

Sri Achyuta and Sri Samanta Chandrasekhar : Images made of Heaven's Transparent Light

Dr. K.C. Sarangi

*namo anadi adi purusham namo srikrishna janardanam
namo achiuta Vishnu sharanam namo anadi mukti
karanam*

In the world geography, the state of Utkal has a separate recognition. Sage Kapilacharya who is believed to be an incarnation of Lord Narayana praised the glories of Utkal, its rivers, mountains, river Mahanadi with the sacred and holy Ganges. The heavenly glory of this land has always attracted saintly devotees, like Sri Chaitanya, Sri Billwamangala and scholars like Sri Vishnugupta, in the past. The *Samhitas* reveal even Pandavas had visited this land. There are certain places in the state like Puri, Nemala, Kantilo, Kapilasha, Ekamra, Kakatpur, Jajpur, Banpur and where Divine mother is worshipped which have very ancient heritage. The Divine Mother Sarva Mangala at Kakatpur is known as Adi Mata and Mother Narayani at Madhapur (Patharchakada) is believed to be worshipped since Dwapar Yuga. The Ananta Vriksha in Nemala is stated to have sheltered the Pandavas for two months. Arjuna kept his bow Gandeeva and the Akhsaya Tunira (Unending Quiver) on the top of this tree. Sage Markandeya, Sage Kapila, Lord Shiva, the Divine Mother Parvati, Lord Narayana, Divine Mother Maha Lakshmi and Garuda all are described to have visited this holy land Utkala, as it transpires from the

Samhitas written by Sri Achyuta and other eminent scholars.

In two different centuries sixteenth and nineteenth two great noble souls, filled with divine effulgence, were born on the soil of Utkal Sri Achyuta in Tilakana (Southern side of the branch river 'Luna' which is a stream flown from the sacred river Chitrotpala) and Sri Samanta Chandrasekhar in the princely state of Khandapara. Both attempted for mitigation of the peoples' miseries through astrology. Sri Achyuta was a saint 'par excellence', a Spiritual Preceptor of the highest order. Sri Samanta Chandra Sekhara was a scholar for whom the sky with its mysterious wonders was the greatest attraction. Sri Achyuta was an uncommon and strict disciplinarian, a great Saviour of his disciples. His astrological predictions were unchallenged and unassailable. Samanta devoted himself more for astronomy than astrology. However, his astrological calculations have mostly been found infallible. One thing that was common in both these great scholars was that they were 'Yogasamsiddha', i.e. burnt in the fire of wisdom and both were Karmayogi and Jnanayogi of the highest order, directly drawing the power from the mysterious controller of the universe by the practice of truth. They made themselves detached to the world of illusion for the search of

knowledge and severed all attachments through the sword of detachment, ‘*asakta shastrena dridheuachhitwa*’ as the Lord has held in the *Gita*.

Lord Sri Jagannatha was the perennial Guide for both of them. By the Lord’s sublime grace both were learned and wise in the true sense of the term. Lord Sri Krishna has held in the *Gita*:

*yasya sarve samarambhah
kamasankalpavarjitah
jnanagnidagdha karmanam tamahu
panditam buddhah*

(Chapter IV.verse 19)

Those who perform as per the Shastric injunctions, those who are desire less, those who are unattached to fruit of actions and their attachments are burnt by the fire of wisdom (bhaswatam jnana deepita), those great men (Mahapurushas) are adored as Pundits even by the wisest persons. Though living with family, both the great scholars were ever-contented (nityatrupta) having taken shelter before the Lotus feet of Paramatma. They were, as Sri Aurovinda writes later, keeping Arjuna in view, ‘God-possessed’ and in their writing the divine glory and divine potency are effulgent and ever-inspiring.

Poverty, social criticism, royal displeasure and other hurdles could not disturb these meditative Yogis. Contented with whatever had come automatically in their ways examining the same by the voice of conscience, these scholars were exemplary in their respective spheres being free from envy and any kind of confusion. Their self-confidence, their equanimity, their equal approach to rich and poor, friend and foe had earned for them an undying fame. Both of them justified in their lives the divine concept of jnana-karma-sanyasa -yoga preached by the Lord in Chapter IV of Srimad Bhagvat Gita.

*Gatasangsy muktasya jnavassthita chetasah
Jajnaya charitam karma samagram pravilyate*

For an ordinary man, emancipation is the highest attainment. But for these noble souls who performed the best, having the spark of divinity within, truth and Loka-kalyana were more important than salvation. Their entire lives were spent in reading, writing Samhitas after Samhitas and Prakashas after Prakashas respectively, ‘swadhyaya, jnanajajnascha yatayah sansitavratah’ as the *Gita* describes, (Ch.IV. verse-28).

