



## JAY GREENBERG: MUSICAL PRODIGY AND COMPOSER



Jay Greenberg<sup>2</sup>, watching as the London Symphony Orchestra is recording his fifth symphony. (CBS)

### Quote

"We are talking about a prodigy of the level of the greatest prodigies in history when it comes to composition. I am talking about the likes of Mozart, and Mendelssohn and Saint-Saëns."

Sam Zyman

s by the time he was 13 years old.

**Correspondent Scott Pelley** first met Jay two years ago when his works were being performed on stage; the story was seen by executives at Sony BMG, who signed Jay as a recording artist. Recently, Pelley caught up

<sup>1</sup> Our thanks to Odin Townley, CBS, the 60-MINUTE crew and all involved in creating this beautiful birds-eye view of our latest musical prodigy in the West. — ED., A. T.

(CBS ) Jay Greenberg is an American composer who some say is the greatest musical genius to come along in 200 years. He wrote five symphonies

with the young composer again in Britain, where the London Symphony Orchestra was recording Jay's fifth symphony.

Jay, who signs his works with the nickname "Blue Jay," is 14 now. When he caught the ear of *60 Minutes* in 2004, this remarkable boy was only 12 years old and had written a piece called "The Storm," commissioned by the New Haven Symphony in Connecticut.

He wrote every note for each and every instrument — and the really amazing part is that he wrote it in just a few hours.

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Composer Sam Zyman says we haven't seen his like in probably 200 years. "We are talking about a prodigy of the level of the greatest prodigies in history when it comes to composition. I am talking about the likes of Mozart, and Mendelssohn and Saint-Saëns," he tells Pelley.

Zyman taught music theory to Jay at the Julliard School in New York, where he has been teaching 19 years.

"This is an absolute fact. This is objective. This is not a subjective opinion," Zyman says. "Jay could be sitting here, and he could

be composing right now. He could finish a piano sonata before our eyes in probably 25 minutes. And it would be a great piece."

How is it possible? Jay told Pelley he doesn't know where the music comes from — but that it comes fully written, playing like an orchestra in his head.

"As you hear it playing, can you change it as it goes along? Can you say to yourself, 'Oh, let's bring the oboes in here,' or 'Let's bring the string section here?'" Pelley asks.

"No, they seem — they seem to come in by themselves if they need to," Jay replies. "It's as if the unconscious mind is giving orders at the speed of light. You know, I mean, so I just hear it as if it were a smooth performance of a work that is already written when it isn't."

Jay's parents are as surprised by his talent as anyone. Neither of them is a professional musician. His father, Robert, is a linguist, a scholar in Slavic languages who lost his sight at the age of 36 to retinitis pigmentosa. His mother, Orna, is an Israeli-born painter.

Michael, Jay's 10-year-old brother, is not a musical prodigy, but Robert and Orna remember when they figured out that Jay was.

"I think around, two, when he started writing and actually drawing instruments, we knew that he was fascinated with it," his mother explains.

At the age of 2, she says, Jay started writing and managed to draw and ask for a cello. "I was surprised, because neither of us have anything to do with string instruments. And I didn't expect him to know what it was," Orna says.

"What a cello was?" Pelley asks.

"Right," she replies.

Orna says there was no cello in the house and that her son had never seen a cello before. But he knew he wanted one.

So his mother brought him to a music store where he was shown a miniature cello. "And he just sat there. He put the cello. And he started playing on it. And I was like, 'How do you know how to do this?'" Orna remembers.

### **(CBS)**

By age 3, Jay was still drawing cellos, but he had turned them into notes on a scale. He was beginning to compose.

"He hears music in his head all the time. And he'll start composing and he doesn't even realize it probably, that he's doing it. But the teachers would get angry, and they would call us in for emergency meetings, you know, with seven people, sitting there trying to figure out how they're going to accommodate our son," Robert explains.

"Or stop him," Orna adds. In second grade, she says her son was "very problematic."

Jay has been told his hearing is many times more sensitive than an average person's. The sound of the city has to be shut out manually, but Jay can't turn off the music in his head. In fact, he told Pelley he often hears more than one new composition at a time.

"Multiple channels is what it's been termed," Jay explains. "That my brain is able to control two or three different musics at the same time, along with the channel of every day life and everything else."

By the age of 10, Jay was going to Julliard, among the world's top conservatories of music, on a full scholarship. At age 11 he was studying music theory with third-year college students. He may be the smallest guy in class, but when the music comes up in his head, Jay has a lot of confidence about what he puts down on paper.

