

SHARNAGATI (COMPLETE SURRENDER TO GOD)- A 'NIYAMA' IN BHAJANS OF A SEEKER -GANGASATI

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Abstract

Sharnagati is mentioned many times in the scriptures and by the devotees in their hymns. This Sharnagati is to be taken by the Tattvanist Guru or God. The devotee accepts surrender and becomes relaxed. The devotee does as his Guru or Lord says. This is what Lord Krishna explains to Arjuna in the Gita. The Guru-Shishya tradition of Sharnagati has been going on for ages. Maharshi Patanjali has mentioned inYogasutrathat Ishwarpranidhan comes under the Major Niyam of Ashtanga Yoga and that is known as Sharnagati. Swami Kripalvanandji and Swami Rajarshi Muni have achieved this through their yoga practice. When the seeker begins the sadhana and the devotee begins the bhakti, the mantra japa also begins withSharnagati. Sharnagati is what makes a devotee attain God and a devotee achieves Moksha.

Keywords: Rap, Hindi Rap, Mumbai, Social Issues, lyrics, Rapper, Influence

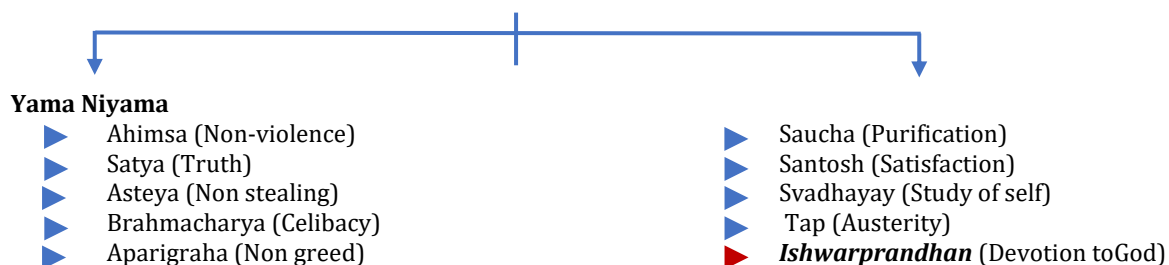
INTRODUCTION

There are many Devotional literature passed down tousin manyways. It tellsus about theirteachings and thelife of a devotee.Out of the manydevotionalsliterature, one such literature tells us about one of the great devoteesGangasati. She composed many *bhajan*'s. Each with a unique theme with spiritual teaching explaining meaning of Bhakti and importance of the grace of guru. All those *bhajans* mention about the "Sharnagati" (Surrendering oneself) to God or Guru.

The devotee performs his full activities with complete awareness and constant chanting when he surrenders himself to God. Such a devotee always maintains intense love for God in his heart. Even if he is temporarily moved away from God even for second, there is restlessness, anguish, and sorrow in devotee'sheart. When a devotee's unceasing love for God is permanently established in his consciousness, then he is called a "SharnagatBhakt".

Under the 'Niyama' given by Patanjali sage, *Ishwarpranidhan* is 'Sharnagati Yoga'.

Ashtanga Yoga



Saints are simple in nature. So,they see all the beings as equal.They do not see caste or caste distinctionsneither do they discriminate between rich and poor. They always consider themselves happy in the service of the saints as well as other creatures. Saints consider chanting the name of God as the key of sadhana. They surrender their lives to God and live-in refuge of God. They are lovers of God. They compose hymns, sing, and recite hymns to others. It also shows the door to the abode of God through their hymns and that too in enigmatic language. They witness God in all the living beings and servethem selflessly. Such saints possessno university degree. They do not

have bookish knowledge but possess experiential knowledge.

Sharnagati (Devotion to God)

Gangasati's bhajans are simple, instinctive, and autogenous. It is the voice of spirit, experience, and heart. It is a spontaneous voice just like Vedas. At the behest of *Gangasati's* husband Bhakt Kahalsang, Panbai always had love for spirituality, she came with *Gangasati* as Vadarana (queen's maid). *Gangasati* composed fifty-two hymns in fifty-two days and recited them to Panbai, taking Panbai to the pinnacle of spirituality. Only then after *Gangasati* also took samadhi (Final stage at which union with divine is reached).

