत माझी सरी ॥  
 सत्ता एक मलाच योग्य, सगळी व्हावी प्रतिष्ठा मला ।  
 सारे विश्व मदांध तुच्छ समजे तो पाहिजे टाळिला ॥

(The egocentric person says), ‘I am the sole orator, wealthy person and my manners are the best in the world. There is no limit to my capability nor can anyone’s intelligence be compared with mine. I am the only one fit for power and I alone should get all the honour’. (Such a) person, who has become blind (to merit anywhere except within himself) because of ego considers the entire universe as worthless, must be avoided. This must be kept in mind in this context.

There is no real need for envy and pride (in life). Recognizing their existence by stretching the (real) needs is not proper. Pride and envy are in fact burdens. By describing them as burdens Samarth is in a way suggesting that they are unnecessary as also unnatural.

Envy is a manifestation of smallness of mind and meanness of nature. When one sees that whatever is desired by him is received by someone else instead of him, there is a kind of heart burning. There is no gain whatsoever in this (kind of attitude). An attitude which cannot endure happiness of someone else creates mental unrest on both the sides. Envy is a symbol of weakness as also inferiority complex. Adopting it is a kind of escapism. Therefore one must keep oneself miles away from such damaging disorders.

Hypocrisy is a child of undeserved popularity. There is a strong desire (in everyone’s mind) for respect, honor, reputation, popularity, etc.; however, the qualities because of which these can be easily achieved, i.e. moral character, good disposition, scholarship, sacrifice, spiritual meditation etc. are just not there. Then the person pretends as if he has all these qualities. He keeps on doing टिळेमाळा (applying a mark on forehead and wearing sacred garland), पूजापाठ (worship of deity and reading religious literature), तीर्थयात्रा (pilgrimage), यज्ञयाग (sacrificing edibles, animals to fire with chanting of hymns in praise of some deity), ब्रत्तेवैकल्ये (self imposed observance of restrictions) etc. श्रीसदगुरु Dasganu Maharaj has given a stinging description of such hypocritical religiousness. He writes,

“भाळिं टिळे ढळबळित चंदनी लावुनि चतुराईचे ।  
 जणूं का सिग्गल आगगाडिचे ॥  
 उपकरण्याला बघुन भाळतां जरी भगवन् किरीटी ।  
 तरी का तांबट थोडे हटीं ॥  
 चांदी, सोने, पांच, हिन्द्याला जरि भगवन् भाळतां ।  
 तरी का सराफ हटिं बैसतां? ॥  
 उज्वल तांब्या, आसन लोकरी, घणघण वाजे घांट ।  
 पुजेचा लंबवरी बोभाट ॥  
 गुलाल, बुक्का, अबीर, चंदन, अष्टगंध, अर्गजा ।  
 पाहिजे, म्हणती गरुडध्वजा ॥  
 जाईजुई नी बकुल मालती निशिगंधाचा तुगा ।  
 हारामधिं निव्वळ बटमोगरा ॥  
 निरांजने तीं दहविस जळतीं नाश तुपाचा खरा ।  
 बदामी नैवेद्याला शिरा ॥

अशी पूजेची करी कवाईत बहुरूप्याचे परी ।  
भक्तिचें नांव नसे अंतरी ॥”

“You have applied bold marks of sandalwood-pest on the forehead as if signals of a railway train. If God, किरीटी (who wears a crest i.e. Lord Krishna), were to get enchanted by copper utensils (used for worship), or by silver, gold, emerald, diamond etc., why would the numerous coppersmiths and goldsmiths be sitting in the market? (They would have got His blessings). You insist on preparation for worship include shining copper utensils, woolen mattresses (for sitting), and large noisy bell so that the worship gets heard (and publicized) over a large area. You say that गरुडध्वज (an epithet of Lord Vishnu, literally meaning the deity on whose flag is a picture of eagle) wants colored and fragrant powders like गुलाल (powder of bajari dyed red with decoction of sanders wood), बुक्का / अबीर (black fragrant powder usually containing sandalwood), अष्टगंध (a fragrant material composed of eight different fragrances), अर्जा (a fragrant powder applied to the body) etc. You have collected a variety of (expensive) flowers like जाईजुई (jasmine), बफुल (a fragrant flower), मालती (flowering jasmine), crest of निशगंध (a flower which blooms at night), garland of बटमोगरा (a type of jasmine flower) etc. Some ten or twenty lamps are burning where large amount of ghee is really wasted. You make नैवेद्य (an offering to deity) of बदामी शिरा (a preparation of crushed almonds and sugar fried in pure ghee). You carry out the entire ritual of the worship like military maneuvers performed by a mimic. However, there is no feeling of devotion whatsoever in your heart”.

Saffron color of clothes, stay in a hermitage and behaving like a sage, pretensions of social work, service to the country, निःसृहता (being free from desire), sacrifice etc. are essentially various manifestations of hypocrisy. Plagiarism in the field of literature is also a form of hypocrisy. There is always some amount of hypocrisy in all the areas of individual and social welfare. While it might give instant popularity, its ultimate result proves undesirable. This addition of hypocrisy in ones behavior ultimately harms the person, and therefore Samarth says that one should not take the burden (of hypocrisy).

मना श्रेष्ठ धारिण्य जीवां धरावें ।  
मना बोलणें नीच सोशीत जावें ॥  
स्वयें सर्वदा नम्र वाचे वदावें ।  
मना सर्व लोकांसि रे नीववावें ॥७॥

manaa shreshhTha dhaarishhTa jiivii dharaave  
manaa bolaNe niicha soshiita jaave  
svaye sarvadaa namra vaache vadaave  
manaa sarva lokaa.nsi re niivavaave

Oh, Mind! Hold great courage in your heart. Oh, Mind! Do endure downgrading insults. You yourself should speak humble words all the time. Oh, Mind! Do offer everyone cool, refreshing joy.

When anyone starts efforts with an intention of doing something good, different from others, it is found that some people in the society have a natural tendency to trouble such persons. Someone abuses him, someone treats him with contempt, someone views him with a prejudice to find faults and subjects him to mental torture, and someone gets inflamed with anger because of envy

of him. The amount of torture varies depending on the power and strength of such persons who envy this (well meaning) person as also the opportunity available to them to trouble him. However, it is a fact that these people (who are trying to achieve welfare of society at large) do not get comfortable situation or favorable situation in their respective fields. Perhaps, this is the planning of God. The qualities like intelligence, capability and faith do not shine if the situation is not adverse. The path of edification has to be tiring. However, from the viewpoint of a person on the path (towards welfare of society at large), this adverse situation has its bad effects. He gets tired, disappointed, sad, becomes escapist and his mind gets prepared to (make escapist decisions like) abandoning the opted path up to committing suicide. This situation is very dangerous. Therefore Samarth is guiding the साधक (disciple), 'Hold great courage in your अंतःकरण (inner self i.e. heart).

Your courage must be unwavering. A little bit of courage or courage which appears off and on will not be good enough. (Your) courage must be stable like mountain-tops which stand firm facing clouds of thunderstorm. The concept of counter blow is not there at the root of courage. The principle concept is that of remaining firm and enduring. Attack and counter blow belong to valor. Stability, endurance, not abandoning, not running away, and standing firmly are included in courage and boldness. Therefore, courage is an important essential quality of a साधक (disciple) on परमार्थमार्ग (the path towards absolute truth). On this path, not much of counter blows and attack are intended. This is so because counter blows and attack as a part of defense are appropriate only at the physical level. It is a different matter if the adversity of situation results in physical opposition. However, at this level (path towards absolute truth), most of the time the adversity does not stoop so low (as to create physical opposition). It usually remains at the psychological level of neglect, contempt, disgust, scornful treatment, abuse etc. And hence the साधक (disciple on परमार्थमार्ग - the path towards absolute truth) must have as much of endurance as possible. In a treatise on this topic, Shankaracharya has compared endurance-patience-forgiveness with an armor which cannot be broken even by वज्र (thunderbolt of Indra, the king of all the Gods). This weapon is supposed to be made of bones of a sage called Dadhichi, and harder as also more penetrating than any of the weapons preceding it).