"Do you ever go back and say, 'No, no, no. That's not right. This should be this way instead of that way,'" Pelley asks.

"No, I don't really ever do that," Jay replies.

Asked if he goes back to edit and revise his compositions, Jay says he doesn't need to, "because it just usually comes — it comes right the first time."

Sam Adler teaches Jay at Julliard, and he agrees Jay can be great — but only if he constantly questions his gift.

"Let's take a great genius in the musical world, someone like Beethoven. When you look at a Beethoven score, it's horrendous. He didn't have an eraser. So he had to cross it out. And it looks as if, you know, he was never satisfied. And that is something that comes with maturity. And I think that's going to happen to Jay," Adler says.

Asked if it's fair to say that there is potential, Adler says, "Absolutely."

Jay's studies include piano lessons with Elizabeth Wolfe. But Jay told Pelley he doesn't need an instrument — only his mind — to write music.

Asked what happens when he first hears a tune rise in his head, Jay says, "Well, at first I just listen to it, and then I start humming it. And then while walking, and I like walking a lot when I am inspired. Because then I walk to the beat of the music ... and I often start conducting as well."

In 2004, Jay was not an average 12-year-old — and he knew it. Catching onto baseball isn't as natural as playing piano.

When Pelley caught up with Jay nearly two years later at the Abbey Road Studios in London, his fifth symphony was in the hands of the London Symphony Orchestra,

recording for Sony BMG.

In the studio where the Beatles recorded and the "Star Wars" films were scored, Jay heard his symphony for the first time.

Asked where he was when he first started writing his fifth symphony, Jay says, "I was in room 301 of my school staring absently at a map across — on the opposite wall — bored to distraction."

The class was history. "But don't tell my teacher, OK," Jay says, laughing.

"That first day, I wrote about 23 bars of the first movement during that class and then, probably about 60 or 70 bars altogether," he recalls.

The finished work runs 190 pages and 1,328 bars. Jay's role at the studio is to make sure all the notes play just as he's imagined.

Every year or two, a brilliant child pianist or genius violin player emerges. Asked where Jay ranks, Zyman says "To be a prodigy composer is far rarer. You have to conquer these issues. How do you notate this rhythm? What's the range of the oboe? Can this be played on the piano? How do you compose for the harp? There are hundreds of thousands of bits of information that you need to master to be able to write a piece of music."

Music is not the only sound Jay is listening to inside his head. He's interested in just about everything — and, for now, he sees music almost as a hobby not necessarily his destiny.

"For example, one thing — I might study physics or psychology or as I mentioned, the computer science or cartography or a lot of other things," Jay explains.

Pelley says Jay's mind makes him the most mystifying interview he has ever done. As he talks, you can see in his eyes that he's

thinking about or listening to a dozen other channels.

Asked what would make him happy, Jay says, "That's a good question. Who can really define happiness?"

For Jay, happiness seems to flow from keeping his mind challenged.

Many accomplished composers spend a lifetime writing no more than five symphonies. Jay wrote his fifth at age 13. It's impossible to know where his mind will take him — and us — but, the *60 Minutes* team noticed that at the end of the recording session he was getting bored. As the orchestra played the last bars of this work, Jay pulled out his paper and started writing a

... "THE MANIFESTATIONS OF GENIUS"<sup>1</sup> in a person, are only the more or less successful efforts of that EGO to assert itself on the outward plane of its objective form--the man of clay--in the matter-of-fact, daily life of the latter. The EGOS of a Newton, an Æschylus, or a Shakespeare, are of the same essence and substance as the Egos of a yokel, an ignoramus, a fool, or even an idiot; and the self-assertion of their informing *genii* depends on the physiological and material construction of the physical man. No Ego differs from another Ego, in its primordial or original essence and nature. That which makes one mortal a great man and of another a vulgar, silly person is, as said, the quality and make-up of the physical shell or casing, and the adequacy or inadequacy of brain and body to transmit and give expression to the light of the real, *Inner* man; and this aptness

<sup>1</sup> In this quote Madame Blavatsky speaks of the great mystery of man's dual mind from which arises both the Higher and the lower Ego. Should the latter aspire to the great Unity and Universal Brotherhood, there are no limits to its growth and expansion into the world of sacrificial work where the pilgrims proceed as "those" who doth forevermore endure."

or in aptness is, in its turn, the result of Karma.

