Please help to maintain respect for volunteer spirit.

Please note that proofreading is done using Devanagari version and other language/scripts are generated using sanscript.
Introduction

Bhaja Govindam was written by Jagadguru Adi Shankaracharya. A biography of Shankara and his other compositions of Vedic literature can be found in the Shankara.itx document. Bhaja GovindaM is one of the minor compositions of the spiritual giant, Adi Shankaracharya. It is classified as a prakaraNa grantha, a primer to the major works. Though sung as a bhajan, it contains the essence of Vedanta and implores the man to think, Why am I here in this life? Why am I amassing wealth, family, but have no peace? What is the Truth? What is the purpose of life? The person thus awakened gets set on a path to the inner road back to the God principle.

The background of Bhaja GovindaM is worth examining. During his stay in Kashi, Adi Shankaracharya noticed a very old man studying the rules of Sanskrit by Panini. Shankara was touched with pity at seeing the plight of the old man spending his years at a mere intellectual accomplishment while he would be better off praying and spending time to control his mind. Shankara understood that the majority of the world was also engaged in mere intellectual, sense pleasures and not in the divine contemplation. Seeing this, he burst forth with the verses of Bhaja govindaM. In 31 verses, he, like no other, explains our fallacies, our wrong outlook for life, and dispels our ignorance and delusions. Thus bhaja govindaM was originally known as moha mudgAra, the remover of delusions. Shankara explains, nay chides, us for spending our time in useless
trivia like amassing wealth, lusting after (wo)men and requests us to discriminate and cultivate the knowledge to learn the difference between the real and the unreal. To emphasise that, he concludes that all knowledge other than the Self-Knowledge is useless, Shankara makes the person realize how foolish he/she is in the conduct and behaviour by these verses, and shows the purpose of our worldly existence, which is to seek Govinda and attain Him.

Bhaja govindaM is divided into dvAdashamanjarikA stotram and chaturdashamanjarika stotram. At the end of composing the first stanza, it is said that Shankara burst forth with the next 12 stanzas of bhaja govindam. Thus stanzas 2-13 with 1st as refrain are called dvAdashmanjarika stotram. Inspired by the extempore recital by Shankara, each of his 14 disciples composed a verse and the 14 verse compendium is called chaturdashamanjarika stotram. (There are no evidences to prove the exact individual authorship of these 14 verses, we have some traditional hearsay evidences as attribution.) Shankara added the finishing touches by adding five of his own stanzas at the last bringing the total to 31.

The combined 31 are also termed as mohamudgaraH by some. The last two verses in this version is not found in all editions.

Bhaja govindaM has been set to musical tones and sung as prayer songs by children. It is divided into dvAdashamanjarikA and charpaTamanjarikA for this purpose. The former is a set of verses (verses 2-13) while the rest of the verses form charpaTamanjarikA. Anyone who listens to the music of Bhaja govindaM is attracted to it. However, the significance of the text goes much deeper and contains a well defined philosophy of attaining salvation.

Shankara’s words seem to be quite piercing and seem to lack the softness and tenderness often found in his other texts, thus addressing directly. The reason is that this was an extempore recital to an old man. His words can be compared to a knife of a surgeon. The surgeon’s knife cruelly removes the tumour with much
pain, but removing the tumour ultimately restores good health in the patient. So are Shankara’s words, which pierce and point out our ignorance. It is a knife into the heart of worldliness, and by removing this tumour of ignorance, we can attain everlasting bliss with the grace of Govinda.

May the AchAryA guide us from ignorance to truth.
OM tat sat.

bhajagovindam.pdf
The life of a person is as uncertain as rain drops trembling on a lotus leaf. Know that the whole world remains a prey to disease, ego and grief.

So long as a man is fit and able to support his family, see what affection all those around him show. But no one at home cares to even have a word with him when his body totters due to old age.

When one is alive, his family members enquire kindly about his welfare. But when the soul departs from the body, even his wife runs away in fear of the corpse.

The childhood is lost by attachment to playfulness. Youth is lost by attachment to woman. Old age passes away by thinking over many things. But there is hardly anyone who wants to be lost in parabrahman.
Who is your wife? Who is your son? Strange is this samsAra, the world. Of whom are you? From where have you come?

Brother, ponder over these truths.

From satsanga, company of good people, comes non-attachment, from non-attachment comes freedom from delusion, which leads to self-settledness. From self-settledness comes JIvan muktI.