Bhakti karvi tene raank thainerehvu ne, Melvu antarnu Abhimaan re;
Sadguru charan ma sheesh namavi, Kar jodi laagvu paay.

Bhakti(Bhandev, 2009, 12)

The one who performs bhakti lives politely and humbly. The devotee is asked to perform bhakti by taking *Sharnagati* to a Tatvanist Guru or God.

There should be a sole devotion to God or to an elemental guru. *Sharnagati* to God is a very important tool in devotion. By saying this verse to Lord Krishna, Arjun is asking for *Sharnagati* to Lord Krishna at the beginning of the Gita,

"शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम्।" (२।७)
later Lord Krishna accepts the *Sharnagati* by saying,
"सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज।" (१८।६६)

In *Sharnagati*, the seeker should offer body, mind, intellect, soul at the feet of God and keep on meditating on him day and night. For the attainment of God, the god does not ask for homely or materialistic things, accepts what the god has given them. The easiest way to get rid of all the troubles is to surrender oneself to God.

The following things should be done to adopt *Sharnagati*.

- 1) Everything must be offered to the god with the understanding that all of it belongs to God.
- 2) To do all the duties for them according to the command of God or Guru.
- 3) To memorize every word of God or Guru, and to meditate and contemplate and accept every word of his with complete faith.
- 4) The seeker should constantly chant god's name.

Janabai, a disciple of Saint Namdev from Maharashtra, used to chant the name of God while doing every housework. When the cow dung cakes made by her, were stolen. She asks Namdevji to find the cow dung cakes made by her. Namdevji asks Janabai to forget that incident and make new cow dung cakes. But Janabai is adamant about getting back the cow dung cakes she made. On this Namdevji asks how to identify those cow dung cakes. Janabai replies that when he made the cow dung cakes, she was continuously chanting the name of 'Vitthal Vitthal.' when the cow dung cakes are to be broken, the sound of 'Vitthal Vitthal' will be heard from it. Namdevji's disciples go to everyone's house in the whole village and break the cow dung cakes and nothing was heard in it. Finally, his disciples go to the last house, they break all the cow dung cakes. No sound was heard from a few of them since those belonged to the owner, but from other half of the cow dung cakes, the sound of Vitthal Vitthal was heard. These cakes were kept aside. These belonged to Janabai. Just by *Naamsmaran* (chanting the name), a certain level of concentration is attained, so much progress is made by the devotee. This was the result of Janabai's unwavering faith and trust in her guru Namdevji.

When devotee completely surrenders himself to the god, the god Himself faces every hardship. Just as Lord Krishna helped Narasimha Mehta by being present on every occasion. As Narasimha Mehta had surrendered himself completely and put all his worries on the god, only focussed on his '*bhajan kirtan*'.

In the Gita, Lord Krishna says to Arjuna,

"यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत्।
यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥" (9/27)

Hey Arjun! Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer in '*yagna*' whatever you give alms and whatever you do in the form of *swadharmacharan*, give it all to me.

Dedicating all the karma that happens to us during the entire day to God, unique potency is produced. For the worship of the Lord, flowers, sandalwood, incense, bel leaves, holy basil and durva sticks are offered. One should not underestimate them all. When one offers food (*naivaidya*) to lord that prasad also becomes very delicious.

"*Tuko mahne chavi aale jeka mishrit Vitthal.*" (Kalyan, 2021, 13,)

Tukaramji says that whatever is '*Vitthal mishrit*' i.e., offered to Lord Vitthal, it has extraordinary flavour.

How delicious is the prasad of '*Rava Shira*' in '*Satyanarayana Pooja*'? On the contrary the shira made at home no matter how much extra ghee or nuts we add, it does not taste as sweet as prasad.