Or, to use another simile, physical man is the musical instrument, and the Ego, the performing artist. The potentiality of perfect melody of sound, is in the former--the instrument--and no skill of the latter can awaken a faultless harmony out of a broken or badly made instrument. This harmony depends on the fidelity of transmission, by word or act, to the objective plane, of the unspoken divine thought in the very depths of man's subjective or inner nature. Physical man may — to follow our simile — be a priceless Stradivarius or a cheap and cracked fiddle, or again a mediocrity between the two, in the hands of the Paganini who ensouls him.

From:

-H. P. Blavatsky Article: "Genius"

**DNYANESHEVARI — I**  
**COMMENTARY BY**  
**DNYANESHWAR**  
**MAHARAJ**  
**TRANSLATED INTO**  
**ENGLISH BY MANU**  
**SUBEDAR<sup>2</sup>G**  
**FROM FEAR TO**  
**HAPPINESS**

CARLOS CARDOSO AVELINE, BRAZIL

In the second paragraph of their 1776 Declaration of Independence, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson and other

<sup>2</sup> This first insertion of *Thenyaneshwari* begins near the end of Chapter Two. On page 10 of the Theosophy Company Edition of *The Voice of the Silence* HPB says of the *The Dnyaneshwari*: "As explained in the sixth Adhyaya of the king of mystic works — — that king of mystic works. — ED., A.T.R." "As explained in the sixth Adhyaya of that king of mystic works : — *Dnyaneshwari* — the body of the Yogi becomes as one *formed of the wind*; as a cloud from which limbs have sprouted out..."

members of the U. S. Congress mention some self-evident truths". The first one, they say, is that all men are created equal, (Equal before the Law of Karma', one might explain.).

The second self-evident truth is that all men have some inalienable rights, and among them are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.

Of these 'rights,' the third one is essential for the philosophy of Theosophy as it refers to the best possible use of both Life and Liberty — the two previously mentioned conditions.

Observation leads us to see that the Pursuit of Happiness is present in all forms of life. Such a goal is clearly far from being limited to the human realm. Plotinus, the neoplatonist, wrote that plants search for happiness. It is easy to see that all animals do the same. Knowing this, Buddhists wish "peace to all beings". But the specific question or challenge which must be faced by modern citizens is — how to find a lasting happiness within; how to get to an 'unconditional peace' which cannot be easily disturbed by any outer events.

:Life shows that the journey from here to happiness is not an easy one. And it is not short, either. We may well ask ourselves, therefore: what are we afraid of, after all? And why is it that fear emerges once and again in our emotions?

External sources of fear can only be active when, and if, there is a corresponding internal source of such a feeling. Without a subjective counterpart, no outward, objective threat or difficult situation can provoke unnecessary or "psychological" fear.

Indeed, our 'lower self' or personality is never afraid of anything purely external. It must also be afraid of some internal impulse, some desire, feeling or situation that threatens it and its sense of continuity — 'from within'.

The existence of fear, of course, is related to one's personal hopes and desires, and to one's emotional dependence on things, places or persons. We are instinctively afraid of anything that threatens our hopes and expectations; and these hopes may be unconscious.

If one takes something for granted which is not realistic, for instance ("I'm not going to get old" or "I'M not going to die"), fear will come. If one suppresses any specific fear on the conscious layers of one's mind, that same fear will become subconscious. It may soon surface later again, perhaps under other forms. Hatred often serves as a disguise for fear. One day, perhaps after some subconscious preparation, one may be able to accept an honest confrontation with the root-fear — always a form of ignorance — and then get rid of it.

That which is said of fear can, of course, be said of other feelings as well. There seems to be a 'symmetrical axis', a 'balance line' between our inner and outer sources of anxiety, happiness, or self-confidence, and many other psychological sensations and perceptions as well.

Individual states of mind run in parallel with, and are relatively independent from, our surrounding objective circumstances. You can have inner happiness while you face a difficult situation. You can feel sadness and despondency while everything seems to be objectively OK. To a great extent, it will depend on whether your higher self (your spiritual soul is, or is not, intensively present in the situation you face.

There can be no psychological fear in the presence of Atma-Buddhi. Everything is good and worthwhile, as long as the Higher Soul is directly engaged in one's activities. When the focus of our consciousness is established within the temple of our own spiritual soul, attachments disappear and we can have a complete confidence in Life which brings about a blissful self-forgetfulness. Yet

such a 'self-forgetfulness' is but the 'outer garment,' so to say, for a new focus of the consciousness: the inner awareness of our true Self. One 'forgets' one's narrow and small self because one has seen the true SELF. That 'outer forgetfulness' is unavoidable for one practical reason: it is a general law in Nature that all beings leave aside smaller forms of happiness once they see better and more enduring ways to be happy. Then the lower self may still suffer, but the real focus of consciousness will not be limited or misled by such 'personal' suffering.

