



Adi Shankara

# भजगोविन्दं

## Bhaja Govindam

A Hymn to Govinda - Krishna  
by Sripad Shankaracharya



Govinda

भजगोविन्दं भजगोविन्दं  
गोविन्दं भजमूढमते ।  
संप्राप्ते सन्निहिते काले  
नहि नहि रक्षति ढुकृञ्करणे ॥ १

### Text 1

bhajagovindam bhajagovindam  
govindam bhajamūḍhamate ।  
samprāpte sannihite kāle  
nahi nahi rakṣati ḍukṛñkaraṇe ॥ 1

Worship Govinda, Worship Govinda, Worship Govinda. Oh fool! Rules of Grammar will not save you at the time of your death.

मूढ जहीहि धनागमतृष्णां  
कुरु सद्बुद्धिं मनसि वितृष्णाम् ।  
यल्लभसे निजकर्मोपात्तं  
वित्तं तेन विनोदय चित्तम् ॥ २

### Text 2

mūḍha jahīhi dhanāgamatr̥ṣṇāṁ  
kuru sadbuddhiṁ manasi vit̥ṣṇām ।  
yallabhase nijakarmopāttam  
vittam tena vinodaya cittam ॥ 2

Oh fool! Give up your thirst to amass wealth, devote your mind to thoughts to the Real. Be content with what comes through actions already performed in the past.

नारीस्तनभर नाभीदेशं  
दृष्ट्वा मागामोहावेशम् ।  
एतन्मांसावसादि विकारं  
मनसि विचिन्तय वारं वारम् ॥ ३

### Text 3

nārīstanabhara nābhīdeśam  
dr̥ṣṭvā māgāmohāveśam ।  
etanmāmsāvasādi vikāram  
manasi vicintaya vāram vāram ॥ 3

Do not get drowned in delusion by going wild with passions and lust by seeing a woman's navel and chest. Bodies are flesh, fat and blood. Do not fail to remember this again and again in your mind.

नलिनीदलगत जलमतितरलं  
तद्वज्जीवितमतिशयचपलम् ।  
विद्धि व्याध्यभिमानग्रस्तं  
लोकं शोकहतं च समस्तम् ॥ ४

**Text4**

nalinīdalagata jalamatitaralam  
tadvajjīvitamatiśayacapalam ।  
viddhi vyādhyabhimānagrastaṁ  
lokaṁ śokahataṁ ca samastam ॥ 4

Uncertain is the life of man as rain drops on a lotus leaf. Know that the whole world remains a prey to disease, ego and grief.

यावद्वित्तोपार्जन सक्तः  
स्तावन्निज परिवारो रक्तः ।  
पश्चाज्जीवति जर्जर देहे  
वार्ता कोऽपि न पृच्छति गेहे ॥ ५

**Text 5**

yāvadvittopārjana saktaḥ  
stāvannija parivāro raktaḥ ।  
paścājjīvati jarjara dehe  
vārtāṁ ko'pi na pṛcchati gehe ॥ 5

So long as a man is fit and able to support his family, see the affection all those around him show. But no one at home cares to even have a word with him when his body totters due to old age.

यावत्पवनो निवसति देहे  
तावत्पृच्छति कुशलं गेहे ।  
गतवति वायौ देहापाये  
भार्या बिभ्यति तस्मिन्काये ॥ ६

**Text 6**

yāvatpavano nivasati dehe  
tāvatpṛcchati kuśalaṁ gehe ।  
gatavati vāyau dehāpāye  
bhāryā bibhyati tasminkāye ॥ 6

When one is alive, his family members enquire kindly about his welfare. But when the soul departs from the body, even his wife runs away in fear of the corpse.

बालस्तावत्क्रीडासक्तः  
तरुणस्तावत्तरुणीसक्तः ।  
वृद्धस्तावच्चिन्तासक्तः  
परे ब्रह्मणि कोऽपि न सक्तः ॥ ७

**Text 7**

bālastāvatkrīḍāsaktaḥ  
taruṇastāvattaruṇīsaktaḥ ।  
vṛddhastāvaccintāsaktaḥ  
pare brahmaṇi ko'pi na saktaḥ ॥ 7

Childhood is lost in play. Youth is lost by attachment to woman. Old age passes away by thinking over many past things. Alas! Hardly is there anyone who yearns to be lost in Parabrahman.

काते कान्ता कस्ते पुत्रः  
संसारोऽयमतीव विचित्रः ।  
कस्य त्वं कः कुत आयातः  
तत्त्वं चिन्तय तदिह भ्रातः ॥ ८

**Text 8**

kāte kāntā kaste putraḥ  
saṁsāro'yamatīva vicitraḥ ।  
kasya tvaṁ kaḥ kuta āyātaḥ  
tattvaṁ cintaya tadiha bhrātaḥ ॥ 8

Who is your wife? Who is your son? Strange is this Samsara. Of whom are you?  
Where have you come from? Brother, ponder over these truths.

सत्सङ्गत्वे निस्सङ्गत्वं  
निस्सङ्गत्वे निर्मोहत्वम् ।  
निर्मोहत्वे निश्चलतत्त्वं  
निश्चलतत्त्वे जीवन्मुक्तिः ॥ ९

**Text 9**

satsaṅgatve nissṅgatvaṁ  
nissṅgatve nirmohatvam ।  
nirmohatve niścalatattvaṁ  
niścalatattve jīvanmuktiḥ ॥ 9

From Satsanga comes non-attachment; from non-attachment comes freedom from  
delusion, which leads to self-settledness. From self-settledness comes Jivan  
Mukti (liberation).

