

## CHAPTER I MAN

*The destiny of man-Real nature of man-Man in bondage - Death and reincarnation.*

### The Destiny of Man

1. You see many stars in the sky at night, but not when the sun rises. Can you therefore say that there are no stars in the heavens during the day? O man, because you cannot find God in the days of your ignorance, say not that there is no God.

2. He is born in vain, who having attained the human birth, so difficult to get, does not attempt to realise God in this very life.

3. A man is rewarded according to his thoughts and motives. The Lord is like [Kalpataru](#), the wish-yielding tree of heaven. Everyone gets from Him whatever he seeks. A poor man's son, having received education and become a judge of the High Court by hard work, is apt to think, "Now I am happy. I have reached the highest rung of the ladder. It is all right now." To him the Lord says, "Do thou remain so." But when the judge of the High Court retires on pension and reviews his past, he understands that he has wasted his life, and exclaims, "Alas, what real work have I done in this life!" To him the Lord also says, "Alas! What hast thou done!"

4. Man is born in this world with two tendencies- [Vidya](#)" the tendency to pursue the path of liberation, and [Avidya](#), the leaning towards worldliness and bondage. At his birth, both these tendencies are, as it were, in equilibrium like the two scales of a balance. The world soon places its enjoyments and pleasures in one scale, and the Spirit its attractions in the other. If the mind chooses the world, the scale of [Avidya](#) becomes heavy, and man gravitates towards the earth; but if it chooses the Spirit, the scale of [Vidya](#) becomes heavier and pulls him towards God.

5. Know the One, and you will know the all. Ciphers placed after the figure 1 get the value of hundreds and of thousands, but they become valueless if you wipe out that figure. The many ciphers have value only because of the One. First the One and then the many. First God, and then the Jivas and the Jagat (creatures and the world).

6. First gain God, and then gain wealth; but do not try to do the contrary. If, after acquiring spirituality, you lead a worldly life, you will never lose your peace of mind.

7. Do you talk of social reform? Well, you may do so after realising God. Remember, the Rishis of old gave up the world in order to attain God. This is the one thing needful. All other things shall be added to you, if indeed you care to have them. First see God, and then talk of lectures and social reforms.

8. A new-comer to a city should first secure a comfortable room for his rest at night, and after keeping his luggage there, he may freely go about the city for sight-seeing. Otherwise he may have to suffer much in the darkness of night to get a place for rest. Similarly, after securing his eternal resting place in God, a new-comer to this world can fearlessly move about doing his daily work. Otherwise, when the dark and dreadful night of death comes over him, he will have to encounter great difficulties and sufferings.

9. At the doors of large granaries are placed traps containing fried rice (*Moori*) to catch mice. The mice, attracted by the flavour of the fried rice, forget the more solid pleasures of tasting the rice inside the granary, and fall into the trap. They are caught therein and killed. Just so is the case with the soul. It stands on the threshold of Divine bliss, which is like millions of the highest worldly pleasures solidified in to one; but instead of striving for that bliss, it allows itself to be enticed by the petty pleasures of the world and falls into the trap of [Maya](#), the great illusion, and dies therein.

10. A [Pandit](#): The Theosophists say that there are 'Mahatmas'. They also say that there are different planes and spheres like astral plane, Devayanic plane, solar sphere, lunar sphere etc., and that man's [subtle body](#) can go to all these places. They say many other such things. Sir, what is your opinion on Theosophy?

The [Master](#): [Bhakti](#) alone is supreme-[Bhakti](#) or devotion to God. Do they care for [Bhakti](#)? If they do, that is well. It is well if they have God-realisation for their aim and goal. But remember, to be engrossed in such trivial things as solar sphere, lunar sphere, astral sphere etc., is not genuine search after God. One has to do Sadhanas (spiritual practices) in order to get devotion to His [lotus](#) feet; one has to weep for Him with the intense longing of the heart. The mind should be gathered up from the different objects and concentrated exclusively on Him. He is not in the Vedas or [Vedanta](#) or in any scripture. Nothing will be achieved unless one's heart yearns for Him. One has to pray to Him with intense devotion, and practise Sadhanas. God cannot be realised so easily. Sadhanas are necessary.

11. Will all men see God? No man will have to fast for the whole day; some get their food at 9 a.m., some at noon, others at 2 p.m., and others again in the evening or at sunset. Similarly, at one time or another, in this very life or after many more lives, all will, and must, see God.

12. Little children play with dolls in the outer room just as they like, without any care or fear or restraint; but as soon as their mother comes in, they throw aside their dolls and run to her crying, "Mamma, mamma". You too, O man, are now playing in this material world, infatuated with the dolls of wealth, honour, fame etc., and do not feel any fear or anxiety. If, however, you once see your Divine Mother, you will not afterwards find pleasure in all these. Throwing them all aside, you will run to Her.