It is the way you connect the inner and the outer worlds in your own consciousness that makes the difference. It is the meaning you give to facts and things, within the context of your own view of life', that makes you a happier or unhappier person along the whole process of a lifetime.

For this, Antahkarana — the metaphoric bridge between upper triad and lower quaternary — plays the decisive role.

The wordless 'voice within' is the 'voice of the silence' in our conscience; and it speaks through Antahkarana. It goes down to us through our own microcosmic and individualized version of the Jacob's ladder (Gn. 28: 11-13). Then an unconditional and long term joy, as well as an unlimited confidence in life get to be with us for good.

CARLOSO CARDOSO AVELINE —  
BRAZIL

**DNYANESHEVARI - I**  
**COMMENTARY BY**  
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Worldly troubles always keep away from him, in whose mind there is unbroken cheerfulness. When the stream of nectar is flowing in the heart, how can a man become hungry or thirsty? He, whose heart is cheerful, has no fear anywhere from anyone. His understanding dwells on the Supreme Spirit firmly and does not waver, like the flame of a lamp, which is put in a place where there is no wind. He, who has realized in his own person the identity of the ascetic (Yogi) and the enjoyer (Bhogi) must be recognized as stable minded (Sthira Budhi). He, who does not strenuously try to achieve this method of Yoga, is absorbed in objects of senses. His intelligence is wandering. He does not even seek the stability of understanding. If he does not even desire to secure a stable mind, how can he possibly have ease in his heart? If he does not seek peace of mind, he cannot get happiness even through an error. Salvation is not for such a one. The man, who has no peace in his mind, can never attain happiness, any more than you can grow crop out of seeds which have been previously scorched. Uncontrolled mind is the root of unhappiness. Therefore one must constantly make an effort to check the senses. The man, who lets his senses do what they want, will never overcome the objects of senses. If he should think at any time that he is getting free from them, it is a mistake. A boat can be drowned even within sight of the shore, if there were a storm. A full-fledged sage, who has approached the moment of salvation, if

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he entertains objects of senses even out of curiosity, will be involved again in the whole cycle of the misery of the world. There is no higher achievement, O Arjuna, than getting the senses under one's own control. When you meet a man whose senses are so controlled and do as they are directed, you must recognize him as sequal-minded (Sthira Budhi). A Yogi is alive to those truths to which all the other living beings are dead (asleep). A Yogi is asleep and indifferent to the objects of the senses in which all the living beings are constantly absorbed. Such a sage is without encumbrances. With renunciation in his heart, such a sage is like the ocean, deep and calm, not willing to over-run its shores even if all the rivers join it in great floods. Nor does it recede in hot weather when all the rivers are dried up and supply no water to it. In prosperity, his mind is indifferent (not jubilant). In adversity, it is nottroubled.

A small lamp can add little to the light of the sun and if the lamp is not there, the sun is still self-sufficient. So absorbed is he in his heart in th3e great happiness (of sSelf), that such a sage does not even remember achievement and plenty,when they come and go. Before the beauty of his own home (the light of his own heart), he spurns even the wealth of the gods. Much less could he be tempted then at the sight of a miserable hut of a rustic. If he is indifferent to nectar, he will not take broth. If he does not care even for the pleasures of heaven, what temptations can petty achievements in life hold out to him?

Content in the knowledge of Self, absorbed in the joy of Brahman, he alone is equal-minded (Sthira Budhi He has eschewed egoism, he has abandoned all desires, and he moves in this world having identified himself with everything. He experiences spontaneously this limitless condition of Brahman and at last attains Brahman without effort. Then even the agony of death cannot trouble him.

