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Bhagavad Gita Chapter 8 online Part 7 dated 04/07/2020 by Swami Dayatmanada (Lecture delivered online from Bangalore, India)

Subject: Chapter 8, Verses 20 and 21.

ॐ वसुदेवसुतं देवं कंसचाणूरमर्दनम् देवकीपरमानन्दं कृष्णं वंदे जगद्गुरुम् ||

Vasudeva sutham devam, Kamsa Chanura mardanam, Devaki paramanandam, Krishnam vande jagat gurum

I worship Lord Krishna, who is the spiritual master of the universe, who is the son of Vasudeva, who is the Lord, who killed Kansa and Chanura, and who is the bliss of Devaki.

सर्वोपनिषदो गावो, दोग्धा गोपाल नन्दनः। पार्था वत्स: सुधीभोक्ता, दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत् ॥



Sarvopanishado gaavo, dogdha gopala nandanaha| parthovatsa: sudheerbhoktaa, dugdham gitamrutam mahat |

All the Upanishads are likened to cows. The milker is Krishna, the son of Nanda. Partha (Arjuna) is likened to a calf, while the drinkers are the wise ones. The nectar of Gita is the milk.

मूकं करोति वाचालं पङ्गुं लङ्घयते गिरिं । यत्कृपा तमहं वन्दे परमानन्द माधवम् ॥

Mookam karoti vachalam pangum langhayate girim | Yat-krupa tamaham vande paramananda madhavam ||

I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, the deliverer of the fallen souls. His mercy turns the dumb into eloquent speakers and enables the lame to cross mountains.

Recollection: (Please refer to the transcripts of Chapter 8 Part 4, 5 and 6.)

We are studying the Eighth Chapter of the Bhagavat Gita called "**Akshar-Brahm-Yoga** अक्षर ब्रह्म योग: The Lord has been giving us the most wonderful teachings:

- Everything in this world is a changing entity called *Kshara*.
- We are the creators of our world. We can be called 'Individual Brahmas'.
- We are the creators of our own world we create our own world during our waking state. As Swami Vivekananda has said, "We are the architects of our own fate and life." We are solely responsible for our enjoyments and sufferings. When we wake up then we find that nothing has changed - our body, mind, circumstances and world have not changed and we pick things up from where we have left them the night before (before going to sleep).
- Who is Brahma? All individuals put together is called Brahma. Brahma is the totality of the entire universe and is also a changing entity like us. He is not permanent, He is not *Akshara*.

- Brahma has two states 1) Manifest state/ Brahma's daytime and 2) Unmanifest state/Brahma's nighttime. We also have two states - 1) Our waking state is our state of manifestation and 2) Our deep sleep state or *shushupti* is our unmanifest state.
- There is nothing called death. How? Existence can never become non-existent and vice versa. We need not worry about death. Death just means to get a different physical body or so-called "a new dress". We get a different body based on our desires and action, known as *karmakritu*. We can choose a better body by the right thoughts and the right actions. A better body helps us to manifest our true nature which is health, wealth and happiness.
- There are two types of Unmanifest state. This is a very interesting and important fact:
 - 1) **Unmanifest state of Brahma or Cosmic Person** is the universal body and mind. He fluctuates between the manifest state and un-manifest state until He totally merges in God/Brahman. (PN: Brahma and Brahman are different words with totally different meanings. Please refer to the transcript of C8, Part 6.)
 - 2) Eternal Unmanifest Being: There is another Unmanifest that never gets manifested directly and is unchanging. He is called Eternal Supreme Unmanifest or Avaikta (Avaikta means never manifests directly.) or Parbrahma or Parmatma or Supreme Brahman or God or Mukti or Param-Shanti or Akshara or Nirvikal Samadhi or Kingdom of Heaven etc. He is truly Avaikta/Unmanifest. Why? Because, a gross body, a subtle body and a causal body can never have even a glimpse of the Eternal Manifest Being.
- Why has God created so many differences in the world? And Why does God favour some and not others? When we look around then we find that some are poor; some are rich; some are happy; some are unhappy etc. Why? God does not create these differences. We create all these differences ourselves. We make ourselves rich or poor or happy or unhappy etc. We are solely responsible for everything which happens to us in our life. We are the creators, sustainers and destroyers of our lives. The most important point is - we are responsible for our own body, mind, circumstances etc. We create our world. We have got every opportunity to change our lives and create a world which is more joyful. People may think - Why does God favour some and not others? God is not partial; we all are His children. We are responsible for our own lives. We are potentially divine and are trying to manifest this divinity through the process of birth and death over and over again. We will get a new body in our next birth but the mind will remain the same. In other words - our *esthula-sharia/gross* body is destroyed but our shuksham-sharira/subtle body and karan-sharira/causal body which stores our *samsakaras* remain the same. However, we can change our subtle body by intelligent planning and intelligently prosecuting our desires. Our scriptures guide us - what we should do and what we should not do - called Vidhi and Nishedha. [Vidhi tells us which option to select when many options are available. *Nishedha* is scriptural suggestions to refrain from doing certain

