

Tukaram Gatha

तुकाराम गाथा

Original Marathi with English translation, a plain-language reading, and an explanation of what each abhanga means

Volume 2: Gatha 501-1000 - 490 abhangas

About This Edition

This reading edition brings together four layers for every abhanga: the original Marathi, an English translation, a rendering in plain words, and a short explanation of its meaning.

The English layers are devotional reading aids. No translation can fully carry Tukaram's Marathi music, wordplay, cultural setting, or spiritual force. Readers are encouraged to return to the original and to consult Marathi teachers and established scholarly editions.

Marathi source: Tukaram Gatha on Marathi Wikisource. The source dataset identifies the Marathi text as public domain. English reading layers are from the Ananta Satsang online edition.

Editorial note: We ask forgiveness for any inaccuracies in rendering Tukaram Maharaj's original Marathi.

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GATHA 0501

Devotion to Vitthal

Arati, the formless takes a form

मराठी मूळ

ओवाळूं आरती पंढरीराया । सर्वभावे शरण आलों तुझिया पायां ॥१॥
 सर्व व्यापून कैसें रूप आकळ । तो हा गौळ्या घरीं जाला कृष्ण बाळ ॥२॥
 स्वरूप गुणातीत जाला अवतारधारी । तो हा पांडुरंग उभा विटेवरी ॥३॥
 भक्तिचिया काजा कैसा रूपासि आला । ब्रिदाचा तोडर चरणीं मिरविला ॥४॥
 भावभक्तिबळें होसी कृपाळु देवा । तुका म्हणे पांडुरंगा तुझ्या न कळती मावा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let me wave the lamp of worship before the Lord of Pandhari. With all my being I have come to the shelter of your feet.

How is it that the one who pervades everything and whose form is beyond grasp was born as the child Krishna in a cowherd's house? He who is beyond all qualities took the form of an incarnation; that same Panduranga stands upon the brick. For the sake of devotion he assumed a visible form and proudly wears the anklet of his pledge upon his feet.

Says Tuka, through the strength of loving devotion you become gracious, O God; O Panduranga, your ways are beyond anyone's reckoning.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let me wave the lamp of worship before the Lord of Pandhari. With my whole being I have come to the shelter of your feet. How is it that the one who fills all things, whose form cannot be grasped, became the child Krishna in a cowherd's house? He who is beyond all qualities took on a body as an incarnation; that same Panduranga stands here upon the brick. For the sake of devotion he came into a visible form, and on his feet he proudly wears the anklet of his vow. Tuka says: by the strength of loving faith you turn gracious, O God; O Panduranga, your ways are past anyone's understanding.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is an arati, a lamp waved before the deity, but it stops to marvel at the deepest mystery of that deity. The God being worshipped is the one who pervades everything and has no graspable form, yet he became a baby in a cowherd's home and now stands as a plain stone image on the brick at Pandhari. The poem says he did this on purpose, for the sake of devotion, even wearing the anklet of a vow on his feet like a binding pledge to his devotees. The point is that love draws the formless into a form it can hold and serve. Tuka ends by confessing that this self-lowering of God is beyond all reckoning; only devotion, not reasoning, can meet it.

GATHA 0502

Devotion to Vitthal

Arati, the vow fulfilled

मराठी मूळ

करुनि आरती । आतां ओवाळूं श्रीपती ॥१॥
 आजि पुरले नवस । धन्य जाला हा दिवस ॥२॥
 पाहा वो सकळा । पुण्यवंता तुम्ही बाळा ॥३॥
 तुका वाहे टाळी । होता सन्निध जवळी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Having prepared the worship, let us now wave the lamp before the Lord. Today the vow is fulfilled; blessed is this day.

Behold him, all you fortunate ones, you beloved children. Says Tuka, I clap in joyful rhythm, standing right beside him.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Having made ready the worship, let us now wave the lamp before the Lord. Today the vow is fulfilled; blessed is this day. Look at him, all of you fortunate ones, you beloved children. Tuka says: I clap in joyful rhythm, standing right beside him.

WHAT IT MEANS

A short, glad arati sung at the moment a long-held vow comes true. The day is called blessed because what was promised and waited for has finally arrived: the sight of the Lord. The singer turns to the gathered people, calling them fortunate children, and bids them simply look at him. The whole feeling is nearness; Tuka is not describing God from a distance but clapping in rhythm right beside him, sharing the joy of the company.

GATHA 0503

Prayers

Bargaining with God for grace

मराठी मूळ

द्याल माळ जरी पडेन मी पायां । दंडवत वांयां कोण वेची ॥१॥
 आलें तें हिशोबें अवघिया प्रमाण । द्यावें तरी दान मान होतो ॥२॥
 मोकळिया मनं घ्याल जरी सेवा । प्रसाद पाठवा लवकरी ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे तुम्ही जालिया कृपण । नामाची जतन मग कैची ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If you grant me the garland, I will fall at your feet; who wastes a prostration for nothing? Everything proceeds by measure and proportion; if you give, let it be a real gift, and honor follows. If you will receive my service with an open heart, then send the consecrated offering quickly.

Says Tuka, if you become miserly, how will the treasury of the Name be preserved?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If you give me the garland, I will fall at your feet; who spends a prostration for nothing? Everything that comes does so by measure and proportion; if you give, let it be a real gift, and honor follows. If you will take my service with an open heart, then send the offering quickly. Tuka says: if you turn miserly, how then will the treasury of the Name be kept safe?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram half-playfully drives a bargain with God over grace. He says he will bow and prostrate, but he wants the garland of acceptance in return, refusing to waste his devotion on nothing. He asks God to be a real giver and to receive his service freely, sending back the prasad without delay. The sting is in the last line: he warns God that if God turns stingy with grace, the very treasury of the Name, the wealth of devotion that depends on God's open hand, will not be kept. It is the bold, teasing intimacy of a devotee who feels free to hold God to account.

GATHA 0504

Devotion to Vitthal

Parting, the mind stays at his feet

मराठी मूळ

तुम्हीं जावें निजमंदिरा । आम्ही जातों आपुल्या घरा ॥१॥
 विठोबा लोभ असों देई । आम्ही असों तुमचें पाई ॥२॥
 चित्त करी सेवा । आम्ही जातों आपुल्या गावां ॥२॥
 तुका म्हणे दिशा भुलों । फिरोन पायापाशीं आलों ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You go to your own temple, and I shall go to my own home. O Vitthoba, let there be love between us; let me remain at your feet.

My mind performs your service even as I return to my village. Says Tuka, I lost my way in every direction and came right back to your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You go to your own temple, and I will go to my own home. O Vithoba, let there be love between us; let me stay at your feet. My mind keeps up your service even as I go to my own village. Tuka says: I lost my way in every direction, and came back again to your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a song of parting after worship, but the parting is only of the body. The devotee goes home and lets God stay in the temple, asking only that the bond of love between them remain unbroken. He claims that distance changes nothing: his mind goes on serving even as his feet carry him back to his village. The last line is a quiet confession of the whole spiritual journey, that he wandered off in every direction and found that every road led him back to the feet he started from. The feet are home in a way the village is not.

GATHA 0505

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, waiting for the leftovers

मराठी मूळ

पाहें प्रसादाची वाट । द्यावें धोवोनियां ताट ॥१॥
 शेष घेउन जाईन । तुमचें जालिया भोजन ॥२॥
 जालों एकसवा । तुम्हां आडुनियां देवा ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे चित्त । करुनि राहिलों निश्चित ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I wait for your blessed leftovers; let me wash the plate clean. When your meal is finished, I will carry away what remains.

I have become one with you, standing close to you, O God. Says Tuka, I have steadied my mind and remain at peace.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I watch for your blessed leftovers; let me wash your plate clean. When your meal is done, I will carry off what remains. I have become one with you, standing close to you, O God. Tuka says: I have steadied my mind and stay here at peace.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks for nothing grand, only the leftovers from God's plate, the *ucchishta* that a humble servant is glad to eat. He waits, ready to wash the plate and carry away the remains, taking the lowest place by his own choosing. Yet in that very lowliness he claims the highest thing: standing so close to God that he has become one with him. The point is that the way up is the way down; the servant who wants only the scraps is the one who ends up inseparable from the Master. His mind, fixed on this, is finally still and at peace.

GATHA 0506

Devotion to Vitthal

The child's plea to be forgiven

मराठी मूळ

केली कटकट गाऊं नाचों नेणतां । लाज नाहीं भय आम्हां पोटाची चिंता ॥१॥
 बैसा सिणलेती पाय रगडूं दातारा । जाणवूं द्या वारा उब जाली शरीरा ॥२॥
 उशिरा उशीर किती काय म्हाणावा । जननिये बाळका कोप कांहीं न धरावा ॥३॥
 तुझिये संगतीं येऊं करुं कोल्हाळ । तुका म्हणे बाळें अवघीं मिळोन गोपाळ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have made a commotion, singing and dancing without knowing how, feeling no shame or fear, only the worry of my belly. Sit down, you are tired; let me rub your feet, O Generous One, and let the breeze cool your body.

Forgive my delay, for a mother should hold no anger toward her child. Says Tuka, we children will come to your company and raise a joyful uproar, all the little cowherds gathered together.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I made a racket, singing and dancing though I do not know how, with no shame and no fear, only the worry of my belly. Sit down, you are tired; let me rub your feet, O Generous One, and let the breeze cool your body. How long can my lateness be scolded? A mother should hold no anger against her child. Tuka says: we children will come into your company and raise a happy uproar, all the little cowherds gathered together.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram comes to God as a clumsy, hungry child rather than a polished worshipper. He admits his devotion is a noisy, untrained racket, sung and danced without skill, driven partly by the simple need of his belly, and he feels neither shame nor fear about it. Then he turns servant, offering to rub God's tired feet and fan a breeze over him. The heart of it is the appeal to a mother's love: a parent does not stay angry at a late or awkward child, so God should not either. The longed-for end is the joyful uproar of all the cowherd children crowding into Krishna's company, where being a child, not being correct, is what wins the welcome.

GATHA 0507

Ecstasy and Joy

Fulfilment, the harvest of the Name

मराठी मूळ

कळस वाहियेला शिरीं । सहस्रनामें पूजा करीं ॥१॥
 पीक पिकलें पिकलें । घन दाटोनियां आलें ॥२॥
 शेवटीचें दान । भागा आला नारायण ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे पोट । भरलें वारले बोभाट ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The pinnacle is placed upon my head; I worship with the thousand names. The harvest has ripened, the dense clouds have gathered.

The final gift has arrived: Narayana himself has come as my share. Says Tuka, my belly is full and all clamor has ceased.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The pinnacle is set upon my head; I worship with the thousand names. The harvest has ripened, it has ripened; the clouds have gathered thick and come. The last gift has arrived: Narayana himself has fallen to my share. Tuka says: my belly is full, and all the clamor has stopped.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the song of a devotee whose long labor has finally borne fruit. The images are of harvest and rain: the crop has ripened, the rain clouds have come at last, the whole growing season of devotion has paid off. The crowning gift, set like a temple spire upon his head, is that Narayana himself has come to him as his portion. The closing is deeply plain: his belly is full, every craving satisfied, and the noise of wanting and crying out has fallen silent. When God is your share, there is nothing left to clamor for.

GATHA 0508

Prayers

Plea to the Mother, a willful child

मराठी मूळ

आरुष शब्द बोलों मनीं न धरावें कांहीं । लडिवाळ बाळकें तूं चि आमुचि आई ॥१॥
 देई गे विठाबाई प्रेमभातुकें । अवधियां कवतुकें लहानां थोरां सकळां ॥२॥
 असो नसो भाव आलों तुझिया ठाया । पाहे कृपादृष्टी आतां पंढरीराया ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे आम्ही तुझीं वेडीं वांकुडीं । नामें भवपाश आतां आपुलिया तोडीं ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Do not hold in your mind any harsh words I may speak; I am but a willful child and you alone are my mother. O Mother Vithabai, give us the gift of love, a delight for all, young and old alike.

Whether my devotion is worthy or not, I have come to your doorstep; look upon me now with merciful eyes, O Lord of Pandharpur. Says Tuka, we are your foolish, crooked ones; now sever our bonds of worldly existence with your name.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do not hold in your heart the harsh words I speak. I am only a willful child, and you alone are my mother. O Mother Vithabai, give us the gift of love. Let it be a delight for all, young and old alike. Whether my devotion is worthy or not, I have come to your doorstep. Look on me now with merciful eyes, O Lord of Pandhari. Tuka says: we are your foolish, crooked ones. Now cut the bonds of this worldly life with your Name.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram comes to Vithoba the way a small child comes to its mother, and he asks her not to take offense at the sharp things he says. He does not claim to deserve anything; he simply names the relation and rests on it. The whole prayer turns on that bond: a child does not earn its mother, so he can come unworthy and still ask for love, for mercy, and for release. The gift he wants is not for himself alone but for everyone, young and old. The bonds he asks to be cut are cut by one means only, the Name.

GATHA 0509

Longing and Separation

Longing, the shut temple door

मराठी मूळ

आडकलें देवद्वार । व्यर्थ काय करकर ॥१॥
 आतां चला जाऊं घरा । नका करूं उजगरा ॥२॥
 देवा लागलीसे निज । येथें उभ्या काय काज ॥३॥
 राग येतो देवा । तुका म्हणे नेघे सेवा ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The temple door is shut; why make a fuss over nothing? Come, let us go home now and not keep this pointless vigil. God has fallen asleep; what business do we have standing here? Says Tuka, God is annoyed and will not accept our service.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The temple door is shut. Why make a fuss over nothing? Come, let us go home now. Do not keep this pointless vigil. God has fallen asleep. What use is there in standing here? Tuka says: God is annoyed, and he will not accept our service.

WHAT IT MEANS

On the surface Tukaram is telling the others to give up and go home, since the door is closed and God seems asleep and even displeased. But the words are spoken by a man who cannot leave, and the giving-up is a kind of complaint pressed against the very door he refuses to abandon. The shut door, the sleeping God, the rejected service: these name the experience of devotion gone silent, when the Lord seems to withhold himself. Saying God will not accept our service is itself an act of service, the lover protesting at the threshold.

GATHA 0510

Krishna Leela

Krishna is everything, total refuge

मराठी मूळ

कृष्ण माझी माता कृष्ण माझा पिता । बहिणी बंधु चुलता कृष्ण माझा ॥१॥
 कृष्ण माझा गुरु कृष्ण माझें तारुं । उतरी पैल पारु भवनदीची ॥२॥
 कृष्ण माझें मन कृष्ण माझें जन । सोडरा सज्जन कृष्ण माझा ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे माझा श्रीकृष्ण विसावा । वाटे न करावा परता जीवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Krishna is my mother, Krishna is my father; Krishna is my sister, brother, and uncle. Krishna is my guru, Krishna is my boat that ferries me across the river of worldly existence.

Krishna is my mind, Krishna is my people; Krishna is my true friend and companion. Says Tuka, Sri Krishna is my rest and refuge; I never wish to turn my soul away from him.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Krishna is my mother. Krishna is my father. Krishna is my sister, my brother, my uncle. Krishna is my guru. Krishna is my boat that carries me across the river of worldly life. Krishna is my mind. Krishna is my people. Krishna is my kinsman and my true friend. Tuka says: Sri Krishna is my rest and my refuge. I will never turn my soul away from him.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram takes every tie a person leans on, family, teacher, friends, his own mind, and assigns all of them to one name. This is not a list of things Krishna gives him; it is a replacement, where Krishna becomes each relation himself. The boat across the river of worldly existence names the stakes: the one who is mother and father is also

the only crossing out of birth and death. Having gathered everything into Krishna, he refuses to take any of it back; the soul that has found its rest will not turn away again.

GATHA 0511

Prayers

Prayer, asking for an heir to the vow

मराठी मूळ

कृपा करावी भगवंतें । ऐसा शिष्य द्यावा मातें ॥१॥
 माझें व्रत जो चालवी । त्यासि द्यावें त्वां पालवी ॥२॥
 व्हावा ब्रम्हज्ञानी गुंडा । तिहीं लोकीं ज्याचा झेंडा ॥३॥
 तुका तुका हाका मारी । माझ्या विठोबाच्या द्वारीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

May the Lord be gracious and grant me such a disciple who will carry forward my vow; may you shelter him under your wing. May he become a knower of Brahman, with his banner raised across the three worlds.

Says Tuka, let him call out my name at the door of my Vitthoba.

IN PLAIN WORDS

May the Lord be gracious and give me such a disciple. Give me one who will carry my vow forward. Shelter him under your wing. Let him become a knower of Brahman, with his banner raised across the three worlds. Tuka says: let him call out my name at the door of my Vithoba.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is not asking for a reward but for someone to come after him and carry on his vow of devotion. He asks the Lord both to grant such a disciple and to protect him, since the gift and its keeping both belong to grace. He wants this heir to be no small figure but a true knower of Brahman, his banner raised across all three worlds. The last line is the tenderest part: that the disciple, having risen so high, will still stand at Vithoba's door and call out the name of his own teacher.

GATHA 0512

Autobiography

Renunciation, the man walking away from his house

मराठी मूळ

जातो वाराणसी । निरवी गाई घोडे म्हैसी ॥१॥
 गेलों येतों नाहीं ऐसा । सत्य मानावा भरवसा ॥२॥
 नका काढूं माझीं पेवें । तुम्हीं वरळा भूस खावें ॥३॥
 भिकारियाचे पाठीं । तुम्ही घेउनि लागा काठी ॥४॥
 सांगा जेवाया ब्राम्हण । तरी कापा माझी मान ॥५॥
 वोकलिया वोका । म्यां खर्चिला नाहीं रुका ॥६॥
 तुम्हीं खावें ताकपाणी । जतन करा तूपलोणी ॥७॥
 नाहीं माझें मनीं । पोरें रांडा नागवणी ॥८॥
 तुका म्हणे नीट । होतें तैसें बोले स्पष्ट ॥९॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I am going to Varanasi; settle the matter of the cows, horses, and buffaloes. Trust me truly when I say that once I have gone I will not return.

Do not open my grain stores; you may eat the chaff and husks. Chase any beggars away with a stick.

If you invite Brahmins to feast, then cut off my head. I have vomited it all out; I have not spent a single coin.

Drink your buttermilk and water, and guard the butter and ghee carefully. I have no concern in my heart for wives and children and their plundering ways.

Says Tuka, I am straightforward and speak plainly just as things are.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am going to Varanasi. Settle the cows, the horses, the buffaloes. Believe me truly: once I have gone, I will not come back. Do not open my grain stores; you may eat the chaff and husks. If beggars come, take a stick to them. If you invite Brahmins to feast, then cut off my head. I have vomited it all out. I have not spent a single coin. Drink your buttermilk and water; guard the butter and ghee with care. There is nothing in my heart for wives and children and their grasping ways. Tuka says: I am straightforward, and I speak plainly just as things are.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a sharp, bitter farewell from a man renouncing the household and saying so without softening. Going to Varanasi is the old language for walking away for good, and he wants no doubt about it: he will not return. The cruel-sounding instructions, hoard the grain, beat off beggars, never feed a Brahmin, are aimed at the household's stinginess, the very pattern he is leaving behind, not held up as advice. He says he has vomited it all out, the whole tangle of property and family claims that he calls grasping. The point of self-examination is the grip itself: how a house and its anxieties can own a person until plain speech is the only way to break free.