What good is lust when youth has fled?
What use is a lake which has no water?
Where are the relatives when wealth is gone?
Where is samsAra, the world, when the Truth is known?

Do not boast of wealth, friends, and youth. Each one of these are destroyed within a minute by time. Free yourself from the illusion of the world of Maya and attain the timeless Truth.

Daylight and darkness, dusk and dawn, winter and springtime come and go. Time plays and life ebbs away. But the storm of desire never leaves.
Oh mad man! Why this engrossment in thoughts of wealth? Is there no one to guide you? There is only one thing in three worlds that can save you from the ocean of samsara, get into the boat of satsanga, company of good people, quickly.

This bouquet of twelve verses (2-13) was imparted to a grammarian by the all-knowing Shankara, adored as the bhagavadpada.

The following 14 form chaturdasha njarika.

There are many who go with matted locks, many who have clean shaven heads, many whose hairs have been plucked out; some are clothed in orange, yet others in various colours — all just for a livelihood. Seeing truth revealed before them, still the foolish ones see it not.

Stanza attributed to toTakAchArya.

Strength has left the old man’s body; his head has become bald, his gums toothless and leaning on crutches. Even then the
attachment is strong and he clings firmly to fruitless desires.
Stanza attributed to hastAmalaka.

Behold there lies the man who sits warming up his body with the fire in front and the sun at the back; at night he curls up the body to keep out of the cold; he eats his beggar’s food from the bowl of his hand and sleeps beneath the tree. Still in his heart, he is a wretched puppet at the hands of passions.
Stanza attributed to Subodha.

One may go to Gangasagar, observe fasts, and give away riches in charity! Yet, devoid of jnana, nothing can give mukti even at the end of a hundred births.
Stanza attributed to vArttikAra (sureshvara).

Take your residence in a temple or below a tree, wear the deerskin for the dress, and sleep with mother earth as your bed. Give up all attachments and renounce all comforts. Blessed with such vairgya, could any fail to be content?
Stanza attributed to nityAnanda.
One may take delight in yoga or bhoga, may have attachment or detachment. But only he whose mind steadily delights in Brahman enjoys bliss, no one else.

Stanza attributed to Anandagiri.

Let a man read but a little from bhagavadGita, drink just a drop of water from the Ganges, worship but once murari. He then will have no altercation with Yama.

Stanza attributed to dRidhabhakti.

Born again, death again, again to stay in the mother’s womb!
It is indeed hard to cross this boundless ocean of samsAra. Oh Murari! Redeem me through Thy mercy.

Stanza attributed to nityanAtha.

There is no shortage of clothing for a monk so long as there are rags cast off the road. Freed from vices and virtues, onward he wanders. One who lives in communion with god enjoys bliss, pure and uncontaminated, like a child and as an intoxicated.

Stanza attributed to yogAnanda.
Who are you? Who am I? From where do I come? Who is my mother, who is my father? Ponder thus, look at everything as essence-less and give up the world as an idle dream.

Stanza attributed to Surendra.

In me, in you and in everything, none but the same Vishnu dwells. Your anger and impatience is meaningless. If you wish to attain the status of Vishnu, have samabhava, equanimity, always.

Stanza attributed to MedhAtithira.

Waste not your efforts to win the love of or to fight against friend and foe, children and relatives. See yourself in everyone and give up all feelings of duality completely.

Stanza attributed to Bharativamsha.

Give up lust, anger, infatuation, and greed. Ponder over your real nature. Fools are they who are blind to the Self. Cast into hell, they suffer there endlessly.

Stanza attributed to Sumati.
Regularly recite from the Gita, meditate on Vishnu in your heart, and chant His thousand glories. Take delight to be with the noble and the holy. Distribute your wealth in charity to the poor and the needy.

Stanza attributed to sumati.

He who yields to lust for pleasure leaves his body a prey to disease. Though death brings an end to everything, man does not give-up the sinful path.

Wealth is not welfare, truly there is no joy in it. Reflect thus at all times. A rich man fears even his own son. This is the way of wealth everywhere.

Regulate the prANa-s, life forces, remain unaffected by external influences and discriminate between the real and the fleeting. Chant the holy name of God and silence the turbulent mind. Perform these with care, with extreme care.
Oh devotee of the lotus feet of the Guru! May thou be soon free from Samsara. Through disciplined senses and controlled mind, thou shalt come to experience the indwelling Lord of your heart!