वयसिगते कः कामविकारः  
शुष्के नीरे कः कासारः ।  
कशीणेवित्ते कः परिवारः  
ज्ञाते तत्त्वे कः संसारः ॥ १०

**Text 10**

vayasigate kaḥ kāmavikāraḥ  
śuṣke nīre kaḥ kāsāraḥ ।  
kśīṇevitte kaḥ parivāraḥ  
jñāte tattve kaḥ saṁsāraḥ ॥ 10

What good is lust when youth has fled? What use is a lake which has no water?  
Where are the relatives when wealth is gone? Where is Samsara (the continuation  
of birth and death) when the Truth is known?

मा कुरु धन जन यौवन गर्वं  
हरति निमेषात्कालः सर्वम् ।  
मायामयमिदमखिलं हित्वा  
ब्रह्मपदं त्वं प्रविश विदित्वा ॥ ११

**Text 11**

mā kuru dhana jana yauvana garvaṁ  
harati nimeṣātkālaḥ sarvam ।  
māyāmayamidamakhilam hitvā  
brahmapadam tvaṁ praviśa veditvā ॥ 11

Do not boast of wealth, friends, and youth. Each one of these are destroyed within  
a minute. Free yourself from the illusion of the world of Maya and attain the  
timeless Truth.

दिनयामिन्यौ सायं प्रातः  
शिशिरवसन्तौ पुनरायातः ।  
कालः क्रीडति गच्छत्यायुः  
तदपि न मुञ्चत्याशावायुः ॥ १२

**Text 12**

dinayāminyau sāyaṁ prātaḥ  
śiśiravasantau punarāyātaḥ ।  
kālaḥ kṛīḍati gacchatyāyuh  
tadapi na muñcatyāśāvāyuh ॥ 12

Daylight and darkness, dusk and dawn, winter and springtime come and go. Time plays and life ebbs away. But the storm of desire never leaves.

द्वादशमञ्जरिकाभिरशेषः  
कथितो वैयाकरणस्यैषः ।  
उपदेशो भूद्विद्यानिपुणैः  
श्रीमच्छन्करभगवच्छरणरिः ॥ १३

**Text 13**

dvādaśamañjarikābhiraśeṣaḥ  
kathito vaiyākaraṇasyaiṣaḥ ।  
upadeśo bhūdvīdyānipuṇaiḥ  
śrīmacchankarabhagavaccharaṇariḥ ॥ 13

This bouquet of twelve verses was imparted to a grammarian by the all-knowing Shankara, adored as the Bhagavadpada.

काते कान्ता धन गतचिन्ता  
वातुल किं तव नास्ति नियन्ता ।  
त्रिजगति सज्जनसं गतिरैका  
भवति भवार्णवतरणे नौका ॥ १४

**Text 14**

kāte kāntā dhana gatacintā  
vātula kiṁ tava nāsti niyantā ।  
trijagati sajjanasaṁ gatiraikā  
bhavati bhavārṇavatarāṇe naukā ॥ 14

Oh mad man! Why this engrossment in thoughts of wealth? Is there no one to guide you? There is only one thing in three worlds that can save you from the ocean of Samsara. Get into that boat of Satsangha (knowledge of the Truth) quickly.

जटिलो मुण्डी लुञ्छितकेशः  
काषायाम्बरबहुकृतवेषः ।  
पश्यन्नपि च न पश्यति मूढः  
उदरनिमित्तं बहुकृतवेषः ॥ १५

**Text 15**

jaṭilo muṇḍī luñchitakeśaḥ  
kāṣāyāmbarabahukṛtaveṣaḥ ।  
paśyannapi cana paśyati mūḍhaḥ  
udaranimittam bahukṛtaveṣaḥ ॥ 15

There are many who go with matted locks, many who have clean shaven heads, many whose hairs have been plucked out; some are clothed in saffron, yet others in various colours --- all just for a livelihood. Seeing truth revealed before them, still the foolish ones see it not.

अण्णं गलितं पलितं मुण्डं  
दशनविहीनं जतं तुण्डम् ।  
वृद्धो याति गृहीत्वा दण्डं  
तदपि न मुञ्चत्याशापिण्डम् ॥ १६

**Text 16**

aṅgaṃ galitaṃ palitaṃ muṇḍaṃ  
daśanavihīnaṃ jataṃ tuṇḍam ।  
vṛddho yāti grhītvā daṇḍaṃ  
tadapi na muñcatyāśāpiṇḍam ॥ 16

Strength has left the old man's body; his head has become bald, his gums toothless and leaning on crutches. Even then the attachment is strong and he clings firmly to fruitless hope.

अग्ने वह्निः पृष्ठेभानुः  
रात्रौ चुबुकसमर्पितजानुः ।  
करतलभिकशस्तरुतलवासः  
तदपि न मुञ्चत्याशापाशः ॥ १७

**Text 17**

agre vahniḥ pṛṣṭhebhānuḥ  
rātrau cubukasamarpitajānuḥ ।  
karatalabhikśastarutalavāsaḥ  
tadapi na muñcatyāśāpāśaḥ ॥ 17

Behold there lies the man who sits warming up his body with the fire in front and the sun at the back; at night he curls up the body to keep out of the cold; he eats his beggar's food from the bowl of his hand and sleeps beneath the tree. Still in his heart, he is a wretched puppet at the hands of passions.

कुरुते गङ्गासागरगमनं  
व्रतपरिपालनमथवा दानम् ।  
ज्ञानविहिनः सर्वमतेन  
मुक्तिं न भजति जन्मशतेन ॥ १८

**Text 18**

kurute gaṅgāsāgaragamanam  
vrataparipālanamathavā dānam ।  
jñānavihinaḥ sarvamatenā  
muktiṃ na bhajati janmaśatena ॥ 18

One may go to the Ganga, observe fasts, and give away riches in charity! Yet, devoid of Jnana, nothing can give Mukthi even at the end of a hundred births.