GATHA 0513

Autobiography

Mission, the open invitation to all

मराठी मूळ

कास घालोनी बळकट । झालों कळिकाळासी नीट । केली पायवाट । भवसिंधूवरुनि ॥१॥
 या रे या रे लाहान थोर । याति भलते नारीनर । करावा विचार । न लगे चिंता कोणासी ॥२॥
 कामी गुंतले रिकामे । जपी तपी येथें जमे । लाविले दमामे । मुक्त आणि मुमुक्षा ॥३॥
 एकंदर शिका । पाठविला इहलोका । आलों म्हणे तुका । मी नामाचा धारक ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Girding my loins firmly, I have confronted all-devouring Time and paved a path across the ocean of worldly existence. Come, come, all of you, small and great, men and women of every kind; no deliberation is needed, no one need worry.

Those entangled in desire and those sitting idle, those who chant and those who practice austerities, all are assembled here; the liberated and the seekers of liberation alike. Says Tuka, I have been sent into this world as a single recruit; I am the bearer of the Name.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I girded my loins tight. I stood up straight to all-devouring Time. I made a footpath across the ocean of worldly life. Come, come, all of you, small and great. Come, men and women of every kind. No weighing is needed. No one need worry. Those caught in desire, those sitting idle, those who chant, those who do austerities, all gather here. The freed and the seekers of freedom alike. Tuka says: I have been sent into this world as a single recruit. I am the bearer of the Name.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presents himself as a soldier who has stood up to death itself and beaten a path across the ocean of birth and death so that others can follow. The invitation is deliberately total: small and great, men and women, every kind of person, with no entrance exam and no need to qualify. He names them by their condition, the desire-bound, the lazy, the austere, the already free, precisely to say that none of these states bars the way. He claims a single commission, sent as one recruit into the world, and his whole equipment is the Name he carries and offers to all.

GATHA 0514

Autobiography

Mission, dwellers of Vaikuntha sent to serve

मराठी मूळ

आम्ही वैकुंठवासी । आलों या चि कारणासी । बोलिले जे ऋषी । साच भावें वर्ताव्या ॥१॥
 झाडूं संतांचे मारग । आडरानें भरलें जग । उच्छिष्टाचा भाग । शेष उरलें तें सेवूं ॥२॥
 पिढूं भक्तिचा डांगोरा । कळिकाळासी दरारा । तुका म्हणे करा । जेजेकार आनंदें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We are dwellers of Vaikuntha, come here for this very purpose: to live truly by the words the sages have spoken. We sweep clean the path of the saints, for the world has become overgrown with wild thickets; we will partake of whatever blessed remnants remain.

We beat the drum of devotion, striking dread into Death himself. Says Tuka, raise a triumphant cheer with great joy.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We are dwellers of Vaikuntha. We have come here for this one purpose: to live truly by what the sages spoke. We sweep clean the path of the saints, for the world has grown thick with wild thickets. Whatever blessed leavings remain, we will take them as our food. We beat the drum of devotion and strike dread into Death himself. Tuka says: raise a cry of victory with joy.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks for himself and his companions as souls come down from Vaikuntha on a single errand: to make the sages' words actually lived, not merely recited. The image of sweeping the saints' overgrown path names the work, clearing away the wild growth of neglect so the way of the holy ones can be walked again. Calling their food the leavings, the blessed remnants, marks their lowliness and their gladness in it; they want no more than what the path leaves over. The drum of devotion is loud on purpose, a public proclamation that frightens Death, and the closing shout turns the whole mission into a festival.

GATHA 0515

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, made mighty by surrender

मराठी मूळ

बळियाचे अंकित । आम्ही जालों बळिवंत ॥१॥
 लाता हाणोनि संसारा । केला षडूर्मीचा मारा ॥२॥
 जन धन तन । केलें तृणाही समान ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे आतां । आम्ही मुक्तीचिया माथां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

By surrendering to the Mighty One, we have become mighty ourselves. We have kicked worldly life aside and conquered the six waves of affliction.

Wealth, people, and body have all been made equal to a blade of grass. Says Tuka, we now stand upon the very head of liberation.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We belong wholly to the Mighty One. By that, we ourselves have become mighty. We have kicked worldly life aside. We have struck down the six waves of affliction. Wealth, people, the body: we have made them all equal to a blade of grass. Tuka says: now we stand upon the very head of liberation.

WHAT IT MEANS

The whole strength Tukaram boasts of is borrowed: he is mighty only because he belongs entirely to the Mighty One. From that surrender comes a freedom strong enough to kick aside worldly life and beat down the six inner forces, hunger, thirst, grief, delusion, old age, death, that toss a person about. Once those are conquered, the things people crave or fear, money, relations, the body itself, weigh no more than a blade of grass. The final image is daring on purpose: he does not merely reach liberation, he stands on its head, mastering even the goal.

GATHA 0516

Renunciation

Renunciation, nothing but the Name

मराठी मूळ

मृत्युलोकीं आम्हां आवडती परी । नाहीं एका हरिनामें विण ॥१॥
 विटलें हें चित्त प्रपंचापासूनि । वमन हें मनीं बैसलेंसे ॥२॥
 सोनें रूपें आम्हां मृत्तिके समान । माणिकें पाषाण खडे तैसे ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे तैशा दिसतील नारी । रिसाचियापरी आम्हांपुढें ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In this mortal world nothing pleases me except the name of Hari alone. My chitta is wearied by worldly affairs; the disgust sits deep within my heart like something vomited.

Gold and silver are no better than clay to me; diamonds and rubies are mere pebbles and stones. Says Tuka, women appear before me as nothing more than she-bears.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In this mortal world, nothing pleases me. Nothing, except the one name of Hari. My chitta is sick of worldly affairs. The disgust sits deep in my heart, like something already vomited. Gold and silver are clay to me. Diamonds and rubies are only pebbles and stones. Tuka says: women appear before me like she-bears.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures everything the world values against one thing, the name of Hari, and finds it all worthless. The disgust he describes is not a passing mood but settled, lodged in him like food already thrown up, which cannot be swallowed back. He runs through the usual objects of craving, precious metal, gems, the lure of beauty, and strips each of its shine: clay, pebbles, repellent. The harsh comparison is aimed at the grip of desire itself, not at any person; he is reporting how thoroughly the longing for the Name has emptied every rival attraction of its power.

GATHA 0517

The Moral Ideal

Moral counsel, the danger of desire

मराठी मूळ

स्त्रियांचा तो संग नको नारायणा । काष्ठा या पाषाणामृत्तिकेच्या ॥१॥
 नाठवे हा देव न घडे भजन । लांचावले मन आवरे ना ॥२॥
 दृष्टिमुखें मरण इंद्रियाच्या द्वारें । लावण्य तें खरें दुःखमूळ ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे जरी अग्नि जाला साधु । परी पावे बाधूं संघष्टणें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O Narayana, shun the company of women, who are wood, stone, and clay. In their presence one forgets God, devotion becomes impossible, and the greedy mind cannot be restrained.

Through the gateways of the senses comes death by way of sight and speech; beauty is truly the root of suffering. Says Tuka, even if one has become a saint as pure as fire, mere contact can still cause harm.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O Narayana, I do not want the company of women, who are made of wood, stone, and clay. In their presence God is forgotten and worship cannot be done; the greedy mind will not be held back. Through the eyes and through the senses comes death; beauty is truly the root of sorrow. Tuka says: even one who has become a saint as pure as fire can still be burned by mere contact.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is asking God to keep him from a craving he does not trust himself around, and the heat is on his own mind, not on women as persons. The point is the grip of desire on the senses: when the greedy mind is roused it forgets God and cannot be reined in, so the eyes and ears become doors through which a kind of death enters. By calling the body wood, stone, and clay he is trying to break the spell of beauty he names as the root of sorrow. The closing image is the sharpest and the most humble: even fire-pure holiness can be scorched by contact, so he asks to be kept from the occasion rather than trusting his own strength.

GATHA 0518

The Moral Ideal

Moral firmness, refusing the temptress

मराठी मूळ

पराविया नारी रखुमाईसमान । हें गेलें नेमून ठायींचें चि ॥१॥
 जाई वो तूं माते न करीं सायास । आम्ही विष्णुदास नव्हों तैसे ॥२॥
 न साहावें मज तुझें हें पतन । नको हें वचन दुष्ट वदों ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे तुज पाहिजे भ्रतार । तरी काय नर थोडे जाले ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I regard another man's wife as I would Rakhumai herself; this has been my firm resolve from the very beginning. Go away, O woman, do not trouble yourself; we are not the kind of servants of Vishnu who would fall.

I cannot bear to witness your downfall; do not utter such wicked words. Says Tuka, if you need a husband, are there so few men in the world?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Another man's wife I hold as I would hold Rakhumai herself. This has been my fixed resolve from the very start. Go away, woman; do not trouble yourself. We are not the kind of servants of Vishnu who fall. I cannot bear to watch your downfall. Do not speak such wicked words. Tuka says: if you need a husband, are there so few men in the world?

WHAT IT MEANS

Here Tukaram puts the resolve into action, turning away a woman who comes to tempt him. He has long held that any other man's wife is to him as sacred as Rakhumai, the Lord's own consort, so the boundary is settled before the test arrives. His refusal is firm but not contemptuous: he says he cannot bear to see her fall, naming her welfare and not only his own purity. The closing line lets her go without cruelty, pointing her back to the ordinary world where, if she truly wants a husband, there is no shortage of men, only this one path she may not take.

GATHA 0519

Longing and Separation

Longing, why have you forgotten me

मराठी मूळ

भक्तिप्रतिपाळे दीन वो वत्सळे । विठ्ठले कृपाळे होसी माये ॥१॥
पडिला विसर माझा काय गुणें । कपाळ हें उणें काय करूं ॥२॥
तुका म्हणे माझें जाळूनि संचित । करीं वो उचित भेट देई ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O Vitthala, you who cherish devotion, who are tender as a cow to her calf toward the humble and full of mercy, O Mother. Have you forgotten me on account of some fault of mine? What can I do about my poor fate? Says Tuka, burn away my accumulated destiny and grant me the meeting that is rightfully due.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You who cherish devotion, tender to the lowly. O Vitthala, merciful one, you are my mother. Have you forgotten me? For what fault of mine? My fate is poor; what can I do about it? Tuka says: burn away the destiny I have stored up. Do what is fitting, and grant me the meeting.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram begins by naming Vitthala's own nature, the cherisher of devotion, mother to the lowly, full of mercy, and then asks how such a one could forget him. He does not accuse God; he turns the question on himself and his fate, wondering what fault has caused the silence. The accumulated destiny he asks to be burned is the store of

past karma that he feels is keeping him apart from the Lord. His final plea leaves the remedy to God: do what is fitting, undo the obstacle, and grant the meeting that mercy itself seems to owe.

GATHA 0520

Longing and Separation

Longing, you are my only kin

मराठी मूळ

तुजविण मज कोण वो सोयरे । आणीक दुसरें पांडुरंगे ॥१॥
 लागलीसे आस पाहा तुझें वास । रात्री वो दिवस लेखीं बोटीं ॥२॥
 काम गोड मज न लगे हा धंदा । तुका म्हणे सदा हें चि ध्यान ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Who is kin to me besides you, O Panduranga? There is no other. I wait longingly for your presence, counting the days and nights on my fingers.

No work appeals to me, no worldly occupation holds my interest. Says Tuka, this alone is my constant meditation.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Who is kin to me but you, Panduranga? There is no other. I wait for you. I watch for your coming. I count the nights and days on my fingers. No work tastes sweet to me. This business does not hold me. Tuka says: this alone is my meditation, always.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strips his whole life down to one relation. He tells Panduranga that no one else counts as family; everything else has fallen away. The waiting is physical: he counts off the nights and days on his fingers, the way someone counts down to a loved one's return. Work no longer interests him, not because he is idle, but because his attention has gone entirely to one place. He calls that fixed attention his only meditation, so that even his longing has become his practice.

GATHA 0521

Prayers

Prayer, the child's claim on the Mother

मराठी मूळ

पढियंतें आम्ही तुजपाशीं मागावें । जीवींचें सांगावें हितगुज ॥१॥
 पाळसील लळे दीन वो वत्सले । विठ्ठले कृपाळे जननिये ॥२॥
 जीव भाव तुझ्या ठेवियेला पायीं । तूं चि सर्वा ठायीं एक आम्हां ॥३॥
 दुजियाचा संग लागों नेदीं वारा । नाहीं जात घरा आणिकांच्या ॥४॥
 सर्वसत्ता एकी आहे तुजपाशीं । ठावें आहे देसी मागेन तें ॥५॥
 म्हणउनि पुढें मांडियेली आळी । थिंकोनियां चोळी डोळे तुका ॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What I must ask of you are intimate matters of the soul, whispered confidences. You who indulge the whims of the humble, O compassionate Vitthala, O Mother.

My life and my devotion are placed at your feet; you alone are everything to me in all places. Do not let even the slightest breeze of another's company touch me; I will not go to anyone else's house.

All power rests with you alone, and I know that whatever I ask, you will give. Says Tuka, therefore I lay out my plea before you, rubbing my eyes and weeping.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What I ask of you, I ask in private. I tell you the secret of my heart. You indulge the whims of the lowly, O tender one; O merciful Vitthala, O Mother. My life and my love I have laid at your feet. You alone are everything to me, in every place. Do not let another's company touch me, not even like a breeze. I do not go to anyone else's house. All power rests with you alone. You know it, and you will give what I ask. So I lay my plea before you. Tuka says: I rub my eyes and weep.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram comes to Vitthal the way a small child comes to its mother, asking with the certainty that he will be heard. He calls Vitthal Mother and asks in private, because what he wants is not a thing but the secret of his own heart. He renounces every other refuge: no other company, no other house, not even a stray breeze of attachment to anything else. His ground for asking is simple: all power belongs to Vitthal alone, so there is no point begging elsewhere. The poem ends not with an argument but with a child's weapon, tears, as Tuka rubs his eyes and cries until he is answered.

GATHA 0522

Longing and Separation

Longing, seizing the hem

मराठी मूळ

कोण पर्वकाळ पहासील तीथ । होतें माझें चित्त कासावीस ॥१॥
 पाठवीं भातुकें प्रेरीं झडकरी । नको राखों उरी पांडुरंगा ॥२॥
 न धरावा कोप मजवरी कांहीं । अवगुणी अन्यायी म्हणोनियां ॥३॥
 काय रडवीसी नेणतियां पोरां । जाणतियां थोरां याचिपरी ॥४॥
 काय उभी कर ठेवुनियां कटीं । बुझावीं धाकुटीं लडिवाळें ॥५॥
 तुका म्हणे आतां पदरासी पिळा । घालीन निराळा नव्हे मग ॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What auspicious occasion are you waiting for, what pilgrimage date? My chitta has been in agony. Send me the gift of your grace swiftly, O Panduranga; do not hold anything back.

Do not be angry with me, even though I am full of faults and offenses. Why do you make innocent children cry, and wise elders too, in this manner? Why do you stand with hands on your hips? Comfort your little darlings instead.

Says Tuka, I will now grab hold of the hem of your garment and never let go.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What holy day are you waiting for, what pilgrimage date? My mind is in agony. Send me your gift; send it quickly. Hold nothing back, Panduranga. Do not be angry with me because I am full of faults and wrongs. Why do you make innocent children cry, and wise elders too, the same way? Why do you stand there with your hands on your hips? Comfort your little ones instead. Tuka says: now I have grabbed the hem of your garment. I will not let go.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is impatient and says so plainly, asking why Vitthal keeps delaying grace as if waiting for some special date on the calendar. He admits he is full of faults, but turns that into a reason for mercy rather than a barrier to it. The image of God standing with hands on the hips is Vitthal's famous pose at Pandhri; Tukaram reads it as God holding back, and begs him instead to bend down and comfort his crying children. Then he stops asking and simply takes hold: he grips the hem of Vitthal's garment and declares he will never let go. The prayer ends as a refusal to leave until the embrace comes.

GATHA 0523

Longing and Separation

Longing, the silence of God

मराठी मूळ

कां हो देवा कांहीं न बोला चि गोष्टी । कां मज हिंपुटी करीतसा ॥१॥
 कंठीं प्राण पाहें वचनाची आस । तों दिसे उदास धरिलें ऐसें ॥ध्रु॥
 येणें काळें बुंधी घेतलीसे खोल । कां नये विटाळ होऊं माझा ॥२॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why, O God, do you not speak a single word to me? Why do you treat me with such contempt? My life hangs in my throat as I wait for a word from you, yet you appear utterly indifferent. You have wrapped yourself up tightly in this dark blanket of silence.

Is it that you cannot bear the taint of my presence?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why, O God, do you not say a single word to me? Why do you treat me with such scorn? My life hangs in my throat as I wait for your word, and you look on as though you do not care. You have pulled the dark blanket of your silence tight over yourself. Is it that you cannot bear the stain of my touch?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is in the worst part of waiting: the silence. God will not even speak, and the silence reads to him as contempt. His life feels lodged in his throat, ready to leave, while God seems wrapped up and indifferent under a dark covering. In his pain he names the fear underneath the longing: maybe God stays silent because he, Tukaram, is too impure to be touched. The abhanga does not resolve this; it leaves the devotee held in the unanswered question, which is itself the heart of the longing.

GATHA 0524

Longing and Separation

Longing, the unanswered door

मराठी मूळ

उचित तें काय जाणावें दुर्बळें । थोरिवेचें काळें तोंड देवा ॥१॥
 देतां हाका कोणी नाइकती द्वारीं । ओस कोणी घरीं नाहीं ऐसें ॥ध्रु॥
 आलिया अतीता शब्द समाधान । करितां वचन कायवेचे ॥२॥
 तुका म्हणे तुम्हां साजे हें श्रीहरी । आम्ही निलाजिरीं नाहीं ऐसीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What does a poor man know of proper conduct? Greatness has turned its face dark, O God. I call out but no one at the door will listen; as if the house stands empty with no one inside.

When a guest arrives, offering a few kind words of welcome costs nothing. Says Tuka, this befits you, O Hari; we are not so shameless as you think.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What does a poor man know of proper conduct? Greatness has turned its face dark, O God. I call out, and no one at the door will listen, as though the house stands empty, no one inside. When a guest arrives, a few words of welcome cost nothing. Tuka says: this suits you, Hari; but we are not as shameless as you make us out to be.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram stands at God's door like a beggar and gets no answer, so he turns the failure of hospitality back on the host. He admits a poor man may not know the fine rules of conduct, but a kind word to a guest costs the host nothing, and even that is withheld. The house seems empty, as if no one is home, which for a devotee is a sharp complaint against a present and powerful God. With gentle sting he says such treatment may befit Hari's grandeur, but it should not make the devotee out to be shameless for simply asking. The reproach is the prayer: he keeps knocking by accusing the silence.

GATHA 0525

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the Name over all powers

मराठी मूळ

आम्ही मागों ऐसें नाहीं तुजपाशीं । जरीं तूं भीतोसि पांडुरंगा ॥ १ ॥
 पाहें विचारुनि आहे तुज ठावें । आम्ही धालों नावें तुझ्या एका ॥ २ ॥
 ऋद्धिसिद्धि तुझें मुख्य भांडवल । हें तों आम्हां फोल भक्तीपुढें ॥ ३ ॥
 तुका म्हणे जाऊं वैकुंठा चालत । बैसोनि निश्चित सुख भोगू ॥ ४ ॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We do not ask for anything you need fear giving, O Panduranga. Consider it carefully; you already know: we are satisfied with your name alone.