The following two are not found in standard text of Bhajagovindam.

Thus a silly grammarian lost in rules cleansed of his narrow vision and shown the Light by Shankara’s apostles.

Worship Govinda, worship Govinda, worship Govinda, Oh fool!

Other than chanting the Lord’s names, there is no other way to cross the life’s ocean.

Appendix: Word meanings

The following words and meanings are added as an appendix to allow the reader to learn Sanskrit words. They may not follow exact word construction in the above verses. Reader is requested to consult a dictionary and commentaries for additional details.

ऋष = worship;
ऋषकल्याण = Govinda;
ऋषकल्याण = O, foolish mind!
ऋषकत्याय = ( when you have) reached/obtained;
ऋषकत्याय = (in the) presence/nearness of;
ऋष = Time (here:Lord of Death, Yama);
No; never;

protects;

the grammatical formula DukRi.nkaraNe;

Oh fool!

jahi+iha, leave/give up+here(in this world);

wealth;

coming/arrival;

thirst/desire;

Do; act;

sat+buddhiM, good+awareness(loosely speaking:mind);
in the mind;

desirelessness;

yat+labhase, whatever+(you) obtain;

nija+karma, one's+duty(normal work);

obtained;

wealth;

by that; with that;

divert/recreate(be happy);

mind;

woman;

breasts that are(full-with milk);

nAbhI+deshaM, navel+region/country;

having seen;

Don’t+go;

infatuated state(moha+AveshaM-seizure);

this;

flesh, fat, +etc;

appearance (generally, grotesque/ugly);

in the mind;

think well;
again;
and again;

.. 3..

nalinI+dala+gata, lotus+petal+reached/gone;
water(drop);
ati+tarala, very+unstable;
like that;
life;
wonderful;
fickle-minded;
know for sure;
disease;
self-importance;
having been caught/seized;
world;people;
attacked(hata) by grief(shoka);
and;
entire;

.. 4..

so long as;
wealth;
ing/earning;
capable of;
tAvat+nija, till then+one’s;
family;
attached;
later;
while living(without earning);
old/digested (by disease etc);
in the body;
word (here enquiry/inquiry);
kaH+api, whosoever; even one;
not; inquires/asks/minds; in the house; so long as; air/breath; lives/dwells; in the body; till then; asks/inquires; welfare; in the house; while gone; air(life-breath); when life departs the body; wife; is afraid; fears; tasmin+kaye, in that body; young boy; till then (till he is young); play; attached/engrossed/absorbed; young man; till then; young woman; attached/engrossed; old man; till then; worry; attached/engrossed/absorbed; in the lofty;high;supreme; also pare
Brahman = God;
whosoever = भज =
not; =
attached/absorbed/engrossed; =
.. 7..
who + your; =
wife; =
son;
world/family; =
this; =
great/big/very much;
wonderful/mysterious; =
whose;
you; =
who;
from where;
have come;
truth/nature;
think well/consider;
tat + iha, that + here;
brother;
.. 8..
in good company;
aloneness/non-attachment/detachment;
non-infatuated state/clear-headedness;
tranquillity/imperturbability;
salvation+freedom from bondage of birth;
vayasi+gate, when age has advanced/gone;
.. 9..
who/what use (in the sense of kva? (where));
sensual/sexual attraction;
= in the drying up of;
= water;
= what( use) is the;
= lake;
= spent-up/weakened state of;
= wealth;
= what( use) for;
= family(is there?);
= in the realised state;
= truth;
= what (use) is;
= world/family bond;
.. 10..
= do not;
= do/act;
= wealth;
= people;
= youth;
= arrogance/haughtiness;
= takes away/steals away;
= in the twinkling of the eye;
= Master Time;
= all;
= delusion;
= full of/completely filled;
= this;
= whole/entire;
= having given up/abandoned;
= the state/position of Brahma/god-realised state;
= you;
= enter;
= having known/realised;
.. 11..

नियमीयांमुळ = dina+yAminI, day + night;

ಒಂದು = evening;

ಮುಂದೆ = morning;

ತೀತ = frosty season;

ವಸಂ = (and) Spring season;

ಅಜಿ = again;

ಎಂದು = have arrived;

ತಾಯ = Master Time;

ಸೇರು = plays;

ಎರಡು = goes (away);

ತಂದು = life/age;

ತಿರುತು = tat+api, then even;

ನ = not;

ಮುಂಜಟು = releases;

ಇದು = desire;

ಅಮ್ಮಿ = air (the wind of desire does not let off its hold);

.. 12..