The basic reason why a person gets harassed because of abuse, disgust and neglect etc. is that he has some ideas about himself and some expectations about his own condition. साधक (disciple on परमार्थमार्ग - the path towards absolute truth) thinks, 'I do not interfere in anyone's personal matters. I do not trouble anyone. I try to do as much of work as possible for the people. The path which I have chosen for myself is not likely to disturb anyone's self interest. Under these circumstances why should I be the target of contempt, neglect etc.?' In fact, when these thoughts come to one's mind, there is an expectation of applause for the work done. One desires admiration, and when it does not happen, one takes an attitude of compromise (and asks), 'Why (should I get) contempt at all?' As long as one's attitude and mind does not reach the stage of total dedication and complete elimination of ego or pride, some incidents of this kind are bound to happen. Where there is true love or selfish interest from the other side, only there a metaphor of applause or praise emerges. Otherwise appreciation of virtues is a rare phenomenon. Sometimes people do exhibit appreciation in order to gain free goodwill or publicize their own connoisseurship. Persons with poor understanding or childish intellect feel delighted even with such hypocrisy. This is a kind of sycophancy. At least साधक (a disciple on परमार्थमार्ग - the path towards absolute truth) should not be infatuated by it. Applause or encouragement should be expected from only

those who are likely to be helpful in progress or edification from the viewpoint of the chosen path (towards absolute truth). He should not pay much attention to abuse or praise of others. However, if any abuse is heard, one should certainly do an introspection of oneself to find out whether the vices mentioned in the abuse are really there in one's own character, (and if some vices are found, one should try to get rid of them) without developing an inferiority complex.

In order to avoid dejection resulting from expecting barren goodwill, Samarth tells to have great courage, and in the very next line explains the reasons for wavering of courage along with the remedies (for avoiding such wavering of courage). Ramdas Swami says, 'You must endure नीच (downgrading) comments of others'. The term नीच implies all kinds of offending, impudent, neglectful, sordid, crooked speech. All instances of downgrading are either without any good reason or on the pretext of very flimsy ground. The term नीच essentially implies unjust approach. In such a (downgrading) speech there is no expectation (or wish) that the targeted person should improve. Such a speech is essentially a manifestation of hatred, contempt and envy in the heart of the speaker. In such an incident, साधक must have prepared his mind so as to be able to endure these verbal blows. Whenever any two persons are together, one must assume that an instance is bound to occur where one will have to listen to undesirable spoken words. The disciple can make progress on his chosen path only if he does not allow adverse effects of such a speech. Otherwise, all his strength would be exhausted in the thoughts or efforts towards improving the situation and he would not get strong support for his own progress.

No one has any control on the situation nor can anyone improve it in the real sense of the term. Both spoiling and improvement are limited to the person himself. As a consequence, the situation might be getting affected; but if someone thinks that for his own improvement, (first) the (surrounding) situation has to improve, then possibility of his improvement becomes remote. This is certainly not to say that साधक does not get any benefit of favorable situation. Favorable or adverse environments do have their effects from the viewpoint of gains or losses (in progress). However, it is not desirable (in the interest of overall welfare of the individual as also the society) to think only of the efforts – which, how, how much etc. – necessary (for making the situation favorable). Therefore Samarth is saying that one should endure, and is recommending the path of patience and endurance.

However, enduring does not mean that one should ignore or consider (such adverse situation) as trivial. This is because it would inflate the ego in one's innerself. If it is possible to maintain the enthusiasm of one's mind on the strength of ego, in a way, it might be said to be desirable only. However, this ego can (easily) get translated into shamelessness and that condition is certainly very bad. Therefore साधक must take care so that ignoring should not take the form of contempt, and hence Samarth says, 'स्वयं सर्वदा नम्र वाचे वदाव' ('One should speak humble words all the time').

An attitude like, 'You go on talking. I am not going to listen at all', results in further provoking the speaker. Therefore if someone is talking in an offensive manner one should certainly clarify one's own viewpoint. However, one must take precaution so that while doing so (i.e. placing one's opposite view on record) one's own tenor does not rise, the language does not justify (the unjust) and the metaphor is not aimed at refuting (the opposite viewpoint). The choice of words should be soft-spoken and the articulation should be humble. This could and would possibly result in improving the situation. Just as everyone around one is not Jnyaneshwar-Tukaram, nor is everyone Duryodhan-Dusshasan. Crookedness cannot be totally eliminated. However,

misunderstandings can be removed. If misunderstanding about oneself is spread around, it could result in adversity. Therefore, it is necessary to express one's own viewpoint again and again in a clear and polite manner. Therefore Samarth is urging, स्वयें वदावें (one should himself say), सर्वदा वदावें (one should always say) and नम्र वाचे वदावें (one should say politely).

साधक (a disciple on the path towards absolute truth) thinks, 'Are people around me so dumb as not to understand my viewpoint? Why should they not understand even after they are told?' and then he resorts to मौन (keeping quiet). This मौन makes the depression of his mind even more serious and then there is no means left for removing the misunderstanding of others. On the contrary the possibility of increasing such misunderstandings gets strengthened. Therefore one's own viewpoint, mindset, expectations regarding aim and means must be repeatedly clarified. This clarification should not have exhibitionism, self-applause nor should there be any hesitation or false shame. This is a good way of removing anger, hatred etc. in other's mind and therefore Samarth says, 'मना सर्व लोकांसि रे नीववावें' (Oh, Mind! Do offer everyone cool, refreshing joy).

Since ancient time there is a tradition in our (Hindu) culture to make an intent, 'सर्वेषामविरोधेन ब्रह्मकर्म समारप्ते' (ब्रह्मकर्म - the religious duties prescribed for a Brahmin – should commence in such a way that everybody agrees not to oppose it). The feeling behind such an intent is that the good work which has been started should not encounter opposition from anybody. The goodwill in the minds of others is indirectly helpful to the progress of साधक. Every time it might not be possible to get or offer cooperation, still it is possible to get or offer goodwill, and it is useful also. Therefore, a disciple should not consider efforts towards avoiding confusion about himself in peoples' minds, (and if such confusion is already there) reducing the confusion and not increasing it, as to be totally left out. In the initial stages (of progress on the path towards absolute truth) this (effort) should be considered not only useful but essential. The state of attaining the ultimate sublimation or being close to is very much different from the initial stage on that path. Normally a disciple should not think like, 'I do not care for the people; then what my obligation towards their feelings is?' One should always desire that others minds get pleased by one's behavior, acts, straightforwardness, courtesy, sincerity, humility and should make efforts to achieve it.

देहे त्यागितां कीर्ति मागें उरावी ।  
मना सज्जना हेचि क्रीया धरावी ॥  
मना चंदनाचें परी त्वां झिजावें ।  
परी अंतरीं सज्जनां नीववावें ॥४॥

dehe tyaagitaa kiirti maage uraavii  
manaa sajjanaa hechi kriiyaa dharaavii  
manaa cha.ndanaache parii tvaa.n jhijaave  
parii a.ntarii sajjanaa niivavaave

Let fame prevail after one's death. Oh gentle Mind! Please make efforts towards this end only. Oh Mind! You should wear out like sandalwood, and yet, offer joy to the hearts of other gentle souls.