Supernatural powers and accomplishments are your chief treasure, but they are worthless to us compared to devotion. Says Tuka, we could walk to Vaikuntha itself and sit there enjoying bliss without a care.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We do not ask of you anything you would fear to give, Panduranga. Think it over; you already know: we are content with your name alone. Riddhi and siddhi, all your powers and attainments, are your chief treasure. To us they are husks before devotion. Tuka says: we could walk to Vaikuntha and sit there, free of care, enjoying bliss.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reassures God that his asking is safe, because he wants nothing God would be reluctant to part with. What he wants is only the Name, and the Name costs God nothing. He refuses the standard prizes of religion, the supernatural powers and accomplishments that others crave, calling them empty husks next to the joy of

devotion. By saying he could simply stroll into Vaikuntha and sit content, he claims that love of the Name already carries him where powers cannot. The whole point is a reversal: the devotee holds the real treasure, and the powers are the small thing.

GATHA 0526

Longing and Separation

Longing, the form over Brahman-knowledge

मराठी मूळ

न लगे हें मज तुझें ब्रम्हज्ञान । गोजिरें सगुण रूप पुरे ॥१॥
 लागला उशीर पतितपावना । विसरोनि वचना गेलासि या ॥२॥
 जाळोनि संसार बैसलों अंगणीं । तुझे नाहीं मनीं मानसीं तें ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे नको रागेजों विठ्ठला । उठीं देई मला भेटी आतां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have no need of your knowledge of Brahman; your beautiful form with all its sweetness is enough for me. You are taking too long, O Redeemer of the fallen; have you forgotten your promise? I have burned my worldly life and sit waiting in your courtyard, yet you show no concern in your heart.

Says Tuka, do not be angry, O Vitthala; rise and give me your embrace now.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have no use for your knowledge of Brahman. Your lovely form with all its sweetness is enough for me. You are late, O Savior of the fallen. Have you forgotten what you said? I have burned up my worldly life and sit in your courtyard, and you keep no thought of me in your heart. Tuka says: do not be angry, Vitthala. Get up and give me your embrace now.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram refuses the highest abstraction on offer, the knowledge of Brahman, and asks instead for the personal, visible, sweet form of Vitthal. He has burned his bridges, given up worldly life, and now sits waiting in the courtyard with nothing to fall back on. So he reminds God of a promise that seems forgotten and presses on the title Savior of the fallen, since he has made himself exactly the fallen one who must be saved. There is impatience and even reproach in it, but it ends in tenderness: do not be angry, just rise and embrace me. The plea is for nearness, not for understanding.

GATHA 0527

The Power of the Name

The Name, the devotee tastes what God cannot

मराठी मूळ

कमोदिनी काय जाणे तो परिमळ । भ्रमर सकळ भोगीतसे ॥१॥
 तैसें तुज ठावें नाहीं तुझें नाम । आम्ही च तें प्रेमसुख जाणों ॥२॥
 माते तृण बाळा दुधाची ते गोडी । ज्याची नये जोडी त्यासी कामा ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे मुक्ताफळ शिंपीपोटी । नाहीं त्याची भेटी भोग तिये ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Does the night-lotus know its own fragrance? It is the bee who enjoys it fully. In the same way, you do not know the sweetness of your own name; it is we who taste that bliss of love.

The mother eats grass, while the child savors the sweetness of her milk; what one cannot use serves another. Says Tuka, the pearl is born in the oyster's belly, yet the oyster never knows its splendor.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Does the night-lotus know its own fragrance? It is the bee who enjoys it fully. So you do not know the sweetness of your own name; only we know that bliss of love. The mother eats grass, the calf tastes the sweetness of her milk. What one cannot use serves another. Tuka says: the pearl is born in the oyster's belly, yet the oyster never knows its splendor.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes a bold claim: the devotee tastes a sweetness in God's Name that God himself does not taste. He proves it with everyday images. The flower holds the fragrance but the bee enjoys it; the cow eats plain grass but the calf drinks the sweet milk; the oyster grows the pearl but never sees how lovely it is. In each case the one who produces the treasure is not the one who relishes it. So the Name belongs to God, but the joy of the Name is the lover's portion. It is a tender boast that turns devotion into the one experience God has handed over entirely to those who love him.

GATHA 0528

The Necessity of Experience

Experience, weary of liberation itself

मराठी मूळ

काय सांगों तुझ्या चरणांच्या सुखा । अनुभव ठाउका नाहीं तुज ॥१॥
 बोलतां हें कैसें वाटे खरेपण । अमृताचे गुण अमृतासी ॥२॥
 आम्ही एकएका ग्वाही मायपुतें । जाणों तें निरुतें सुख दोघें ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे आम्हां मोक्षाचा कांटाळा । कां तुम्ही गोपाळा नेणां ऐसें ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How can I describe the joy of your feet? Even you do not know that experience. How strange it sounds to speak of it aloud, as if telling nectar about the qualities of nectar.

We are like mother and child who bear witness to each other; we both know that intimate joy. Says Tuka, we are wearied by the thought of liberation itself. How is it, O Gopala, that you do not know this?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

How can I tell the joy of your feet? You yourself do not know that experience. How can it even sound true to speak of it, like telling nectar about the qualities of nectar? We are mother and child, each a witness for the other. We two know that joy for certain. Tuka says: we are sick of the very thought of liberation. How is it, Gopala, that you do not know this?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a joy so complete it cannot be reported, only shared. The sweetness of God's feet is like nectar trying to describe nectar; words double back on themselves. He says even God does not know this taste, because the bliss belongs to the relation between them, witnessed by both like a mother and child who alone know what passes between them. Most strikingly, he says he is tired of the idea of moksha, of liberation, because union in love is already fuller than any release the scriptures promise. He ends by teasing Gopala for not seeming to know the very thing that the devotee knows by heart.

GATHA 0529

Devotion to Vitthal

Adoration, the form that contents the mind

मराठी मूळ

देखोनियां तुझ्या रूपाचा आकार । उभा कटीं कर ठेवूनियां ॥१॥
 तेणें माझ्या चित्ता होतें समाधान । वाटतें चरण न सोडावे ॥२॥
 मुखें गातों गीत वाजवितों टाळी । नाचतों राउळीं प्रेमसुखें ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे मज तुझ्या नामापुढें । तुश हें बापुडें सकळी काळ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Seeing the form of your figure standing with hands placed upon your hips, my chitta finds perfect contentment and I feel I should never let go of your feet. I sing songs with my lips, clap my hands, and dance in your temple, overflowing with the joy of love.

Says Tuka, before your name, all of time itself is a humble, trifling thing.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Seeing the shape of your form, standing with your hands on your hips, my mind comes to rest. I feel I must never let go of your feet. With my mouth I sing the song; I clap my hands; I dance in your temple in the joy of love. Tuka says: before your name, all of time itself is a poor, small thing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks at Vitthal in his familiar pose, standing with hands on the hips, and that single sight settles his restless mind completely. The contentment turns at once into clinging: he never wants to release those feet. From stillness it overflows into motion, singing, clapping, dancing in the temple, the body joining the joy the mind has found. The closing line sets the scale of it all: measured against the Name, even time, the great devourer of everything, shrinks to something small and pitiable. Adoration here is both deep rest and overflowing dance.

GATHA 0530

Renunciation

Renunciation, pleasure and pain are one

मराठी मूळ

आतां येणेंविण नाहीं आम्हां चाड । कोण बडबड करी वांयां ॥१॥
सुख तें चि दुःख पुण्यपाप खरें । हें तों आम्हां बरें कळों आलें ॥२॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Beyond this, we have no other desire. Who babbles on about other things in vain? Pleasure itself is same as pain, and merit the same as sin: this much has become clear to us.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now, apart from this, we have no need of anything. Who babbles on in vain about other things? Pleasure is the same as pain; merit and sin are alike. This much has become clear to us.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram states the end of all wanting in a few lines. Apart from this one thing, his devotion, he needs nothing, and he brushes aside all the busy talk that chases after other goods as idle babble. Then he names what he has seen: pleasure and pain turn out to be the same, and so do merit and sin. He is not preaching this as theory; he says it has simply become clear, the settled fruit of his experience. Once the pairs that drive ordinary life lose their pull, there is nothing left to chase but God.

GATHA 0531

The Necessity of Experience

Experience, hidden in plain sight

मराठी मूळ

बोलों अबोलणें मरोनियां जिणें । असोनि नसणें जनि आम्हां ॥१॥
भोगीं त्याग जाला संगीं च असंग । तोडियेले लाग माग दोन्ही ॥२॥
तुका म्हणे नव्हें दिसतों मी तैसा । पुसणें तें पुसा पांडुरंगा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

To speak is to be silent; to die is to truly live; to exist among people is to not exist at all. In the midst of enjoyment, renunciation has happened; in company itself, detachment has taken hold, and both pursuit and attachment are severed.

Says Tuka, I am not what I appear to be; if you wish to know the truth, ask Panduranga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To speak is to keep silent; to die is to truly live; to live among people is not to exist at all. In the midst of enjoying, renunciation has happened; in company, I am unaccompanied. Both the trail ahead and the trail behind are cut. Tuka says: I am not what I look like. If you want to know, ask Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the strange double life of one who is awake. His words are also silence; the death of his old self is his real life; he moves among people while no longer belonging to the world they live in. Even while he enjoys things, the grip of wanting has let go, and even in company he stays inwardly alone with God, with the trails of past and future both cut so nothing pulls him forward or back. He admits this cannot be read from the outside: he is not what he appears to be. So he hands the verdict to God himself, telling the listener to ask Panduranga what he truly is.

GATHA 0532

Appeals and Exhortations

Teaching, do not burn the boat

मराठी मूळ

अधिकार तैसा दावियेले मार्ग । चालतां हें मग कळों येतें ॥१॥
जाळूं नये नाव पावलेनि पार । मागील आधार बहुतांचा ॥२॥
तुका म्हणे रोग वैदाचे अंगीं । नाहीं करी जगीं उपकार ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The path is shown according to one's capacity; its truth becomes clear only when one walks it. One should not burn the boat after reaching the far shore, for it serves as a support for the many still crossing.

Says Tuka, when the physician himself carries the disease, he does no good to the world.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The path is shown to each one according to his capacity. As you walk it, the truth of it becomes clear. Do not burn the boat once you have reached the far shore. Many behind you still lean on it to cross. Tuka says: when the disease lives in the physician's own body, he does the world no good.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is speaking about how a teacher should carry his learning. A path is given to each seeker only as far as he can hold it, and only walking it makes its truth plain. So even after you cross, do not destroy the means that carried you: others are still crossing, and the boat is their support. The last line names the test for any guide: a healer who is himself sick can heal no one, so the teacher must first be free of the very thing he treats.

GATHA 0533

The Saints

Saints, God living in the world

मराठी मूळ

संवसार तीहीं केला पाठमोरा । नाहीं द्रव्य दारा जया चितीं ॥१॥
 शुभाशुभ नाहीं हर्षामर्ष अंगीं । जनार्दन जगीं होउनि ठेला ॥२॥
 तुका म्हणे देहें दिला एकसरें । जयासि दुसरें नाहीं मग ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who have turned their backs on worldly life, who hold no desire for wealth or spouse in their chitta, in whom neither good fortune nor bad provokes elation or resentment: they have become Janardana himself, living in the world. Says Tuka, having surrendered the body once and for all, nothing second remains for them.

IN PLAIN WORDS

They have turned their backs on worldly life. There is no wealth, no wife, in their mind. Good and bad, gain and loss, stir no joy and no resentment in them. They have become Janardana himself, living here in the world. Tuka says: they gave the body away once and for all. For them nothing second remains.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing what a true saint actually is. He names it by subtraction: no craving for wealth or spouse, no swing of elation or resentment when fortune turns good or bad. When all of that is gone, what is left is not a holy man but God walking in the world, Janardana himself. The last line lands the claim: such a one surrendered the body completely, and so for him there is no second thing, no other besides God.

GATHA 0534

Worldly Life

Worldly life, the burden of self and other

मराठी मूळ

देहबुद्धि वसे लोभ जयां चितीं । आपुलें जाणती परावें जे ॥१॥
 तयासि चालतां पाहिजे सिदोरी । दुःख पावे करी असत्य तो ॥२॥
 तुका म्हणे धर्म रक्षाया कारणें । छाया इच्छी उन्हें तापला तो ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those whose chitta is steeped in body-consciousness and greed, who distinguish between 'mine' and 'another's,' need provisions for their journey and suffer misery because they live by falsehood. Says Tuka, the one scorched by the sun seeks shade in order to protect what is righteous.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Their mind is full of body-thought and greed. They divide the world into mine and another's. Such people must carry provisions when they travel. They live by falsehood, and so they suffer. Tuka says: to guard what is right, the man scorched by the sun goes seeking shade.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is contrasting the life weighed down by ego with the life set free. As long as the mind is sunk in body-consciousness and greed, it keeps splitting reality into mine and yours, and that division is a falsehood that brings its own suffering. Such a person can never travel light: he must always carry his store of provisions, his anxious securities. The closing image points to the remedy by analogy: just as the sun-scorched man seeks shade, one burned by this false way should seek the cool refuge of what is truly righteous.

GATHA 0535

The Nature of God

The nature of God, the secret time cannot eat

मराठी मूळ

काळें खादला हा अवघा आकार । उत्पित्तसंहारघडमोडी ॥१॥
 वीज तो अंकुर आच्छादिला पोटी । अनंता सेवटीं एकाचिया ॥२॥
 तुका म्हणे शब्दे व्यापिलें आकाश । गुढार हें तैसें कळों नये ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Time has devoured every form through the cycle of creation and destruction. The seed, the sprout, is concealed in the belly of the Infinite One from beginning to end.

Says Tuka, sound pervades the sky, yet its secret remains beyond understanding.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Time has eaten every form. Creation rises and is destroyed, made and unmade. The seed, the sprout, lies hidden in the belly of the Infinite One, from first to last, in him alone. Tuka says: sound fills the whole sky. This mystery is like that. It cannot be grasped.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is pointing at what stands behind all change. Every shape that appears is devoured by time through the endless turning of creation and dissolution; nothing made survives. Yet the seed of all of it stays hidden in the Infinite One, from beginning to end, present in that One alone. The final image carries the weight: as sound pervades the whole sky and yet cannot be seized in the hand, this mystery is everywhere and still beyond the mind's grasp.

GATHA 0536

The Power of the Name

The Name, the one remedy of this age

मराठी मूळ

आणीक काळें न चले उपाय । धरावे या पाय विठोबाचे ॥१॥
 अवघें चि पुण्य असे तया पोटीं । अवघिया तुटी होय पापा ॥२॥
 अवघें मोकळें अवघिया काळें । उद्धरती कुळें नरनारी ॥३॥
 काळ वेळ नाहीं गर्भवासदुःखें । उच्चारितां मुखें नाम एक ॥४॥
 तुका म्हणे कांहीं न लगे सांडावें । सांगतसें भावें घेती तयां ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In this dark age no other remedy avails; one must hold fast to the feet of Vitthoba. All merit resides within those feet, and all sins are destroyed thereby.

Everything is set free in every age; men and women and their entire lineages are redeemed. There is no fixed time or occasion, no suffering of the womb; simply uttering the Name with one's mouth is enough.

Says Tuka, nothing needs to be abandoned; I say this with sincerity to all who will receive it with faith.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In this dark age no other remedy works. Hold fast to the feet of Vithoba. All merit lies in those feet. By them all sin is cut away. In every age everything is set free. Men and women and their whole families are saved. There is no fixed time, no fixed hour, no pain of the womb. Just speak the one Name with your mouth. Tuka says: nothing has to be given up. I tell this in sincerity to all who will take it in faith.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming the single sufficient practice for the present age. He says no other method holds, and reduces it all to one act: cling to Vithoba's feet, where every merit is gathered and every sin is undone. The Name needs no qualification, no proper hour, no ordeal; simply uttering it with the mouth rescues whole families. The closing line removes the last objection people raise: you do not have to renounce or abandon anything first, and he offers this in earnest to anyone willing to receive it with faith.

GATHA 0537

Longing and Separation

Longing, the God who will not answer

मराठी मूळ

कां रे माझा तुज न ये कळवळा । असोनि जवळा हृदयस्था ॥१॥
 अगा नारायणा निष्ठाय निर्गुणा । केला शोक नेणां कंठस्फोट ॥२॥
 कां हें चित्त नाहीं पावलें विश्रांती । इंद्रियांची गति कुंटे चि ना ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे कां रे धरियेला कोप । पाप सरलें नेणों पांडुरंगा ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why does my plight not stir compassion in you, when you dwell so close, right within my heart? O Narayana, O Formless and Faithful One, I have cried out in anguish until my throat is raw, yet you seem not to hear. Why has my mind not found rest? Why do the senses refuse to be still? Says Tuka, why do you hold this grudge, O Panduranga? I cannot tell whether my sins have yet been exhausted.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why does my plight not stir your pity, when you live so close, right inside my heart? O Narayana, formless and faithful one, I have cried out until my throat is torn, and still you do not seem to hear. Why has my mind found no rest? Why will the senses not grow still? Tuka says: why do you hold this grudge, Panduranga? I cannot tell whether my sins are not yet spent.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praying from inside an unanswered cry, and the ache is sharpened by nearness: the God he begs from dwells in his own heart, yet seems deaf. He has worn his throat raw with calling, and still the mind will not rest and the senses will not be quiet. He even half-accuses the Lord of holding a grudge. The last line shows where he finally turns the suspicion: not on God's coldness but on himself, wondering whether his own sins are simply not yet exhausted.

GATHA 0538

The Nature of God

The nature of God, protector of the helpless

मराठी मूळ

दीनानाथा तुझीं ब्रिदें चराचर । घेसील कैवार शरणागता ॥१॥
 पुराणीं जे तुझे गर्जती पवाडे । ते आम्हां रोकडे कळों आले ॥२॥
 आपुल्या दासांचें न साहासी उणें । उभा त्याकारणें राहिलासी ॥३॥
 चक्र गदा हातीं आयुधें अपारें । न्यून तेथें पुरें करुं धावें ॥४॥
 तुका म्हणे तुज भक्तीचें कारण । करावया पूर्ण अवतार ॥५॥
 ठायींची हे काया ठेविली चरणीं । आतां ओवाळुनि काय सांडूं ॥६॥
 नाहीं भाव ऐसा करुं तुझी सेवा । जीव वाहूं देवा तो ही तुझा ॥७॥
 मज माझें कांहीं न दिसे पाहातां । जें तुज अनंता समर्पविं ॥८॥
 तुका म्हणे आतां नाहीं मज थार । तुझे उपकार फेडावया ॥९॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O Lord of the lowly, your fame as protector of all creation, who champions the cause of those who surrender, fills the moving and the still. The glorious deeds the Puranas proclaim about you, we have seen them proven true before our very eyes.

You cannot bear to see your devotees suffer any want; that is why you stand there, ready. With discus, mace, and countless weapons in hand, you rush to fill whatever is lacking.

Says Tuka, devotion is the reason you take birth in this world. This body of mine was always meant for your feet; now what more can I wave before you and cast aside? I have no devotion worthy enough to serve you; even if I offer my life, that too belongs to you.

When I look within, I see nothing of my own that I might offer to you, O Infinite One. Says Tuka, I can find no way to repay your kindness.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Lord of the lowly, your name as protector fills all that moves and all that stands still. You take the side of those who surrender. The mighty deeds the Puranas sing of you, we have seen them proved true with our own eyes. You cannot bear to see your servants lack anything. That is why you stand there, ready. Discus and mace in hand, countless weapons, you run to fill whatever is missing. Tuka says: devotion is the reason you take birth. This body was always meant for your feet. What more can I now wave before you and throw away? I have no devotion good enough to serve you. Even if I offer my life, that life is yours too. When I look within, I see nothing of my own to give you, O Infinite One. Tuka says: now I find no way left to repay your kindness.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram begins in praise and ends, helplessly, in debt. He honors Vitthal as the sworn protector of the lowly and of all who surrender, and says the Puranas' old stories of rescue have come true before his own eyes: the Lord cannot stand to see a devotee in want, so he stands ready, armed, rushing to supply whatever is lacking. Then the poem turns the tribute back on the singer. Everything he might offer in return, his body, his devotion, even his life, already belongs to God, so he has nothing of his own to give. The closing confession is the point: faced with such kindness, the devotee finds no way at all to repay it.