ಬುಜುಟ್ಟಿಕೆಯನ್ನು = by the bouquet consisting of 12 flowers (12; shlokas above)

ಅಚ್ಛು = without remainder/totally;

ಕಿತ್ತಿ = was told;

ಕ್ರಮಾಚಲವಿಧಿ = to the grammarian+this;

ಉವನ್ನು = advice;

ಅಭೂ = was;

ಅಭೂ +ನಿರ್ದೇಶ = by the ace scholar Shankara (Plural is used for reverence);

ಅಭೂ +ನಿರ್ದೇಶ +ಶಾಂಕರ +ಪಾದ = by the Shankaracharya who is known;

as shankarabhagavat +charaNAH or pAdAH (plural for reverence)

.. 12.. ..

ಕೀರ್ತ = kA+te, who+your;

ನಾಮ = wife;

ದಣೆ = wealth;

bhajagovindam.pdf
Thinking of; O mad one!;
what?; your;
n+asti, is not there;
controller;
in the three worlds;
good people;
controller = sa.ngatiH+ekA, company+(only) one (way);
becomes;
bhava+arNava, birth and death+ocean;
in crossing;
boat/ship;
with knotted hair;
shaven head;
hair cut here and there;
saffron cloth;
cloth/sky;
variously done/made-up;
make-ups/garbs/roles;
even after seeing;
cha+na, and +not;
sees;
the fool;
for the sake of the belly/living;
various make-ups/roles;
limb(s);
weakened;
ripened(grey);
head;
dashana+vihInaM, teeth+bereft;
= having become;
jaws/mouth?
= the old man;
goes;
holding the;
stick(walking);
then even;
not;
lets go/releases/gives up;
AshA+pindaM, desire+lump(piNDaM also means rice-ball given;
as oblation for the dead)
in front of-ahead/beforehand;
fire (for worship);
pRiShThe+bhAnuH, behind+sun;
in the night;
face dedicated to(huddled up between) the knees;
taking alms in the palms;
living under the trees;
then even;
not;
releases/lets go;
desire;
rope/ties;
= one takes resort to;
the sea of Ganga (banks of the Ganges);
going;
austerities;
observance/governance;
or/else;


dhâ¥mâ¥na = charity;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = (but) bereft of knowledge of the Self;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = according to all schools of thought/unanimously;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = salvation/freedom;
\( \_ \) = not;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = attains;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = birth(s);
dhâ¥mâ¥na = hundred;

.. 17..

dhâ¥mâ¥na = temple of god;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = tree;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = root;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = living;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = bed;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = on the surface of the earth;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = skin (of Antelope);
dhâ¥mâ¥na = living;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = all attachments;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = sacrificing/abandonment of enjoyable things/worldly pleasures;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = whose;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = happiness;
\( \_ \) = not;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = does;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = Non-attachment/desirelessness;

.. 18..

dhâ¥mâ¥na = indulging in yoga;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = or;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = indulging in worldly pleasures;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = or;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = indulging in good company;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = or;
dhâ¥mâ¥na = bereft of company;
भाज गोविंदम

 whose = whose;  
 in Brahman (God);  
 delights;  
 mind (here soul);  
 revels;  
 nandati+eva, revels alone/revels indeed;

 god’s;  
 song (here the scripture ‘bhagavatgItA’);  
 a little;  
 studied;  
 river Ganga;  
 water drop;  
 a little droplet, drunk;  
 Even a little drop of Ganga water;

 once even;  
 by whom;  
 the enemy of ‘MurA’ (Lord Krishna);  
 well worshipped;  
 is done;  
 his;  
 by Yama, the lord of Death;

 not;

 discussion;