The attitudes which a human being has naturally been endowed with are essentially for the purpose of the progress of humanity. Every human being is naturally endowed with three

instincts viz. धनेषणा, दारेषणा and लोकेषणा. धनेषणा means the instinct that prompts one to make efforts for acquiring power and wealth which help one to get worldly enjoyment. दारेषणा essentially means the five basic human instincts because of which one feels that one should get comforts satisfying the five sense organs, i.e. sound, touch, vision, taste and smell, continuously, in plentiful amount and in various manners. The implications of दारेषणा is not limited to the desire about woman (sexual instinct). The meaning (sexual instinct) is indeed there but desires of enjoyment of other sense organs are also included. दारेषणा is a secondary characteristic. Desires of eating tasty, rich, spicy food; watching drama, movie, dance recital; listening to music; sleeping on soft, comfortable bed; use of various kinds of perfumes etc. are all parts of दारेषणा. Desires for applause, praise, admiration, certificates of honor, felicitation, mass appeal etc. imply लोकेषणा. Even small children have लोकेषणा. Young children do not (necessarily) work with enthusiasm unless they are praised (with phrases like, 'You are a wise boy'). Even crooked, selfish persons having bad behavior want to justify themselves. One always feels like hypocritically exhibiting one's good nature in order to get peoples' admiration. All the three instincts are minute, strong, and of progressive higher levels, and their interrelationships are such that for getting (satisfaction of) any one of them, the other two have to be abandoned, at least curtailed in some proportion. All the three instincts (ultimately) result in sorrow for (individual) human being and destruction of social happiness. धनेषणा and दारेषणा can even be a cause for downfall of an individual as also the society. The more a person is developed, progressed or edified from the viewpoint of mind and intellect, the his mind is influenced more by लोकेषणा than by दारेषणा; the influence of धनेषणा being less than that of दारेषणा. Therefore, धनेषणा gets weakened due to दारेषणा which gets weakened or even destroyed due to लोकेषणा. Pure (healthy) form of लोकेषणा is regarded as an evidence of good culture and a means of progress and edification. धनेषणा is not a basic instinct. In comparison, दारेषणा is a more basic instinct. This is because the wealth is essentially a medium which is useful for acquisition or storage of means of enjoyment or worldly comforts. A human being has a desire for wealth because of his belief that on the strength of this medium i.e. on the strength of wealth, it would be possible to acquire whatever (material, comfort or service) he wants, at whichever place he wants and in any amount as he wishes. However, later on this (desire for wealth) translates itself into addiction and at least some of the individuals sacrifice enjoyment, turn away from worldly material comforts and go (in a single-minded manner) after collecting wealth only. We call them कृष्ण or miser. It is impossible for others to receive any supply of means for material comforts from those who themselves do not enjoy them. There is a nice satirical verse in Sanskrit which ridicules this attitude of the miser. It is a translation of an original Hindi witty saying.

भर्तरं कृपणं जगाद् दयिता म्लाना मुखश्रीः कथं ।  
 किं कश्चित् कटितश्युतः पण इतः कस्मै प्रमादात् ददः ॥  
 दत्तो नैव च्युतश्च नैव मयि तद् संभाव्यते वा कथं ।  
 दातारं प्रसमीक्ष्य कंचिदपरं कान्ते विषण्णं मनः ॥

The wife asked her miser husband, 'Why are you looking so sad? Did you lose a पैसा (lowest denomination coin in Indian currency)?' Then the husband responds, 'Oh, no! I did not give it to anybody nor did I lose it. How can such an act be done by me? However, I saw a stupid person on my way home. A beggar asked for a पैसा, and he pulled it out from his pocket and gave it to him. I felt sad because stupid persons do not understand the value of important thing like money. Is this extravagance good?'

Miserliness is the most damaging (human) attitude. It eliminates all hopes of progress. Therefore, the misers are seen to be the targets of adverse criticism everywhere. A miser can never gain popularity. In comparison, persons fond of fun and frolic are more popular. In order to gain popularity, a person has to practice at least some constraint on his (personal) merrymaking, enjoyment, fun and frolic; and does have to incur at least some expenditure (however small) for others. Therefore, at this point, Samarth is showing an incentive of लोकेषणा to the human being and relieving him from (the grip of) धनेषणा and दारेषणा which cause downfall of individual and create unrest and conflict in the society. Further, he is also directing the person to keep one's behavior (disciplined) so that this लोकेषणा (i.e. desire for popularity) rises to such a level that it does not become obstructive to परमार्थ (absolute truth) and also that he would achieve such a popularity which would remain intact even after the demise of the body.

Persons who have power and wealth try to retain their popularity by actions like creating institutions with their own name in their titles, placing signboards of their names on buildings etc. It is a fact that in spite of being devoid of moral character, virtues etc. it is possible for them to buy such popularity for some time. However, this is not true popularity and Samarth has not implied it. This is a kind of publicity campaign or advertisement. This is a commercial attitude in which one takes care of some requirement of some needy persons and thereby forces gratitude on them, and in return publicizes one's own name and there also ensures mention of three generations. An example which exhibits the meanest of such attitudes is one wherein one donates a nice picture to a temple and thereby makes advertisement of one's own business or shop.

A person should achieve such greatness that people would sing praise of his virtues for generations. Excellent examples of such persons are Shankarayacharya, Jnyaneshwar, Tukaram, Ramdas, Shivaji, Ahilyabai etc. Such fame cannot be bought with power or wealth. It is achieved only on the strength of virtues like moral character, capability, sacrifice, generosity, valor, urgency of public welfare etc. It is not enough for these virtues to appear once in a while; they must be an integral part of the human character. This is not so easy. For this to be realized, it is expected that there is sacrifice, hard work and consistency. Statues of wealthy and powerful persons do get erected, also with their names adoring them. However, one is required to ask, 'Who was this fellow?'. The very fact that after seeing the nameplate (below the statue), one is required to ask as to whose name this is, explains the value of the so called fame which was purchased (with the help of wealth by the person whose statue has been erected).

People read and throw away the handbills of advertisement. Then they are trampled under feet. However, only distinction of the above mentioned names is that as are engraved in stone and fixed to a wall, they are saved from being trampled. Is it not a kind of trampling only that the name is seen yet one cannot remember the person?

(Sometimes) such incidents do take place in case of ignorant questioners, but that is not implied here. If someone asks, 'Who was Vyasa? Who was Valmiki?', then it is an expression of the low level intellect of the questioner.

In order to get everlasting fame, a person is required to put in (tremendous amount of) hard work without self interest and this is precisely what Samarth is explaining by giving a simile that one should wear out like sandalwood. People do know Ravan and Kans the same way they know

Ram and Krishna. People cannot forget Chengiskhan and Aurangzeb just as they cannot forget Ashok and Chandragupt. Names of cruel robbers also find place in newspapers just as the names of leaders devoted to social work. However, this is not fame (in the real sense of the term); this is evil fame. This is not what is implied by Samarth at this point and he has explained it by giving a simile of sandalwood. A person should be virtuous and beneficial to others in the same way as sandalwood is fragrant and pleasant as it goes on wearing out so that people should get benefit of its good qualities. A person should not get tired of hard work or sacrifice and he should make efforts all the time towards the welfare of society and country and happiness of the people. At that time it should be considered auspicious even if one is required to ignore one's own physical comforts. This entire thinking is implicit in the simile of sandalwood which wears out while being ground on सहाण (a levigating slab).

Who should be the beneficiary of the sacrifice, disinterestedness about own comforts and hard work or wearing out like sandalwood? While answering this question, Samarth says, 'Heart of good people must be pleased and their mind should be satisfied as a result of your behavior (and work or acts)'. This aim for the attitude of working hard is very important. People continue to put in hard work of various kinds for satisfying their own धनेषणा (desire for acquiring wealth and power), दारेषणा (basic human instincts) and लोकेषणा (desire for fame and popular applause). There are many human beings in this world who work hard day and night for जामात, जठर, जाया (son-in-law, stomach and wife) who never get satisfied, never get contented, never say enough, never say, 'you have done a lot'. They would even suffer from tuberculosis as a result of too much of exhaustion. However, this wearing out is not similar to that of the sandalwood. Human efforts must be aimed at the satisfaction of good people in the same way as the sandalwood wears out for the purpose of worship of deity. A good person does not (necessarily) speak openly. Normally he does not explicitly call somebody evil. However, his inner self gets pleased because of a good act and gets hurt because of bad behavior. Therefore one must understand the (implications of) silence or applause of a good person; then only, one would understand as to how one should behave. Otherwise, one would only be a recipient of self-cheating.