GATHA 0539

Longing and Separation

Longing, pull me out of the fire

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं सुख मज न लगे हा मान । न राहे हें जन काय करूं ॥१॥
 देहउपचारें पोळतसे अंग । विषतुल्य चांग मिष्टान्न तें ॥२॥
 नाइकवे स्तुति वाणितां थोरीव । होतो माझा जीव कासावीस ॥३॥
 तुज पावें ऐसी सांग कांहीं कळा । नको मृगजळा गोवूं मज ॥४॥
 तुका म्हणे आतां करीं माझें हित । काढावें जळत आगींतूनि ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I find no pleasure in worldly comforts, I have no use for honor, and people will not leave me alone; what am I to do? Comforts of the body scorch my skin; fine delicacies taste like poison. I cannot bear to hear anyone's praise or have my greatness described; it makes my soul writhe.

Tell me some means by which I may reach you; do not entangle me in mirages. Says Tuka, work now for my true welfare and pull me out of this fire.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I find no pleasure in this. I have no use for honor. People will not leave me alone. What am I to do? Comforts of the body scorch my skin. Fine rich food tastes like poison. I cannot bear to hear praise, to have my greatness described. It makes my soul writhe. Tell me some way to reach you. Do not tangle me in mirages. Tuka says: now do what is truly good for me. Pull me, burning, out of the fire.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is begging to be rescued from the very things people chase. Honor, comfort, rich food, praise: each one repels him, scorching his skin, tasting like poison, making his soul twist when he hears it. The only thing he wants is a way to reach God, and he asks not to be deceived by mirages, the false satisfactions that look like fulfillment and are not. The closing cry names the stakes plainly: he is on fire, and he asks God to do what is actually good for him and drag him out.

GATHA 0540

Faith and Trust

Faith, only Narayana matters

मराठी मूळ

न मिळो खावया न वाढो संतान । परि हा नारायण कृपा करो ॥१॥
 विटंबो शरीर होत कां विपत्ति । परि राहो चित्तीं नारायण ॥२॥
 तुका म्हणे नासिवंत हें सकळ । आठवे गोपाळ तें चि हित ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let there be nothing to eat, let no children be born to me, so long as Narayana is merciful. Let the body be tormented, let misfortune strike, so long as Narayana remains in my heart.

Says Tuka, everything in this world is perishable; to remember Gopala alone is the true good.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let there be nothing to eat. Let no children be born to me. Only let Narayana be merciful. Let the body be tormented. Let misfortune strike. Only let Narayana stay in my heart. Tuka says: all of this is perishable. To remember Gopala alone is the true good.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is setting his single condition against everything else and accepting the cost. He will give up food, offspring, the body's safety, all of it, on one term only: that Narayana be merciful and remain in his heart. The structure of the prayer makes the priority brutal and clear, hunger and ruin counted as nothing beside God's presence. The reason is given last: every one of those things is perishable and passing, so to keep remembering Gopala is the only good that actually holds.

GATHA 0541

Renunciation

Renunciation, the body cannot be saved

मराठी मूळ

पिंड पोसावे हें अधमाचें ज्ञान । विलास मिष्टान्न करुनियां ॥१॥
 शरीर रक्षावें हा धर्म बोलती । काय असे हातीं तयाचिया ॥२॥
 क्षणभंगुर हें जाय न कळतां । ग्रास गिळि सत्ता नाही हातीं ॥३॥
 कर्वतिलीं देहें कापियेलें मांस । गेले वनवासा शुकादिक ॥४॥
 तुका म्हणे राज्य करितां जनक । अग्नीमाजी एक पाय जळे ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

To pamper the body with luxuries and fine food is the wisdom of the lowest kind. They say preserving the body is dharma, but what power does anyone truly have over it? This fragile thing perishes without warning; one cannot even swallow a morsel by one's own authority.

Shuka and others sawed through their bodies and cut away their flesh, then departed into the forest. Says Tuka, even while Janaka ruled his kingdom, one of his feet was burning in fire.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To pamper the body with luxuries and rich food is the wisdom of the lowest sort. They say guarding the body is dharma. But what power does anyone hold over it? This fragile thing breaks without warning. You cannot even swallow one mouthful by your own authority. Shuka and others sawed through their bodies, cut away their flesh, and went off into the forest. Tuka says: even as Janaka ruled his kingdom, one of his feet was burning in the fire.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is attacking the project of saving and serving the body. To feed it luxuries and call that wisdom is, he says, the lowest understanding; and the claim that protecting the body is dharma collapses once you see how little control anyone has over it. The body is fragile, it breaks unannounced, and a person cannot so much as guarantee his next swallow. Against this he sets the detachment of the realized: sages like Shuka treated the body as nothing, and Janaka could rule a whole kingdom while inwardly unattached, as a king at his ease with one foot already in the fire. The point is self-examination: stop staking your life on a thing you do not own.

GATHA 0542

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the body sworn to the Name

मराठी मूळ

जरी माझी कोणी कापितील मान । तरी नको आन वदों जिद्धे ॥१॥
 सकळां इंद्रियां हे माझी विनंती । नका होऊं परतीं पांडुरंगा ॥२॥
 आणिकांची मात नाइकावी कानीं । आणीक नयनीं न पाहावें ॥३॥
 चित्ता तुवां पायीं रहावें अखंडित । होउनी निश्चित एकविध ॥४॥
 चला पाय हात हें चि काम करा । माझ्या नमस्कारा विठोबाच्या ॥५॥
 तुका म्हणे तुम्हां भय काय करी । आमुचा कैवारी नारायण ॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even if someone should cut off my head, O tongue, do not speak any name other than Panduranga's. This is my plea to all my senses: do not turn away from the Lord.

Let these ears hear no one else's words; let these eyes gaze upon nothing else. O mind, remain steadfast and undivided at his feet.

Come, hands and feet, do this one task: bow before my Vitthoba. Says Tuka, what have any of you to fear? Narayana is our protector.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Even if someone cuts off my head, O tongue, do not speak any name but Panduranga's. This is my plea to all my senses: do not turn away from the Lord. Let these ears hear no one else's words. Let these eyes look at nothing else. O mind, stay unbroken at his feet, settled and one-pointed. Come, hands and feet, do this one task: bow before my Vithoba. Tuka says: what have any of you to fear? Narayana is our protector.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is mustering his own body and senses like a vow taken under threat. He commands the tongue to keep the Name even if his head is struck off, and goes part by part, ears, eyes, mind, hands, feet, ordering each to attend to nothing but the Lord and to bow before Vithoba. It reads as a discipline of total inward devotion, the whole person turned single-pointed at God's feet. The closing line answers the fear such a vow might raise: none of these faculties need be afraid, because Narayana is their protector.

GATHA 0543

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the false saints

मराठी मूळ

करिसी तें देवा करीं माझें सुखें । परी मी त्यासी मुखें न म्हणें संत ॥१॥
 जया राज्य द्रव्य करणें उपार्जना । वश दंभमाना इच्छे जाले ॥२॥
 जगदेव परी निवडीन निराळे । ज्ञानाचे आंधळे भारवाही ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे भय न धरीं मानसीं । ऐसियाचे विशीं करितां दंड ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O God, do whatever pleases you with me, but I will never call those people saints who have become slaves to wealth, status, and the desire for worldly acquisition, who are ruled by pride and ambition. Let them be revered by the world; I will sort out the truly wise from the frauds, those who are blind despite their learning, mere beasts of burden.

Says Tuka, I hold no fear in my heart when it comes to condemning such pretenders.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do with me whatever you please, God, gladly. But these people I will not call saints with my mouth. They labor to gather kingdoms and wealth. They are slaves to show and to status, ruled by their own craving. Let the world worship them. I will sort the truly wise from the frauds, the men blind despite their learning, the beasts that only carry loads. Tuka says: I hold no fear in my heart when it comes to condemning such pretenders.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is refusing to flatter holy reputations that are hollow. He hands himself over to God's will, but draws one hard line: he will not call these men saints. He names the pattern, hunger for kingdoms and wealth, enslavement to display and status, the rule of one's own ambition, and says worldly worship of such figures changes nothing. He claims the right to separate the genuinely wise from the frauds, those learned yet blind, carrying their knowledge like pack animals carry a load. The point turns toward self-examination as much as accusation: it is the pattern of pride and acquisition that is condemned, and he says he is unafraid to call it out.

GATHA 0544

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the false saint

मराठी मूळ

म्हणविती ऐसे आइकतों संत । न देखीजे होत डोळां कोणीं ॥१॥
 ऐसियांचा कोण मानितें विश्वास । निवडे तो रस घाईडाई ॥२॥
 पर्जन्याचे काळीं वाहाळाचे नद । ओसरतां बुंद न थारे चि ॥३॥
 हिर्याय ऐशा गारा दिसती दूरोन । तुका म्हणे घन न भेटे तों ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I hear people call themselves saints, yet none can be seen with one's own eyes. Who would place trust in such people? True substance reveals itself only under scrutiny.

In the rainy season every ditch becomes a river, but when the rains stop, not a drop remains. Hailstones look like diamonds from afar.

Says Tuka, the deception lasts only until you hold them close.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I hear people call themselves saints. But I see none with my own eyes. Who would trust such people? The real substance shows itself only when you test it. In the rainy season every ditch swells into a river; when the rain stops, not a drop is left. Hailstones look like diamonds from far away. Tuka says: the trick lasts only until you hold them close.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is warning against trusting a holy reputation that has not been tested. Anyone can claim the title of saint; the claim proves nothing, because the real worth of a person only shows under scrutiny. He gives two pictures: the monsoon ditch that roars like a river while the rains last and runs dry the moment they stop, and the hailstone that glitters like a diamond from a distance and melts in your hand. The point lands on the reader as much as on the booster: do not be dazzled from afar, and do not be the swollen ditch yourself. Look closely, and what is hollow falls apart.

GATHA 0545

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the costumed devotee

मराठी मूळ

अतिवाद लावी । एक बोट सोंग दावी ॥ १ ॥
 त्याचा बहुरूपी नट । नव्हे वैष्णव तो चाट ॥ २ ॥
 प्रतिपादी वाळी । एक पुजी एका छळी ॥ ३ ॥
 तुका म्हणे नाही । भूतदया ज्याचे ठायी ॥ ४ ॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One puts on excessive airs and makes a show of pointing a finger. He is a costumed actor, not a true Vaishnava but a sycophant but a fraud.

He supports one person, worships another, and torments someone else. Says Tuka, wherever compassion for all beings is absent, there is no true devotion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He makes a great show. He points a finger and plays a part. He is a costumed actor, not a true Vaishnava, only a flatterer. He praises one man, worships another, and torments a third. Tuka says: where there is no compassion for all beings, there is no devotion.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming the gap between the show of devotion and its one real mark. The man here performs piety like an actor in costume, pointing fingers and playing favorites: praising one person, flattering another, harassing a third. None of that is Vaishnava faith, only sycophancy dressed as religion. The test Tukaram applies is simple and severe: bhutadaya, compassion toward all living beings. Where that is absent, the costume is empty, however loud the performance; and the warning is for anyone tempted to mistake religious display for the thing itself.

GATHA 0546

Social Criticism

Social criticism, religion for the belly

मराठी मूळ

पोटाचे ते नट पाहों नये छंद । विषयांचे भेद विषयरूप ॥१॥
 अर्थ परमार्थ कैसा घडों सके । चित्त लोभी भीके सोंग वांयां ॥२॥
 देवाचीं चरित्रें दाखविती लीळा । लाघवाच्या कळा मोहावया ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे चित्तीं राहे अभिळास । दोघां नरकवास सारिखा चि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Performers who act for their belly are not worth watching; their art is shaped by the senses and leads back to the senses. How can spiritual truth flourish when the mind is greedy and the show of begging is hollow? They enact the stories of God's deeds as clever tricks to enchant people.

Says Tuka, when desire lingers in the heart, both performer and audience share the same road to ruin.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do not watch performers who act for their belly. Their art is shaped by the senses and leads back to the senses. How can spiritual truth grow when the mind is greedy and the begging is a hollow act? They act out the deeds of God as clever tricks, to enchant people. Tuka says: when desire stays in the heart, the performer and the watcher walk the same road to ruin.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is attacking the use of sacred stories as a livelihood, a performance staged to win an audience and fill a stomach. When the mind behind the show is greedy, the senses both drive it and feed it, so no spiritual truth can take root; even the holy deeds of God become tricks to charm a crowd. The sharp turn comes at the end: the audience is not innocent. If desire lingers in your own heart, watching such a show feeds the same hunger, and performer and spectator share the same fall. The verse asks the listener to examine what they have come for.

GATHA 0547

Social Criticism

Social criticism, ignore the slanderers

मराठी मूळ

भुंकती तीं घावीं भुंकों । आपण त्यांचें नये शिकों ॥१॥
 भाविकांनीं दुर्जनाचें । मानूं नये कांहीं साचें ॥२॥
 होइल तैसें बळ । फजीत करावे ते खळ ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे त्यांचें । पाप नाहीं ताडणाचें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let those who bark keep barking; one should never learn their ways. The faithful must never take the words of the wicked as truth.

With whatever strength you possess, expose and humiliate those scoundrels. Says Tuka, there is no sin in punishing such people.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let those who bark keep barking. Do not learn their ways. The faithful must never take the words of the wicked as true. With whatever strength you have, expose and shame the scoundrels. Tuka says: there is no sin in punishing such people.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is steeling the devotee against slander. He compares hostile detractors to barking dogs: let them bark, but do not pick up their habits, and never accept the wicked man's word as truth. Then he sharpens it into a charge to act, to expose and shame those who corrupt others, with whatever strength you have. His blunt closing line, that there is no sin in punishing such people, is aimed at the harm itself and at the duty to protect the faithful from it, not at hatred of any soul. The fight is against the pattern of deceit, not against the person as a person.

GATHA 0548

Renunciation

Renunciation, guard your own ground

मराठी मूळ

जप करितां राग । आला जवळी तो मांग ॥१॥
 नको भोंवतालें जगीं । पाहों जवळी राख अंगीं ॥२॥
 कुड्याची संगती । सदा भोजन पंगती ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे ब्रम्ह । साधी विरहित कर्म ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

While performing japa, one whom society had cast out came and sat down near me. I need not look around at the world; let me keep sacred ash upon my body.

The company of the crooked infects even the communal meal. Says Tuka, seek Brahman free from the entanglement of ritual action.

IN PLAIN WORDS

While I did my japa, one whom the world had cast out came and sat near me. I need not look around at the world; let me keep the sacred ash on my own body. The company of the crooked spoils even the shared meal. Tuka says: seek Brahman, with action set free from attachment.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is turning a moment of social tension into counsel about where to keep your eyes. Mid prayer, someone the world rejects sits down beside him, and his answer is not to scan and judge the world around him but to keep the sacred ash on his own body, to mind his own discipline. He grants that bad company can corrupt even something as ordinary and shared as a common meal, so vigilance is real. But the resolution points inward and upward: seek Brahman, and let your action be free of the grip of attachment. The work is on yourself, not on policing others.

GATHA 0549

The Necessity of Experience

Experience, free of name and form

मराठी मूळ

कांहीं च मी नव्हे कोणिये गांवींचा । एकट ठायींचा ठायीं एक ॥१॥
 नाहीं जात कोठें येत फिरोनियां । अवघें चि वांयांविण बोलें ॥२॥
 नाहीं मज कोणी आपुलें दुसरें । कोणाचा मी खरें कांहीं नव्हे ॥३॥
 नाहीं आम्हां ज्यावें मरावें लागत । आहों अखंडित जैसे तैसे ॥४॥
 तुका म्हणे नांवरूप नाहीं आम्हां । वेगळा ह्या कर्मा अकर्मासी ॥५॥
 लोहगावांस परचक्रवेढा पडला - अभंग ३

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I belong to no village at all; I am alone, one with the One. I go nowhere and return from nowhere; all that I speak is without substance.

I have no one who is mine, nor do I truly belong to anyone. I do not need to live or to die; I remain as I am, unbroken and unchanged.

Says Tuka, I have neither name nor form; I am apart from both action and inaction.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am nothing, and I belong to no village. I am alone, one with the One. I go nowhere and come back from nowhere; all that I say is without substance. No one is mine, and I am truly no one's. I do not need to live or to die. I stay as I am, unbroken, just as I am. Tuka says: I have no name and no form. I stand apart from action and from inaction.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is Tukaram speaking from the far side of liberation, where the ordinary marks of a self have dropped away. He has no village, no kin, no comings or goings, and even his own words he calls empty, because the separate person who would own them is gone. Belonging to no one and owning no one, he no longer faces birth or death as events that touch him; he simply remains, unbroken and unchanging. The closing claim is the boldest: he is beyond name and form, and beyond the whole pair of action and inaction. The verse is the direct report of nondual realization, not a wish for it.

GATHA 0550

Prayers

Prayer, anguish at the suffering of others

मराठी मूळ

न देखवे डोळां ऐसा हा आकांत । परपीडे चित्त दुःखी होतें ॥१॥
 काय तुम्ही येथें नसालसें जालें । आम्हीं न देखिलें पाहिजे हें ॥२॥
 परचक्र कोठें हरिदासांच्या वासें । न देखिजेत देशें राहातिया ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे माझी लाजविली सेवा । हीनपणें देवा जिणें जालें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My eyes cannot bear to witness this devastation; my chitta grieves when others are tormented. Are you not present here? Must we be made to see such things? Where the devotees of Hari dwell, no hostile force should be able to reach their land.

Says Tuka, my service has been put to shame; this lowly existence, O God, has become unbearable.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My eyes cannot bear to watch this ruin. My chitta grieves when others are tormented. Are you not here? Must we be made to see such things? Where the servants of Hari live, no hostile force should reach their land. Tuka says: my service has been put to shame. This low life, O God, has become unbearable.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is crying out to God over violence and devastation he cannot stand to witness. His grief is not for himself but for others who are being tormented, and his protest is sharp: if you are present, how can this be allowed to come before our eyes? He appeals to a kind of covenant, that where Hari's devotees dwell no hostile force should be able to invade. The closing line carries the wound of it: his lifelong service feels shamed and his existence unbearable, because the God he serves seems to stand by. The poem keeps faith and complaint in the same breath, the way a servant complains only to the master he still trusts.

GATHA 0551

Longing and Separation

Longing, where is your protection

मराठी मूळ

काय म्यां मानावें हरिकथेचें फळ । तरिजे सकळ जनीं ऐसैं ॥१॥
 उच्छेद तो असे हा गे आरंभला । रोकडें विठ्ठला परचक्र ॥२॥
 पापाविण नाहीं पाप येत पुढें । साक्षसी रोकडें साक्ष आलें ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे जेथें वसतील दास । तेथें तुझा वास कैसा आतां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What fruit of Hari's story should I believe in, if it is said that all people are thereby saved? For destruction has already begun, and the enemy's invasion stands before us in plain sight, O Vitthala. Sin does not arrive without prior sin; the evidence has come as a living witness.

Says Tuka, where your devotees reside, how is it that your presence there can be so questioned now?