सुर मंदिर तरु मूल निवासः  
शय्या भूतल मजिनं वासः ।  
सर्व परिग्रह भोग त्यागः  
कस्य सुखं न करोति विरागः ॥ १९

**Text 19**

sura mandira taru mūla nivāsaḥ  
śayyā bhūtala majinaṃ vāsaḥ ।  
sarva parigraha bhoga tyāgaḥ  
kasya sukhaṃ na karoti virāgaḥ ॥ 19

Take your residence in a temple or below a tree, wear the deerskin for the dress, and sleep with mother earth as your bed. Give up all attachments and renounce all comforts. Blessed with such Vairagya, could any fail to be content?

योगरतो वाभोगरतोवा  
सण्णरतो वा सण्णवीहिनः ।  
यस्य ब्रह्मणि रमते चित्तं  
नन्दति नन्दति नन्दत्येव ॥ २०

**Text 20**

yogarato vābhogaratovā  
saṅgarato vā saṅgavīhinaḥ ।  
yasya brahmaṇi ramate cittam  
nandati nandati nandatyeva ॥ 20

One may take delight in Yoga or Bhoga, may have attachment or detachment. But only he whose mind steadily delights in Brahman enjoys bliss, no one else.

भगवद् गीता किञ्चिदधीता  
गण्गा जललव कणिकापीता ।  
सकृदपि येन मुरारि समर्चा  
क्रियते तस्य यमेन न चर्चा ॥ २१

**Text 21**

bhagavad gītā kiñcidadhītā  
gaṅgā jalalava kaṇikāpītā ।  
sakṛdapi yena murāri samarcā  
kriyate tasya yamena na carcā ॥ 21

Let a man read but a little from the Bhagavad-Gita, drink just a drop of water from the Ganga, worship Murari (Krishna) just once. He then will have no altercation with Yama (the lord of death).

पुनरपि जननं पुनरपि मरणं  
पुनरपि जननी जठरे शयनम् ।  
इह संसारे बहुदुस्तारे  
कृपयाऽपारे पाहि मुरारे ॥२२

**Text 22**

punarapi jananam punarapi maraṇam  
punarapi janani jaṭhare śayanam ।  
iha saṁsāre bahudustāre  
kṛpayā'pāre pāhi murāre ॥22

Born again, death again, birth again to stay in the mother's womb! It is indeed hard to cross this boundless ocean of Samsara. Oh Murari! Redeem me through Thy mercy.

रथ्या चर्पट विरचित कन्थः  
पुण्यापुण्य विवर्जित पन्थः ।  
योगी योगनियोजित चित्तो  
रमते बालोन्मत्तवदेव ॥ २३

**Text 23**

rathyā carpaṭa viracita kanthaḥ  
puṇyāpuṇya vivarjita panthaḥ ।  
yogī yoganiyojita citto  
ramate bālonmattavadeva ॥ 23

There is no shortage of clothing for a monk so long as there are rags cast off the road. Freed from vice and virtue, onward he wanders. One who lives in communion with God enjoys bliss, pure and uncontaminated, like a child and as someone intoxicated.

कस्त्वं कोऽहं कुत आयातः  
का मे जननी को मे तातः ।  
इति परिभावय सर्वमसारम्  
विश्वं त्यक्त्वा स्वप्न विचारम् ॥ २४

**Text 24**

kastvaṁ ko'haṁ kuta āyātaḥ  
kā me jananī ko me tātaḥ ।  
iti paribhāvaya sarvamasāram  
viśvaṁ tyaktvā svapna vicāram ॥ 24

Who are you? Who am I? From where do I come? Who is my mother, who is my father? Ponder thus, look at everything as essence-less and give up the world as an idle dream.

त्वयि मयि चान्यत्रैको विष्णुः  
व्यर्थं कुप्यसि मय्यसहिष्णुः ।  
भव समचित्तः सर्वत्र त्वं  
वाञ्छस्यचिराद्यदि विष्णुत्वम् ॥ २५

**Text 25**

tvayi mayi cānyatraiko viṣṇuḥ  
vyartham kupyasi mayyasahiṣṇuḥ ।  
bhava samacittaḥ sarvatra tvaṁ  
vāñchasyacirādyadi viṣṇutvam ॥ 25

In me, in you and in everything, none but the same Vishnu dwells. Your anger and impatience is meaningless. If you wish to attain the quality of Vishnu soon, have Sama Bhāva always.

शत्रौ मित्रे पुत्रे बन्धौ  
मा कुरु यत्नं विग्रहसन्धौ ।  
सर्वस्मिन्नपि पश्यात्मानं  
सर्वत्रोत्सृज भेदाज्ञानम् ॥ २६

**Text 26**

śatrau mitre putre bandhau  
mā kuru yatnaṁ vighrahasandhau ।  
sarvasminnapi paśyātmānaṁ  
sarvatrotsrja bhedājñānam ॥ 26

Do not waste your efforts to win the love of or to fight against friend and foe, children and relatives. See yourself in everyone and give up all feelings of duality completely.

कामं क्रोधं लोभं मोहं  
त्यक्त्वाऽत्मानं भावय कोऽहम् ।  
आत्मज्ञान विहीना मूढाः  
ते पच्यन्ते नरकनिगूढाः ॥ २७

**Text 27**

kāmaṁ krodhaṁ lobhaṁ moham  
tyaktvā'tmānaṁ bhāvaya ko'ham ।  
ātmajñāna vihīnā mūḍhāḥ  
te pacyante narakaniḡḍhāḥ ॥ 27

Give up lust, anger, infatuation, and greed. Ponder over your real nature. Fools are they who are blind to the Self. Cast into hell they suffer there endlessly.

गेयं गीता नाम सहस्रं  
ध्येयं श्रीपति रूपमजस्रम् ।  
नेयं सज्जन सण्णे चित्तं  
देयं दीनजनाय च वित्तम् ॥ २८

**Text 28**

geyaṁ gītā nāma sahasraṁ  
dhyeyaṁ śrīpati rūpamajasraṁ ।  
neyaṁ sajjana saṅge cittaṁ  
deyaṁ dīnajanāya ca vittaṁ ॥ 28

Regularly recite from the Bhagavad-Gita, meditate on Vishnu in your heart, and chant His thousand glories. Take delight to be with the noble and the holy. Distribute your wealth in charity to the poor and the needy.