Words are incomprehensible. They cannot comprehend the glories of these noble souls of this soil. Centuries have passed in the meanwhile. But the heavenly Sadgurus, Sri Achyuta and Sri Samanta Chandrasekhara continue to bestow their heavenly blessings on their disciples ceaselessly. Sage Abhiram has placed a touchstone as regards how to assess successful persons. According to him, when we stand in front of a mirror our appearance is revealed. Similarly when a person faces the society, his real ingenuity, his genuine skillfulness is put to test. Only scholastic studies do not help. If your studies do not create a vibration in the heart of others, then it cannot be said that one has achieved excellence. This is true in all spheres; be it astrology, be it medicine, be it politics or be it administration. Viewed from the angle of the above touch-stone contemplated by Sage Sri Abhiram, both Sri Achyuta and Sri Samanta are far far above, the imaginable human standard. The contemporary governance, astrological studies and studies of Ayurveda have many things to learn from these dedicated scholars. It is not an exaggeration. It is acknowledged by many eminent Scholars inside the country and abroad.

In the *Gita*, the Lord has said that the result of Karma is mysterious, ‘gahana karmana

gatih'. But for devotees of sublime order, this mystery gets unfurled, assures, Brahmaleena Sage Rahnsukhdasji in his *Sadhaka Sanjibani*. What Sri Ramsukhdasji intends to say is that the Graceful Lord due to his ceaseless mercy, let the devotees know what would be the result of their actions. The devotee becomes able to know 'akarma' in 'karma' and 'karma' in 'akarma' (The *Gita*, Chapter. 4 verse 18). In the ultimate analysis, suffice it to say that the devotee becomes able to know what is Karma and what is 'Karma Yoga'. Whereas a Karma Yogi knows karma yoga and a Jnana Yogi knows Jnana Yoga only a devotee by the grace of the Lord is able to know both Jnanayoga and Karmayoga. Needless to mention that Sri Achyuta and Sri Samanta Chandrasekhara were devotees of this high order.

In Mundaka Upanishad and Swetaswetara Upanishad, we find a description of 'jiwatma' and 'paramatma', two birds having friendship with each other taking shelter in the tree of body. The Upanishads say :

*dwa suparna sajuja sakhaya
samana vriksham parishaswajate
tayahiranyah peepalam
swadwatyanashnannanyo abhichakas hiti.*

Out of these two birds the 'Parmatma' is unattached, He only radiates, the 'jiwatma' partakes of the pain and pleasure. Sri Achyuta, therefore, writes in his *Sharana Panjara*.

*Pathaku sankhali hoiba nama gayana kara
Se namaku sehu japiva jeeva galavelara
Tu kisa japivu se nama tora japare nahin
Taha namaku nirantara sehu japu achhai.*

What Mahapurusa, Sri Achyuta intends to elucidate is that the bird 'paramatma' is ceaselessly uttering his own name. If 'jiwatma' also follows the same path, then the goal is reached.

The twentieth century philosopher and saint Sri Sathya Sai describes this approach as 'moving in harmony with God'. Sri Sathya Sai, the Revered Founding Chancellor of SatyaSai Institute of Higher Learning very lucidly advises as follows.

*As you progress along the journey of life
You should walk hand in hand with God.
In whatever form you see Him
God is the ultimate Guide and Helper.*

*And He will carry you forward on the path
If you only establish real contact with Him.
It is like walking along a path with your closest friend.
You can walk in complete silence and your friend too, will
remain silent
Or you can talk to your friend all the time and learn from
him as you go along.*

*God is that friend and it is up to you, to break the silence
and
Bring Him into your life at every moment of the day
It is a long journey, but it becomes
Shorter and easier once you share with God (the Lord)
He knows the path and will guide you to the very end
To the ultimate liberation.*

The same vibration is perceptibly visible in Sri Achyuta's Samhitas and Sri Samanta's Siddhanta Darpana. In Prakasha 14 verse 68 of Siddhanta Darpana, Chandra Sekhar writes:

*kshirodarodhasi dharopari chochamanah
sarojavandhavi sarosatarokti ropat
naropagopanparah ari dhara virodhamarot
tharoga nikaroparatim karota.*

Lord Sri Jagannath whose finger is adorned by Sudarshana Chakra is worshipped in Purusottamakshetra which is near the shore of the Ocean. He is protecting the human civilization from the wrath of Yamaraj (son of the Sun). The Lord destroys our several enemies like desires. In fact these desires are like diseases. O' Lord,

save us from all maladies which are caused due to the desires and lust.