IN PLAIN WORDS

What fruit of Hari's story should I believe in, if it is said all people are saved by it? For the destruction has already begun, and the enemy stands before us in plain sight, O Vitthala. No sin comes without an earlier sin; the proof has come now as a living witness. Tuka says: where your servants live, how can your presence be in doubt now?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is pressing God with a hard question born of catastrophe. The teaching promises that Hari's story saves everyone, yet ruin has already begun and an enemy stands openly before them, so he asks what fruit that promise is supposed to have. He half answers his own doubt with the law that no calamity comes without prior wrong, the present disaster being its living evidence. But the real ache is the last line: the devotees live here, and they were told God lives where his devotees live, so how can that presence now seem absent? It is a believer's protest, demanding that God make good on his own word.

GATHA 0552

Prayers

Prayer, asking for shelter to worship

मराठी मूळ

भीत नाहीं आतां आपुल्या मरणा । दुःखी होतां जना न देखवे ॥१॥
 आमची तो जाती ऐसी परंपरा । कां तुम्ही दातारा नेणां ऐसैं ॥२॥
 भजनीं विक्षेप तें चि पें मरण । न वजावा क्षण एक वांयां ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे नाहीं आघाताचा वारा । ते स्थळीं दातारा ठाव मागें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I do not fear my own death; what I cannot bear is seeing people suffer. Our tradition has always been thus, generation upon generation; how is it, O Generous Lord, that you do not know this? Any interruption of worship is itself death to me; not a single moment should pass in vain.

Says Tuka, grant me a place where there is no threat of violence, O Lord.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I do not fear my own death now. What I cannot bear is to watch people suffer. Our line has always been like this, family after family; how is it, O Giving Lord, that you do not know it? Any break in worship is itself death to me; not one moment should pass in vain. Tuka says: grant me a place where no blow can fall, O Giving Lord.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is asking God not for safety from death but for the conditions to keep worshipping. He has no fear for himself; his pain is the sight of others suffering, a tenderness he says has run through his lineage for generations, so he reproaches the Lord for seeming not to know it. For him the true death is any interruption of bhajan, any moment of devotion lost. So his single request is for a refuge free of violence, a place where worship cannot be broken. The prayer reveals what he counts as life and death: continuous devotion is life, and its interruption is the only death worth dreading.

GATHA 0553

The Saints

The saints, beyond compare

मराठी मूळ

फिरंगी वाखर लोखंडाचे विळे । परि ते निराळे गुणमोल ॥१॥
 पायरी प्रतिमा एक चि पाषाण । परि तें महिमान वेगळालें ॥२॥
 तुका म्हणे तैशा नव्हतील परी । संतजना सरी सारिखिया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Foreign steel and ordinary iron may look alike, yet their quality and worth are entirely different. A doorstep and a sacred image are both made of the same stone, yet their dignity is worlds apart.

Says Tuka, even so, nothing in this world can ever be made equal to the saints.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Foreign steel and an ordinary iron sickle may look alike, yet their quality and worth are wholly different. A doorstep and a holy image are both cut from the same stone, yet their dignity is worlds apart. Tuka says: even so, nothing in this world can be set equal to the saints.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is teaching that sameness of appearance says nothing about true worth. Fine foreign steel and a common iron sickle look like one metal, yet differ utterly in quality; a stone doorstep and a carved deity come from the same rock, yet one is trodden on and the other worshipped. By these pairs he prepares the ear for his real claim:

the saints cannot be measured against ordinary people at all. The likeness of human shape hides an incomparable difference, and to rank a saint among common folk is to mistake the doorstep for the image. The verse asks the reader to honor that hidden distinction rather than judge by the surface.

GATHA 0554

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, God as the only audience

मराठी मूळ

कोण जाणे कोणा घडे उपासना । कोण या वचनाप्रति पावे ॥१॥
 आतां माझा श्रोता वक्ता तूं चि देवा । करावी ते सेवा तुझी च मां ॥२॥
 कुशळ चतुर येथें न सरते । करितील रिते तर्क मतें ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे जालें पेणें एके घरीं । मज आणि हरी तुम्हां गांठी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Who knows to whom true worship is granted, and who will attain the fulfillment of these words? From now on, O God, you alone are my listener and my speaker; let me serve only you. The clever and the cunning have no place here; they will only spin empty theories and opinions.

Says Tuka, I have settled into one single home: the bond between me, Hari, and all of you.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Who knows to whom true worship is granted, and who will reach the fulfillment of these words? From now on, O God, you alone are my listener and my speaker; let me serve only you. The clever and the cunning have no place here; they will only spin empty theories and opinions. Tuka says: I have settled into one single home, the bond between me, Hari, and you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is surrendering both the worship and its words back to God. He admits he cannot know who is granted real devotion or who will reach what his verses point to, so he stops performing for any human audience. From now on God is both his hearer and the one who speaks through him, and service is owed to God alone. He shuts the door on the clever and the cunning, whose cleverness only produces empty argument, because the bond here is not a matter for debate. His final resting place is small and complete: one home holding only himself, Hari, and the listener drawn into that same intimacy.

GATHA 0555

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, imitation without feeling

मराठी मूळ

आमचा विनोद तें जगा मरण । करिती भावहीण देखोवेखीं ॥१॥
 न कळे सतंत हिताचा विचार । तों हे दारोदार खाती फेरे ॥२॥
 वंदिलें वंदावें निंदिलें निंदावें । एक गेलें जावें त्याचि वाटा ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे कोणी नाइके सांगतां । होती यमदूता वरपडे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What is playful sport to us is death to the world; those without inner feeling imitate us blindly without understanding. Until one grasps the wisdom of what truly benefits the soul, one wanders uselessly from door to door.

Whatever is praised they praise, whatever is blamed they blame; wherever one goes, they follow the same beaten path. Says Tuka, no one listens when you warn them, and so they fall prey to the messengers of Death.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What is playful sport to us is death to the world. Those with no inner feeling imitate us blindly, by sight alone. Until a man grasps what truly helps the soul, he wanders uselessly from door to door. Whatever others praise, they praise; whatever others blame, they blame; wherever the crowd goes, they follow the same beaten path. Tuka says: no one listens when you warn them, and so they fall prey to the messengers of Death.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is exposing devotion done by imitation rather than from the heart. What the realized do as free, joyful sport becomes deadly when the feelingless copy it by sight alone, mimicking the outward acts without the inner life that makes them safe. Such a person, never grasping what actually benefits the soul, drifts from door to door and simply echoes the crowd: praising what is praised, blaming what is blamed, treading the worn path everyone treads. The warning is urgent because no one heeds it, and the unexamined herd ends up seized by the messengers of Death. The verse calls the reader to find the inner feeling, not just the gestures.

GATHA 0556

Faith and Trust

Fearless faith, the Name outshines all

मराठी मूळ

दीप घेउनियां धुंडिती अंधार । भेटे हा विचार अघटित ॥१॥
 विष्णुदास आम्ही न भयो कळिकाळा । भुलों मृगजळा न घडे तें ॥२॥
 उधळितां माती रविकाळा मळे । हें कैसें न कळे भाग्यहीना ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे तृणें झांके हुताशन । हें तंव वचन वाउगें चि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

They take a lamp and go searching for darkness; such an impossible discovery that would be. We are servants of Vishnu and do not fear Death; we cannot be deceived by a mirage.

Throwing dust may dim the rays of the sun for a moment; how is it that the unfortunate cannot understand this? Says Tuka, to say that grass can smother a blazing fire is an utterly hollow claim.

IN PLAIN WORDS

They take a lamp and go searching for darkness. Such a thing could never be found. We are servants of Vishnu. We do not fear death or the dark age. We will not be fooled by a mirage; that cannot happen. You may throw dust in the air, but does it dim the rays of the sun? How does the luckless soul not see this? Tuka says: to claim that a blade of grass can smother a blazing fire, that is an utterly hollow word.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is stating why faith does not flinch. He stacks up three impossibilities: looking for darkness with a lamp in hand, dust thrown up to blot out the sun, a wisp of grass put forward to put out a fire. Each one names how small the threats really are against God. As a servant of Vishnu he refuses to fear death or the corrupt age, and refuses to be taken in by what only looks like water in a desert. The point is plain: nothing the world can muster touches the one who belongs to God, and only a soul without grace fails to see it.

GATHA 0557

The Necessity of Experience

The Self, unstained by its many disguises

मराठी मूळ

नटनाट्ये अवघें संपादिलें सोंग । भेद दाऊं रंग न पालटे ॥१॥
 मांडियेला खेळ कौतुक बहुरूप । आपुलें स्वरूप जाणतसों ॥२॥
 स्फटिकाची शिळा उपाधि न मिळे । भाव दावी पिवळे लाल संगे ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे आम्ही या जनाविरहित । होऊनि निश्चितं क्रीडा करूं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Like an actor, I have put on the whole costume of this play, yet however the scene may change, the true color beneath does not alter. The game of many disguises has been set up as a spectacle, but I know my own true nature all along.

A crystal slab takes on no stain from its surroundings; it merely reflects yellow or red from whatever is placed beside it. Says Tuka, we are free from this crowd of people and shall sport in perfect ease.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Like an actor, I have put on the whole costume of this play. The scene changes, but the true color underneath does not change. A game of many disguises has been set up as a spectacle. Through it all, I know my own true nature. A slab of crystal takes no stain from what is near it; it only shows yellow or red from whatever is set beside it. Tuka says: we stand free of this crowd of people, and at ease we will play.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming the difference between the role and the one who wears it. He compares life to a stage where he has put on a full costume and plays many parts, while what he truly is never alters underneath. The crystal is his image for this: it reflects whatever color is placed against it, yet takes no color into itself. So he passes through the world's many appearances without being changed by them. Knowing his own nature, he no longer belongs to the crowd and its anxieties; he can move through the whole spectacle in freedom and ease.

GATHA 0558

Devotion to Vitthal

Total devotion, all else accursed

मराठी मूळ

तुजविण वाणीं आणिकांची थोरी । तरी माझी हरी जिह्वा झडो ॥१॥
 तुजविण चित्ता आवडे आणीक । तरी हा मस्तक भंगो माझा ॥२॥
 नेत्रीं आणिकांसि पाहीन आवडी । जातु ते चि घडी चांडाळ हे ॥३॥
 कथामृतपान न करिती श्रवण । काय प्रयोजन मग यांचें ॥४॥
 तुका म्हणे काय वांचून कारण । तुज एक क्षण विसंबतां ॥५॥
 स्वामींचे स्त्रीनें स्वामींस कठिण उत्तरें केलीं - अभंग ७

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If my tongue ever praises any greatness other than yours, O Hari, then let it fall from my mouth. If my mind ever delights in anything besides you, then let my head be shattered.

If my eyes ever gaze upon another with longing, let that very moment be accursed. What use are ears that refuse to drink the nectar of sacred stories? Says Tuka, what is the point of living if I forget you for even a single moment?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If my tongue ever praises the greatness of any other than you, O Hari, then let my tongue fall out. If my mind ever delights in anything but you, then let my head be shattered. If my eyes ever look on another with longing, let that very moment be accursed. What is the use of ears that will not drink the nectar of the sacred stories? Tuka says: what is the point of living if I forget you for even a single moment?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is binding every faculty to Hari alone and cursing it if it strays. He calls down ruin on his own tongue, mind, and eyes should they turn toward anything other than God, and he writes off ears that refuse to listen to the sacred stories. This is not cruelty toward himself but the measure of how complete he wants his devotion to be: nothing held back, no part left for a rival love. The closing line names the stake plainly. A single moment of forgetting God empties life of its whole purpose.

GATHA 0559

Worldly Metaphors

The wife's complaint, the husband lost to God

मराठी मूळ

मज चि भोंवता केला येणें जोग । काय याचा भोग अंतरला ॥१॥
 चालोनियां घरा सर्व सुखें येती । माझी तों फजीती चुके चि ना ॥२॥
 कोणाची बाईल होऊनियां वोढूं । संवसारीं काढूं आपदा किती ॥३॥
 काय तरी देऊं तोडितील पोरें । मरतीं तरी बरें होतें आतां ॥४॥
 कांहीं नेदी वांचों धोवियेलें घर । सारवावया ढोर शेण नाहीं ॥५॥
 तुका म्हणे रांड न करितां विचार । वाहुनियां भार कुंथे माथां ॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This husband of mine has set me going in circles; has he renounced anything at all? All comforts walk right past our door, yet my humiliation never ends. Whose wife am I supposed to be, dragging along like this? How much more misery must I pull out of this household? He gives nothing; the children will tear everything apart.

It would have been better if they had died. He will not let me breathe; the house has been washed clean and there is not even cow dung left for plastering.

Says Tuka, the wife grumbles and groans under her burden without ever stopping to think.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This husband of mine has set me going in circles. Has he given up anything at all? Every comfort walks right past our door, and my humiliation never ends. Whose wife am I, dragged along like this? How much more misery must I pull out of this household? He gives nothing. The children will tear everything apart. It would be better if they had died now. He lets me have nothing; the house is scrubbed bare, and there is not even cow dung left to plaster the floor. Tuka says: the wife grumbles and groans under her burden, and never once stops to think.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks in his wife's voice to dramatize the cost of his own devotion as the household sees it. She is worn out: comforts pass them by, the children go hungry, the house is stripped to nothing, and she feels publicly shamed. Her bitter words are real and her hardship is real. But Tukaram lays a quiet judgment under the lament with his closing line: she carries the weight without ever pausing to ask what it is for. The poem turns the complaint back on us, asking whether we too only groan under life's burden and never stop to consider where our true wealth lies.

GATHA 0560

Worldly Metaphors

The wife's despair, the householder turned saint

मराठी मूळ

काय नेणों होता दावेदार मेला । वैर तो साधिला होउनि गोहो ॥१॥
 किती सर्वकाळ सोसावें हें दुःख । किती लोकां मुख वासूं तरीं ॥ध्रु॥
 झवे आपुली आई काय माझें केलें । धड या विठ्ठलें संसाराचें ॥२॥
 तुका म्हणे येती बाईले असडे । फुंदोनियां रडे हांसे कांहीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Who knows what creditor died and took his revenge by raising this uproar in my life. How long must I endure this suffering every day? How long must I show my face to the world? Curse his own mother; what good has this Vitthala done for our household? Says Tuka, the wife lets out these outbursts, sobbing one moment and laughing bitterly the next.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Who knows what creditor died and took his revenge by being born as my husband and raising this storm in my life. How long must I bear this suffering, day after day? How long must I show my face to the world? Curse his mother; what good has this Vitthala ever done for our home? Tuka says: the wife lets out these outbursts, sobbing one moment and laughing bitterly the next.

WHAT IT MEANS

Again Tukaram puts the lament in his wife's mouth, raw and unfiltered. She suspects her husband is some old enemy reborn to torment her, she is ashamed before her neighbors, and in her bitterness she even curses the very Vitthala her husband has given everything to. Her words swing between weeping and a brittle laugh. Tukaram does not soften her; he lets the household's anguish stand. The honesty is the point: a life given to God can look, from inside the home, like ruin, and the poem holds both truths at once without pretending the cost away.

GATHA 0561

Worldly Metaphors

The wife's reproach, the husband who feeds strangers

मराठी मूळ

गोणी आली घरा । दाणे खाऊं नेदी पोरा ॥१॥
 भरी लोकांची पांटोरी । मेला चोरटा खाणोरी ॥ध्रु॥
 खवळली पिसी । हाता झोंबे जैसी लांसी ॥२॥
 तुका म्हणे खोटा । रांडे संचिताचा सांटा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A sack of grain comes home, but he will not let the children eat a morsel. He fills the bowls of strangers; this wretched hoarder has died to his own family.

She rages like a wild woman, clawing like a hook. Says Tuka, O woman, the store of past merit is exhausted; that is why the pile is depleted.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A sack of grain comes home, and he will not let the children eat a single bite. He fills the bowls of strangers. This wretched hoarder is dead to his own family. She flies into a rage, clawing like a hook at the hand. Tuka says: O woman, your store of past merit is spent; that is why the pile runs out.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram stages another scene of the household's grievance: grain comes in but goes to strangers and pilgrims while the children stay hungry, and the wife rages at the waste. Then his own signature line turns the frame. He answers her, naming the deeper account: the grain runs out because the store of past good karma is exhausted, not merely because of the husband's giving. The poem holds the wife's real anger together with a teaching about where lasting provision actually comes from, asking the listener to look past the visible quarrel to the invisible ledger.

GATHA 0562

Worldly Metaphors

The wife's worry, the husband gone god-mad

मराठी मूळ

आतां पोरा काय खासी । गोहो जाला देवलसी ॥१॥
 डोचकें तिंबी घातल्या माळा । उदमाचा सांडी चाळा ॥२॥
 आपल्या पोटा केली थार । आमचा नाही येसपार ॥३॥
 हातीं टाळ तोंड वासी । गाय देउळीं । देवापासीं ॥४॥
 आतां आम्ही करुं काय । न वसे घरीं राणा जाय ॥५॥
 तुका म्हणे आतां धीरी । आझुनि नाहीं जालें तरी ॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What will your children eat now? Your husband has become a god-mad devotee. He shakes his head, sways, and wears garlands; he has abandoned all trade and livelihood.

He has settled his own belly's needs but has given no thought to ours. With cymbals in hand and mouth gaping, he sings away at the temple near God.

What are we to do? He will not stay at home; he roams off to the woods. Says Tuka, be patient, woman; things have not yet reached their end.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What will your children eat now? Your husband has become a god-crazed devotee. He shakes his head, sways, and wears garlands; he has dropped all trade and livelihood. He has settled his own belly and given no thought to ours. With cymbals in hand and mouth wide open, he sings away at the temple, close to God. What are we to do? He will not stay home; he wanders off to the woods. Tuka says: be patient, woman; it has not yet come to its end.

WHAT IT MEANS

Once more Tukaram voices the wife as she watches her husband disappear into devotion. He has thrown over the family trade, wears the bhakta's garlands, and spends his days singing with cymbals at the temple, leaving the children's future a question. Her worry is genuine and the strain on the home is real. But the closing line, again in Tukaram's own voice, asks for patience: things have not reached their end. The poem sets the household's fear beside a quiet trust that the God the husband sings to has not finished the story, and invites the listener to wait rather than judge too soon.

GATHA 0563

Worldly Metaphors

Domestic peace, the wife at last appeased

मराठी मूळ

बरें जालें गेलें । आजी अवघें मिळालें ॥१॥
 आतां खाईन पोटभरी । ओल्या कोरड्या भाकरी ॥२॥
 किती तरी तोंड । याशीं वाजवूं मी रांड ॥३॥
 तुका बाइले मानवला । चीथू करुनियां बोला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Good riddance, it all came together today. Now I will eat my fill, whether the bread is fresh or dry.

How long should I, a mere woman, keep arguing with this man? Says Tuka, the wife was at last appeased by letting her vent her bitter words.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Good, it is over; today it all came together. Now I will eat my fill, whether the bread is fresh or dry. How long should I, only a woman, keep wrangling with this man? Tuka says: the wife was appeased at last, once she had spoken out her bitter words.

WHAT IT MEANS

This abhanga closes the cycle of the wife's complaints on a note of release. Having let out all her resentment, she gives up the fight: she will be content with whatever bread there is, fresh or stale, and stop arguing. Tukaram names plainly that letting her speak her bitterness through is what finally settled her. The poem honors a small domestic truth, that anger spoken fully can spend itself and make room for peace, and it lets the long quarrel between household and devotion come to rest.