## **CHAPTER THREE –**

**Arjuna says to Shri Krishna: From what you have said, I gather that there is neither action nor the performer of action. If such is your deliberate opinion, why are you urging me on to take part in this terrible warfare? If you prohibit all actions, why do you ask me to do something which is heinous? You support the theory of no actions and yet you want me to do the unspeakable wrong of killing others. I am ignorant. I cannot find my way. If your advice is so contradictory, how can I discriminate? I despair of ever getting true knowledge. If the doctor himself administers poisonto a patient, there can be no hope for him. If you put a blind man on the wrong track, or give intoxicants to a monkey, what would be his condition? It was because I did not know anything and I was in serious perplexity that I asked your advice, but you say one thing after the other which contradicts itself. I am your follower. I put absolute confidence in you. You must tell me somethingthat will enable me to judge. Am I to believe that your are deliberately doing this to test my mind on the retext of giving me advice? Are you in earnest, or are you tryin to mislead me? Please say what you have to say indefinite terms. I may be of feeble understanding, but I will listen very carefully. A medicine is a necessity, but it might also be palatable and pleasing. Teach me the truth in terms full of deep meaning, but also in terms which I can understand. You are the great preceptor and what falls from you ought not to be ambiguous. Having you near me, I shall not be content with less, any more than a man, who reaches the ocean of nectar, would remain thirsty. It must be through accumulated merit of my previous lives, that I have bveen associated with you. I have hopes in my mind of learning what is right from you. You are the abode of**

supreme good. You are available to me as a mother is available to the child for milk. Tell me one definite thing, which it is proper for me to follow in this life and which will do one good in the next.

**Shri Krishn says to Arjuna: While describing to you the path of action (Karma Marga), I may incidentally mention to you the greatness of the path of knowledge (Dnyana Marga). You are puzzled for nothing, as you did not know what I was driving at. I have described to you the paths of action and knowledge. From the earliest ages these two paths have been introduced by Me in this world. The path of knowledge is pursued by the sages (Saankhyas), and when one is fully conversant with it, one secures immediate self-realization. The path of action (Karma Yoga) is practiced by those, who are anxious for liberation (Mumukshu), who ultimately attain salvation (Nirvana). Though apparently different, both paths lead to the same goal in the end, in the same manner as food gives satisfaction, whether cooked by oneself or by others. The rivers flowing towards the west and towards the east appear to be different, but they are the same in the end, when they merge into the ocean. Though directed towards the same end, the pursuit of one or the other of these paths depends on the capacity of the seekers. A bird catches the fruit of the tree in a single flight, but is it possible for a man to reach that fruit with the same swiftness? He will reach there gradually, *i.e.*, from one branch to another and will ultimately catch hold of the fruit. Those who practice the path of knowledge (Dnyana Yoga) accomplish the end (liberation) by one jump instantaneously like the bird. Other Yogis proceeding on the path of action, carrying out their proper duties (Dharma ) reach salvation gradually.**

Without the performance of obligatory actions, no one can attain the

**stage of non-desire (Naish karmya), in which the Yogi rejoices. It is absolute stupidity to expect any one to reach this end by neglecting his obligations. No one discards a boat, if he has to cross the river. If one must appease hunger, he must have his food cooked either by himself or by others. So long as there is no freedom from desire, there is action, but when contentment arises all desires spontaneously disappear. Those who aim at final liberation should not turn from their duties. It is not possible for one to perform actions or to abandon them at will. To talk of relinquishing actions is to talk nonsense, because however much one may wish, he cannot abandon them. So long as there are natural conditions (Prakriti, actions are being done, because all actions are subject to the three qualities (Gunas) and are being done involuntarily. Mere wish to abandon obligatory actions is not going to alter the tendencies of the senses. If you said you would do nothing, will your ears cease to hear, or the eyes fail to see, will the nose lose its function, will breathing be stopped, or will the mind become free from all ideas? Will hunger and thirst disappear? Will the cycle of sleep and waking stop? Will feet refuse to move and above all, will you be free from the chain of life and death? If all this cannot stop, then what is it that you would have abandoned? It is futile to believe that one can take up or throw away actions. A man, sitting in a carriage moves because he is in the carriage, though he may be himself motionless. A dry and insentient leaf moves in the sky because it is wafted up by the wind. Even a disinterested person (sage) performs actions by the force of nature and by the tendencies of the organs of action. So long as one is linked with nature (Prakriti), his abandonment of actions is impossible. To talk otherwise is to show futile obstinacy.**

Some men seek to restrict by checking the senses. But in reality, they

**cannot do so, as in their mind the desire for action always exists, though externally they may show he reverse. I am really sorry for such people, for they are doubtless holding on to the objects of senses.**