things.] If we change our lives based on scriptural teachings then our lives will get better and better.

- A very important point which we need to understand when we wake up after a good night's rest then we find our house, job, talents, capacities, family etc. is exactly the same. Similarly, when Brahma starts creating (during His daytime which is one thousand yugas) then living beings (with consciousness) as well as non-living (bereft of consciousness) like a stone, a lump of clay, a mountain, a river and all other objects, manifest themselves.
- The highest world for enjoyment is called *Brahma-Loka*. We must develop the capacity to enjoy *Brahma-Loka*. If we fail to develop the capacity to enjoy *Brahma-Loka* but reach there by some hook or crook or by the grace of God then most likely we will behave like a pig! (A pig only searches for sewage water wherever it lands because it derives its highest enjoyment only in sewage water.)
- Our life is based upon two facts manifestation and non-manifestation. These are the two sides of the same coin. This means if there is manifestation then necessarily there will be non-manifestation as well, and vice versa.
- Brahma's position is temporary. That is why the Lord has categorically said, "आब्रह्मभुवनाल्लोका: पुनरावर्तिनोऽर्जुन ā-brahma-bhuvanāl lokāḥ punar āvartino rjuna -[means O, Arjuna even if a person enters into Brahma-Loka, he will be subject to rebirth.]

An analogy of aeroplane travel:

Suppose you are travelling in an aeroplane and you buy an economy ticket but you get promoted to first class by the courtesy of someone. You will enjoy all the facilities of first class. However, we must not forget that the destination is the same for all passengers, regardless of where they are sitting. When we reach the destination then we have to exit the aeroplane whether it is economy class or first class. There are two concerns associated with this. First - unnecessarily I have wasted my money by buying a first-class ticket. Secondly - I have to get off the plane after 6-7 hours at the end of this journey. All pleasures of first-class flying will come to an end.

Similarly - entering Brahma-Loka means becoming one with Brahma (not Brahman) and achieving unity with Brahma. Thereby enjoying the highest dualistic pleasures in Brahma-Loka. Why dualistic? Because it is not eternal permanent happiness. Similarly, when we enter Indra-Loka by contemplation and identify ourselves with Indra then we enjoy all the facilities and comforts available in Indra-Loka. There will be no difference between Indra and us. But this is all temporary.

Here is an important point - to get *punya or* merit we do not need to take any physical action. Just contemplating upon God mentally is more than enough; contemplation upon God means obtaining knowledge of God and identifying with God. I will provide you with an example - suppose there is a poor hungry man. There are three options to relieve his hunger: 1) If we provide him with some food to eat then he will be happy for a day. 2) If we give him some money then

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he will be happy for few days while the money lasts. 3) However, if we can educate him so that he can get a good job and earn money for his whole life then hopefully, this person will be happy for a longer period. (Knowledge is a greater source of happiness.)

 Two important points I have made in my previous classes: 1) If a person is continuously happy then he will never be able to appreciate happiness. An interesting analogy is - if we want to eat and enjoy lots of sweets then we must eat some hot pickles in between! If there is no contrast then we will not be able to enjoy it. 2) There is a background fear all the time which we have that our merits are going to be exhausted soon. (Just like when a seven-star holiday comes to an end and then we have to leave.)

Enjoyment achieved by contemplating the subtlest state is far superior.