GATHA 0564

Worldly Metaphors

Satire on idle devotees, the ruined household

मराठी मूळ

न करवे धंदा । आइता तोंडीं पडे लोंदा ॥१॥
 उठितें तें कुटितें टाळ । अवघा मांडिला कोल्हाळ ॥२॥
 जिवंत चि मेले । लाजा वाटुनियां प्याले ॥३॥
 संसाराकडे । न पाहाती ओस पडे ॥४॥
 तळमळती यांच्या रांडा । घालिती जीवा नांवें धोंडा ॥५॥
 तुका म्हणे बरें जालें । घे गे बाइले लीहिलें ॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He will not do any work; lumps of food just fall into his mouth. Whatever rises up, he turns it into the clapping of cymbals; the whole place is in an uproar.

These people are as good as dead while still alive, distributing shame like a feast and drinking it down. They do not even glance at their household, which lies in ruin.

Their wives writhe in agony and curse their fate. Says Tuka, well then so be it; take it, O wife, as what was written in your destiny.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He will not do any work; lumps of food just fall ready into his mouth. Whatever comes up, he turns into the clapping of cymbals; the whole place is an uproar. These men are dead while still alive; they hand out shame like a feast and drink it down. They never glance at the household, and it falls to ruin. Their wives writhe in agony and curse their fate. Tuka says: well, so be it; take it, O wife, as what was written for you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Here Tukaram turns satirical and points it at a pattern, not at any single man. He sketches those who use the look of devotion as a cover for idleness: living off ready food, raising noise with cymbals, leaving the family to fall apart while the wives suffer. He calls such men dead while still alive. The poem is a warning against devotion that is only performance and shirking dressed up as worship. The closing line, half resigned, hands the consequence over as fate, leaving the reader to examine whether their own piety carries its weight or merely escapes it.

GATHA 0565

Worldly Metaphors

Satire, the bitter wife who scorns kindness

मराठी मूळ

कोण घरा येतें आमुच्या काशाला । काय ज्याचा त्याला नाहीं धंदा ॥१॥
 देवासाठीं जालें ब्रम्हांड सोडरें । कोमळ्या उत्तरें काय वेचे ॥२॥
 मानें पाचारितां नव्हे आराणुक । ऐसे येती लोक प्रीतीसाठीं ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे रांडे नावडे भूषण । कांतेलेंसें श्वान पाठीं लागे ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Who comes to our house, and for what reason? Does everyone not have their own work to attend to? For God's sake, the whole world has become a relative; kind words cost nothing to offer. When called with respect, no one refuses to come; people arrive simply for the sake of love.

Says Tuka, the wife who despises ornaments is like a skinned dog snapping at everyone's heels.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Who comes to our house, and what for? Does everyone not have their own work to do? For God's sake, the whole world has become one family; soft, kind words cost nothing to give. Call a person with respect and no one refuses to come; people come simply for the sake of love. Tuka says: a wife who hates ornaments is like a skinned dog snapping at every passing heel.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram contrasts two ways of meeting people who come to the door. The open way treats the whole world as kin and spends gentle words freely, since respect and love draw others near at no cost. Against that he sets the sour temper that grudges every visitor and asks why they bother coming. His sharp closing image is aimed at that pattern of bitterness, not at the dignity of any person: a heart that scorns gentleness becomes raw and snapping like a skinned dog. The poem commends warmth and self-examines the meanness that drives others off.

GATHA 0566

Worldly Metaphors

Faith versus the hardened heart

मराठी मूळ

भाव धरी तया तारील पाषाण । दुर्जना सज्जन काय करी ॥१॥
 करितां नव्हे नीट श्वानाचें हें पुंस । खापरा परीस काय करी ॥२॥
 काय करिल तया साकरेचें आळें । बीज तैसीं फळें येती तया ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे वज्र भंगे एक वेळ । कठीण हा खळ तयाहूनी ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who holds sincere faith can be saved even by a stone, but what can even a saint do for the wicked? A dog's tail can never be straightened; what can the philosopher's stone do for a broken pot? What good is a field of sugarcane to one who cannot taste its sweetness? The fruit that comes is always according to the seed that was sown. Says Tuka, even a thunderbolt may crack once, but the hardened scoundrel is tougher still.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One who holds faith can be carried across even by a stone. But what can a good man do for the wicked? A dog's tail cannot be made straight; what use is the philosopher's stone to a broken shard of clay? What good is a bed of sugarcane to one who cannot taste sweetness? The fruit always comes according to the seed. Tuka says: a thunderbolt may crack once, but the hardened scoundrel is harder than that.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures two soils against the same grace. Where there is sincere faith, even a stone can ferry a soul across, but where the heart is closed, neither a saint nor the philosopher's stone can transform it, just as a potsherd cannot be turned to gold or a dog's tail made straight. His point is about the seed: the fruit a person bears matches what is sown in them. The closing line lands the claim on the pattern of stubbornness itself, harder than a thunderbolt, urging the listener to soften the ground of their own heart rather than blame the rain that finds no soil to enter.

GATHA 0567

Ecstasy and Joy

Fulfillment in silence, the body as God's house

मराठी मूळ

इच्छावें तें जवळी आलें । काय बोलें कारण ॥१॥
 नामरूपीं पडिली गांठी । अवघ्या गोष्टी सरल्या ॥२॥
 मुकियाचे परी जीवीं । साकर जेवों खादली ॥२॥
 तुका म्हणे काय बोलें । आतां भलें मौन्य ची ॥३॥
 परद्रव्य परनारी । याचा धरीं विटाळ ॥४॥
 देवभाग्यें घरा येती । संपत्ती त्या सकळा ॥२॥
 तुका म्हणे तें शरीर । गृह भांडार देवाचें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

All that I desired has come near; what more is there to say? The Name and the Form have become knotted together and every matter is settled. Like a mute who has eaten sugar, I know the sweetness but cannot express it.

Says Tuka, what can I say now? Silence itself is the best. Regard another's wealth and another's spouse as things to be shunned.

By God's grace, all good fortune comes to the house on its own. Says Tuka, that body is God's own dwelling; the household and its store belong to him.

IN PLAIN WORDS

All that I longed for has come near. What reason is there to speak? The Name and the Form are knotted together, and every matter is settled. Like a mute who has eaten sugar, I taste the sweetness in my heart but cannot say it. Tuka says: what can I say now? Silence itself is best now. Treat another's wealth and another's spouse as things defiled, to be shunned. By God's grace all riches come to the house on their own. Tuka says: that body is God's own dwelling; the home and its store belong to him.

WHAT IT MEANS

This piece moves from an ecstasy that words fail to reach toward the plain conduct that flows from it. The longing is fulfilled, the Name and the Form have joined, and like the mute who has tasted sugar Tukaram knows a sweetness he cannot speak, so he chooses silence as the truest response. The second movement turns that fullness into ethics: keep clear of another's money and another's spouse, and trust that real fortune comes by God's grace, not grasping. The closing line names why such purity matters. The body itself is God's dwelling, and all that the house holds is finally his.

GATHA 0568

The Nature of God

Adoration, the God who shields us

मराठी मूळ

आम्हासाठीं अवतार । मत्स्यकूर्मादि सूकर ॥१॥
 मोहें धांवे घाली पान्हा । नांव घेतां पंढरीराणा ॥२॥
 कोठें न दिसे पाहतां । उडी घाली अवचिता ॥३॥
 सुख ठेवी आम्हासाठीं । दुःख आपणची घोंटी ॥४॥
 आम्हां घाली पाठीकडे । पुढें कळिकाळाशीं भिडे ॥५॥
 तुका म्हणे कृपानीधी । आम्हां उतरीं नांवेमधीं ॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

For our sake he took the forms of the Fish, the Tortoise, and the Boar. When we call the name of the Lord of Pandharpur, he rushes forward overflowing with a mother's milk of love.

When he is nowhere to be seen, he suddenly leaps forth without warning. He keeps all joy for us and swallows the suffering himself.

He places us behind his back and faces Death head on. Says Tuka, O treasury of mercy, carry us safely across in your boat.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He took on bodies for our sake: the Fish, the Tortoise, the Boar. When we say the name of the Lord of Pandhari, he runs to us with love, his milk flowing like a mother's. When you look, he is nowhere; then all at once he leaps out. He keeps the joy for us and swallows the sorrow himself. He puts us behind his back and stands in front, facing Death. Tuka says: O treasury of mercy, carry us across in your boat.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lists the reasons to trust God completely. The avatars, Fish, Tortoise, Boar, were not for God's own sake but for ours; the same Lord runs to the one who calls the Name, with a mother's instinct, not a master's calculation. The poem keeps reversing where God and devotee stand: God is invisible until he suddenly appears, he hands us the joy and drinks the pain himself, he shields us with his own body while he meets Death face to face. The closing prayer follows naturally: a God who does all this can be asked to ferry us across the world's flood, and he will.

GATHA 0569

*The Necessity of Experience**Nondual union, no seam to cut*

मराठी मूळ

रवि रश्मीकळा । नये काढितां निराळा ॥१॥
 तैसा आम्हां जाला भाव । अंगीं जडोनि ठेला देव ॥२॥
 गोडी साकरेपासुनी । कैसी निवडती दोन्ही ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे नाद उठी । विरोनि जाय नभा पोटीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The rays cannot be separated from the sun. In the same way, God has become fused with my very being.

How can sweetness be divided from sugar? Says Tuka, a sound arises and then dissolves back into the belly of the sky.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You cannot pull the rays away from the sun and set them apart. That is what my devotion has become: God has fastened himself to me and stays. How would you separate the sweetness from the sugar? They are not two things. Tuka says: a sound rises, and then it dissolves back into the belly of the sky.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing what his bhakti has turned into: not worship across a gap, but union with no gap left. His three images all name the same thing, a quality that cannot be detached from its substance: rays from the sun, sweetness from sugar, sound from the open sky it rises in and sinks back into. God has become inseparable from his very being. The point is that at this depth the question of how to worship dissolves, because the worshipper and the worshipped are no longer two.

GATHA 0570

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, take the imperishable good

मराठी मूळ

थोडें परी निरें । अविट तें घ्यावें खरें ॥१॥
 घ्यावें जेणें नये तुटी । बीज वाढे बीजा पोटी ॥२॥
 चित्त ठेवीं ग्वाही । आणिकांशीं चाड नाही ॥३॥
 आपलें तें हित फार । तुका म्हणे खरें सार ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Take what is small but pure; accept what is genuine and unfading. Take that which knows no depletion, where the seed multiplies within the seed.

Keep your mind as witness; there is no need for anything else. Says Tuka, to know one's own true welfare is the real essence.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Take what is small but pure; take what is real and never goes stale. Take the thing that never runs out, where the seed grows more seed inside itself. Keep your own mind as the witness; you need nothing and no one else for this. Your true good is the great thing. Tuka says: that is the real essence.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is telling the listener what to choose and what to ignore. He sets a small, pure, inexhaustible good against everything large but perishable: take the thing that does not run dry, the seed that keeps multiplying within itself, which is the Name and the inner devotion it feeds. He insists the test is internal: your own steadied mind is the only witness you need, so do not look to others for permission or proof. To know and seize your own true welfare, he says, is the whole essence of the matter.

GATHA 0571

The Nature of God

Discrimination, not all things are equal

मराठी मूळ

अवघे देव साध । परी या अवगुणांचा बाध ॥१॥
 म्हणउनी नव्हे सरी । राहे एका एक दुरी ॥२॥
 ऊंस कांदा एक आळां । स्वाद गोडीचा निराळा ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे नव्हे सरी । विष अमृताची परी ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

All are God's creation, yet the affliction of bad qualities persists. That is why no two things can truly be compared; each remains at a distance from the other.

Sugarcane and onion grow in the same plot, yet their taste and sweetness are entirely different. Says Tuka, poison and nectar can never be made equal.

IN PLAIN WORDS

All things are made by God, yet the fault of bad qualities still clings to them. So they are not all the same; one stays far apart from another. Sugarcane and an onion grow in the same plot of ground, but their taste and their sweetness are nothing alike. Tuka says: they are not equal. It is the way poison differs from nectar.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram blocks a lazy conclusion: that because God made everything, everything is therefore the same and worth the same. He grants the first half, all is God's, but says the flaw of bad qualities still marks things, so they cannot be set side by side as equals. Two plants in one field, sugarcane and onion, drink the same soil yet come out wholly different in taste. The closing line makes the stake plain: the gap between good and corrupt is the gap between poison and nectar, and the seeker must learn to tell them apart rather than flatten the difference.

GATHA 0572

The Moral Ideal

Moral counsel, peace and the far shore

मराठी मूळ

शांतीपरतें नाहीं सुख । येर अवघें ची दुःख ॥१॥
 म्हणउनी शांति धरा । उतराल पैल तीरा ॥२॥
 खवळलिया कामक्रोधीं । अंगी भरती आधिव्याधी ॥२॥
 म्हणे त्रिविध ताप । जाती मग आपेंआप ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is no happiness greater than peace; everything else is only suffering. Therefore hold fast to peace, and you will reach the far shore.

When lust and anger are inflamed, the body fills with affliction and disease. Says Tuka, the three kinds of suffering then vanish on their own.

IN PLAIN WORDS

There is no happiness beyond peace; everything else is only suffering. So hold on to peace, and you will cross to the far shore. When lust and anger flare up, the body fills with worry and disease. He says: then the three kinds of suffering leave you on their own.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram names peace as the one real happiness and everything else as disguised pain, then gives a plain instruction: hold fast to peace, and that is what carries you across. He points to the cost of the opposite, when lust and anger are stirred up, they do not stay in the mind but settle into the body as worry and sickness. Calm the inner fires and the threefold suffering, of body, of circumstance, of fate, falls away by itself. The teaching is practical, not abstract: peace is both the goal and the means of crossing.

GATHA 0573

The Nature of God

Nondual union, gold and ornament

मराठी मूळ

गोडीपणें जैसा गुळ । तैसा देव जाला सकळ ॥१॥
 आतां भजों कवणे परी । देव सबाह्य अंतरीं ॥२॥
 उदका वेगळा । नव्हे तरंग निराळा ॥२॥
 हेम अळंकारा नामीं । तुका म्हणे तैसे आम्ही ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Just as jaggery is nothing but sweetness through and through, so God has become all that exists. How then shall I worship, when God pervades everything, inside and out? A wave cannot be separated from the water.

Says Tuka, as gold takes the name of the ornament it becomes, so are we one with him.

IN PLAIN WORDS

As jaggery is sweet through and through, so God has become all of this. Then how shall I worship him, when he is everywhere, outside and within? A wave cannot stand apart from the water. Tuka says: as gold goes by the name of the ornament made from it, so are we one with him.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pushes worship to the point where it questions itself. If God is sweet all the way through like jaggery, and fills everything inside and out, then there is no separate place to stand and offer worship from. His images all collapse the seeming difference: a wave is only water shaped for a moment, and gold called a bangle or a ring is still gold under the name. So we too are not other than God; we are God under a passing name and form. The poem does not deny worship so much as locate it inside a oneness that was always already the case.

GATHA 0574

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, every heaven counts as nothing

मराठी मूळ

परमेष्ठिपदा । तुच्छ करिती सर्वदा ॥१॥
 हें चि ज्यांचें धन । सदा हरीचें स्मरण ॥२॥
 इंद्रपदादिक भोग । भोग नव्हे तो भवरोग ॥३॥
 सार्वभौमराज्य । त्यांसि कांहीं नाहीं काज ॥४॥
 पाताळींचें आधिपत्य । ते तों मानिती विपत्य ॥५॥
 योगसिद्धिसार । ज्यासि वाटे तें असार ॥६॥
 मोक्षायेवढें सुख । सुख नव्हे चि तें दुःख ॥७॥
 तुका म्हणे हरीविण । त्यासि अवघा वाटे सिण ॥८॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those whose sole wealth is the constant remembrance of Hari regard even the seat of Brahma as trivial. The pleasures of Indra's throne and such heavenly enjoyments are not pleasures at all but the disease of rebirth.

They have no use for sovereign rule over the entire earth. Dominion over the netherworlds they consider a calamity.

The fruit of yogic powers they deem worthless. Even a joy as great as liberation itself they call suffering, not happiness.

Says Tuka, without Hari, everything feels like weariness to them.

IN PLAIN WORDS

They think nothing, always, of the seat of Brahma. Their one wealth is this: the constant remembrance of Hari. The pleasures of Indra's throne and the rest are not pleasures; they are the disease of rebirth. They have no use for rule over the whole earth. Lordship over the netherworlds they count a disaster. The prize of yogic powers seems worthless to them. Even a joy as large as liberation they call suffering, not happiness. Tuka says: without Hari, the whole of it feels like weariness to them.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the devotees whose only treasure is the steady remembrance of Hari, and weighs every other reward against it. One by one he refuses the things people strive for: Brahma's seat, Indra's pleasures, rule over the earth, dominion below, the powers won by yoga. He pushes the refusal to its limit by naming liberation itself, the highest goal, as mere suffering when set beside the Name. The reason is given in the last line: for these devotees anything that is not Hari is only weariness, so no heaven and no attainment can tempt them away from him.

GATHA 0575

The Saints

The saints, kept safe in God

मराठी मूळ

मोहोर्या च्या संगें । सुत नव्हे आगीजोगें ॥१॥
 नाही तरी त्याचें भक्ष । काय सांगणें ते साक्ष ॥१॥
 स्वामीचिया अंगें । रूप नव्हे कोणाजोगें ॥२॥
 तुका म्हणे खोडी । देवमणी न देती दडी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In the company of gold coins, even a thread of gold is saved from the fire; otherwise it would be burned the fire. Without the master's presence, no form holds worth for anyone.

Says Tuka, flawed or not, the gem set in the divine ring never falls from its place.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In the company of pure gold, even a thread of gold is saved from the fire; without it, it would simply be burned, and what more is there to say, the proof is plain. Apart from the master's presence, no form is worth anything to anyone. Tuka says: flawed or not, the gem set in God's own ring never falls out of place.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is explaining why the one who keeps the company of God, or of his saints, is protected. Gold mixed in with pure gold survives the fire that would otherwise consume a stray thread of it; the difference is the company it keeps, and that is proof enough. In the same way a person has no standing on his own; it is the master's presence that gives any form its worth. His closing image is the strongest reassurance: a gem set into God's ring, flawed or not, does not fall from its setting, so the one held by God is held regardless of his imperfections.

GATHA 0576

Autobiography

Autobiography, no tricks with this servant

मराठी मूळ

मजसवें नको चेष्टा । नव्हे साळी कांहीं कोष्टा ॥१॥
 बैस सांडोनि दिमाख । जाय काळें करीं मुख ॥१॥
 येथें न सरे चार । हीण आणीक वेव्हार ॥२॥
 तुका विष्णुदास । रस जाणतो नीरस ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Do not try your tricks with me; I am no simple weaver to be fooled. Drop your pretenses and sit down, or go away with your face blackened.

Here no fraud or low dealing will succeed. Says Tuka, this servant of Vishnu knows the real from the worthless.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do not play your games with me; I am no plain weaver to be cheated. Drop your swagger and sit down, or go off with your face blackened. Here no fraud works, no cheap or low dealing. Tuka, the servant of Vishnu, knows what has flavor from what has none.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks bluntly to anyone who comes to him with pretense and show. He refuses to be taken for a simpleton who can be fooled, and tells the boaster to either set down his airs and sit honestly or leave in shame. He states the rule of the place plainly: deceit and low dealing get no traction here. As Vishnu's servant he has learned to taste the real from the worthless, so performance and posturing do not impress him; only sincerity does.

GATHA 0577

True Worship

True worship, devotion is God

मराठी मूळ

भाव देवाचें उचित । भाव तोचि भगवंत ॥१॥
 धन्यधन्य शुद्ध जाती । संदेह कैचा तेथें चित्तीं ॥२॥
 बहुत बराडी । देवजवळी आवडी ॥२॥
 तुका म्हणे हें रोकडें । लाभ अधिकारी चोखडे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Sincere devotion is the only fitting thing before God; devotion itself is the Lord. Blessed, truly blessed is that pure disposition; how can any doubt enter there? Loud and fervent calling is what delights God most.

