



Sri Shankara Bhagavatpada was requested by the disciples to favour them with a final message which they themselves could treasure and broadcast to all earnest aspirants in the march towards the final goal of life and that it was in gracious response to this request that this set of five stanzas was given. Every stanza contains within itself eight injunctions arranged in a logical and ascending scale and so this small work really contains forty injunctions.

||sādhana pañcakam||

vedo nityamadhīyatām taduditam

karma svanuṣṭhīyatām

teneśasya vidhīyatāmapacitiḥ

kāmye matistyajyatām |

pāpaughāḥ paridhūyatām bhavasukhe

dośo'nusandhīyatām

ātmeccā vyavasīyatām nijagrḥāt

tūrṇam vinirgamyatām ||

1. Study spiritual texts (“Vedas”) regularly (constantly) and put into practice their teachings. Worship the Divine in that manner (as prescribed by Veda) and give up the thought of desires. Wash away the negative habit-energy and examine the defects of worldly excitement. Hold on to the awareness of the Atman and leave at once your own limited identity.

saṅgaḥ satsu vidhīyatām bhagavato

bhaktirdṛḍhā’dhīyatām

śāntyādiḥ paricīyatām dṛḍhataram

karmāśu santyajyatām |

sadvidvānupasṛpyatām pratidinam

tatpādukā sevyatām

brahmaikākṣaramarthyatām śrutiśiro

vākyam samākarṇyatām ||

2. Remain in the company of the holy (good satsang) and strengthen your devotion to God. Cultivate the qualities such as self-restraint and give up all work prompted by selfish desire. Approach those who are wise and holy, and serve them. Seek

only the Imperishable Being (“God”) and hear the words of the scripture.

vākyārthaśca vicāryatām śrutiśiraḥ

pakṣaḥ samāśrīyatām

dustarkātsuviramyatām śrutimatas

tarko'nusandhīyatām |

brahmāsmīti vibhāvyatāmaharahaḥ

garvaḥ parityajyatām

dehe'hammatirujhyatām budhajanair

vādaḥ parityajyatām ||

3. Reflect over the meaning of the scripture and take refuge in its perspective. Keep away from vain arguments and follow the reasoning of the scripture. Always be aware that you are Brahman and completely give up all egoism. Eliminate the thought of “I” connected with the body and don't argue with the wise ones.

kṣudvyādhiśca cikitsyatām pratidinam

bhikṣauṣadham bhujyatām

svādvannam na tu yācyatām vidhivaśāt

prāptena santuṣyatām |

śītoṣṇādi viśahyatām na tu vṛthā

vākyam samuccāryatām

audāsīnyamabhīpsyatām janakṛpā -

naiṣṭhuryam - utsṛjyatām ||

4. Through the daily medicine of alms, treat the disease of hunger. Don't hanker after delicious food; be contented with whatever comes of its own. Forbear the polarities such as cold and heat and do not utter useless words. Do not expect kindness from others and abandon all harshness toward others.

ekānte sukhamāsyatām paratare -

cetaḥ samādhīyatām

pūrṇātmā susamīkṣyatām jagadidaṁ

tadvādhitaṁ dṛśyatām |

prākkarma pravilāpyatām citibalān -

nāpyuttaraiḥ śliṣyatām

prārabdhaṁ tviha bhujyatāmatha para

brahmātmanā sthīyatām ||

5. Live happily in solitude and focus the mind on the God. See carefully the infinite Self and notice how it eliminates this fleeting existence called the world. Through the power of consciousness, dissolve your past karma, remain unaffected by your later karma, and experience your present karma. In this way, remain established in the awareness of the Supreme Self.