The state of Brahma is the subtlest state. The capacity to enjoy is greater when the state is subtlest. Brahma-Loka is such a state that a human mind can never be able to comprehend it, it has to be personally experienced. A spiritual aspirant gets an indescribable amount of happiness in *Brahma-Loka*. Sadly, this will also come to an end. (Just like in mathematics there is concrete mathematics and abstract mathematics. For abstract mathematics, we do not need a big laboratory. We just need a table, pencil and paper and to think deeply. However, the enjoyment of abstract mathematics is far greater than concrete mathematics.) The enjoyment that comes from contemplation on the subtlest state is far superior to any grosser type of enjoyment. We should keep this point in mind.

Types of Pralaya:

There are four types of *Pralaya*.

- 1. *Nitya-Pralaya* (daily dissolution): When we go to the deep sleep state.
- 2. *Prakruti-Pralaya* (rebirth): The present body falls away and we get a new body. [This is the end of a lifetime of a *jiva/individual soul*. Birth and Death are its determining units.]
- 3. **Yuga-Pralaya**/ **Brahma's deep sleep**: When Brahma goes to His *shushupti* state/deep sleep state or withdraws into His unmanifest state.
- 4. **Atayntika-Pralaya** (ultimate complete dissolution): When we get the knowledge of Brahman "I am Brahman, I am Self" and then the gross-body/*esthula-sharira*, subtle-body/*shukshm-sharira* and causal-body/*karan-sharira* all come to an end. Just like a drop of water or a small pond or a bigger lake or a small river or a big river ultimately reaches the ocean. It is not destruction but expansion. Similarly, it is the expansion of an individual-soul into the Universal-Soul. This is the permanent ultimate state.

Bhagavat Gita: Chapter 8, Verse 20

परस्तस्मात्तु भावोऽन्योऽव्यक्तोऽव्यक्तात्सनातन: | य: स सर्वेषु भूतेषु नश्यत्सु न विनश्यति || 20|| paras tasmāt tu bhāvo nyo vyakto vyaktāt sanātanaḥ yaḥ sa sarveṣhu bhūteṣhu naśhyatsu na vinaśhyati The Lord is saying, "Beyond this unmanifest state (of Brahma), there is another 'Unmanifest Eternal Being', who does not perish even when all beings perish."

To summarise: The Lord is teaching us that even if an aspirant reaches Brahma-Loka, it is only temporary. One must come back to this miserable world. Therefore, even Brahma-Loka is not desirable. Anything which comes and goes is not desirable, it is like the saying '*aya Ram gaya Ram*' and it is called *Samsara-Chakra* (goes on moving all the time.) *Samsara-Chakra* is *dukhalayam*/abode of unhappiness. God-realisation is the only way to get rid of these sufferings.

It is interesting to note that even the gross body of an *Avatara*/God Incarnation also has an end and His *sukshm-sharira*/subtle body also has an end. However, *sukshm-sharira*/subtle body may survive for a long time for the good of mankind. Shri Ramakrishna used to say, "I will leave my gross body but will continue to manifest in the form of my subtle body for a long time for my devotees. I will help them to move forward by overcoming the obstacles of their lives."

There are two types of experiences.

- 1. **Anya-bhava:** The first type is when we experience something outside. Examples are - I see a table; I see you; I see a mosquito etc. Here, I am separate and the objects which I am experiencing through all my five sense organs are separate from me and are all temporary. Also, when we experience one object, then other objects completely disappear. It is interesting to note that the mind can only experience one object at any given time. Similarly, Brahma's state is also coming and going, manifesting and non-manifesting. It is only temporary and not a true unmanifest. The only true unmanifest is God.
- 2. Swa-bhava: When we talk about seeing God or vision of God or experience of God then it is not that God is standing in front of us and we are seeing Him. Seeing God means becoming one with God. This is called true knowledge, that is why the knowers of Brahman have been declared -ब्रह्मविद ब्रह्मैव भवति Brahmvid brahmai bhavati. Whenever any knowledge enters our mind then we become one with that knowledge. It is interesting to note that when thoughts of anger flash in our mind if we just witness it, we will not get angry but will remain as a witness of the thoughts. However, if we identify ourselves with the angry thoughts then we will get angry and become one with the angry thoughts. We will forget everything and react to that knowledge of the angry thought. Even when an ordinary thought becomes a part of our knowledge then we get identified with that knowledge. That is how we become happy or unhappy or angry or loving etc. A knower of Brahman will not say that "I am happy or unhappy", he would say that "I am happiness; I am infinite; I am blissful because his happiness does not come and go". The Chandogaya-Upanishad states - bhuma eva sukham - infinity alone is called bliss.