Says Tuka, this truth is plain for all to see; the sincere seeker reaps the reward.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Sincere feeling is the one fitting offering before God; that feeling itself is the Lord. Blessed, blessed is the pure heart; how could any doubt enter it? Loud, fervent calling on God is what he loves. Tuka says: this is plain and present truth; the sincere seeker takes the reward.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram puts the whole of worship inside the heart's sincerity. The only thing fit to bring before God is genuine feeling, and he goes further: that feeling is not merely a means to God, it is God himself. A heart that pure has no room for doubt, and the calling that pleases God most is not refined performance but loud, fervent longing. The closing line makes it concrete: this is ready, visible truth, and it is the sincere seeker, not the clever one, who actually receives what is given.

GATHA 0578

Faith and Trust

Faith, the real labor begins in battle

मराठी मूळ

गौरव गौरवापुरतें । फळ सत्याचे संकल्प ॥१॥
 कठिण योगाहुनि क्षम । ओकलिया होतो श्रम ॥२॥
 पावलें मरे सिवेपार्शी । क्लेश उरत ते क्लेशीं ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे बहु आणी । कठिण निघालिया रणीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Flattery lasts only as long as flattery serves; the fruit belongs to sincere resolve alone. Harder than any yoga is endurance; once you have vomited the false, the labor begins.

What was attained dies at the boundary line; pain persists only for those who cling to pain. Says Tuka, much may be brought to the field, but the real hardship begins once you step into battle.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Flattery lasts only as long as flattery is useful; the fruit belongs to honest resolve alone. Harder than any yoga is patient endurance; once you have spat out the false, the real toil starts. What you reached dies at the boundary; pain stays only with those who hold on to pain. Tuka says: much can be carried to the field, but the hardship is real once you step into the fight.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram warns that the spiritual path is harder than it first appears and that shortcuts give nothing back. Flattery and show serve only for the moment; the actual fruit comes only from sincere resolve. He calls patient endurance harder than any yogic feat, and says that giving up the false is not the finish but the start of the real labor. The final image is the soldier's: it is easy to march much to the battlefield, but the true difficulty begins the instant you enter the fight, so faith is tested in the doing, not in the preparation.

GATHA 0579

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the man who clings to his faults

मराठी मूळ

न संडी अवगुण । वर्मे मानीतसे सिण ॥१॥
 भोग देतां करिती काई । फुटतां यमदंडें डोई ॥२॥
 पापपुण्यझाडा । देतां तेथें मोटी पीडा ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे बोला । माझ्या सिणती विठ्ठला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who will not give up bad habits secretly relishes the irritation they cause. What can punishment achieve when even the blows of Yama's rod upon their heads do not move them? When the reckoning of sin and merit comes, the torment only increases.

Says Tuka, they grow weary, O my Vitthala, even of my words.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The one who will not let go of his bad habits secretly enjoys the sting they bring. What can any punishment do, when even Yama's rod splitting their heads does not move them? When the account of sin and merit is settled, the torment there only grows. Tuka says: they grow tired even of my words, O Vitthala.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks at the person who refuses to drop his faults and finds a hard truth: at some level that person relishes the very irritation the habit causes, which is why correction fails. If even the blows of Yama's rod cannot move him, no outside punishment will, and when the final reckoning of sin and merit comes the suffering only mounts. The poem turns the harshness toward the pattern of clinging, not toward the soul caught in it, and ends in weary sorrow: such a one tires even of Tukaram's pleading, so he hands the matter to Vitthal.

GATHA 0580

The Nature of God

Surrender, the bond that holds

मराठी मूळ

पावे ऐसा नाश । अवघियां दिला त्रास ॥१॥
 अविटाचा केला संग । सर्व भोगी पांडुरंग ॥२॥
 आइता च पाक । संयोगाचा सकळिक ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे धणी । सीमा राहिली होऊनी ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He gave trouble to everyone, bringing about their ruin, yet formed an unfading bond with Panduranga, who bears all things. The feast was ready-made, a gathering of every kind of being.

Says Tuka, the boundary has been drawn and now stands firm.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Such ruin comes that everyone is troubled by it. But I have made my bond with the one who never fades; Panduranga enjoys all things. The feast was ready-made, a gathering of every kind of thing. Tuka says: I am full now. A limit has been reached, and there it stays.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets two things side by side: the ruin that troubles everyone, and the one bond that holds against it. Everything in the world wears down and gives trouble, but Panduranga does not fade, and to join oneself to him is to join the one who already enjoys and bears all things. The feast was never something Tukaram had to prepare; it

lay ready, a gathering of every kind of being, waiting only to be received. He ends in fullness: he has had enough, a boundary has been reached, and there it stays. The point is that the satisfied soul stops reaching, because the unfading one is all it needs.

GATHA 0581

Appeals and Exhortations

Warning, the flood of falsehood

मराठी मूळ

दुर्बळ हें अवघें जन । नारायणीं विमुख ॥१॥
झाडोनियां हात जाती । पात्र होतीं दंडासी ॥२॥
सिंदोरी तें पापपुण्य । सर्वेसिण भिकेचा ॥२॥
तुका म्हणे पडिला वाहो । कैसा पाहा हो लटिक्याचा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

All these people are wretched because they have turned their faces away from Narayana. They will depart empty-handed, shaking off their hands, fit only for punishment.

Their provisions for the journey are merely sin and merit, accompanied by the weariness of begging. Says Tuka, see how great a flood of falsehood has swept over everything.

IN PLAIN WORDS

All these people are wretched. They have turned their faces away from Narayana. They will leave with empty hands, shaking them out, fit only for punishment. Their provisions for the road are sin and merit, and with them the weariness of begging. Tuka says: look how a flood of falsehood has swept over everything.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram names what makes a whole people wretched: they have turned their faces from Narayana, and so they carry nothing real. He pictures the end of the road, where they leave empty-handed, shaking out their palms, deserving only punishment. The only provisions they packed were sin and merit, and merit too runs out, leaving the weariness of begging. His closing cry is at the pattern, not at any one person: a flood of falsehood has covered everything, and he is asking the hearer to see it and turn back toward the Name while there is time.

GATHA 0582

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the ego underfoot

मराठी मूळ

वाजतील तुरें । येणें आनंदें गजरें ॥१॥
जिंकोनियां अहंकार । पावटणी केलें शिर ॥२॥
काळा नाही वाव । परा श्रमा कोठें ठाव ॥२॥
तुका म्हणे आतां । सोपें वैकुंठासी जातां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Trumpets shall sound with this joy and celebration. Having conquered the ego, I have made its head my stepping stone.

Death has no room here; there is no place for any other burden. Says Tuka, the way to Vaikuntha is now easy.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Trumpets will sound with this joy and uproar. I have conquered the ego, and made its head my stepping stone. Here death has no room; where would any other burden find a place? Tuka says: now the way to Vaikuntha is easy.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram celebrates a single victory and what it opens. He has conquered the ego and set his foot on its head, using the very thing that once ruled him as the step that lifts him up. Once that is done, death finds no room and no other burden can take hold, because the self that feared and labored has been put down. The trumpets and uproar are the festival of a soul that has won. His conclusion is plain joy: with the ego underfoot, the road to Vaikuntha, God's own realm, is now easy to walk.

GATHA 0583

Prayers

Prayer, crying at the saints' door

मराठी मूळ

झाड कल्पतरु । न करी याचकीं आव्हेरु ॥१॥
 तुम्ही सर्वी सर्वोत्तम । ऐसे विसरतां धर्म ॥२॥
 परिसा तुमचें देणें । तो त्या जागे अभिमानें ॥२॥
 गार्हातण्यानें तुका । गर्जे मारुनियां हाका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The wish-fulfilling tree never turns away one who asks. O saints, you who are the best among all, how can you forget this sacred duty? The touchstone gives to all, yet remains proud and awake in its own nature.

Says Tuka, burdened by my household life, I cry out loudly at your door.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The wish-granting tree never turns away one who asks. You saints are the best of all; how do you forget this duty? The touchstone gives to whoever comes, awake and sure in its own nature. Tuka says: weighed down by my household life, I stand at your door and cry out loud.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses his appeal on the saints by holding two images before them. The wish-granting tree turns no beggar away, and the touchstone turns iron to gold for whoever brings it; both give freely and stay true to what they are. If even these do their work without fail, how can the saints, who are the highest of all, forget the same

duty toward one who asks? He names his own weight openly: his household life burdens him, and that is why he is here. So he does not ask quietly; he stands at their door and cries aloud, claiming the help that givers by their nature owe to those who come.

GATHA 0584

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, God in every hour

मराठी मूळ

वसवावें घर । देवें बरें निरंतर ॥१॥
 संग आसनीं शयनीं । घडे भोजनीं गमनीं ॥२॥
 संकल्प विकल्प । मावळोनि पुण्यपाप ॥२॥
 तुका म्हणे काळ । अवघा गोविंदें सुकाळ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let the house be inhabited by God, continually and without break. Let his company attend us in sitting, sleeping, eating, and walking.

Let all thoughts and doubts dissolve, along with the notions of merit and sin. Says Tuka, when Govinda pervades every moment, there is abundance in all seasons.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let the house be lived in by God, always and without break. Let his company stay with me in sitting, in sleeping, in eating, in walking. Let plans and doubts melt away, and merit and sin with them. Tuka says: when Govinda fills all of time, every season is abundance.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays not for a special hour of worship but for a life entirely lived in. He wants God to dwell in the house without interruption, his company present in sitting, sleeping, eating, and walking, the ordinary motions of a day. When that company is constant, the restless machinery of plans and doubts dissolves, and even the bookkeeping of merit and sin falls away with it. The closing line is the harvest of this: when Govinda saturates every moment, there is no lean season at all. The whole of time becomes plenty, because God is in all of it.

GATHA 0585

The Necessity of Experience

Experience, the silent imprint

मराठी मूळ

येथील हा ठसा । गेला पडोनियां ऐसा ॥१॥
 घरीं देवाचे अबोला । त्याची ते चि सवे त्याला ॥२॥
 नाहीं पाहावें लागत । एकाएकीं च ते रित ॥२॥
 तुका म्हणे जन । तयामध्यें येवढें भिन्न ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The imprint of this place has fallen upon me and remains. In the house of God there is a silence; his company is his own way with him.

One does not need to look for it; it comes naturally of its own accord. Says Tuka, among all these people, this one difference is immense.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The mark of this place has fallen on me and stays. In God's house there is a silence; his company is just his own way of being with you. You do not have to go looking for it; all at once, on its own, it is there. Tuka says: among all people, this one difference is vast.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is reporting something that happened to him and remains. An imprint from God's house has settled on him and will not lift; what marks that house is a silence, a nearness that is simply God's own way of keeping company. He insists it is not earned by searching; it arrives all at once and of itself, not by effort or hunting. The last line measures the gap this opens. Between the one who carries this imprint and everyone else, the difference is immense, even though it shows as nothing louder than silence.

GATHA 0586

The Saints

The saints above the image

मराठी मूळ

करितां देवार्चन । घरा आले संतजन ॥१॥
 देव सारावे परते । संत पूजावे आरते ॥ध्रु॥.
 शाळिग्राम विष्णुमूर्ती । संत हो का भलते याती ॥२॥
 तुका म्हणे संधी । अधिक वैष्णवांची मांदी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If while you are performing worship of the deity, saintly people arrive at your door, set the deity aside and attend to the saints with ardent welcome. The deity is a stone image of Vishnu, but the saints, whatever their caste may be, are the living God.

Says Tuka, the gathering of devotees is a richer and more sacred occasion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If, while you are worshipping the deity, holy people come to your house, set the deity aside and worship the saints with a warm, eager welcome. The shaligram is a stone image of Vishnu; the saints, whatever caste they are born in, are the living thing. Tuka says: the gathering of the devotees is the greater occasion.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram ranks the living above the carved. He tells the worshipper that if saints arrive mid-ritual, the right thing is to set the stone image aside and turn the welcome and the worship toward them. His reason is direct: the shaligram is an image of Vishnu, but the saints, no matter what caste they were born into, carry God alive in them.

The caste clause is deliberate; he refuses to let birth outrank holiness. The closing line lands the claim plainly: the company of devotees is the higher and more sacred moment, worth more than the rite it interrupts.

GATHA 0587

Faith and Trust

Faith, the fearless servant

मराठी मूळ

ज्याची खरी सेवा । त्याच्या भय काय जीवा ॥१॥
 करितां स्वामीसर्वें वाद । अधिक अधिक आनंद ॥२॥
 असावा तो धर्म । मग साहों जातें वर्म ॥३॥
 वदे वाग्देवी । तुका विठ्ठली गौरवी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who serves truly has nothing to fear for his life. Even arguing with the master only increases joy.

One must have dharma on one's side; then one can endure whatever strikes at the core. Says Tuka, the goddess of speech speaks, and Vitthala honors him.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One whose service is true has nothing to fear for his life. Even arguing with the master only brings more and more joy. You must have dharma on your side; then you can bear whatever strikes at the core. The goddess of speech speaks, says Tuka, and Vitthal gives him honor.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the freedom of the one who serves truly. Such a servant has nothing to fear, even to argue with his master only increases his joy, because the bond is secure enough to hold the quarrel. The condition is dharma: with righteousness on your side you can take a blow aimed at the very core and still stand. He closes by naming the source of his words; the goddess of speech speaks through him, and Vitthal himself honors him. The whole abhanga rests on confidence: true service makes a person fearless and lifts him into honor.

GATHA 0588

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, fed on God

मराठी मूळ

देवें जीव धाला । संसार तो कडू झाला ॥१॥
 ते चि येतील ढेंकर । आनंदाचे हरिहर ॥२॥
 वेधी आणिकांस । ऐसा जया अंगीं कस ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे भुक । येणें न लगे आणीक ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My soul is sated with God, and worldly life has turned bitter. The belches that arise are belches of bliss from Hari.

One whose very being carries this quality inspires others as well. Says Tuka, once this hunger is satisfied, no other craving remains.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My soul is full of God, and worldly life has turned bitter. The belches that rise up are belches of bliss from Hari. One whose body holds this quality draws others in too. Tuka says: once this hunger is fed, no other craving is left.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses the plain image of a satisfied eater to describe a soul fed on God. He has eaten his fill of God, and so the world has gone bitter in his mouth; the belches that rise are not of food but of bliss from Hari. He adds that this fullness is contagious: a person whose very being carries it pulls others toward the same table. The closing line names the result. When this one hunger is satisfied, every other craving simply ends, because nothing else can compete with being full of God.

GATHA 0589

The Power of the Name

The Name, essence of all

मराठी मूळ

नाम साराचें ही सार । शरणागत यमकिंकर ॥१॥
उतमातम । वाचे बोला पुरुषोत्तम ॥धु॥।।
नाम जपतां चंद्रमौळी । नामें तरला वाल्हा कोळी ॥२॥
तुका म्हणे वणूप काय । तारक विठोबाचे पाय ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The Name is the essence of all essences; even Yama's servants bow before one who has surrendered to it. Whether high or low, let the tongue speak the name of the Supreme Being.

Chandra Mauli himself chants the Name; by the Name even Valmiki, whom society had cast out, was saved. Says Tuka, what more can I describe? The feet of Vitthoba are the vessel of deliverance.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The Name is the essence of every essence; even Yama's servants bow to one who has taken refuge in it. High or low, let the tongue speak the name of the Supreme. Shiva, who wears the moon, chants the Name; by the Name even Valya the Fowler was carried across. Tuka says: what can I praise? The feet of Vithoba carry us over.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lifts the Name to the highest place: it is the essence of all essences, and even the agents of death bow before whoever takes refuge in it. He throws the door open to everyone, high-born or low, since the tongue of any person can speak the name of the Supreme. His proofs are two well-known figures: Shiva, the moon-crowned, himself chants the Name, and Valya the fowler, an outcast hunter, was ferried across by it. He ends confessing that praise runs out of words; in the end it is the feet of Vithoba that carry the soul across.

GATHA 0590

Confession and Sin

Confession, the empty outward show

मराठी मूळ

गातों भाव नाहीं अंगीं । भूषण करावया जगीं ॥१॥
 परि तूं पतितपावन । करीं साच हें वचन ॥२॥
 मुखें म्हणवितों दास । चित्तीं माया लोभ आस ॥५॥
 तुका म्हणे दावीं वेश । तैसा अंतरीं नाहीं लेश ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I sing, yet there is no true devotion in my being; I do it merely to adorn myself before the world. But you are the Redeemer of the fallen; make this promise of yours come true.

I call myself a servant with my mouth, yet my heart is full of greed, worldly longing, and desire. Says Tuka, the garb I display on the outside has not the slightest trace within.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I sing, but there is no real feeling in me; I do it to dress myself up before the world. Yet you are the saver of the fallen: make this word of yours come true. With my mouth I call myself your servant, while my heart is full of illusion, greed, and longing. Tuka says: the costume I show outside has not a trace of it within.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the harsh light on himself rather than on anyone else. He admits his singing has no inward feeling; it is a costume he wears to look pious before the world. With his mouth he calls himself God's servant, but his heart is crowded with illusion, greed, and craving, and he refuses to pretend otherwise. Yet the confession is also a plea: because God is the one who lifts the fallen, Tukaram asks him to make that title true in his case. The abhanga is an example of honest self-examination, naming the gap between outward show and inner state and handing it to the only one who can close it.

GATHA 0591

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the miser laid bare

मराठी मूळ

द्रव्य असतां धर्म न करी । नागविला राजद्वारीं ॥१॥
 माय त्यासि व्याली जेव्हां । रांड सटवी नव्हती तेव्हां ॥१॥
 कथाकाळीं निद्रा लागे । कार्मीं श्वानापरी जागे ॥२॥
 भोग स्त्रियेसि देतां लाजे । वस्त्र दासीचें घेउनि निजे ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे जाण । नर गाढवाहुनी हीन ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A man who has wealth but gives nothing to charity ends up stripped bare at the king's court. When his mother gave birth to him, there were no witches or sorceresses present to curse him; he cursed himself by his own greed.

He sleeps through the hour of sacred recitation, yet stays awake for lust like a prowling dog. He is ashamed to share pleasures with his own wife, yet steals the maidservant's cloth to sleep with.

Says Tuka, know that such a man is lower than a donkey.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A man has wealth but gives nothing in charity, and is stripped bare at the king's court. When his mother bore him, no witch or hag was there to curse him. At the hour of sacred recitation sleep takes him; for lust he stays awake like a dog. He is ashamed to share pleasure with his own wife, yet takes the servant girl's cloth and lies down. Tuka says: know that such a man is lower than a donkey.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strips bare a single pattern: the man who hoards. He has wealth but gives nothing, so the king's court ends up stripping him; no outside curse made him this way, his own greed did. The poet lists how the pattern bends a life out of shape: he sleeps through the sacred recitation but is wide awake for lust like a prowling dog, shrinks from his own wife yet sneaks to the maidservant. The closing line is blunt, calling such a man lower than a donkey. The verse is aimed at the pattern of miserliness and hypocrisy, holding it up so a hearer can check his own life against it, not so anyone is despised.