नको रे मना द्रव्य तें पूढिलांचे ।  
अति स्वार्थबुद्धी नरे पाप साचे ।  
घडें भोगणे पाप तें कर्म खोटें ।  
न होतां मनासारिखे दुःख मोठे ॥१९॥

nako re manaa dravya te puuDhilaa.nche  
ati svaarthabuddhii nure paapa saa.nche  
ghaDe bhogaNe paapa te karma khoTe  
na hotaa manaasaarikhe duHkha moThe.

Oh Mind! Do not hanker after others' wealth. With too much of selfishness you will accumulate only sins. The acts that lead one to suffer the consequences of sin are untruthful. Great grief befalls one who sees the mind's desires unfulfilled.

In our culture, it has been stated in various ways that one should be selfless and willing to sacrifice one's selfish interests. Our culture regards those persons, who sacrifice their self-interests as deserving supreme reverence. In this verse Samarth is directing to abandon self-

interests. Therefore it must be clearly understood as to who should be called selfless, what the boundaries of self-interest are, and what the sign of extreme self-interest is. Bhartrahari calls a person who sacrifices self interest for giving happiness to others as the best human being and expects that an ordinary person would help others at least so long as it is स्वार्थला अविरोधी (i.e. his self-interest is not compromised). However, in order to determine the exact nature of स्वार्थला अविरोधा, he has stated the characteristic of अथम (vile) and called one who behaves in such a way that he harms other's welfare for achieving self interest as रक्षस (demon).

Here it is inevitable that the term स्वार्थ is understood from all the angles. The literal meaning of स्व plus अर्थ is something being wanted, desired, expected for oneself, and as long as one has the human body (i.e. is living normal life), it is impossible to be totally selfless in the literal sense of the term. Who knows what happens to a mystic or ascetic who has attained the state of total sublimation? However, all others definitely have requirements of food, clothing and shelter in some form or other. Even the sages who practice total nudity are not able to abandon hut or अंथरूण-पांघरूण (bedding and warm cloth by which one covers the body as a protection from cold). (Then it is not clear as to what is the purpose of remaining nude. Is it a means of conquering विकार disorder or an exhibition of having conquered disorders? God only knows!) Normally all the sages, pious persons, great personalities do have to accept food-clothing-shelter in some form or other for maintaining the normal body functionality. They might not be slaves of taste, their wants might be based on hygiene, unlike a common man they might not consider that as wealth, prestige or enjoyment, yet it is not possible for anyone to survive for a long time without food or shelter. Therefore, our ancient scriptures (as also law makers) have directed that hunger should be regarded as a kind of disease and treated by food even if it is received by begging. Shrimat Shankaracharya has said (exactly the same), 'क्षुद्रव्याधिश्च चिकित्स्यताम् प्रतिदिनं भिक्षौषधं भुज्यताम्'. However, immediately thereafter he has warned, 'स्वाद्वन्नं न तु याच्यताम्' (one should not beg for sweets or tasty food) so as to prevent this necessity translating into attachment, luxury, desire for enjoyment etc. One should request for alms but should not say, 'serve me fried भजीं (a preparation of gram flour soaked in water, kneaded into small pellets or balls and fried in oil), जिलब्बा (a preparation of gram flour soaked in water, rolled into coils, fried in oil and then soaked in sugar decoction)'. Here it has been said that sweets are to be avoided. This is not because of any potential danger from sweets. A diabetic person has to avoid sweets. Here it is not the case. Having a fear from sweets amounts to weakness, (whereas) fearlessness is an important constituent of परमार्थ (absolute truth), and hence Shankaracharya further says, 'विधिवशात् प्राप्तेन संतुष्टताम्' (one should be happily satisfied with whatever is received in alms as a result of one's fate). This means that, while it might be true that one should not ask for sweets, if sweets (or any tasty food) is received (without asking), then one should not behave arrogantly and throw it away. All the physical comforts of the body should be honestly left to be decided by प्राण्य (the destiny). No special efforts other than natural body movements should be done for getting physical comforts of the body. Whatever is received without making any efforts should be accepted with satisfaction. The purpose, while deciding between acceptance and rejection, the criterion should only be the protection of health. When it is not prevented by dietetics if one vows not to eat sweets, the host who regards guest as God would be in trouble. In that case how could a householder host follow the rule which directs one to offer the best possible food to the deity? Generally nobody is unduly troubled because of such a difficulty. This is because the normal tendency of people is to somehow complete the formality of religious rituals (with minimum possible efforts) which

cannot be avoided due to weakness of mind. Therefore special items like पुण्याहवाचनाच्या सुपान्या (beetle-nuts for the ritual performed at the beginning of a religious ceremony like marriage), वाणाचा खण (the blouse-piece to be donated to a Brahmin lady during a religious ceremony) and होमाचे तृप (ghee to be offered to the fire during a religious ceremony) are available in the market. (These items are never used for human consumption as they are of the cheapest and of the lowest quality and are often recycled). Because of this kind of attitude we do not feel any inconvenience if the guest were to follow some strict rules (like avoiding sweets or so); it might even be considered desirable. However, irrespective of whether a guest decides to observe such strict rules or not, and if he decides to follow the rules then their purpose must be clearly understood. In the initial stages of साधकावस्था (learning stage of disciple) it might be necessary to observe some strict ब्रते (shunning some physical comforts like food, water etc. as a part of a ritual) for the purpose of conquering sense-organs, but it cannot be a general rule applicable to everyone. It is not normal. In conclusion, desiring something for inevitable need is not selfishness as we understand the term. Our ancient laws state, 'यावद् अभियेत जठरं तावत् स्वस्थं हि देहिनाम्' (accepting sufficient food for filling the stomach is a fundamental right of every living animal including of course the human being), and hence there used to be a conviction in our (Hindu) culture that one who accepts alms does a favor to the donor; the donor does not do any favor. Therefore, during several thousands of year's history, conflicts due to economic causes did not arise in our country. These days such a noble form (of giving and accepting alms) is no longer evident. Nowadays, the donor has become arrogant or at least egoistic, and his attitude is either to force the alms or consider the recipient as wretched. While it is true that it is a basic right of everyone to have sufficient food for filling up the stomach, it must be kept in mind that the religious law which has given this right has also stated, 'अधिकं योऽभिमन्येत स स्तेनो दण्डमर्हति' (one who desires more is a thief, he deserves punishment). In the present form of आश्रमव्यवस्था (the Hindu traditional system of the division of a man's life into four periods of twenty five years each, viz. ब्रह्मचर्य - bachelorhood devoted to study -, गृहस्थ - household and family life -, वानप्रस्थ - living away from the family and progressively reducing the worldly needs wherein the wife may accompany, and संन्यास - abandoning all the worldly desires and comforts and focusing on the path towards absolute truth) which is a result of changing times and local environment, in view of the duties and commitments, it must be accepted that the boundaries of necessity have considerably broadened as compared to the past. There was a period in history when a Brahmin living a family life was allowed to accumulate (wealth required for worldly needs) ideally for not more than three days, and was given a concession to accumulate wealth which would suffice for up to one year. Later on the laws became somewhat more lenient. Presently the (traditional Hindu) law has given permission to a family-man to accumulate wealth which would be sufficient to enable him to bring up his children, give them good education, help them to get means of subsistence, marry his daughters into suitable families, etc. Now, is it necessary to stretch this concession much further? After (satisfactory) completion the family commitments like – completing the education of the son after which he becomes a responsible adult, marriage of the daughter in a good family, all the festivities in the first year after her wedding according to the prevalent custom, traditional duties about the birth of her first child etc. one should feel, 'now my commitments are over and there is no more need to accumulate wealth for that purpose'. Shouldn't there be any limit as to how much wealth one should accumulate and by what means? If the attitude remains greedy, the rules of government as also those of the religion will remain only in the books (and will never get implemented in practice). In practice, a person would always be looking for loopholes and continue to carry out improprieties and thereby lose individual as also social peace. Therefore,

while there is no objection for collecting wealth for satisfying the necessities, the limit for accumulation of wealth must be taken into consideration. Then only the life of the individual and thereby the life of the society will be full of happiness. Therefore Samarth says, 'नके रे मना द्रव्य तें पूढ़िलांचे' (Oh Mind! Do not hanker after others' wealth).