Coming back to our subject:

The 'Eternal Unmanifest God' is different from the 'Unmanifest state of Brahma'. The 'Eternal Unmanifest God' remains unmanifest - we need to realise Him and become one with Him. We also need to understand that manifestation or non-manifestation are two ideas in the mind. We can never become one with God if we cannot transcend the limitations of body and mind. This means when we do not cognise with body and mind then Atman remains. The ideas of happiness or unhappiness or manifest state or unmanifest state or bondage or liberation or time etc. are only limited to the mind. When there is no mind then these thoughts will disappear just like in our *shushupti* state/ deep sleep. Who is experiencing the *shushupti* state? There is a kind of consciousness which experiences the state of deep sleep. Deep sleep is the greatest happiness in the world. We do not think about the waking state or dream state during the deep-sleep state. Because when there is no mind then there will be no experience. When we wake up from a deep sleep then we say "I had a fantastic sleep".

Our waking state, dream state and deep sleep state are temporary.

When we experience the world in the waking state, dream state and also deep sleep then we are separate and these states are separate. How? When we go into the dream state, then the waking state disappears; when we go into the deep sleep state then both waking and dream states disappear and when we wake up then both dream and deep sleep states disappear. These states are coming and going. Whatever state we are experiencing is our manifest state called *vaikta* /manifest state and the states which have been forgotten are our un-manifest states or *avaikta*. I hope, this point is clear. So, these states are changing and are temporary.

God is eternal - never changes.

God is *aja*/unborn, *avaikta*/forever non-manifest (the word 'forever' should not be used here because it is just a concept in the mind. God is beyond mind or time/space and causation.) However, when we identify ourselves with God then it is pure oneness/pure unity. This idea is expressed in Verse 20 - *avyaktaḥ*— this state remains unmanifest. What is His nature? *sanātanaḥ*—eternal; *yaḥ sa sarveṣhu bhūteṣhu naśhyatsu na vinaśhyati* - that state of God never becomes destroyed (means does not cease to exist), when we say 'never get destroyed' this means 'never changes.'

We need an unchanging background to experience any change.

For example - to enjoy a constantly changing film in the cinema, we need an unchanging cinema screen. In our case, we are the witness or *sakshi* or perceiver and this witness is not changing. This is a marvellous concept. I would like to explain this point with an analogy.

Classroom and the Blackboard:

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Once Swami Chinmayananda gave a beautiful analogy. There is a classroom and the classroom has a blackboard on which to write. First, a history teacher comes, he writes and draws few things on the board. At the end of his class, he wipes the blackboard clean and leaves the classroom. Subsequently, a science teacher comes, then a maths teacher comes, after him a geography teacher comes - they all write something relevant to their subjects on the black board, wipe the blackboard and leave the classroom.

In this analogy, the teachers are changing and whatever they are writing on the blackboard is also changing. However, the blackboard is not changing. Here, the blackboard symbolises unchanging God or *Parbrahman and Parbrahman*.

(Incidentally, we are talking about *Brahma-Loka*. Brahma means the creator; this equally applies to Vishnu/maintainer and Shive/destroyer or recycler. This concept of *Brahma-Loka* could also apply to *Shiva-Loka* or *Kailasha*, *Vaikuntha* or *Devi-Loka* for *Tantrics etc*.)

We have to understand this point very clearly - we will not be able to notice a change without an unchanging background. There must be an unchanging background/screen to notice the change from manifestation to non-manifestation and non-manifestation to manifestation - this unchanging screen is eternal, indestructible, infinite and unborn and is called God/Divine Lord/ *Parmatma/Parbrahman.*

अजो नित्य: शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे || Gita C2, V20 ajo nityaḥ śhāśhvato 'yaṁ purāṇo na hanyate hanyamāne śharīre

An analogy about the manifest and unmanifest state:

Swami Chinmayanadaji gave another very beautiful illustration regarding manifest state, un-manifest state and rebirth.