**I shall tell you the characteristics of a man, who has gone beyond all desires. He is steadfast in heart and absorbed in Brahman and outwardly pursues the normalworldly activities of life. He does not direct his senses towards anything; he is not afraid of the objects of senses and he does not omit to perform obligatory actions (Karma) as a duty. He does not obstruct the senses while doing actions; yet he is not controlled by the tides (violence) of these senses. He is not obsessed by desires. Nor is he tainted by the blackness of) delusion, just as the lotus in water, does not get wet. A sage living in his world appears like everybody else, just as the orb of the sun reflected in water appears like the sun, but there is no sun there in reality. Because he appears like one of the common crowd, you must not assess his spiritual worth accordingly. Recognise him to be free (Mukta), who shows these characteristics and who has bput himself beyond the snares o desire. Such a Yogi is worthy of universal respect. I ask you to set him up as your model. Control your mind; be firm in your heart; then let the senses freely perform their actions.**

**I repeat that it is not possible in life to remain free from actions and, therefore, actions have to be performed. Those that are prohibited by the Shastras must be eschewed. Do everything which is opportune and proper, but without motive for any of the results. There is a special characteristic of such action (Karma); being free from desires it leads a man to liberation. Whoever performs his duties arising in his own condition of life with care, certainly reaches liberation by his own action**

To perform one's duties properly is in itself the highest offering. Those who pursue this path are not touched by sin. It is only when one's duties are neglected and one is inclined to do erroneous acts, that he is caught in the cycle of life and death. The performance of one's duty is in itself the highest sacrifice (Yadna) and the man, who is devoted to such sacrifice, is free from all bonds. The world is tied up by actions. He, who allows himself to be drawn into this snare of delusion (Maya) is bound to fail to give daily offering.

I will now tell you a great tradition on this subject. When the Creator (Brahma) created this institution of the universe, he created all beings (Prani) simultaneously with their duties, which being too subtle, they were incapable of understanding. They all approached the Creator (Brahma) and said: "How are we to be guided in this world?" Then the Lord said to them: "We have laid down the proper duties to be performed by you according to your station in life. Perform them and you will find your desires spontaneously fructify. You need not absorb yourself in religious ceremonies. You need not pain the body. Nor go upon long journeys of pilgrimage. You need not practice physical Yoga (Hatha Yoga), or give devotion with any motive. You need not equip yourself with any charms and incantations. You need not worship the minor deities or engage in any fussy activities. Your obligatory duties are the one sacrifice (Yadna) you should offer. Do your duties cheerfully and without desire for fruits, just as a faithful wife serves her husband spontaneously and without expecting a reward. The performance of duty is the only sacrifice worth practicing. Therefore act accordingly. Duties properly done will fulfil all your desires. All deities will be thus satisfied. Doing one's duty (Dharma) is tantamount to the worship of the deities, who supply prosperity and security. If you worship the deities, they will be pleased with you, and mutual favour would arise. Then

whatever you propose will easily come to pass and all (legitimate) desires of your mind will be encompassed. Your words will come true. You will possess power to command others and the goddess of supremacy will wait on you. At the beginning of spring, the magnificence of the forest is manifested in plenitude of blossoms. So good fortune incarnate will come seeking after you., with every conceivable comfort. If you are solely devoted to your duties you will ever enjoy prosperity and will overcome all evils. Having obtained this affluence, if you succumb to the attractions of the objects of senses and indulge in them you will draw upon yourself big calamity. (Similar is the fate of the man) who will not employ prosperity given to him by God properly and who will not offer worship to the One Spirit by the performance of his duties, who will not worship with fire, or who will not entertain sages arriving at his house, who will be slack in devotion to his Guru, or who will refuse hospitality to the needy, or who will cause distress to the community. Those who turn their back on their duty (Dharma), who are filled with the pride of achievement, or who are absorbed in objects of enjoyment, will fall prey to acute unhappiness. They not only lose prosperity, but find it difficult even to enjoy, what they have got. Just as life departs from a dead body, magnificence is not found in the house of a pauper, light ceases when the lamp is put out, so, by failing in one's obligations, one is deprived of the source of all happiness.

Where a man strays from the path of duty he entirely loses his independence. Nemesis overakes him. He will be regarded as a thief and will be deprived of all, that he possesses. Sins envelop him like ghosts prowling in the night in a cemetery. He becomes the object of every kind of impurity existing in the three worlds. However much such erring ones may grumble, they will not be free from unhappiness."

In this way Brahmadev teaches people: Stick to your duty and never let your senses go astray. Aquatic creatures perish when they leave water; so does a man who forgets his duty. A man, who employs all his available resources for performing proper actions without any desire for fruit, who offers the worship ordained and who discharges his obligations to his ancestors, who enjoys what remains to himself, after he has done all this, with his family, is free from all evil. His sins disappear like disease on the use of nectar and delusion with the teachings of sages. Whatever one gets by keeping to the path of duty should be spent in satisfying one's obligations and if anything is left over, that should be enjoyed. But they are sinners (and what they enjoy is sinful), who assign to the Soul the properties of the body, Those who believe that all objects are meant for indulgence, who never think of anything beyond this, who do not realize that all possessions are means of performing sacrifices (Yadnas), who are anxious for nice dishes for their own self-satisfaction and who, through ignorance and selfishness, indulge themselves.