You should not accept anyone's money except that of yourself. Taking anyone's money without authority amounts to bribe or theft; even then such money is indirectly acquired in various ways. It must be clearly understood that even that also amounts to theft. Anything which is not one's own by right, acquiring that in any way whatsoever amounts to theft. This is so because expecting more than what is one's own by right, amounts to direct or indirect encroachment on someone else's natural right. (In such cases) the usual human feeling is that if someone else is bound to do it (encroachment), then why not I myself. It is often considered pardonable from practical point of view, and correct as well. However, it must at least be kept in mind that it is not befitting gentlemanly behavior. The moral code of conduct is that even if someone else is behaving against it, one must not abandon good moral behavior. The ancient (Hindu) law has recommended exceptions to the general moral code of conduct so as to enable one to offer resistance in self-defense and implementing it depending on the particular occasion is also included in the moral code of conduct. However, care must be taken so that it (exception) does not become normal way of life.

Shrimat Vasudevanand Saraswati Tembeswami Maharaj was a great spiritual personality in the recent past. It used to be said about him that he possessed many kinds of सिद्धी (supernatural powers) and used to execute them for special purpose. However, he had drawn a boundary line (for their usage). Once in a while he used to execute his powers only for (specific tasks like) curing (normally incurable) disease, removing devil's influence etc., but would not oblige if someone says something like, 'Please help me to get a job'. When a devotee asked for an explanation, he explained, 'If I use my powers to get him a job, it would amount to injustice to someone else, who would have naturally got that job (on his own merit). If someone seeks a boon from God for getting money from lottery or horse-racing, it is not likely to materialize. Issues like getting relief from (incurable) disease or having a child (for a childless couple) are distinct (from the above examples). Here, it (usage of supernatural powers) is related only to the concerned person(s); there is no encroachment on anyone else's rights. Thus, there is no selfishness in availing sufficient for one's necessities. Samarth takes into consideration that, if somebody does something (not anything) for food sufficient to maintain health, shelter, clothing and other related appurtenances necessary for one to move around in the society like a civilized person, then there is nothing objectionable; and says, 'अति स्वार्थबुद्धि नरे पाप सांचे' (With too much of selfishness you will accumulate only sins).

'Expecting more (than necessary) is a sin. You should not do it'. Here some people will ask, 'Then should all things like wealth, prosperity, enjoyment, ambition etc. should be regarded as suitable for being abandoned?' If this (principle) is accepted then it would mean that the entire literature of saints is only for ascetics, sages and mystics. This discourse is of no use to a common householder person. However, this doubt is not correct. Indian culture does not abhor wealth and prosperity. While at some places there is indeed a teaching of strong renunciation of all the sensuous delights and gratifications, it is essentially for resisting uncontrollable attachment and very strong desires for worldly pleasures, not for deciding wealth and prosperity

as fit to be abandoned. If wealth is going to be acquired according to the saying 'जोडोनिया धन उत्तम वेहरे' (earning money by doing best business), then there is nothing condemnable in it. However this happens very rarely. Only an exceptionally fortunate person gets wealth and prosperity by honest means. For this purpose mostly one would have used means like bribe, black business, extortion, cheating, theft etc. These acts happen only for selfish interests. Therefore Samarth calls them sin. Our (Hindu) culture has no objection to someone becoming wealthy by healthy utilization of his extraordinary capability or intelligence; religion would at best teach him to be more generous but would not regard wealth acquired by त्याज्य means (which must be abandoned) as fit to be rejected. However, (most of the time) the legitimate means of acquiring wealth are ignored as a result of extreme selfish intent (or excessive greed) due to false concept of wealth for prestige. Communism regards wealth as fit for rejection, whereas the capitalists assume becoming rich by any means whatsoever as appropriate. Indian culture has rejected both these extremist and harsh social orders and recommended to behave in such a way that one would become rich by legitimate means and make the poor happy with one's own generosity. Hence there is (always) a scope for personal ambition, yet it does not result in social conflict. However, adherence to this directive of culture was lost and social calamities started becoming more severe. Samarth realized this fact while minutely observing all the aspects of social life and therefore he has directed to keep away from excessive selfish interest.

Sin is such a phenomenon that (its consequence) has to be endured some time or other, in some form or other. There is no escape for anybody. (Consequences of sin committed) in the present birth or the previous one (have to be endured) in the present birth or the next one; the sin does deliver its pains. Sin shows its consequences in various forms of sorrow like physical, mental, individual or collective (sorrow for the family). Therefore Samarth says, 'घडे भोगणे पाप तें कर्म खोटे' (The acts that lead one to suffer the consequences of sin are untruthful). The attitude of collecting wealth which is not one's own by right, because of extreme selfish interest and greed, without bothering of legitimacy or otherwise, not bothering even if it causes whatever amount of trouble to others, focusing only on one's own pleasure and prosperity, is indeed fit to be abandoned. Whatever efforts are required for collecting wealth by such means, one has to flout all the don'ts (of the moral code of conduct); and then, even if this act appears outwardly increasing happiness and prosperity, ultimately results in sorrow and poverty. Wealth of such a rich person is apparent in the open. We begin to envy him after seeing his enjoyment, merrymaking social prestige etc. When one sees his house, consisting of a number rooms with most modern furnishing and provisions for several comforts, the expensive means of pleasure and articles for शृंगार-विलास (amorous blandishments) in open (broad daylight), a thought appears in one's mind, 'We behave in an honest manner, (always) give a thought to पाप पुण्य (sin and virtuous act), still penury in our life does not vanish, then why to abide by the rules and regulations of the religion?' However, if one peeps into the inner self of these wealthy persons, it would be seen that his life is indeed burdened with many kinds of sorrows. Exhibition of etiquettes and outwardly formal civilized language might appear prevalent in that house; however, absence of true affection, intimacy and mutual love and respect is (easily) visible. While the body is seen immersed in merrymaking, real health is conspicuous by absence. This wealth is always harassed and tormented by a number of painful and incurable disorders like insomnia, mental unrest, gear, worry, intellectual pressure, indigestion, (abnormal) blood pressure etc. Therefore Samarth says, act which causes one to endure (consequences of) sin is untrue, it should not be done. The wealth not collected by honest means causes tremendous

pressure on one's mind. Then, in order to get rid of the strain due to this fear and worry, this wealth gets addicted to vices and drowns in uncontrolled behavior and evil acts. Further, this (behavior) gives rise to even more different kinds of difficulties. Therefore, wealth torn by such worries cannot deliver true happiness, health or satisfaction.