सुखतः क्रियते रामाभोगः  
पश्चाद्धन्त शरीरे रोगः ।  
यद्यपि लोके मरणं शरणं  
तदपि न मुञ्चति पापाचरणम् ॥ २९

**Text 29**

sukhataḥ kriyate rāmābhogaḥ  
paścāddhanta śarīre rogaḥ ।  
yadyapi loke maraṇaṁ śaraṇaṁ  
tadapi na muñcati pāpācaraṇam ॥ 29

He who yields to lust for pleasure leaves his body a prey to disease. Though death brings an end to everything, man does not give up the sinful path.

अर्थमनर्थं भावय नित्यं  
नास्तिततः सुखलेशः सत्यम् ।  
पुत्रादपि धन भाजां भीतिः  
सर्वत्रैषा विहि रीतिः ॥ ३०

**Text 30**

arthamanarthaṁ bhāvaya nityaṁ  
nāstitataḥ sukhaleśaḥ satyam ।  
putrādapi dhana bhājāṁ bhītiḥ  
sarvatraiṣā vihiā rītiḥ ॥ 30

Wealth is not welfare, truly there is no joy in it. Reflect thus at all times. A rich man fears even his own son. This is the way of wealth everywhere.

प्राणायामं प्रत्याहारं  
नित्यानित्य विवेकविचारम् ।  
जाप्यसमेत समाधिविधानं  
कुर्ववधानं महदवधानम् ॥ ३१

**Text 31**

prāṇāyāmaṁ pratyāhāraṁ  
nityānitya vivekavicāraṁ ।  
jāpyasameta samādhividhānaṁ  
kurvavadhānaṁ mahadavadhānam ॥ 31

Regulate the Pranas (life airs within), remain unaffected by external influences and discriminate between the real and the fleeting. Chant the holy name of God and silence the turbulent mind. Perform these with care, with extreme care.



गुरुचरणाम्बुज निर्भर भक्तः  
संसारादचिराद्भव मुक्तः ।  
सेन्द्रियमानस नियमादेवं  
द्रक्ष्यसि निज हृदयस्थं देवम् ॥ ३२

Text 32

gurucaraṇāmbuja nirbhara bhakataḥ  
saṁsārādacirādbhava muktaḥ ।  
sendriyamānasa niyamādevaṁ  
drakśyasi nija hṛdayasthaṁ devam ॥ 32

Oh devotee of the lotus feet of the Guru! May thou be soon free from Samsara. Through disciplined senses and controlled mind, thou shalt come to experience the indwelling Lord of your heart!

मूढः कश्चन वैयाकरणो  
डुकृञ्करणाध्ययन धुरिणः ।  
श्रीमच्छम्कर भगवच्छिष्यै  
बोधित आसिच्छोधितकरणः ॥ ३३

Text 33

mūḍhaḥ kaścana vaiyākaraṇo  
ḍukṛñkaraṇādhyayana dhuriṇaḥ ।  
śrīmacchamkara bhagavacchiṣyai  
bodhita āsicchodhitakaraṇaḥ ॥ 33

Thus was a silly grammarian lost in rules cleansed of his narrow vision and shown the Light by Shankara's apostles.

भजगोविन्दं भजगोविन्दं  
गोविन्दं भजमूढमते ।  
नामस्मरणादन्यमुपायं  
नहि पश्यामो भवतरणे ॥ ३४

Text 34

bhajagovindaṁ bhajagovindaṁ  
govindaṁ bhajamūḍhamate ।  
nāmasmaraṇādanyamupāyaṁ  
nahi paśyāmo bhavataṛaṇe ॥ 34

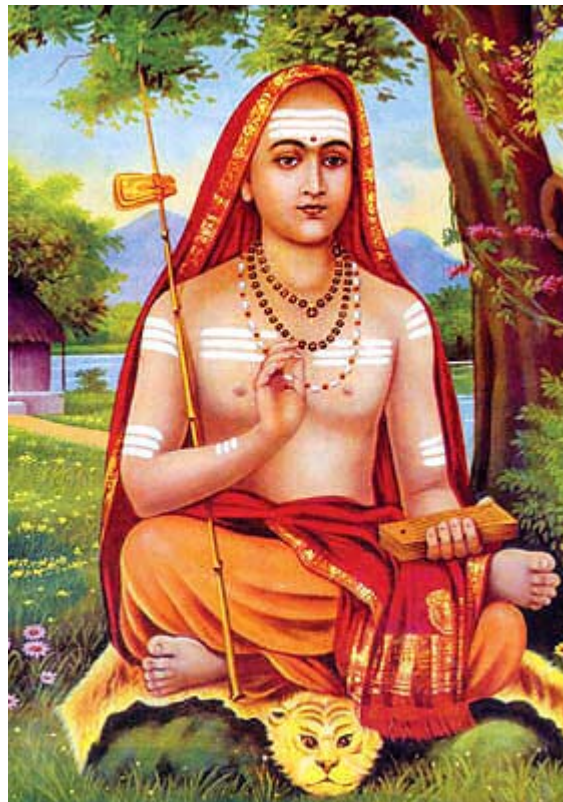
Worship Govinda, worship Govinda, worship Govinda, Oh fool! Other than chanting the Lord's names, there is no other way to cross the life's ocean.



## Adi Shankara's - Bhaja Govindam

Bhaja Govindam was written by Jagadguru Adi Shankaracharya and is one of his greatest compositions.

Shankaracharya is widely known for his teachings on Vedanta. He was born in the village of Kaladi, in South India, about 2500 years ago to his Brahmin parents, Sivaguru and Aryamba. He travelled throughout India during his life, preaching and establishing four important maths, or centres, and accepted numerous disciples. He had also composed a number of verses and hymns of his knowledge and insight. However, the Bhaja Govindam is perhaps his greatest. He is still today one of the greatest influences in the present-day understanding of Vedic philosophy, with numerous schools of thought throughout India still expounding his teachings.