Ranaji sent a cup of poison to Mirabai with a servant, claiming it is a Prasad of the Lord, then Mirabai drank the cup of poison in the name of Lord Krishna, and nothing happened to her. When the saints do any work, they first

take the name of the god and do it only for the god.

Revealing the secret of devotion, Vinobaji says that

"Karma is to be done; but to offer the fruit to the god is to use the fruit for purification of theChitt Shuddhi."(Kalyan,2021, 1 3,)

At any given point of time, without depending on anyone, abandoning shame, fear, respect, greatness, and attachment, without ego-affection consider Paramatma(the supreme authority)as the sole refuge,sole resort, the only salvation and ubiquitous. Whither unwavering faith and love continuously chant god's name and praising qualities, virtues meditate his influence and effectiveness, along with 'Bhajan and Kirtan' doing all the obligatory deeds selflessly for the sake of God as told by the God. This is what we call as unique refuge of God.

Ananyashraya tyaji avyo ekaj tara asraya,

Pap-shok Hari mara, rakh taro gani mane. (Kripalvanandji, ,2005,21)

I left everything behind,and I surrender myself toyou. Take away my sins-sorrows and consider me as one of yours.

Maharshi Patanjali calls this surrender, Ishwarpranidhan.

"शौचसंतोषतपः स्वाध्यायेश्वरप्रणिधानानि नियमाः।"(Yogadarshan, 2/3)

Saucha (Cleanliness), Santosh (Satisfaction), Tap(penance), Swadhyay (self-study), Ishwarpranidhan (devotion to God) comes under the Niyama.

This are the five rules of code of conduct of seeker. Maharshi has included Ishwarpranidhan under the 'Niyama'.Ishwarpranidhan means to have complete faith in God and offer all our 'Karma' to the God.

Ishwarpranidhan (to dedicate to god all that one does,in body,mind and speech).

(Kripalvanandji, 1977,44)

Ishwar Pranidhan: -

'Ishwar' means 'Sagunabrahm or Parmatma'.

'Pranidhan' means 'to be submissive with prana'.

"Ishwar ne jagat na swami mani amane tan-man thi shradha Purvak seva pooja karvi ane samarpit bhav dakhavo, Ishwarpranidhan na samanya lakshno che. Ishwarpranidhan yogani antim bhumika 'Samadhi' ni prapti nu sadhan che. Samadhi ma Ishwardharshan pami,Sadhak prakruti na bandhanmathi mukt bani jaya che."

(Rajarshree Muni, 2004,23)

It is a common feature of Ishwarpranidhan to worship God with all one's heart and mind and show devotion to him as the supreme lord orlord of the world. The ultimate goal of Ishwarpranidhan in yoga is the means of attaining 'Samadhi'.

Maharshi Vyasji defines yoga assamadhi. While in yoga, the seeker practices Yama, Niyama, Asana and Pranayama properly. Then the seeker is physically and mentally purified. He then enters to Dharna, Dhyan and samadhi through Ishwarpranidhan in 'AshtangaYoga'or 'Rajyoga'. When this purification of the devotee is done through faithful chanting, meditation of God, *bhajan-kirtan*, then his physical and mental purification occurs. He then enters Samadhi through *Sharnagati*.

Explaining this, Kripalvanandji says that,

"Priyatam prabhuji ke pranidhan dwara bhi shighratamsamadhi labh hota hai. Bhaktjano ko toh yaksukhada sharnagatiatyantpriya hoti hai. Anugraha prapti ke pashchyat hi Ishwarpranidhan ka prarambh hota hai." (Sutra Triveni, 2017,15)

Even by the Ishwarpranidhan of the beloved lord, the samadhi is quickly attained. To the devotees, this happy refuge is very much clear. Ishwarpranidhan begins when one receives the blessing from God.