He is truly happy who does not have any worries. If worries are going to grow with every coin earned, why should one desire it at all? Sometimes the people who become rich by wrong means are very callous and shameless and fear, worry or their consequences are not apparent in their cases. However, such दुर्योधनीवृत्तीचे (people with attitude like Duryodhan, the eldest of Kauravas never regretted any of his actions) persons are very rare; 'लाखों में एक' (literally one among one hundred thousand - singular) even among the wicked persons. There is no need to consider such an exception. It would be better if common persons do not even consider such examples of दुर्योधनीवृत्ती (exceptional wickedness) for justifying their behavior. An honest person gets at least some mental support which a wicked person can never get. Therefore, at the bottom of his heart, this apparently shameless person is indeed restless. Therefore Samarth has said that one should not do such act the ill effects of which would have to be endured. When the consequence of the (kind of) act is painful like, 'हांसत कर्म करावें, भोगावें रडत तेंच परिणामी' (one might smile while doing an evil act, but he would have to weep while enduring the consequences), who at all do it? It is always beneficial to avoid the acts which force one to stoop to the level of downfall, which are ultimately troublesome or create unrest at the level of individual, family, society or nation. Therefore one must decide the boundaries of one's wants in a scientific manner and condition one's mind to feel satisfied within them. At least after one stage the happiness and satisfaction of a person are dependent on his mindset. If the mind is not conditioned to feel contented in the pleasures and comforts available within the (predetermined) boundaries, it remains unhappy even after getting anything and in whatever amount. The reason is न होतां मनासारिखें दुःख मोठें (the sorrow of not happening as desired by one's mind is very great).

Intelligent human beings have laboriously utilized science because of outrageous ambition resulting from the greed for more and more comforts, pleasure and enjoyment. As a result, the humanity which had lived happily for lakhs of years on the earth, has presently reached a cliff of total destruction within a century of scientific progress. No more options have remained open for humanity except for a peaceful life after being forced to live in animal-like slavery or नंगा नाच (literally – naked dance - havoc) of uncontrolled conflict. On one side all kinds of pollutions which render life unbearable and on the other side the atomic and even more fearful weapons which could totally destroy the entire life (on the earth) like a dread demon are ready to crush the entire humanity under his (molar) teeth. Once these (frightening) effects of scientific progress are seen, one can realize why Manu has called creation of a machine as a sin.

A great scientist like Chandrashekhar Raman also has said that it is not appropriate to expand the scope of scientific progress like (creation of) space ship. He had expressed a fear that the humanity would be impoverished; nations would get destroyed as a result of extravagance on space research. The routine cycle of nature gets disturbed at least to some extent as a result of the zest for scientific progress, and that gives rise to natural calamities like excessive rainfall, draught, thunderstorms, unbalanced summer and winter etc. This fear is being expressed in various ways by reputed scientists and not by astrologers. The root cause of all these is the

excessive greed for enjoyment as also the unlimited ambition of the humanity. However, the human being is avoiding seeing this as if wearing blinkers.

These days the human being has conveniently decided not to accept existence of God and regulation of religion on the basis of deceitful intellectualism and therefore he does not feel much of a pinch (or regret) of bad behavior or uncontrolled enjoyment. Therefore the only target before him is, if something is wanted, (to accept that) it is indeed wanted and it has to be acquired (at any cost). He does not bother to think as to what for (it is required if at all), how much (is actually required) and how to acquire. And then, more, still more, remains the only painful conviction before him. Is this truly appropriate? Man must give a thought to this issue.

There is a famous anecdote about a small child. There were only three persons in a family, husband, wife and a two year old child. An ideal family from the present day viewpoint. The mother was required to go out for some important work. It was not convenient to carry the child. Therefore it was necessary to entrust the father with the responsibility of babysitting, and he did accept with pride saying, ‘Yes, yes (I will do it)’, and he laid down whatever the toys available in the house before the child. The child immediately became happy for some times because of getting all the toys at the same time. However his interest in playing was over in an equally short time; and then it started demanding sweets. The father saw a large container of joggery in front, and he took a small piece of joggery about the size of a beetle nut and gave it to the child. When the child saw a container full of joggery, it started asking for more. The father gave him a piece of the size of a lemon. The child again asked for more and the father gave him a piece of the size of a mango. The child still asked for more and when refused, started crying. The father got worked up and dumped a piece of the size of a cocoanut before the child. Even then the child would not stop crying and demanding for still more. The father got irritated and he threw down the container itself before the child. The child continued to cry and demand for still more. The father got frustrated, harassed and started shouting in a voice louder than that of the child. Even then the problem was not solved.

The mother returned after some time and was surprised to see the battlefield at home. She immediately understood the situation and smiled. First she properly rearranged all the things including the container of joggery. She washed the face of the child which had become dirty with fluids dripping from mouth (saliva), nose (mucus) and eyes (tears), with fresh water. She picked up the child, fondled and patted it. She spoke to the child in a soft and coaxing tone, diverted its attention (from joggery) to some totally different topic, and made him comfortably quiet by scolding some imaginary creature; and then asked, ‘what do you want?’ The child said ‘sweets’ and that too in large amount. The mother kept the child down and brought the previously kept aside container of joggery before the child. She took out two pieces of joggery in each of her hands, one of the size of a small beetle nut and other of the size of a slightly bigger beetle nut, and fondly told the child, ‘take whichever piece you want to take’. The child smiled, grabbed the bigger piece in the hand of the mother, put it in the mouth and started playing happily. The mother looked at the father. The father accepted his defeat with an open mind and the pleasant atmosphere of the house reappeared.

Human mind is very much similar to the abovementioned child. It is as if the sense organs go on placing before it more and more means of worldly enjoyments, yet the mind never gets satisfied.

Its cries for ‘more, more’ go on increasing. Finally the sense organs get tired. Still the mind remains unsatisfied. Ultimately the intellect becomes active and it places some worldly comforts, classifying them as some more, some less within the boundaries wherein they are desirable, appropriate, and beneficial. Naturally ‘some more’ (of the worldly comforts) gets accepted, and having seen ‘little less’ one gets satisfaction as well. It is essentially for this reason that our (Hindu) culture has directed right since the Vedic period, ‘अधःपश्यस्व मोपरि’ (always look at the lower level, not at the higher one). One travelling in a car should look at the one riding a motorcycle; he in turn should consider the condition of one riding a bicycle. The person riding a bicycle should seek happiness in the fact that he is not required to walk on foot. The one who has to walk should consider the pain of the one who has to walk barefooted. However, what happens in reality is the opposite. Even the one who drives a car is unhappy because his car is only a Fiat or an Ambassador. He feels sad that he does not have a Dodge, Chevrolet or an Impala. Where would this stop? There is always a definite limit to the necessity. Even after taking into consideration in the context of country and time, the necessity cannot become unlimited. However, there is no limit whatsoever to the ideas of enjoyment. As the following quotation says, ‘निःस्वो वष्टि शतं, शती दशशतं लक्षं सहस्राधिपः ।’ (a poor craves for a hundred, owner of hundred craves for a thousand and owner of thousands craves for hundred thousand), it can be understood that someone earning a hundred or (even) five hundred rupees (a month) saying that he cannot make both ends meet in these days (around 1970 or so) of dearness; but what can one say when a judge earning some four thousand rupees (a month) also resigns saying he cannot manage (in such a small amount of salary)? On the top of it he (calls himself that he) is a promoter of socialism! It is felt that there cannot be a more cruel ridicule of human greed. Well, for acquiring this (wealth) is it a case that only straightforward, honest, respected and just ways are adopted? Is the courtesy maintained? Here it is not so. No one feels any regret whatsoever in adopting clandestine business, extortion, cheating, exploitation, strikes, shut-downs, seizures, harsh pressure, cruel threats (for achieving the desired end). If it is decided (by everyone) to behave with this attitude, no government, no social order and no amount of scientific progress can deliver peace and happiness to the mankind. There was never any argument about (the principle that) natural desires should be satisfied and not suppressed; however, a conviction that whatsoever wish emerges, has to be regarded as natural only, and it must be satisfied, is not affordable for anyone at any time. Confused intellectualists call restraint as suppression and roar aloud that suppression causes disorder. This style of thinking of these (intellectualists) is in vain. Restraint protects strength as also increases both the strength and the ability to enjoy, and therefore the person (who practices restraint) can enjoy life like a connoisseur for a much longer time. However, the ability to enjoy itself gets weakened due to excitement and uncontrolled merrymaking. This is because the uncontrolled enjoyment causes faster decay of the strength of the individual and such persons become pitiable, restless and affected by disorder because of frightening frustration and depression at an early age of thirty to thirtyfive or so. Therefore, if the concept of happiness is allowed to be under the control of the mind, there is no possibility of receiving anything except grief, and hence Samarth has suggested that one should always seek happiness in restraint.