He primarily taught the non-dual, or advaita, form of understanding, teaching that everything is ultimately one. Many of the commentaries on the Vedic texts, such as the Brahma-samhita, the Upanishads, and others, are written with commentaries by those who follow his advaitic principles. Thus, many such texts have the impersonalistic sway to them, leaving out the idea that everything comes from a personal or Supreme Creator. However, before he left this world, he composed the Bhaja Govindam prayers that evokes the mood of devotion to Lord Govinda, Krishna.

It is in this prayer that he emphasizes above all else the importance for developing devotion for Govinda/ Krishna, which is the principle means for attaining the Grace of the Supreme, and the freedom from further rounds of reincarnating in material existence. It is this prayer that leaves us no doubt that his final instruction was to give up our egotistical differences and surrender to Lord Krishna. It also encapsulates the sum and substance of all Vedantic thought in whatever other works that he had written.

There is a story attached to the composition of this Hymn. It is said that Shankara was walking along a street in Varanasi one day, accompanied by his disciples. He heard an old scholar studying the grammatical rules of Sanskrit by Panini. Shankara was touched with pity at seeing the plight of the old man spending his years at a mere intellectual accomplishment, while he would be better off praying

and spending the rest of his time to Govinda, the Supreme Lord. Taking pity on him, he went up and advised him not to waste his time on grammar at his advanced age but to turn his mind to God in worship and adoration. Shankara understood that the majority of the world was also engaged in mere intellectual, sense pleasures and not in the divine contemplation. Seeing this, he burst forth with the verses of Bhaja govindam

In the verses of Bhaja Govindam, Shankara, like no other, explains our fallacies, our wrong outlook for life, and dispells our ignorance and delusions. Thus bhaja govindam was originally known as moha mudgāra, *the remover of delusions*.

Shankara explains, nay chides, us for spending our time in useless trivia like amassing wealth, lusting after (wo)men and requests us to discriminate and cultivate the knowledge to learn the difference between the real and the unreal, spirit and matter. To emphasise that, he concludes that all knowledge other than the Self-Knowledge is useless. Shankara makes the person realize how foolish he/she is in the conduct and behaviour by these verses, and shows the purpose of our worldly existence, which is to seek Govinda and attain Him.

Shankara's words may seem to be quite piercing and direct in this hymn, missing the softness and tenderness often found in his other texts. The reason is that this was an extempore recital to an old man, wasting his time. His words can be compared to a knife of a doctor. The doctor's knife cruelly removes the tumour with much pain, but removing the tumour ultimately restores good health in the patient. So is Shankara's direct words, which pierce and point out our ignorance. It is a knife into the heart of worldliness, and by removing this tumour of ignorance; we can attain everlasting bliss by taking shelter of Govinda.

Bhaja govindam has been set to musical tones and sung as prayer songs by children. It is divided into dvādashapaNjarikā and charpaTapaNjarikā for this purpose. The former is a set of verses (verses 1-12) while the rest of the verses form charpaTapaNjarikā.

Though sung as a bhajan, it contains the essence of vedanta and implores the man to think, "Why am I here in this life ? Why am I amassing wealth, family, but have no peace ? What is the Truth ? What is the purpose of life ? The person thus awakened gets set on a path to the inner road of Selfrealisation.

Anyone who listens to the music of Bhaja govindam is attracted to it. However, the significance of the text goes much deeper and contains a well defined philosophy of attaining salvation (Moksha) by taking shelter of Govinda / Krishna.

*May the achārayā guide us from ignorance to truth . OM tat sat.*

**Srila Prabhupada:** "The Sankara's Bhaja Govinda verse is as follows: bhaja govindam bhaja govindam ..... This is Sankara's last instruction to his followers, and the purport is that the mayavadi philosophers are very much accustomed to draw favorable meanings from unwanted interpretations by grammatical jugglery. In Sanskrit the grammatical jugglery is a great puzzle, there are many words which can be changed into different meanings by grammatical root derivations and affixing and prefixing pratyayas.

So Sankara advised that do not try to exact favorable conclusions by beating the Sastras, but be submissive to Lord Govinda and worship Him. Otherwise, this grammatical jugglery of words will not help you at the time of death. At that time only if you can somehow or other remember the Lotus Feet of Govinda, Krishna, that will save you, O' the fool number-one. Don't waste your time in misinterpreting the sastras." (*SP. Letter January 21, 1970 / Los Angeles* )



bhaja govindam bhaja govindam govindam bhaja mūdhamate

## Appendix: Sanskrit words and meanings

*The following words and meanings are added as an appendix to allow the reader to learn Sanskrit words.*

भज	= worship;
गोविन्दं	= Govinda;
मूढमते	= O, foolish mind!;
संप्राप्ते	= ( when you have) reached/obtained;
सन्निहिते	= (in the) presence/nearness of;
काले	= Time (here:Lord of Death, Yama);
नहि	= No; never;
रक्षति	= protects;
डुकृञ्करणे	= the grammatical formula DukRi.nkaraNe;
.. १..	= Text 1

मूढ	= Oh fool!;
जहीहि	= jahi+iha, leave/give up+here(in this world);
धन	= wealth;
अगम	= coming/arrival;
तृष्णां	= thirst/desire;
कुरु	= Do;act;
सद्बुद्धिं	= sat.h+buddhiM, good+awareness(loosely speaking:mind);
मनसि	= in the mind;
वितृष्णां	= desirelessness;
यत्नलभसे	= yat.h+labhase, whatever+(you)obtain;
निजकर्म	= nija+karma, one's+duty(normal work);
उपात्त	= obtained;
वित्तं	= wealth;
तेन	= by that; with that;
विनोदय	= divert/recreate(be happy);
चित्तं	= mind;
.. २..	= 2