 again again;  
 birth;  
 again again;  
 death;  
 again again;  
 mother;  
 in the stomach;
ಭಜ = sleep;
ಶಯನ = in this world/here;
ಶಾಂತಿ = family/world;
ಭಾಗವನ್ನು = fordable with great difficulty;
ಶೂನ್ಯಚಾಲಿತ = out of boundless compassion;
ಭಂಡ = protect;
ಮೇಲೆ = Oh MurA’s enemy!(KriShNa);
.. 21..
ರಚನೆಯಿಂದ = torn/tattered cloth lying in the street;
ಪ್ರತಿ = created;
ಭದ್ರ ಭದ್ರ = rag;
ಭವ್ಯಾಂಶಾಂಶು = virtues sins;
ಪ್ರತಿಫ್ರೀಂದರು = without/ having abandoned;
ಭದ್ರ = way;
ನಂತರ = the man seeking union with god;
ಪ್ರತಿಯೇವಿತ್ತನೆ = controlled by yoga;
ಭಂದರು = mind;
ಭಂದಾರು = delights;
ಆಂಧಿಯೂಣಿಸಿದನೆ = like a child who has gone mad;
.. 22..
ಚಂದ್ರ = who (are);
ಚಂದ್ರ = you;
ಚಂದ್ರ = who(am);
ಅತ್ತರು = I;
ಎಂದ್ರ = whence;
ಅಂತ್ರಾಂತಂದ್ರ = has come;
ಕಂಠ = who;
ತೀರು = my;
ತನ್ನೆ = mother;
ಕಂಠ = who;
ತೀರು = my;
ಕಂಠ = father;
भज गोविंदम

= thus;
= deem well/visualise;
= the entire;
= worthless/without essence;
= world;
= having abandoned/sacrificed;
= dream;
= consideration/thinking;

.. 23..
= in yourself;
= in myself;
= cha+anyatra+ekaH, and+ in any other place+ only one;
= the Lord MahAviShNu;
= in vain ; for nothing: purposeless;
= you get angry;
= mayi+asaHiShNuH, in me+ intolerant;
= become;
= equal-minded/equanimitiy;
= everywhere;
= you;
= you desire;
= without delay/in no time;
= if;
= the quality/state of Brahman/god-realisation;

.. 24..
= in (towards) the enemy;
= in (towards) the friend;
= in (towards) the son;
= in (towards) relatives;
= don’t;
= do;
= effort;
= for war(dissension) or peace-making;
= in all beings;
= see your own self;
= everywhere;
= give up;
= difference/otherness/duality;
= desire;
= anger;
= greed;
= infatuation;
= having abandoned see as one’s own self;
= deem/consider/visualise/imagine;
= who am I;
= knowledge of self;
= bereft;
= fools;
= they;
= are cooked?;
= in the hell;
= cast in;
= is to be sung;
= bhagavatItA;
= name of the lord;
= 1000 times;
= is to be meditated;
= LakShmi’s consort MahAviShNu’s;
= form/image;
= the unborn one;
= is to be lead/taken;
= good people;
bhajagovindam.pdf


---

.. 29..

**ಅಜುಸಸೆಯಂ** = breath-control;

**ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮೇಣ** = diet-control;

**ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮೇಣ** = always/daily/certain;

**ಮಾರ್ತಿಸ** = uncertain/temporary/ephemeral/transient;

**ಸಿದ್ಧಿಯಾಯ** = awareness after reasoning;

**ಸೂತ್ರ** = thought/considered conclusion/opinion;

**ಯಾನ್ಯುಶ್ರೀಯಂ** = with chanting of the names of the lord;

**ಸಂಯುಕ್ತುಂಭೆ** = in the state of trance;

**ಪ್ರಾಯಾಂಜುಣ್** = pay attention;

**ಸಂಯು್ಣ್** = great care attention;

.. 30..

**ಸಾಂಜ್ಜಾಲೂಯಂ** = the lotus feet of the teacher/guru;

**ಯಜ್ಞ** = dependent;

**ಭಕ್ತಿ** = devotee;

**ಸಂಯೋಜಿಸ್** = from the world;

**ಯಾಲ್ಯುಂಭೆ** = in no time from the cycle of birth and death;

**ಸಂಯುಂಭೆ** = released;

**ಸಿದ್ಧಿಯುತ್ತಮ** = sa+indriya+mAnasa, with senses and mind;

**ಸಂಯುಕ್ತುಂಭೆ** = control alone(niyamAt eva);

**ನಜ್ಞುಂಭೆ** = you will see;

**ಸ್ವ** = one’s own;

**ಹೃದಯಸ್** = heart-stationed;

**ನಾಗ್** = God;

.. 31..
Bhaja Govindam

Encoded and translated by M. Giridhar.

Proofread M. Giridhar, NA, PSA Easwaran

The audio renderings have different sequence for verses.

Bhaja Govindam

pdf was typeset on March 15, 2022
Please send corrections to sanskrit@cheerful.com