There is a chemistry teacher, an artist, a businessman, a pandit/man of knowledge and a thief. They all are pursuing their own profession during the daytime. When night comes then they all go to sleep. Now, it is very interesting to note that when they are sleeping, the businessman is not a businessman; the chemistry teacher is not a chemistry teacher; the thief is not a thief and the artist is not an artist. They have all merged in their un-manifest forms, which means that if we enter the room while they are sleeping then we will not be able to make any distinction among them. We will not know who is who. However, when they wake up, they will come back to their normal manifest forms and start performing their usual activities. Each person will manifest his previous night's *samsakaras*.

Similarly, when Brahma starts creating the universe then He is not creating anything new, everything which is inside Him in an unmanifest form just starts manifesting. We will all restart our rebirth from the point where we were in our previous life. When Brahma wakes up then everything within Him wakes up. We resume our nature and start from the point where we left in our previous life.

To summarise: Two points need to be noted.

- I. The Lord is saying, "Beyond this unmanifest state (of Brahma), there is another 'Unmanifest Eternal Being', that does not perish even when all beings perish. There are two types of unmanifest states. 1) Lower Temporary Unmanifest State of Brahma is perishable, changeable. This unmanifest state is dependent upon its manifest state and vice versa. This is called changing or perishing. 2) Eternal Unmanifest State/Supreme Lord - there is an unchanging background around which all the Divine-Lila is going on. We cannot experience it because it does not manifest. However, we can become one with the Eternal Unmanifest. The goal of life is to get identified with this Eternal Unmanifest Being called God.
- II. na vinaśhyati nothing gets destroyed, demons do not get destroyed; saints do not get destroyed; the body (matter) doesn't get destroyed (only the form gets destroyed) and the mind doesn't get destroyed. The great sages understood this fact a long time ago that matter cannot be created or destroyed. Why? Because matter is eternal and something which eternal cannot be created or destroyed. An object which is created must go back to its original constituents. This is called manifestation and non-manifestation. This is a scientific fact. An important point, we need to understand this manifestation is exactly as it was before. (nashyati means changeable but not destructible.) Even if we reach Brahma-Loka that is the highest unmanifest state, we have to come back to a manifest state. Therefore, go beyond both states manifest and temporary unmanifest state.

Bhagavat Gita: Chapter 8, Verse 21

अव्यक्तोऽक्षर इत्युक्तस्तमाहु: परमां गतिम् | यं प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं मम || 21|| avyakto kṣhara ityuktas tam āhuḥ paramāṁ gatim yaṁ prāpya na nivartante tad dhāma paramaṁ mama

Meaning: This (second) Eternal Unmanifest (*Parmatma*) is called imperishable or *Akshara. It is* said to be the ultimate supreme goal, and those who reach it, never come back. That is My/God's Supreme Abode.

This point has been discussed already. The second Unmanifest State/*Avaikta* is called *Akshara*, it is not perishable and not changeable. *(Shara* means that which is changeable and perishable.)

In other words, 'matter' is the manifestation of energy. The more accurate statement should be 'energy cannot be created; energy cannot be destroyed because energy is eternal, but it can be transformed.' Here is an important point - modern scientists are also talking about energy. A question may be raised - what makes energy transform into matter? Scientists are unable to answer this question. Vedanta answers this beautifully, "There must be an intelligent cause. Imagine we

have got a lump of clay (called *upadan-karana or material cause*) and a potter's wheel (instrumental cause) but if there is no potter (*nimmitta karana* or intelligent cause) then clay-pots cannot be made. Here, the potter is an intelligent cause/*nimmitta -karana*. Scientists say that energy is inert. They are unable to explain how that energy gets transformed into matter. This has been explained by Indian sages thousands of years ago.

[Nasadiya Sukta (Hymn of non-Eternity, origin of universe):

The **Nāsadīya Sūkta** (after the incipit *ná ásat*, or "not the non-existent"), also known as the **Hymn of Creation**, is the 129th hymn of the 10th mandala of the Rigveda (10:129). It is concerned with cosmology and the origin of the universe. It states:

"There was neither non-existence nor existence then; Neither the realm of space nor the sky which is beyond; What stirred? Where? In whose protection? There was neither death nor immortality then...]