Pranopasana begins with the grace of Guru or God. Maharshi Patanjali states,

"तपःस्वाध्यायेश्वरप्रणिधानानि क्रियायोगः।।" (2/1)

Pranopasana itself is the *Sharnagati*. In it the mind is subject to the prana. The devotee performs prana inspired karmas (action). He does not do any Karma voluntarily. The devotee calls it as the divine play (Leela) of the Lord. The body & mind are defined by 'Tamoguna ' &'Rajoguna', Sattvic penance must be done to purify the body. Purification of body & mind is best done with Sattvic tapa/penance. Because in sattvic 'tapa' body & mind are not considered foe or friends. But they are purified without any rage or hatred.

Swadhyaya includes chanting, meditating, Ishwar Pujan and Ishwarpranidhan. 'Anahatanad' (unstuck voice) emanates from vibrations with the practice of Swadhyaya. When one practice 'naad' 'pranavayu' or vital force becomes sustaining and gradually the mind becomes focused.

In Ishwarpranidhan, *sharnagati* is not just a literal prayer. In *sharnagati*, the seeker surrenders everything to God or the philosophical Guru with complete faith, trust, and devotion from the heart. Then in a very humble voice says, "I surrender to you." This is *Sharnagati*.

"Gyanee ane Bhakt je karma kare che tekarma Swechit karma hota nathi.Prbhu prerit karma hoye che. Teja Ishwarponidhan, Swadhyaya ane tapa che. Tenu naamaj Kriya Yoga Athwa, Karma sanyasche. (Kripalvanandji,

1996, 83)

The deeds that a sage and a devotee does are not voluntary deeds. They are God-inspired deeds. They are Ishvarapranidhana, Swadhyaya and Tapa. This is 'Kriya Yoga' or 'Karma Sannyasa.'

Describing the form of a yogi performing Ishwarpranidhan, Vedavyasaji shows him as a 'Amrutbhogi'.

शय्यासनस्थोऽथ पथि व्रजन् वा
स्वस्थः परिक्षीणवितर्कजालः।

संसारबीजक्षयमीक्षमाणः स्यान्नित्ययुक्तोऽमृतभोगभोगी॥(Kalyan,2021, 14)

The seeds of the world i.e., 'Lack of knowledge' (avidya, kalesh etc) are bound to decay. The cycle of birth and death comes to an end. The yogi is completely involved in God, while sleeping-waking, eating-drinking, moving around he is only absorbed in the meditation of God.

The child is dependent on his mother. Until then, the mother carries the responsibility of his protection & all kinds of care. The young child, (after committing a mistake) falls into the mother's lap. In the same way the devotee falls at the feet of his Lord. He is least worried whether God will bless him or punish him. Always happy in the statement made by God. He is never distracted by any kind of grief.

Even God does not pay attention to the faults of the devotees. He has immense love for the devotee in his heart. God may keep us as his wills & wherever we live only his memory should remain unaltered.

One who surrenders himself into the hands of God, all the Vices & malicious instincts are automatically destroyed from his heart. Instead, virtue & virtue instincts are developed. Many examples of this are found in the Scriptures. Vala or Ratnakar turned from robber to sage Valmiki, Jesal Jadeja also turned from a bandit to Jesal pir.

CONCLUSION

The surrender only removes the "I" from the ego. Due to the *Sharnagati* of the Lord, he considers himself as a mere puppet of the Lord.

Mirabai says in her bhajan,

Ram kahe tem rahiye Odhavji,

Aapane citthi na chakar chaiye Odhavji. (Jaisalpura, 1997, 42)

Just as the puppet dances as the narrator does making no move on his own. Everything that happens is done by God alone. Therefore, every action done by God is very holy & ideal. So, no action is done by the devotee which is against the command and will of the God.

Among such *paramatma parayan bhaktas* is Shukadevji who still wanders in the world indifferent to save people. Some, like Arjuna, follow the orders of God & perform their duties. While some go crazy in wonderful Premleela like gopis & some stay dumb & crazy like Jadbharat.

The Surrendered devotee turns into gold from iron by the touch of Sadguru with *Sharnagati*.

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