All one's resources are to be regarded as material, for offering worship in the form of performance of one's duty. The food, through which sacrifice (Yadna) can be performed and the deity propitiated, should not be regarded lightly. Is from food that living beings grow and rain produces food on earth. Rain comes about from sacrifice (Yadna) and actions (Karma) enable Yadna to be performed. Karma has its root in Brahman<sup>1</sup>

A man possessing eyesight leads a blind man after him. So the wise men perform

<sup>11</sup>According to *The Voice of the Silence* the root of Karma is in Compassion, or, as said on page 76: "This "compassion must not be regarded in the same light as "God, the divine love" of the Theists. Compassion stands here as an abstract, impersonal law, whose nature, being absolute Harmony, is thrown into confusion by discord, suffering and sin. — Ed.,A.T.

duty as a guide to ignorant people. If those who know, fail to act in this way, how can the ignorant find their path?

In this world whatever the leaders of the mass do, comes to be regarded as duty (Dharma) and the common crowd follow. This is quite natural. Good people, therefore, do not neglect actions but attend to them diligently. Take my own example. I follow this path. I perform duty (Dharma) not because any calamity can befall me, or I have to achieve any particular end. I am perfect and I am Omnipotent. You were witness of my prowess, when I brought to life the dead son of our Guru, and though I am free from all desires, I never cease acting. I do so in order that all living beings, whose existence depends on Me, should not go astray.

I can remain fully satisfied with Self, but that would be a bad example for other people. Noticing my conduct, people will act in imitation of me and neglect their work, which will lead to disorganisation of this world. The great ones and the wise ones never abandon Karma.

A man seeking an end, acts with the intention of securing that fruit. So should a disinterested person also act (though he has no expectation). The institutions of this world must necessarily be preserved. One should follow the path of duty and set an example to people to do the same and one should not keep aloof from them. A child that sucks the mother's breast with difficulty, cannot digest cooked food. Even in joke, you should not teach inaction to those, who are not capable of the performance of action. They should be taught the path of good actions and that path alone should be praised before them. Even those, who seek nothing, must continue to do their duty offering a good model. They would do so for universal welfare and be free from the bonds of Karma. As in a theatre, those who act as king and queen do not entertain in their mind any

feeling of being man and woman, though they succeed in creating this feeling in the minds of the audience, so the wise continue to do their duty. If you take somebody else's burden on your head, your head will feel the weight. Good and bad actions arise on account of nature, but ignorant men in their delusion think themselves as the cause of such actions. To such an egoist and perverted idiot, this deep spiritual wisdom need not be revealed. Narrating this to him would be a waste of time.

Wise men, who know the truth, eschew egoism from which all action arises in their life. Being conscious that they are different from the physical body, they place themselves beyond the three qualities (Gunas). They are merely onlookers of the activities of the body, although they remain in the body. Like the sun being unaffected by the activities of the creatures of this world, though endowed with form, the wise remain free from the bonds of action.

Only he, who is gripped by the three qualities (Gunas) and impelled by an illusion (Maya) is tainted by the effect of Karma. He assumes responsibility for actions, that are not his, but are performed by the senses doing their natural functions. My advice to you is: Perform all proper actions, offer them to God and let your heart be devoted to the Self. Never think that "this is the action and I am doing it for a particular object." Entertain no attachment for the body, abandon all desires and then you will earn the joy, which comes spontaneously.

Take your bow in your hand, mount your chariot, and with a firm mind, embrace the duty of the warrior. Spread your fame in this world and proclaim the significance of proper performance of duty by which the burden of the earth will be relieved. Abandon all doubts, set your mind on this battle and speak of nothing else. This being my firm opinion, those who accept it with faith and practise it implicitly, are free from the bonds of actions, though they are active.

Action is inevitable, but those who entertain attachment to the body and fondle the senses in disregard of this teaching or underestimating this truth or treating it with contempt, will be besotted by the wine of infatuation, gripped by the poison of the objects of senses and sunk in the mud of ignorance. Just as it is useless to keep a jewel in the hands of a dead man, or to tell a person, who is born blind about sunrise, just as the rise of the moon offers no satisfaction to the crows, so this great truth does not appeal to the stupid. Do not even discuss this subject with men, who are averse to the highest teaching (Paramartha). They will not be able to act up to this truth, but will jeer at it. A moth cannot bear light, but he meets death by touching light, and the enjoyment of objects of senses is thus suicidal.