Humility remained the hallmark of both these noble geniuses. Rather it appears the 'humility' assumed human forms, with divine dimensions. Elsewhere singing the glory of 'humility', Sri Sai said, "Lord Sri Krishna Himself has declared in many situations and places that He is the dutiful servant of His devotees. An example of this is His accepting to be the Charioteer of Arjuna". (Sri Satya Sai Speaks Vol.XVIII P-124)

The time has passed away. The great traditions and values have vanished from the scene. We rarely find a spiritual man today with the humility of Sri Krishna, Sri Achyuta or Sri Samanta. Magnificence and effulgence of heaven's transparent light in their character, behaviours and attitude made these sublime and blessed sons of India what they actually were. It is irresistible to conclude that it is the quality of character which is an important criterion. The great visionary Sai, therefore, hopefully advised:

*If the culture of the ordinary man himself
results in such
elevation, each one can judge for himself
how much more
purified and holy will be the character of
those who are
engaged in spiritual exercises and incessant
contemplation of God.*

Sri Achyuta, Sri Sai, Sri Samanta, Sri Abhiram such sages and devotees across the canvas of time, all uphold one maxim carefully and dexterously. The surrender before the Lotus feet of the Lord is the best possible way to escape this ocean of death. Sri Achyuta writes in his Sharana Panjara (Nava Gujjari).

*Guanra nirbodha pamara raja tamase ratah
Mada matsarjya kama krodhe padi helini hata*

*Ethu jeve daya kariva yama yatana kati
Janme janme bhrutya hoina pravu thivi mu khati
Nohile e bhava marivi prabhu ninda hoiva
Anathanatha deenabandhu ke kahinki dakiba
Bhasigali pravu rakha he nische hoili nasa.
Achyuta bole mahappravu tumbhe vahiva dosa.*

(Verse7)

The sage and devotee, Sri Achyuta, with utter humility, prays before the Lord, saying that if the Lord does not save him, he will be completely washed away and this would create a stigma to the glorious and immaculate fame of the Lord as He is popularly known as the friend of the destitutes.

In "Govinda Damodar Stotram", Sri Villwamangalacharya prays before the Lord in the similar vein :

*Samsarakupe patitah ati agadhe
mohandhapurne vishayabhitapte
karavalambam mama dehi Vishno Govinda
Damodara Madhaveti.*

(Verse 50)

Sage-devotee Villwamangala who purged his sins through austere atonement, addressing the Lord says O' Madhusudan. I have fallen inside a well which is filled with the darkness of delusion . I am burning with worldly desires and attachment. O Lord, O Govinda, O Madhava, O' Damodara, please rescue me out of this dreadful fall, dragging me out with your gracefully stretched hand. Surrender, thus, is same, language may be different. Needless to say that for communing with the divine there is only one language and this is the language of the heart. Sri Chandrasekhara approaches in the like manner for the Lord's mercy:

*jnanagnidagdha khila punyapapa manah
samadhayah haraupareshe*

*yadjogino jantyanibatti
masmyadatyantikancheti layasca turdha.*

(Prakasha 18, verse 151)

Attempting to conceive of a division of 'pralaya' i.e. total annihilation or amalgamation with the divine, Samanta says that the yogis by virtue of their fire of wisdom burn both their vices and virtues and concentrate their mind on the Lotus feet of the Lord, Sri Hari. They no more intend to come back to this world of desire, expectation, sorrow and death. This merger of the 'yogic mind' with the Lotus feet of the Lord, according to Chandrasekhara, is known as 'attyantika pralaya'. In earlier stanza of the same Prakasha, Samanta divided Pralaya into four types, (a) Brahma Pralaya when after the day's end of Lord Brahman, the entire creation is merged in him; (b) Prakrutika Pralaya when all including Lord Brahman also gets merged in Prakriti (c) Dainandina Pralaya which means the normal death of human being, "dine dine yanmriyate hi, bhutaih dainandinam tam pralayam vadanti" (Chapter.18 v.149) (d) Attyantika Pralaya has already been explained above.

The Lord according, to Sri Achyuta is 'Arupananda'. The mind which is concentrated

on the Lotus feet of Sri Arupananda is blessed indeed. Utkal is the sacred place, which has given birth to such brilliant exponents in spiritualism, astronomy and astrology whose blessings even after departing of their noble souls from this mundane world are capable to shower blessings on their followers and disciples and also capable to award salvation. The perennial instruction for the right disciple is, as Sai held :

*Bear all and do no harm to others
Hear all and say nothing .
Give all and take nothing
This is the way to God.*

Besides, the instruction is to worship Utkaljanani, our sacred mother, with all the sincerity of our hearts, as our ancients did.

Vande utkal bhumata vyakt a ca janani param
Dinohamvalakah kankshye sevam janma janmani
Pratijanmani me chittam vitham dehasca santati
Twat seva niratam bhuyu mata twam karunamayee.

Dr. K.C. Sarangi, Addl. Secretary, S&ME Department,
Govt. of Odisha, Odisha Secretariat, Bhubaneswar.