13. There are pearls in the deep sea, but you must hazard all perils to get them. If you fail to get at them by a single dive, do not conclude that the sea is 'without them. Dive again and again, and you are sure to be rewarded in the end. So also in the quest for the Lord, if your first attempt to see Him proves fruitless, do not lose heart. Persevere in the attempt, and you are sure to realise Him at last.

14. Meditate upon the Knowledge and the Bliss Eternal, and you will have bliss. The Bliss is indeed eternal, only it is covered and obscured by ignorance. The less your attachment to the sense-objects, the more will be your love for God.

15. Mere possession of wealth does not make a man rich. The sign of a rich man's house is that a light burns in each room. This temple of the body should not be kept in darkness; the lamp of Knowledge must be lighted in it. "Light the lamp of Knowledge in your room, and look at the face of the Mother. Divine." Everyone can attain Knowledge. There is the individualised self and there is the higher Self. Every individual is connected with the higher Self. There is a gas connection in every house, and gas can be had from the Gas Company. Only apply to the proper authorities, and the supply will be arranged. Then you will have gaslight in your room.

#### **Real Nature of Man**

16. The digit 1 may be raised to a figure of any value by adding zeros after it; but if that 1 is omitted, zeros by themselves have no value. Similarly so long as the [Jiva](#) (individual soul) does not cling to God, who is the One, he has no value, for all things here get their value from their connection with God. So long as the [Jiva](#) clings to God, who is the value-giving figure behind the world, and does all his work for Him, he gains more and more thereby; on the contrary, if he overlooks God and adds to his work many grand achievements, all done for his own glorification, he will gain nothing therefrom.

17. As a lamp does not burn without oil, so a man cannot live without God.

18. God is to man what a magnet is to iron. Why does He not then attract man? As iron thickly imbedded in mud is not moved by the attraction of the magnet, so the soul thickly imbedded in [Maya](#) does not feel the attraction of the Lord. But when the mud is washed away with water, the iron is free to move. Even so, when by the constant tears of prayer and repentance, the soul washes away the mud of [Maya](#) that compels it to stick to the earth, it is soon attracted by the Lord to Himself.

19. The union of the Jivatman with the [Paramatman](#) is like the union of the hour and the minute hands of a watch once in every hour. They are inter-related and interdependent, and though usually separate, they may become united as often as favourable opportunities occur.

20. The soul enchained is man, but when free from the chain ([Maya](#)), it is the Lord.

21. What is the relation between the Jivatman and the [Paramatman](#)? As a current of water seems to be divided into two when a plank of wood is placed against it edgewise, so the Indivisible appears divided into two, the Jivatman and the [Paramatman](#), due to the limitation of [Maya](#).

22. Water and a bubble on it are one and the same. The bubble has its birth in the water, floats on it, and is ultimately resolved into it. So also the Jivatman and the [Paramatman](#) are one and the same, the difference between them being only one of degree. For, one is finite and limited while the other is infinite; one is dependent while the other is independent.

23. The idea of an individual ego is just like enclosing a portion of the water of the [Ganges](#) and calling the enclosed portion one's own [Ganges](#).

24. As a piece of lead thrown into a basin of mercury soon becomes an amalgam with it, so an individual soul loses its limited existence when it falls into the ocean of **Brahman**.

25. God is the infinite Being, while **Jiva** is only a finite being. How then can the finite grasp the Infinite? It is like a doll made of salt trying to fathom the depth of the ocean. In doing so the salt doll is dissolved into the sea and lost. Similarly the **Jiva**, in trying to measure God and know Him, loses its separateness and becomes one with Him.

26. The Lord Himself is playing in the form of man. He is the great juggler and this phantasmagoria of **Jiva** and Jagat is His great jugglery. The Juggler alone is true, the ; jugglery is false.

27. The human body is like a pot, and the mind, the intellect and the senses are like water, rice and potato. When you place a pot containing water, rice and potato on fire, they get heated, and if anyone touches them, his finger is burnt, even though the heat does not really belong to the pot, or the water, or the potato or the rice. Similarly it is the power of **Brahman** in man that causes the mind and the intellect and the senses to perform their functions; and when that power ceases to act, these also stop work.

### **Man in Bondage**

28. The true nature of the **Jiva** is eternal Existence - Knowledge-Bliss. It is due to egotism that he is limited by so many **Upadhis** (limiting adjuncts), and has forgotten his real nature.

29. The nature of the **Jiva** changes with the addition of each **Upadhi**. When a man dresses like a fop, wearing the fine black-bordered muslin, the love songs of **Nidhu Babu** spring to his lips. A pair of English boots inflates even a languid man with the delight of vanity; he begins to whistle immediately, and if he has to ascend a flight of stairs, he leaps up from one step to another like a **Saheb**. If a man holds a pen in his hand, he will go on scribbling carelessly on any paper he happens to get.