सदा सर्वदा प्रीति रामीं धरावी ।  
दुखाची स्वयें सांडि जीवीं करावी ॥  
देहेदुःख हें सूख मानीत जावें ।  
विवेकें सदा सस्वरूपीं भरावें ॥10॥

sadaa sarvadaa priiti raamii dharaavii  
sukhaachii svaye saa.nDi jiivii karaavii  
deheduHkha te suukha maaniita jaave  
viveke sadaa svasvaruupii bharaave

You should continue to the love for Rama for ever. The grief from your heart should be relieved by striving yourself. You should regard bodily pain as if it were pleasure. You should stay in your true self using your discretion.

Considering someone as one's own, loving someone and getting satisfaction by mutual affection is a natural tendency of human being. This tendency cannot refrain from appearing in open after his physical necessities are satisfied to some specific extent. However, Samarth is addressing the issue as to who should be the target of such feeling so that it becomes beneficial (to the person in particular and his family or society in general). He says, 'Do hold on to love. It is one of the feelings which you want from the bottom of your heart. However, the target of your love should be Ram. Wife, children, household property, power, wealth etc. should not be the subjects of your love. This certainly does not mean that you should abandon your home or behave curtly with the members of your family. However, the only implication here is that the basis of the strongest feeling of your love should not be the family or household matters'. The foundation of the strongest feeling of love should be such that it would enable one to get everlasting happiness, ultimate satisfaction or pleasure of the inner self. It is not at all possible to achieve this ever in the worldly family life dominated by material issues. Therefore Samarth says, 'सदा सर्वदा प्रीति रामीं धरावीं' (You should hold on to the love for Rama for ever).

(For a human being) it is not necessary to learn how to love विषय (objects of sense-organs i.e. sound, touch, vision, taste and smell). It is not necessary to acquire this (knowledge as it is inherited by birth). This attachment gets naturally developed in the mind through the medium of the sense-organs which have their natural desires for their own satisfaction. However, as the happiness of परमार्थ (absolute truth) is independent of and not related to the sense-organs, its liking has to be developed and increased with special efforts. Therefore Samarth suggests that one should hold on to the love towards Ram (here Ram can be interpreted figuratively as the Almighty) and also that this love should be very strong day and night (all the time, irrespective of the time of the day). Love, desire and attachment regarding the worldly matters do have and should have constraints of time frame, instance, व्यवहार (context of situation and mutual relationship) etc. Otherwise the episode becomes very much painful. More, even more is essentially a feature of परमार्थ (absolute truth) and not प्रपञ्च (mundane worldly matters). This is because the absolute truth is (intrinsically) without any limits or boundaries by its own nature. In the case of the worldly matters this is not so. There the policy must be: first the boundaries (are drawn) and then the enjoyment (within the predetermined boundaries). (Consider for example:) once the amount to be spent (budgetary provision) for purchasing a sari (or for that matter, any article of clothing) is decided, there is no difficulty in giving scope to the likes and dislikes about काठ (border) - पट्ट (end of the cloth, specifically a sari). The length of a sari is usually six or nine yards, most of it is wound around the waist, and the end i.e. पट्ट covers the chest and its end loosely hangs behind the back over one of the shoulders. When worn by ladies, because of its position, its color, and artwork receive the maximum attention of everyone) - रंग (color) - पोत

(texture) etc. Otherwise this could end up into bankruptcy, or at least would create tensions without any genuine cause. Therefore, Samarth has told, ‘दुखाची स्वयं सांडि जीवीं करावी’ i.e. one should learn to feel contented in यथालाभ (whatever one gets by destiny) so that it is possible to easily avoid sorrow of the human being (inevitable in an unrestrained life style).

Most of the worldly pains suffered by human beings are to be endured because of disorders like hatred, greed, attachment etc. One should have an attraction of परमार्थ (absolute truth). Then the root cause (of the worldly pains) is removed and one feels as if the pain has been removed. However, the hardships required to be carried out or undergone have to be endured, but they ultimately result in happiness only. Therefore, in order that one should understand that one should learn to regard physical hardships as pleasure only, Samarth says, ‘देहेदुःख ते सूख मानीत जावें’ (One should regard bodily pain as if it were pleasure). While it is a fact that the pain and hardships of the body are not at all pleasant, still one should learn to regard them as pleasant, then only it would be beneficial (in one's progress towards absolute truth).

From the viewpoint of परमार्थ (absolute truth), Kunti asks for, ‘विपदः सन्तु नः शश्त् तत्र तत्र जगद्गुरो’ (our calamities should be everlasting, everywhere, Oh, Almighty!). This is because the human nature is such that he remembers God only when in trouble. One should not make a distorted interpretation of Kunti's statement that one cannot or should not remember God when there is no difficulty. Kunti was a lady of great merit. She says with a strong feeling of devotion that if human beings are not going to remember God as a result of their natural tendency, then it does not matter if calamities arrive again and again which would make one to remember God all the time. This essentially is the implication of Kunti's statement. Usually action and reaction are equal. According to this principle, if sorrow is happily accepted, pleasure will naturally follow; and as enjoying pleasure after pain or sorrow is indeed the true happiness, there is no point in demanding pleasure which would yield pain as its reaction. This also could have been the reason why Kunti has asked for sorrow. In any case, actions which appear unpleasant for the body ultimately turn out to be beneficial (in the long run).

This (phenomenon) is experienced from the viewpoint of health science in daily routine life. It is necessary to abandon (physically) comfortable lifestyle, behave in such a way that the body will undergo hardships. Those who earn their livelihood by doing physical hard work and get (barely) sufficient food and shelter live a much more healthy life than the rich immersed in excessive enjoyment. Whatever is felt tasty by pallet need not necessarily be good for health. The pallet always feels desire for tasty food like खेळ (a medley of various parched grains, cocoanut etc. fried together and mixed with onion, tomato, unripe mango etc. cut into small pieces, and sometimes sprinkled over with tamarind-water), भजी (a preparation of gram flour soaked in water, formed into small balls and fried in oil), चिवडा (a medley of various parched grains, cocoanut etc. fried together), आलिपीरे (dough of flour of a mixture of parched grains soaked in water, patted into flat round pieces in a flat pan of iron covered with a thin layer of oil and baked), fried food items, sweets etc. However, eating such items daily is very much damaging for health. It is true that one feels like eating spicy tasty food in large amount. However, it is even truer that it causes stomach upset. Even a person suffering with stomach upset does not like it if asked to eat only buttermilk and भाकरी (a plane cake of flour of cereal grains like जोधळा - holoclea-sorghum, बाजरी - holoclea-spicatus etc.), or milk and फोळी (a plain cake of wheat flour soaked in water, rolled into thin round

disks and baked), he cannot do without तोड़ी लावणे (any spicy item which helps secretion of saliva, to be eaten with main nutritious item which is usually not tasty); and when a small concession is allowed from that angle, the proportion (of spicy items) goes on increasing and then it is back to square one of undesirable diet viewpoint. Thus however unwanted it might be felt by the pallet, eating only that much food so as to remain slightly hungry, putting strict limits on the proportion of hot-salty-spicy items etc. are indeed beneficial from the viewpoint of health. Soft beddings made from feathers might be felt pleasant, however only hard bed is beneficial for the health of spinal cord. An exercise of long walk is very much beneficial. However, people consider it comfortable to wait for half an hour or so for the bus. A directive in our ancient (Hindu) tradition viz. ‘चरैवेति चरैवेति चराति चरतो भगः’ (keep on walking, go on walking, fortune of one who walks progresses) is worth considering from this point of view.