नारी	= woman;
स्तनभर	= breasts that are(full-with milk);
नाभीदेशं	= nAbhi+deshaM, navel+region/country;
दृष्ट्वा	= having seen;
मागा	= mA+gaa, Don't+go;
मोहावेशं	= infatuated state(moha+AveshaM-seizure);
एतन्	= this;
मांसावसादि	= mAmsau+Adi, flesh+etc;
विकारं	= appearance (generally, grotesque/ugly);
मनसि	= in the mind;
विचिन्तय	= think well;
वारं	= again;
वारं	= and again;
.. ३..	= 3

नलिनीदलगत	= nalinI+dala+gata, lotus+petal+reached/gone;
जल	= water(drop);
अतितरलं	= ati+tarala, very+unstable;
तद्वत्	= like that;
जीवित	= life;
अतिशय	= wonderful;
चपलं	= fickle-minded;
विद्धि	= know for sure;
व्याधि	= disease;
अभिमान	= self-importance;
ग्रस्तं	= having been caught/seized;
लोकं	= world;people;
शोकहतं	= attacked(hata) by grief(shoka);
च	= and;
समस्तं	= entire;
.. ४..	= 4

यावत्	= so long as;
वित्त	= wealth;
उपार्जन	= earning/acquiring;
सक्तः	= capable of;
तावन्नज	= tAvat.h+nija, till then+one's;
परिवारः	= family;
रक्तः	= attached;
पश्चात्	= later;
जीवति	= while living(without earning);
जर्जर	= old/digested (by disease etc);
देहे	= in the body;
वार्ता	= word (here enquiry/inquiry);
कोऽपि	= kaH+api, whosoever; even one;
न	= not;
पृच्छति	= inquires/asks/minds;
गेहे	= in the house;
.. ५..	= 5

यावत्	= so long as;
पवनः	= air/breath;
निवसति	= lives/dwells;
देहे	= in thge body;
तावत्	= till then;
पृच्छति	= asks/inquires;
कुशलं	= welfare;
गेहे	= in the house;
गतवति	= while gone;
वायौ	= air(life-breath);
देहापाये	= when life departs the body;
भार्या	= wife;
बिभ्यति	= is afraid;fears;
तस्मिन्काये	= tasmin.h+kaye, in that body;
.. ६..	= 6

बालः	= young boy;
तावत्	= till then (till he is young);
क्रीडा	= play;
सक्तः	= attached/engrossed/absorbed;
तरुणः	= young man;
तावत्	= till then;
तरुणी	= young woman;
सक्तः	= attached/engrossed;
वृद्धः	= old man;
तावत्	= till then;
चिन्ता	= worry;
सक्तः	= attached/engrossed/absorbed;
परे	= in the lofty;high;supreme;
ब्रह्मणि	= Brahman.h ;God;
कोऽपि	= whosoever;
न	= not;
सक्तः	= attached/absorbedengrossed;
.. ७..	= 7

काते	= kA+te, who+your;
कान्ता	= wife;
कस्ते	= kaH+te, who+your;
पुत्रः	= son;
ससारः	= world/family;
अयं	= this;
अतीव	= great/big/very much;
विचित्रः	= wonderful/mysterious;
कस्य	= whose;
त्वं	= you;
कः	= who;
कुतः	= from where;
आयातः	= have come;
तत्त्वं	= truth/nature;
चिन्तय	= think well/consider;
तदिह	= tat.h+iha, that+here;
भ्रातः	= brother;
.. ८..	= 8

सत्सङ्गत्वे	= in good company;
निस्सङ्गत्वं	= aloneness/non-attachment/detachment;
निर्मोहत्वं	= non-infatuated state/clearheadedness;
निश्चलतत्त्वं	= tranquillity/imperturbability;
जीवन्मुक्तिः	= salvation+freedom from bondage of birth;
वयसिगते	= vayasi+gate, when age has advanced/gone;
.. ९..	= 9

कः	= who/what use( in the sense of kva?(where));
कामविकारः	= sensual/sexual attraction;
शुष्के	= in the drying up of;
नीरे	= water;
क	= what( use) is the;

कासारः	= lake;
क्षीणे	= spent-up/weakened state of;
वित्ते	= wealth;
कः	= what( use) for;
परिवारः	= family(is there?);
जाते	= in the realised state;
तत्त्वे	= truth;
कः	= what (use) is;
संसारः	= world/family bond;
.. १०..	= 10

मा	= do not;
कुरु	= do/act;
धन	= wealth;
जन	= people;
यौवन	= youth;
गर्व	= arrogance/haughtiness;
हरति	= takes away/steals away;
निमेषात्	= in the twinkling of the eye;
कालः	= Master Time;
सर्व	= all;
माया	= delusion;
मयं	= full of/completely filled;
इदं	= this;
अखिलं	= whole/entire;
हित्वा	= having given up/abandoned;
ब्रह्मपदं	= the state/position of Brahma/god-realised state;
त्वं	= you;
प्रविश	= enter;
विदित्वा	= having known/realised;
.. ११..	= 11

दिनयामिन्यौ	= dina+yAminI, day + night;
सायं	= evening;
प्रातः	= morning;
शिशिर	= frosty season;
वसन्तौ	= (and) Spring season;
पुनः	= again;
आयातः	= have arrived;
कालः	= Master Time;
क्रीडति	= plays;
गच्छति	= goes (away);
आयुः	= life/age;
तदापि	= tat.h+api, then even;
न	= not;
मुञ्चति	= releases;
आशा	= desire;
वायुः	= air (the wind of desire does not let off its hold);
.. १२..	= 12