The wise must not indulge the senses even out of curiosity or any other (innocent looking) motive. Can one play with a serpent, or associate with a tiger, or digest the virulent (Kalkut) poison? No matter how a fire originates, even if it is in sport, when the flames arise, they are difficult to control. The fondling of the senses produces no good result. They remain free from the by bonds of action.

Only he, who is gripped by the three qualities (Gunas) and impelled by an illusion (Maya) is tainted by the effect of Karma. He assumes the responsibility for actions, that are not his, but that are performed by the senses doing their natural functions. My advice to you is: Perform all proper actions, offer them to the One Spirit and let your heart be devoted to the Self.

The performance of one's own duty even when it is difficult, is beneficial and is to be preferred to any other actions, however, attractive they may be.

#### **Arjuna says to Shri Krishna:**

How does it happen that we see even the wise missing the proper path and going astray? The wise understand the difference between what is acceptable and what is not, and yet they err. A blind man might not be able to separate seed and husk, but how can a man with good sight make the same mistake? Those who abandon attachment to the senses feel dissatisfied and even recluses come back to society. While attempting to keep away from evil acts and escape sin, they are forcibly pulled into it.

**Shri Krishna says to Arjuna: The enemies to guard against are desire and anger. These enemies are ruthless and they are like death itself. They are like serpents on the hoard of knowledge, tiger in the caves of senses and unclean persons on the path of devotion. They are the rocks in the fortress of the physical body, the protecting wall in the village of the senses. Through the confusion which they create they exercise power in this world. They are at the root of (Rajas) activities of the mind and their functioning is evil. Being enemies of life, they are held in great respect in the city of death. There is no limit to their hunger, and hope itself increases their activities. Delusion is the younger sister of hope, which can consume everything as quickly as children could finish off a packet of sweetmeats. Delusion gives strength to desire. Desire and anger have their root in egotism. Desire and anger create hypocrisy and the suppression of truth. They destroy mental peace and substantiate illusion (Maya)**

I will tell you a very effectiveremedy for overcoming desire and anger. All actions arise through the function of the senses and it is in the senses that these enemies of wisdom reside. Therefore control the senses first and that will make the mind steady, reason independent and will not leave much room for these feelings. Desire and anger will be destroyed like the mirage disappearing in the rays of the sun. Thus when affection and aversion have been removed, will be established the supreme reign of Brahman, which will enable aman to enjoy true self in the Self. This is the great secret between the preceptor and the disciple, viz., the union of individual self, with the Self, Jiva and Shiva. Be firm, therefore in this faith and do your dutyhu

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

Shri Krishna says to Arjuna: This system of Yoga was imparted by me to the Lord Vaivaswat (sun). Tat was a long time ago. He imparted it to Manu, and Manu, having practiced it himself, imparted it to Ikshwaku. In this way it has been handed down. Several royal sages came to know this Yoga later on, but at the present moment, it is lost. When an individual is absorbed in the pursuit of objects of senses in the body, the knowledge of Self is forgotten, faith is weakened, enjoyment seems to be the supreme goal and the paraphernalia of worldly existence appears to be attractive. In a country where everybody is naked clothing is useless. To him, who is blind from birth, the sun can do no service. On an assembly of the deaf, music is wasted. Burglars dislike the moonlight. The crow cannot recognize the moon, as before the moon rises, its sight is lost. How can, therefore, these reach Brahman when they have not gone even to the borders of renunciation and when they do not know even the alphabet of reflection. This system of Yoga has been lost to the world on account

**of the increase of illusion and the subsequent passage of time.**

I have now without reservation conveyed to you what this system is. This is a great secret and as I have affection for you I have imparted it to you. You have love for me, you have devotion, and you have friendship. You, therefore, deserve my confidence. Though we are surrounded by warlike preparations, bear with me for a few moments.

**Arjuna says to Shri Krishna:** Where can there be greater affection than the affection of the mother to the child? You are the oasis in the desert of life. You are the mother of all that are helpless. It is truly by your favour, which will carry us forward. Even my ancestors did not know, who was Vaivaswat and how did you manage to tell this Yoga to him? The sun is more ancient than any of us and you were only born the other day. I do not know the mystery of your life, bbut I find what you just said