If we think about old persons who are tough and enthusiastic even at the age of seventy or seventy five, it would be found that they were not getting bored of physical hard work in their previous years (youth). Our Dada (Shri Dasganu Maharaj) used to regularly perform नगरप्रदक्षिणा (walk around the town) of one and a half to two miles of Pandharpur at the age of eighty. Later on, when he was unable to do that, he would at least walk up to the महाद्वार (main door or the temple), where there is an idol of Datta. He would not sleep in the afternoon, always sit in an upright position and take very simple diet. When he was about eighty years old, I used to be required to almost run while accompanying him during his walk. When I asked him (about the secret of his good health) he said, ‘My child, when I was in the service of Police force, I used to walk for about twenty – twenty five miles every day and do my work’. Nowadays we have lost physical hard work in our zest to upgrade the standard of living, and consequently our health has become dependent on the usage of highly effective medicines. One who gets lot of work done from his own body, gives it only that much (food) as is essential and makes it toil, his health remains excellent. There is no happiness in laziness. There is no happiness in taste (i.e. pleasure of the pallet). ‘ज्याचें ऐहिक धड नाहीं । त्याचें परत्र पुससी कार्यी ॥’ (One whose worldly affairs are not well, what is the point in asking about his spiritual matters?) (Jnya. 4/155). This has been told by Jnyaneshwar, not Samarth. Upanishads have said, ‘नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः’ (Weak person will not have आत्मसाक्षात्कार self realization). If the body, mind and intellect are weak, not capable, not tough, incapable of enduring, it is not possible to attain the merit (required) for आत्मदर्शन (viewing one’s inner self).

तितिक्षा (patience) or तपश्चर्या (pious mortification of the body) and various ब्रताचरणे (observing some religious vows of self-mortification) are principally for the purpose of increasing the capability of these three (body, mind and intellect). Physical exercise or endurance of hardships are only their external manifestations. If someone cannot behave with restraint, cannot abandon the desire for physical comforts, cannot maintain good health resulting from restraint which can be actually experienced as truly pleasant, cannot manage to follow (the prescribed) diet even after experiencing several times (that not observing diet leads to) disease becoming stronger, how can he make progress on the path towards परमार्थ (absolute truth)? Therefore, while explaining the principle which is equally useful for the worldly progress (as it is useful for the spiritual progress) says, ‘देहदुःख ते सूख मानीत जावे’ (You should regard bodily pain as if it were pleasure).

The next line is ‘विवेके सदा सस्वरूपी भरावे.’ (You should stay in your true self using your discretion). Here सस्वरूपी is actually स्वस्वरूपी. It is possible that because of the style of articulation in that period (the seventeenth century) or inattention of the persons making copies, स्वस्वरूपी became सस्वरूपी. Why should the body be ignored like this? Why should the body not be pampered? The fourth line has emerged while explaining the principle, ‘Body, organs and mind are not my manifestations – I am distinct from all these’. This ‘I’ is सच्चिदानन्द स्वरूप (literally the manifestation of one who gives true joy to the mind - manifestation of Brahma, the supreme and all-sustaining essence). Body, (organs, mind) etc. are his instruments. Therefore, it is necessary not to think about the body (organs, mind) etc. but to think about the soul which is far beyond all these. If नास्तिक (the non-believers, those who refuse to accept existence of God) who regard the body itself as the soul, talk honestly, speak honestly, they would not be able to accept existence of mind. (These days the advanced psychology has started accepting this). Then they would not be able to relate many happy instances in the human life. Many sublime facts can be interpreted only if one accepts existence of something beyond the worldly (human) body. Therefore Samarth has told not to regard pain of the body as the real pain, but consider it as if pleasure, and to understand one’s true manifestation with the help of discretion, and directed, ‘विवेके सदा सस्वरूपी भरावे’ (You should stay in your true self using your discretion).

Whatever might be the work he is doing, the person should not lose his attention towards the true manifestation. Then only his dealings would improve on at the level of welfare. Even though the principle, ‘My true manifestation is the soul. My body is not (the true) myself’, is completely true, experiencing it is not easy. देहबुद्धि (the attachment of mind and intellect with the body) does not vanish just by saying, ‘I abandon it’. Even आत्मसाक्षात्कार (self-realization) does not happen merely by saying, ‘I am the soul’. Even if one acquires शब्दज्ञान (literal knowledge) as a result of संस्कार (good moral influence), his प्रारब्ध (destiny), resultant प्रकृति (nature), प्रवृत्ति (attitude) and environment, the time-frame of efforts required to experience that could be very lengthy. It would have to be counted not only in terms of several years, but sometimes in terms of the number of जन्म (birth-death cycles). And hence Samarth has told that one should stay in one’s true self using discretion. ‘I am not the body, I am the soul’, is essentially discretion. While this principle is true, one must understand साधना (the efforts) required in the correct serial order. One must retain hard faith. It is not possible to achieve it in a way like पी हळ्ड कीं हो गोरी (literally, ‘drink turmeric decoction and immediately acquire fair complexion’, achieving results immediately after doing the effort). Ayurved which explains the principles of hygiene also has told that the quality has to be increased in a step-by-step manner; it is of no use making haste in this regard. Otherwise it would increase the difficulties.

Regarding the bodily pain as if it were pleasure does not imply that one should observe strict fast for days together, should get burnt in hot sunshine, should get soaked in rain, should shiver in cold etc. It is possible to endure this; however, there is a limit, as also an order. It would depend on what the original strength of the body is. चातुर्थिक ज्वर (Suffering from cold every fourth day and subsequent fever) is a very chronic disease. One gentleman suffering for a long time from this disease jumped into cold water while his cold was just beginning, and from that day his cold vanished. Some other person learned about this and carried out the same experiment on his old mother; the poor old lady did not survive. No goal can be achieved by impatience. One must take into consideration all the possible angles. Therefore Samarth says that one should use discretion.

In general, Samarth gives a lot of emphasis on discretion. He has said so about discretion with urgency at many places and in many contexts. Many a time it is easy for a person to take an extreme position as he feels that this would solve the problem in very short time. If there is an objection for some food items, he would accept not eating anything at all. However, mostly he cannot tolerate if the physician tells him that he can eat usual food, but must not eat salt. He gets a tension of the regular attention required (for observing such restraints) and this is precisely what he does not want. Then he says with disgust, ‘Tell me everything only once; not in step-by-step manner!’ However, would this work? We do not inhale the air required for twentyfour hours in one single breath, nor can we survive without breath for one or two hours. One cannot fill up the food and water enough for one month in a single meal, the way a camel is said to be able to do, and say that this (exercise of eating food) should not be an everyday botheration. One cannot take bath required for the whole year in one single instance by sitting in the bathroom for four or five hours. All these actions have to be carried out again and again in their appropriate proportion. The same is the case of discretion.

If a mistake is committed, there is no escape from undergoing its consequences. The mistake and its consequences are dependent more on the surrounding situation than the person (committing the mistake) himself. Missing a step and slipping on a straight and plain road is different than slipping while walking on a difficult narrow path on the edge of a cliff in the Himalayas. Slipping is the same mistake (in both the cases); however the consequences are very different. For getting infection of tetanus, it is the same whether it is minor bleeding due to a small cut of blade while shaving or profuse bleeding due to a limb getting chopped off in an accident. Therefore, it is not the real issue whether the mistake is minor or major. Mistake is always a mistake; and being minor, if considered pardonable, there is a strong possibility of such a negligence ultimately proving to be damaging. One has to reach the pleasure of soul in the order: health of the body, satisfaction of the organs, contentedness of the mind and stability of intellect. Therefore, after saying, ‘देहेदुःख तैं सूख मानीत जावे’ (one should regard body pain as if it were pleasure) Samarth immediately gives a guidance that ‘विवेके सदा स्वस्वरूपीं भरावें’ (one should stay in one’s true self using discretion) and describes both the initial means and the ultimate aim; and explains the methodology by using the term **विवेक** (discretion).