द्वादशमञ्जरिकाभिः	= by the bouquet consisting of 12 flowers (12; shlokas above)
अशेष	= without remainder/totally;
कथित	= was told;
वैयाकरणस्यैषः	= to the grammarian+this;
उपदेशः	= advice;
भूद्	= was;
विद्यनिपुणै	= by the ace scholar Shankara (Plural is used for reverence);
श्रीमच्छंकरभगवत्+चरणैः	= by the Shankaracharya who is known; as shankarabhagavat +charaNAH or pAdAH (plural for reverence)
.. १३..	= 13

काते	= kA+te, who+your;
कान्ता	= wife;
धन	= wealth;
गतचिन्ता	= thinking of;
वातुल	= ;
कि	= ;
तव	= your;
नास्ति	= na+asti, not there;
नियन्ता	= controller;
त्रिजगति	= in the three worlds;
सज्जन	= good people;
संगतिरैका	= sa.ngatiH+ekA, company+(only) one (way);
भवति	= becomes;
भवारणव	= bhava+arNava, birthdeath+ocean;
तरणे	= in crossing;
नौका	= boat/ship;
.. १४..	= 14

जटिलः	= with knotted hair;
मुण्डी	= shaven head;
लुञ्छितकेश	= hair cut here and there;
काषाय	= saffron cloth;
अम्बर	= cloth/sky;
बहुकृत	= variously done/made-up;
वेषः	= make-ups/garbs/roles;
पश्यन्नपि	= even after seeing;
चन	= cha(?)+na, and +not;
पश्यति	= sees;
मूढः	= the fool;
उदरनिमित्तं	= for the sake of the belly/living;
बहुकृतवेषः	= various make-ups/roles;
.. १५..	= 15

अङ्गं	= limb(s);
गलितं	= weakened;
पलितं	= ripened(grey);
मुण्डं	= head;
दशनविहीनं	= dashana+vihInaM, teeth+bereft;
जातं	= having become;
तुण्डं	= jaws/mouth?;
वृद्धः	= the old man;

याति	= goes;
गृहीत्वा	= holding the;
दण्डं	= stick(walking);
तदपि	= then even;
न	= not;
मुञ्चति	= lets go/releases/gives up;
आशापिण्डं	= AshA+pindaM, desire+lump(piNDaM also means rice-ball given; as oblation for the dead)
.. १६..	= 16

अग्रे	= in front of/ahead/beforehand;
वह्निः	= fire ( for worship);
पृष्ठभानुः	= pRishhThe+bhaanuH, behind+sun;
रात्रौ	= in the night;
चुबुकसमर्पितजानु	= face dedicated to(huddled up between) the knees;
करतलभिक्षा	= alms in the palms;
तरुतलवासं	= living under the trees;
तदपि	= then even;
न	= not;
मुञ्चति	= releases/lets go;
आशा	= desire;
पाशं	= rope/ties;
.. १७..	= 17

कुरुते	= one takes resort to;
गङ्गासागर	= the sea of Ganga (banks of the Ganges);
गमनं	= going;
व्रत	= austerities;
परिपालनं	= observance/governance;
अथवा	= or/else;
दानं	= charity;
ज्ञानविहिनः	= (but)bereft of knowledge of the Self;
सर्वमतेन	= according to all schools of thought/unanimously;
मुक्तिं	= salvation/freedom;
न	= not;
भजति	= attains;
जन्म	= birth(s);
शतेन	= hundred;
.. १८..	= 18

सुर	= gods;
मंदिर	= temple;
तरु	= tree;
मूल	= root;
निवासः	= living;
शय्या	= bed;
भूतल	= on the surface of the earth;
मजिन	= deer skin?;
वासः	= living;
सर्व	= all;
परिग्रह	= ttachment;
भोग	= enjoyable things/worldly pleasures;

त्याग	= sacrificing/abandonment;
कस्य	= whose;
सुखं	= happiness;
न	= not;
करोति	= does;
विरागः	= Non-attachment/desirelessness;
.. १९..	= 19

योगरतः	= indulging in yoga;
वा	= or;
भोगरतः	= indulging in worldly pleasures;
वा	= or;
सङ्गरतः	= indulging in good company;
वा	= or;
सङ्गवीहिनः	= bereft of company;
यस्य	= whose;
ब्रह्मणि	= in Brahman(God);
रमते	= delights;
चित्तं	= mind (here soul);
नन्दति	= revels;
नन्दत्येव	= nandati+eva, revels alone/revels indeed;
.. २०..	= 20

भगवद्	= god's;
गीता	= song (here the scripture `bhagavatgItA');
किञ्चित्	= a little;
अधीता	= studied;
गङ्गा	= river Ganga;
जललव	= water drop;
कणिकापीता	= a little droplet, drunk;
सकृदपि	= once even;
येन	= by whom;
मुरारि	= the enemy of `Muraa' (Lord Krishna);
समर्चा	= well worshipped;
क्रियते	= is done;
तस्य	= his;
यमेन	= by Yama, the lord of Death;
न	= not;
चर्चा	= discussion;
.. २१..	= 21

पुनरपि	= punaH+api, again again;
जननं	= birth;
पुनरपि	= again again;
मरणं	= death;
पुनरपि	= again again;
जननी	= mother;
जठरे	= in the stomach;
शयनं	= sleep;
इह	= in this world/here;
संसारे	= family/world;

बहुदुस्तारे	= fordable with great difficulty;
कृपायाऽपारे	= out of boundless compassion;
पाहि	= protect;
मुरारे	= Oh Muraa's enemy!(KrishhNa);
.. २२..	= 22

रथ्या	= ?;
चर्पट	= torn/tattered cloth;
विरचित	= created;
कन्थः	= throated man;
पुण्यापुण्य	= virtues sins;
विवर्जित	= without/ having abandoned;
पन्थः	= wayfarer?;
योगी	= the man seeking union with god;
योगनियोजित	= ccontrolled by yoga;
चितः	= mind;
रमते	= delights;
बालोन्मत्तवदेव	= like a child who has gone mad;
.. २३..	= 23

