

Haridasas of Karnataka

Shri Vijaya Das :
Works - Spiritual and prose lyrics (selected, abridged) (Part II)

- Prof. D. V. Potdar

Vijaya das pays tributes to the pioneers of Madhwa philosophy, Srts. Jayateertha, Vyasa raya, Vadiraja, Raghvendra, and Purandar in a number of spiritual lyrics. He expresses his gratefulness to them, for they are his 'swaropa uddharakas' (uplifters from a lower state). In the narrative poems he a) defends the tenets of dualism, b) describes the circumstances which led lord Vishnu and Bhimasena to appear in female forms. He offers prayers for his dead son and friend and begs the lord to make them alive. He is even prepared to offer a part of his life for the revival. There is the usual cheek slapping for sins committed in ignorance, and prayer for His grace.

1.

Lord,
I didn't complain, "I starved,
went naked",
but simply prayed, "Get rid of my passions"

I didn't say, "My wife and kids suffer"
but prayed, "Show me the right path"

Vijaya vithala, merciful one,
I pray, "Let me be in good company,
be pure in heart, and serve your feet always"

2.

I laughed at the worthy,
but hobnobbed with the wicked.
Relatives I welcomed,
but devotees I turned away,
My wife I placated, but didn't mind
the devotee's anger.
I fed my kids, but let Brahmins
go hungry.

I ne'r bathed you Lord,
kept a tulsi leaf at your feet,
made an offering, and lighted a lamp,
I wouldnt touch Your feet,
but fawned for a piece of bread,

All my learning was for argument, fights,
Clothes and ornaments I brought,
not for my wife but for mistresses,
Aware of hell and punishment,
I minded them not a bit,
Repentant, now I come to you
Vijaya vithal reya, and pray for mercy.

3.

Forgive this fool,
Achyuta, resident of my heart.

Offered a garland of fragrant jasmynes,
I called it ugly, threw it away,
and live like a pig.

Invited to a dinner,
of sweet dishes, ghee, by dear mother,
I turned away, ate burnt porridge,
served by a maid

A boatman waited to ferry me,
but I refused, said, "I'll swim!".

4.

The widow, the sick, the loose,
the deaf, the dumb, the blind,
the handicapped, the high, the low,
all kinds of women fascinate me!
While they wash, change clothes,
I watch them hungry eyed!

5.

You cant escape from your
devotees, Lord.
You may wear a loincloth,
turn away your face, lift your hand in ire,
escape the siren's clutches, cross the sea,
wander from house to house in disguise
relish poison, be pushed in a deep lake,
beg your food, move in the forests incognito,
shave your tuft*, throw away your sacred thread,

and sit at the feet of Krishna, meditating.**

* of hair ** the three incarnations, Hanuma, Bhima, Madhwa

6.

I don't mind being born a dog,
a pig or a donkey,
or in the lower castes, and pass thro'
many lives, suffer,
if at the end, I may follow the
creed of Pavamana,
and be released.

7.

My ears are wide open,
and Kali wishes to enter,
Let your ankle bells jingle Hari,
and he'll run 'cos of fear.

You say, "I'm the supreme being,
food is the supreme being,
but when you fall ill, do without food,
how's that?"*

If all beings are supreme,
and there are no differences,
watch out, somebody may sleep with your wife!*

If you are the supreme being, the lord,
how come your wife and children go hungry?*

None can overrule His dictates, son,
not even the brave or the princes,
see, Parikshit sat amidst water,
hoping to 'scape death

(a miscellany)

*hits at monism

8.

Receive His grace, and you'll see
Him everywhere,

what you eat and wear'll be worship,
if you fall ill, that'll be penance,
words of slander hurled* will be blessings,
lying down on the earth'll be prostration
your wanderings'll be pilgrimages,
poverty'll be an opportunity for contemplation,
contentment with what you get'll lead to happiness

* at you

9.

See the maiden* and her quaint ways,
bursting with youth, a string of jasmynes
in her hair,
her smile allures, and her words ooze honey!

*mohini roopa

Wives, let husbands snip your locks,*
offer them to Mother Ganges,
so you'll have great fortune,
and remain united with husbands,
life after life.

* a ritual during a visit to Benares

(a miscellany)

10.

In the presence of the mistress,
if the maid is dragged, insulted,
who's to blame?

While the husband watches,
if the wife is disrobed, and kicked,
who's to blame?

If the child sitting in the lap,
is pulled, roped, and tortured,
who's to blame?

In the king's court,
if the wicked snatch the weapons,

and dishonour the soldier,
who's to blame?

Vijaya vithal reya,
if your devotee's honoured or insulted,
who's to care?

11.

Live long son,*
let the dust of the devotee's feet
be on your forehead.

Don't, stretch your palm before the wicked,
and reveal religious truths to the unworthy;
be deaf to scandal, share your meal with others,
serve not princes, think not of tomorrow,
be admired by the learned and the lowly,
have a good time, surrounded by family and
the twice born,
and forget not for a moment to touch the
feet of Vijaya vithal reya.

*Mohan das (written when he was ordained)

12.

Don't trust your devotees Lord,
they care not for release*, but wish
to worship you (in person).

Like the hungry fellow, who goes
to a feast, asks for a morsel,
and doesn't get up till he has his fill!

Or like the weary traveler,
who begs for room to sleep,
and receiving the nod occupies
the whole house!

* moksha

13.

I won't mourn my son,

for when Abhimanyu was killed,
uncle Krishna, Partha, Bhima,
brave warriors all,
could do nothing.

Sage Vashishta had a hundred sons,
brave, moral, they lived happily,
but met death, all of a sudden.

If this be the fate of the greats,
what about us, poor mortals?*

* written when his son died

14.

The Fire god burns up what he
comes across,
but not his own ornaments, clothes,
in like manner our Vijaya vithal reya
destroys our sins, sorrows,
but punishes the wicked.

15.

Evils! run, run away from me,
for if our brave lord Vijaya vithal reya
meets the lot of you, you'll be beheaded,
thrown to the devils.

16

A true wife, cursed by a sage,
stopped sun rise, to save her husband,
another argued with the god of death,
to bring back her husband to life,
the third heard the guffaw of the recorders,*
and prayed them to save her husband.**

*Chitra gupta ** references, (line wise) Kaushika, Satyavan, Brahma sharma

17.

As fishermen throw nets, catch fish,
you throw nets, catch your sins,
the net full, place it at the feet of

Vijaya vithal reya, and be free from
birth and death!

Om Tat Sat