Vedanta is answering so beautifully: There is a most intelligent Being. He is of the nature of pure intelligence and pure knowledge. He is eternal, unborn, changeless and infinite. Somehow, it seems that He has created the universe and has become the cause and effect. In simple words - there is God; He is the creator of the creator (means creator of Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh). These three are nothing but manifestations of the same Supreme God's powers. Depending upon their functions - we call one power Brahma, another power as Vishnu and another power as Shiva.

परमां गतिम् *paramāṁ gatim -* means supreme goal and supreme state. The sages who have realised God by their personal experience are categorically telling us that this is the highest goal. All beings are standing on an escalator of evolution to reach God and become one with God. What will be the benefit to us? यं प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते *yaṁ prāpya na nivartante -* when a sadhaka/aspirant reaches this state then there will be no rebirth and he will remain as Sat-Chit-Ananda. He will not just enjoy bliss but will become bliss. तदाम परमं मम *tad dhāma paramaṁ mama -* Bhagwan Krishna is telling us, "That Supreme Reality is none other than Me." Here, Shri Krishna is not an individual but a symbol of the Supreme Reality. How do we know?

Gopika-Geetam:

I would like to quote the most beautiful fourth verse of Gopika Geetam. (Bhagavatam Skanda 10, Chapter 31)

The so-called blessed unlettered Gopis of Brindavan loved Shri Krishna with their heart and soul. They became enlightened just by thinking of Shri Krishna.

न खलु गोपिकानन्दनो भवानखिल देहिनामन्तरात्म द्दक् । विखनसार्थितो विश्व गुप्तये सख उदेयिवान्सात्वतां कुले ।।

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na khalu gopīkā-nandano bhavān,akhila-dehinām antarātma-drk vikhanasārthito viśva-guptaye, sakha udeyivān sātvatām kule (Gopika Geetam Verse 4)

न खलु गोपिकानन्दनो भवान **na khalu gopīkā-nandano bhavān -** means you are not the mere son of an ordinary cowherd village woman.

अखिल देहिनामन्तरात्म द्दक् - 'You are the indweller. You are the witness/ruler/Ishwar of every living and non-living beings in this world, in the form of existence, knowledge and bliss.' When the Gopis use the word 'indweller' for Krishna then immediately an idea comes that He is formless. He is everything and everywhere. He is inside as well as outside just like an ice cave - where water is inside and outside the cave and permeated everywhere. It seems that the same water is separating itself inside and outside. Here, we need to understand the difference between concept and percept. For example, love has no form, that is why it is not a percept but a concept. Similarly, happiness, friendliness, service etc. are all concepts. These concepts have no form, they express themselves through certain activities - such as a loving glance of a mother at her baby expresses her love for the baby.

Blessed Gopis of Vrindavan are saying, "O, beloved Krishna, You are not just a human being with this particular body; You are not just a son of Yashoda and You do not have any name or form." If there is no name and form, this means Lord Krishna cannot be perceived, He can only be conceived.

[विखनसार्थितो विश्व गुप्तये - means, for the protection of the world. Brahma requested, "O' Lord please incarnate for the protection of this earth."

सख उदेयिवान्सात्वतां कुले - lineage of Krishna is called सत्वाकुला Satvakula or वृष्णि कुला।]

The Lord is telling us, "I am the supreme goal. I am the highest state called Moksha."

Arjuna said, "Lord, I understood your teachings that there is nothing called death, it is only either a state of manifestation or a state of unmanifest. Therefore, I am fearless now. But, please tell me - how can I attain You?"

This beautiful question will be discussed in our next class.

Vasudeva sutham devam kamsa Chanoora mardhanam, Devaki paramanandam Krishnam vande Jagat Gurum.

वसुदेवसुतं देवं कंसचाणूरमर्दनम् ।

देवकीपरमानन्दं कृष्णं वन्दे जगद्गुरुम् ॥ May Shri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda bless us all.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti

With kind regards

Mamta Misra

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