कः	= who (are);
त्वं	= you;
कः	= who(am);
अहं	= I;
कुतः	= whence;
आयातः	= has come;
का	= who;
मे	= my;
जननी	= mother;
कः	= who;
मे	= my;
तातः	= father;
इति	= thus;
परिभावय	= deem well/visualise;
सर्व	= the entire;
असारं	= worthless/without essence;
विश्वं	= world;
त्यक्त्वा	= having abandoned/sacrificed;
स्वप्न	= dream;
विचारं	= consideration/thinking;
.. २४..	= 24

त्वयि	= in yourself;
मयि	= in myself;
चान्यत्रैक	= cha+anyatra+ekaH, and+in any other place+only one;
विष्णुः	= the Lord MahaavishhhNu;
व्यर्थ	= in vain ; for nothing;purposeless;
कुप्यसि	= you get angry;
मय्यसहिष्णु	= mayi+asahishhhNuH, in me+intolerant;
भव	= become;
समचित्तः	= equal-minded/equanimity;

सर्वत्र	= everywhere;
त्वं	= you;
वाञ्छसि	= you desire;
अचिराद्	= without delay/in no time;
यदि	= if;
विष्णुत्वं	= the quality/state of Brahman/god-realisation;
.. २५..	= 25

शत्रौ	= in (towards)the enemy;
मित्रे	= in (towards) the friend;
पुत्रे	= in(towards) the son;
बन्धौ	= in (towards) relatives;
मा	= don't;
कुरु	= do;
यत्नं	= effort;
विग्रहसन्धौ	= for war(dissension) or peace-making;
सर्वस्मिन्नपि	= in all beings;
पश्यात्मानं	= see your own self;
सर्वत्र	= everywhere;
उत्सृज	= give up;
भेदाज्ञानं	= difference/otherness/duality;
.. २६..	= 26

कामं	= desire;
क्रोधं	= anger;
लोभं	= greed;
मोहं	= infatuation;
त्यक्त्वाऽत्मानं	= having abandoned see as one's own self;
भावय	= deem/consider/visualise/imagine;
कोऽहं	= who am I;
आत्मज्ञान	= knowledge of self;
विहीना	= bereft;
मूढा	= fools;
ते	= they;
पच्यन्ते	= are cooked?;
नरक	= in the hell;
निगूढा	= cast in;
वित्तं	= wealth;
.. २७..	= 27

गेयं	= is to be sung;
गीता	= bhagavatgItA;
नाम	= name of the lord;
सहस्रं	= 1000 times;
ध्येयं	= is to be meditated;
श्रीपति	= Lakshmi's consort MahAvishhNu's;
रूपं	= form/image;
अजस्रं	= the unborn one;
नेयं	= is to be lead/taken;
सज्जन	= good people;
सङ्गे	= in the company;

चित्तं	= mind;
देयं	= is to be given;
दीनजनाय	= to the poor (humble state) people;
च	= and;
.. २८..	= 28

सुखतः	= for happiness;
क्रियते	= is done;
रामाभोग	= sexual pleasures?;
पश्चाद्धन्त	= later on in the end;
शरीरे	= in the body;
रोग	= disease;
यद्यपि	= even though;
लोके	= in the world;
मरण	= death;
शरणं	= resort/surrender;
तदपि	= even then;
न	= not;
मुञ्चति	= releases/gives up;
पापाचरणं	= pApa+AcharaNa, sin-practising;
.. २९..	= 29

अर्थ	= wealth;
अनर्थ	= purposeless/in vain/danger-productive;
भावय	= deem/consider/visualise;
नित्यं	= daily/always;
न	= not;
अस्ति	= is;
ततः	= from that;
सुखलेशः	= (even a little) happiness;
सत्यं	= Truth;
पुत्रादपि	= even from the the son;
धन	= wealth;
भाजां	= acquiring peeople;
भीतिः	= fear;
सर्वत्र	= everywhere;
एषा	= this;
विहिता	= vihitA?, understood;
रीतिः	= procedure/practice/custom;
.. ३०..	= 30

प्राणायाम	= breath-control;
प्रत्याहार	= diet-control;
नित्यं	= always/daily/certain;
अनित्य	= uncertain/temporary/ephemeral/transient;
विवेक	= awareness after reasoning;
विचार	= thought/considered concluion/opinion;
जाप्यसमेत	= with chanting of the names of the lord;
समाधिविधान	= in the state of trance;
कुर्ववधानं	= pay attention;
महदवधानं	= great care attention;
.. ३१..	= 31

गुरुचरणाम्बुज	= the lotus feet of the teacher/guru;
निर्भर	= dependent;
भक्तः	= devotee;
संसारात्	= from the world;
अचिराद्भव	= in no time from the cycle of birth death;
मुक्तः	= released;
सेन्द्रियमानस	= sa+indriya+mAnasa, wwith senses and mind;
नियमादेव	= control alone(niyamAt.h eva);
द्रक्ष्यसि	= you will see;
निज	= one's own;
हृदयस्थं	= heart-stationed;
देवं	= God;
.. ३२..	= 32

मूढ	= fool;
कश्चन	= cerain;
वैयाकरण	= Grammar;
डुकृञ्करण	= grammatic formula DukRi.nkaraNa;
अध्ययन	= study;
धुरिण	= awakened/aroused?;
श्रीमत्	= honourable prefix;
शंकर	= Shankara;
भगवत्	= God;
शिष्यैः	= disciples;
बोधित	= having been taught/enlightened;
आसित्	= was/existed;
चोधितकरण	= tested or awakened senses;
.. ३३..	= 33

भज	= worship;
गोविन्दं	= lord Govinda;
मूढमते	= Oh foolish mind!;
नामस्मरणात्	= (except) through/from remembrance of the lord's name;
अन्य	= other;
उपाय	= plan/method/means;
नहि	= not;
पश्याम	= we see;
भवतरणे	= for crossing the ocean of births deaths;
.. ३४..	= 34