30. As the snake is separate from its slough, even so is the Spirit separate from the body.

31. The Self is not attached to anything. Pleasure, pain, sinfulness, righteousness etc., can never affect the Self in any way; but they can affect those who identify themselves with the body, as smoke can blacken only the wall but not the space enclosed within it.

32. The Vedantins say that the **Atman** is completely unattached. Sin. or virtue, pain or pleasure, cannot affect it; but they can inflict sufferings on those who have attachment to the body. The smoke can soil the walls, but can do nothing to the sky.

33. Men are of different natures according to the preponderance of **Sattva**, **Rajas** or **Tamas** in them.

34. Though all souls are one and the same in their ultimate nature, they are of four classes according to their respective conditions. They are **Baddha** or bound, **Mumukshu** or struggling for liberation, **Mukta** or emancipated, and **Nityamukta** or ever-free.

35. A fisherman cast his net into the river and had a large haul. Some fish lay in the net calm and motionless, not exerting in the least to go out of it. Others struggled and jumped but could not extricate themselves, while a third class of fish somehow managed to force their way out of the net. In the world, men too are thus of three kinds-those who are bound and never strive to be free, those who are bound but struggle for freedom, and those who have already attained freedom

36. There are three dolls-the first made of salt, the second made of cloth, and the third of stone. If these dolls are immersed in water, the first will become dissolved and lose its form, the second will absorb a large quantity of water but retain its form, and the third will remain impervious to water. The first doll represents the man who merges his self in the universal and all-pervading Self and becomes one with It; he is the liberated man. The second represents the **Bhakta** or the true lover of God, who is full of Divine bliss and knowledge. And the third represents the worldly man who will not admit even a particle of true knowledge into his heart.

37. Men are like pillow-cases. The colour of one may be red, that of another blue, and that of a third black; but all contain the same cotton within. So it is with man; one is beautiful, another is black, a third holy, and a fourth wicked; but the Divine Being dwells in them all.

38. The outer layers of cakes are made of rice flour, but inside they are stuffed with different ingredients. The cake is good or bad according to the quality of its stuffing. So all human bodies are made of one and the same material, yet men are different in quality according to the purity of their hearts.

39. A Brahmana's son is no doubt a Brahmana by birth; but some of these born Brahmanas grow up into great scholars, some become priests, others turn out cooks, and still others roll themselves in the dust before courtesans' doors.

40. It is true that God is even in the tiger; but we must not therefore go and face that animal. It is true that God dwells even in the most wicked beings, but it is not proper that we should associate with them.

41. The Deity [Narayana](#) (God) broods over the water, but every kind of water is not fit for drinking. Similarly, though it is true that God dwells in every place, yet every place is not fit to be visited by man. One kind of water may be used for washing our feet, another for purposes of ablution, and a third for drinking, while there are still others which are unfit even to be touched. Similarly there are different places, of which some may be approached and others visited, while there are still others which should only be saluted from a distance and bidden good-bye.

42. Beware of the following: the garrulous man; the man who is not open-hearted; the man who makes a parade of his devotion by sticking sacred [Tulsi](#) leaves on his ears; the woman who wears a long veil; and the cold water of the stagnant pool overgrown with rank vegetation, which is very injurious to health.

### **Death and Reincarnation**

43. Even at the time of death the 'bound souls' speak of worldly matters only. There is no use in visiting places of pilgrimage, or bathing in the holy [Ganges](#), or counting beads; if there are worldly attachments in the heart, they are sure to manifest themselves at the dying moment. Hence 'bound souls' indulge in random talks even at that time. A parrot may ordinarily sing the holy name of [Radha-Krishna](#), but when it is attacked by a cat, it cries out 'Kang', 'Kang'-its natural cry.

44. Man suffers so much simply for want of devotion to God. One should therefore adopt such means as would help the thought of God to arise in the mind at the last moment of one's life. The means is practice of devotion to God. If this is done during one's life-time, the thought of God is sure to occur to one's mind even at the last hour.

45. A man's rebirth is determined by what he has been thinking about just before death. Devotional practices are therefore very necessary. If, by constant practice, one's mind is freed from all worldly ideas, then the thought of God, which fills the mind in their place, will not leave it even at the time of death.

46. When an unbaked pot is broken, the potter can use the mud to make a new one; but when a baked one is broken, he cannot do the same any longer. So when a person dies in a state of ignorance, he is born again; but when he becomes well baked in the fire of true knowledge and dies a perfect man, he is not born again.

47. A grain of boiled paddy does not sprout again when sown. Only unboiled paddy sends forth the shoot. Similarly, when one dies after becoming a [Siddha](#), a perfect man, he has not to be born again, but an [siddha](#), an imperfect man, has to be born again and again until he becomes a [Siddha](#)