



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.

॥साधन पञ्चकम्॥

वेदो नित्यमधीयतां तदुदितं कर्म स्वनुष्ठीयतां

तेनेशस्य विधीयतामपचितिः काम्ये मतिस्त्यज्यताम् ।

पापौघः परिधूयतां भवसुखे दोषोऽनुसन्धीयतां

आत्मेच्छा व्यवसीयतां निजगृहात्तूर्णं विनिर्गम्यताम् ॥१॥

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.

सङ्गः सत्सु विधीयतां भगवतो भक्तिर्दृढाऽऽधीयतां  
शान्त्यादिः परिचीयतां दृढतरं कर्माशु सन्त्यज्यताम् ।  
सद्विद्वानुपसृप्यतां प्रतिदिनं तत्पादुका सेव्यतां  
ब्रह्मैकाक्षरमर्थ्यतां श्रुतिशिरोवाक्यं समाकर्ण्यताम् ॥२॥

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.

वाक्यार्थश्च विचार्यतां श्रुतिशिरः पक्षः समाश्रीयतां  
दुस्तर्कात्सुविरम्यतां श्रुतिमतस्तर्कोऽनुसन्धीयताम् ।  
ब्रह्मास्मीति विभाव्यतामहरहर्गर्वः परित्यज्यतां  
देहेऽहंमतिरुड्यतां बुधजनैर्वादः परित्यज्यताम् ॥३॥

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.

क्षुद्व्याधिश्च चिकित्स्यतां प्रतिदिनं भिक्षौषधं भुज्यतां  
स्वाद्धन्नं न तु याच्यतां विधिवशात्प्राप्तेन सन्तुष्यताम् ।  
शीतोष्णादि विषह्यतां न तु वृथा वाक्यं समुच्चार्यतां  
औदासीन्यमभीप्स्यतां जनकृपानैष्ठुर्यमुत्सृज्यताम् ॥४॥

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.

एकान्ते सुखमास्यतां परतरे चेतः समाधीयतां

पूर्णात्मा सुसमीक्ष्यतां जगदिदं तद्वाधितं दृश्यताम् ।

प्राक्कर्म प्रविलाप्यतां चितिबलान्नाप्युत्तरैः श्लिष्यतां

प्रारब्धं त्विह भुज्यतामथ परब्रह्मात्मना स्थीयताम् ॥५॥

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.