GATHA 0592

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the hollow teacher

मराठी मूळ

मुखें बोले ब्रम्हज्ञान । मनीं धनअभिमान ॥१॥
 ऐशियाची करी सेवा । काय सुख होय जीवा ॥ध्रु॥.
 पोटासाठीं संत । झाले कलींत बहुत ॥२॥
 विरळा ऐसा कोणी । तुका त्यासि लोटांगणी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He speaks of the knowledge of Brahman with his mouth, but his mind is swollen with the pride of wealth. What happiness can one gain by serving such a person? In this age of Kali, many have become saints merely for the sake of their bellies.

Says Tuka, rare indeed is the one who is genuine; to such a one I bow in prostration.

IN PLAIN WORDS

His mouth speaks the knowledge of Brahman. His mind is swollen with the pride of his wealth. Serve a man like that, and what happiness comes to your soul? In this age of Kali, many have turned saint just to fill their bellies. Rare is the one who is true. Tuka says: to that one I fall down in prostration.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram separates the words a man speaks from the mind behind them. A teacher can recite the highest truth, the knowledge of Brahman, while inside he is proud of his money; serving such a man feeds no one's soul. He names the cheap motive plainly: in a corrupt age many take up the saint's role only to be fed. The verse asks each listener to test the teacher, and himself, by what the mind actually wants. And it ends in worship, not contempt: the genuine one is so rare that Tuka throws himself flat before him.

GATHA 0601

The Necessity of Experience

Inner sacrifice, the ego laid waste

मराठी मूळ

एक वेळ प्रायश्चित्त । केलें चित्त मुंडण ॥१॥
 अहंकारा नांवें दोष । त्याचें ओस पाडिले ॥ध्रु॥
 अनुतापें स्नानविधि । यज्ञासिद्ध देहहोम ॥२॥
 जीवशिवा होतां चुका । तेथें तुका विनटला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Once and for all I performed the expiation: I shaved the head of my chitta. The fault called ego has been laid waste and emptied out.

Through remorse I performed the ritual bath; through the sacrifice of this body I completed the rite. When the error between the individual soul and the Supreme Soul was resolved, Says Tuka, I merged into that very place.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Once and for all I did the penance. I shaved the head of my mind. The fault that is called ego I laid waste and emptied out. With remorse I performed the ritual bath. With this body offered up I completed the fire-rite. The mistake that stood between the soul and the Supreme was undone. Tuka says: there I merged and was lost.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram takes the outward rites of expiation and turns every one of them inward. The head he shaves is not his own but his mind, his chitta; the fault he destroys is the ego itself. The cleansing bath is his remorse, and the body offered in the sacrificial fire is this very life given over. When the error that kept the individual soul apart from the Supreme Soul dissolves, nothing of the separate self is left. The penance is finished once and for all because he disappears into that union.

GATHA 0602

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the Provider never tires

मराठी मूळ

त्रैलोक्य पिळतां उबगला नाही । आमचें त्या काई असे ओझें ॥१॥
 पाषाणाचे पोटीं बैसला ददुनर । तया मुखीं चार कोण घाली ॥२॥
 पक्षी अजगर न करी संचित । तयासि अनंत प्रतिपाळी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तया भार घातलिया । उपेक्षीना दयासिंधु माझा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He who sustains the three worlds without growing weary, how can our small burden be a weight to him? He who sits inside a stone enduring hardship, who places food in that mouth? The birds and the python make no provisions, yet the Infinite One provides for them. Says Tuka, when you cast your burden upon that ocean of compassion, he will never forsake you.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He holds up the three worlds and never grows tired. So how could our small weight be a burden to him? A worm sits inside a stone. Who puts food in that mouth? The birds and the python store up nothing. Yet the Infinite One feeds them. Tuka says: cast your load on him, and my ocean of mercy will never leave you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers the fear that God is too busy or too great to bother with one small life. The same One who carries the three worlds without strain cannot find our little burden heavy. He points to creatures who plan nothing for themselves: the worm sealed in stone, the birds and the python that lay up no stores, all fed by the Infinite. If they are provided for, so are you. So he tells you to put your whole weight on that ocean of compassion, certain it will not forsake you.

GATHA 0603

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the pious fraud

मराठी मूळ

बोली मेंदाची बरवी असे । वाटे अंतरीं घालावे फांसे ॥१॥
 कैसा वरिवरि दिसताहे चांग । नव्हे भाविक केवळ मांग ॥२॥
 टिळा टोपी माळा कंठीं । अंधारीं नेउनि चेंपी घांटी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तो केवळ पुंड । त्याजवरी यमदंड ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The words of the deceiver sound pleasant, but his intention is to slip a noose around your neck. On the surface he appears handsome and good, but he is no devotee; he is a thorough scoundrel.

He wears the tilak, the cap, and the garland around his neck, then leads you into the dark and squeezes your throat. Says Tuka, he is nothing but a thug, and the rod of Yama hangs over him.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The cheat speaks sweetly. Inside he means to drop a noose around your neck. On the surface he looks fine and good. He is no devotee. He is a complete scoundrel. He wears the tilak, the cap, the garland at his throat. Then he leads you into the dark and squeezes your windpipe. Tuka says: he is nothing but a thug. The rod of Yama hangs over him.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram warns against the man who wears devotion as a disguise. His speech is pleasant, his forehead marked, his neck strung with beads, and all of it is bait; the real aim is to get a noose around your neck. The holy props prove nothing, because once he has you alone he goes for the throat. The verse points at a pattern, the fraud who trades on piety to prey on the trusting, and tells you to judge by what the man does in the dark, not by his costume. Such a one is a thug, and Yama's rod of judgment is already raised over him.

GATHA 0604

The Power of the Name

The Name, the promise that holds

मराठी मूळ

दोष पळती कीर्तनें । तुझ्या नामें संकीर्तनें ॥१॥
 हें कां करुं आदरिलें । खोटें वचन आपुलें ॥२॥
 तुम्ही पापा भीतां । आम्हां उपजावया चिंता ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे सेवा । किळकाळा जिंकी देवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Sins flee from the power of kirtan, from your name sung in congregational praise. Why then would you make your own promise turn false? You fear sin, only to sow anxiety in us.

Says Tuka, devotion to God conquers even Death.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Sins flee before the kirtan. They flee before your Name sung together. So why begin this? Why let your own word turn false? You are afraid of sin, only to plant worry in us. Tuka says: this service, this devotion, conquers Death himself, O God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks half in argument with God. The promise is that sins run from the Name sung in shared praise, so he presses the point: do not let that promise prove false by drawing back as if our sins were too much. To hesitate over sin is to make God seem afraid of it, and that fear only breeds anxiety in the devotee. The verse insists the Name is stronger than any sin. Devotion offered to God, Tuka says, defeats even death.

GATHA 0605

Prayers

Prayer, end my sorrow

मराठी मूळ

करा नारायणा । माझ्या दुःखाची खंडणा ॥१॥
 वृत्त राखा पायांपाशीं । वस्ती धरुनि मानसीं ॥२॥
 पाळोनियां लळा । आतां पाववावें फळा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे दीनें । त्यांचा हरतिया सीण ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O Narayana, put an end to my suffering. Keep my mind tethered close to your feet, dwelling firmly in my heart.

You have indulged my every whim until now; bring it at last to fruition. Says Tuka, you are the one who removes the weariness of the humble.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do it, Narayana. Put an end to my suffering. Keep my attention at your feet. Make your dwelling firmly in my mind. You have indulged my every wish until now. Now bring it to its fruit. Tuka says: he is the one who lifts away the weariness of the lowly.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks Narayana for two things at once: to cut off his suffering, and to keep his own wandering mind fastened at the Lord's feet. He reminds God of a long history of being indulged, and asks that all that tending now ripen into its fruit. The prayer rests on a settled trust, that this is the God who takes the tiredness from the helpless. So the plea is bold yet humble: finish what you have begun in me.

GATHA 0606

Prayers

Prayer, lower than the lowest

मराठी मूळ

मी तों दीनाहूनि दीन । माझा तूज अभिमान ॥१॥
मी तों आलों शरणागत । माझें करावें स्वहित ॥२॥
दिनानाथा कृपाळुवा । सांभाळावें आपुल्या नांवा ॥३॥
तुका ह्याने आतां । भलें नव्हे मोकलितं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I am lowlier than the lowest; my pride rests in you alone. I have come to you as a suppliant; now see to my true welfare.

O Lord of the humble, O Merciful One, uphold the honor of your own name. Says Tuka, it will not be well if you abandon me now.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am lower than the lowest. My only pride is in you. I have come to you for refuge. Now do what is truly good for me. Lord of the humble, Merciful One, guard the honor of your own name. Tuka says: now it would not be right for you to let me go.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram comes empty-handed, claiming nothing of his own worth, only that his single pride is God. As a refugee who has thrown himself on God's protection, he asks not for what he wants but for his true welfare. Then he turns the appeal onto God's own reputation: you are called the Lord of the humble, so uphold that name by sheltering me. The closing line presses the claim home, that abandoning him now would dishonor God himself.

GATHA 0607

Sacred Stories

Mythology, God comes running

मराठी मूळ

सुख वाटे तुझे वणिनतां पवाडे । प्रेम मिठी पडे वदनासी ॥1॥
 व्याले दोन्ही पक्षी एका वृक्षावरी । आला दुराचारी पारधी तो ॥२॥
 वृक्षाचिया माथां सोडिला ससाना । धनुष्यासि बाणा लाविलेलें ॥३॥
 तये काळीं तुज पक्षी आठविती । धांवें गा श्रीपती मायबापा ॥४॥
 उडोनियां जातां ससाना मारील । बैसतां विंधील पारधी तो ॥५॥
 ऐकोनियां धांवा तया पिक्षयांचा । धरिला सर्पाचा वेश वेगीं ॥६॥
 डंखोनि पारधी भुमीसि पाडिला । बाण तो लागला ससान्यासी ॥७॥
 ऐसा तूं कृपाळु आपुलिया दासा । होसील कोंवसा संकटीचा ॥८॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुझी कीर्तिन त्रिभुवना । वेदाचिये वाणी वर्णवेना ॥९॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

It delights me to recount your glorious deeds; love itself seals my lips. Two birds nested on a single tree, and a wicked hunter arrived.

He released a hawk from the treetop and fitted an arrow to his bow. In that moment the birds cried out to you: come quickly, O Lord, our mother and father.

If they flew, the hawk would kill them; if they stayed, the hunter would pierce them. Hearing the desperate cry of those birds, you swiftly took the form of a serpent.

You bit the hunter and felled him to the ground, and the hawk too was struck by the arrow. Such is your mercy toward your own devotees; you become a shelter in their hour of peril.

Says Tuka, your glory fills the three worlds; even the voice of the Vedas cannot describe it fully.

IN PLAIN WORDS

It gives me joy to tell your great deeds. Love itself seals my lips. Two birds had nested in one tree, and a wicked hunter came. He loosed a hawk from above the tree and fitted an arrow to his bow. In that moment the birds remembered you: come quickly, Shripati, our mother and father. If they flew, the hawk would kill them; if they stayed, the hunter would pierce them. Hearing the cry of those birds, you swiftly took the form of a serpent. You bit the hunter and felled him to the ground, and the arrow struck the hawk instead. Such is your mercy to your own servants. You become their shelter in the hour of danger. Tuka says: your glory fills the three worlds; even the speech of the Vedas cannot tell it in full.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram retells a rescue story to show what kind of God he serves. Two birds are trapped with no way out: a hawk above, a hunter and his arrow below, death on either side. They have nothing to do but cry out to God as mother and father, and that cry is enough. God takes a serpent's form on the instant, bites down the hunter and turns the

arrow onto the hawk, so that both threats fall at once. The point is not the marvel but the mercy: this is how He shelters those who are wholly helpless and call on Him. Tuka adds that such glory is past all telling, beyond even the Vedas.

GATHA 0608

Faith and Trust

Faith, hungry for recognition

मराठी मूळ

नाही दुकळलों अन्ना । परि या मान जनादनना ॥१॥
 देव केला सकळसाक्षी । काळीं आणि शुद्धपक्षीं ॥२॥
 भोगी भोगविता । बाळासवें तो चि पिता ॥३॥
 कर्म अकर्म जळालें । प्रौढें तुका तें उरले ॥३॥
 नाटाचे अभंग समाप्त 63

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have not starved for bread, O Janardana, but I hunger for your recognition. I have made God the witness of everything, in dark times and in bright.

The one who experiences and the one who grants experience are one; the father accompanies his child through all. Both action and inaction are burned away.

Says Tuka, only the bold and steadfast survive.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have not gone hungry for bread, Janardana. But I hunger for your regard. I have made God the witness of everything, in dark days and in bright. The one who enjoys and the one who grants the enjoying are one. The father walks beside his child through all of it. Action and inaction are both burned away. Tuka says: only the bold and steadfast remain.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says his real hunger is not for food, which he has, but to be seen and owned by God. He lives with God as the witness of every moment, good times and bad alike. He sees the one who enjoys and the one who grants enjoyment as a single reality, and trusts that God walks beside him as a father beside his child. In that trust both action and inaction lose their hold and burn away. What is left, he says, is what belongs to the bold and steadfast.

GATHA 0609

Devotion to Vitthal

Invocation, Ganapati and the flood

मराठी मूळ

प्रथम नमन तुज एकदंता । रंगीं रसाळ वोडवीं कथा । मति सौरस करीं प्रबळता । जेणें फिटे आतां अंधकार ॥1॥
 तुझिये कृपेचें भरितें । आणीक काय राहिलें तेथें । मारग सिद्धाच्यानि पंथें । पावविसी तेथें तूं चि एक ॥धु॥
 आरंभा आदि तुझें वंदन । सकळ करितां कारण । देव ऋषि मुनि आदिकरुन । ग्रंथ पुराण निर्माणी ॥2॥
 काय वणूप तुझी गती । एवढी कैची मज मती । दिनानाथ तुज ह्मणती । करी । करीं सत्य वचन हें चि आपुलें ॥

3॥

मज वाहावतां मायेच्या पुरीं । बुडतां डोहीं भवसागरीं । तुज वांचुनि कोण तारी । पाव झडकरी तुका ह्मणे ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

First I bow to you, O Ganapati, the single-tusked one; fill this recitation with color and sweetness. Strengthen my intellect with power, so that the darkness may be dispelled.

When your grace overflows, what else remains lacking? You alone guide us along the proven path of the perfected ones. Your invocation stands at the beginning of every undertaking; gods, sages, and seers alike commence their scriptures and Puranas with it.

How can I describe your ways? I do not possess such intellect. They call you the Lord of the humble; now make this promise of yours come true.

Says Tuka, as I am swept along in the flood of illusion, drowning in the deep pool of worldly existence, who but you can save me? Come swiftly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

First I bow to you, single-tusked one. Pour color and sweetness into this telling. Strengthen my mind, make it strong, so the darkness lifts now. When your grace floods in, what could still be missing? You alone bring us along the proven path of the perfected ones. Your worship stands at the start of every undertaking; gods, sages, and seers begin their books and Puranas with you. How can I describe your ways? Where would I get such intellect? They call you the Lord of the humble; now make that word of yours come true. As I am swept along in the flood of illusion, drowning in the deep pool of worldly life, who but you can save me? Tuka says: come quickly.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram opens a recitation the customary way, bowing first to Ganapati, and asks for the gifts a singer needs: sweetness in the telling and a mind strong enough to clear the dark. He confesses he has no intellect of his own to describe the god's ways, so the whole work rests on grace. Then he leans on the title the god is given, Lord of the humble, and asks him to prove it true. The plea sharpens into an image of danger: he is drowning in the deep water of worldly illusion, with no rescuer but this one. Come quickly, he ends; the invocation is also a cry for help.

GATHA 0610

Sacred Stories

Mythology, the dancing remover of obstacles

मराठी मूळ

प्रथमारंभीं लंबोदर । सकळ सिद्धींचा दातार । चतुर्भुज फरशधर । न कळे पार वणितां ॥१॥
 तो देव नटला गौरीबाळ । पायीं बांधोनि घागःया घोळ । नारदतुंबरसहित मेळ । सुटला पळ विघ्नांसी ॥२॥
 नटारंभी थाटियला रंग । भुजा नाचवी हालवी अंग । सेंदुरविलेपनें चांग । मुगुटीं नाग मिरविला ॥३॥
 जया मानवतीदेव ऋषि मुनी । पाहातां न पुरें डोळ्यां धनी । असुर जयाच्या चरणीं । आदीं अवसानां तो चि एक ॥
 ४॥
 सकळां सिद्धींचा दातार । जयाच्या रूपा नाहीं पार । तुका ह्मणे आमुचा दातार । भवसागर तारील हा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

First comes Lambodara, the pot-bellied one, the giver of all accomplishments, bearing four arms and an axe, whose greatness cannot be measured. That God, the child of Gauri, is dancing with anklets jingling at his feet, joined by the company of Narada and Tumbara, while all obstacles flee.

The stage is set and the performance begins; he waves his arms and sways his body, adorned with vermilion paste and a serpent upon his crown. Gods, sages, and seers delight in him; one's eyes are never satisfied by gazing upon him.

Demons bow at his feet; he alone exists at the beginning and at the end. Says Tuka, he is the giver of all accomplishments, his beauty is beyond measure, and he shall carry us across the ocean of the world.

IN PLAIN WORDS

At the very beginning comes Lambodara, the pot-bellied one, giver of all attainments, four-armed, bearing the axe, whose limit cannot be told. That God, the child of Gauri, has begun to dance, anklets bound jingling at his feet, with Narada and Tumbara in his company, and the obstacles take flight. The stage is set, the dance begins; he makes his arms dance and sways his body, beautiful with vermilion paste, a serpent shining on his crown. Gods, sages, and seers delight in him; the eyes are never filled with looking. Demons bow at his feet; he alone is there at the beginning and at the end. Tuka says: he is the giver of all attainments, his form has no limit, and he will carry us across the ocean of the world.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram begins his telling by invoking Ganapati under his names, the pot-bellied Lambodara, four-armed and axe-bearing, beyond all measure. He paints the god dancing, anklets ringing, attended by the celestial singers, and as he dances the obstacles flee, which is just what this god is for. The picture is meant to be feasted on: vermilion, the serpent on the crown, gods and sages unable to look their fill, demons bowing at the feet. He is named as the one present at the start and the finish of everything. The invocation closes with its purpose stated plainly, that this giver of all attainments will carry the singer across the ocean of worldly life.

GATHA 0611

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, Vitthal is everything

मराठी मूळ

विठ्ठल आमचें जीवन । आगमनिगमाचें स्थान । विठ्ठल सिद्धीचें साधन । विठ्ठल ध्यानविसावा ॥१॥
 विठ्ठल कुळींचें दैवत । विठ्ठल वित्त गोत । विठ्ठल पुण्य पुरुषार्थ । आवडे मात विठ्ठलाची ॥२॥
 विठ्ठल विस्तारला जनीं । सप्त ही पाताळें भरुनी । विठ्ठल व्यापक त्रिभुवनीं । विठ्ठल मुनिमानसीं ॥३॥
 विठ्ठल बाप माय चुलता । विठ्ठल भगिनी आणि भ्राता । विठ्ठलेंविण चाड नाहीं गोता । तुका ह्मणे आतां नाहीं दुसरें
 ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Vitthala is our very life, the abode of all sacred knowledge. Vitthala is the means to all spiritual attainment, and Vitthala is the resting place of meditation.

Vitthala is the deity of our family line; Vitthala is our wealth and kin. Vitthala is our merit and our purpose; the word of Vitthala alone delights us.

Vitthala has spread throughout all people, filling even the seven netherworlds. Vitthala pervades the three realms; Vitthala dwells in the minds of the sages.

Vitthala is father, mother, and uncle; Vitthala is sister and brother. Says Tuka, without Vitthala I have no desire for any other bond; there is nothing else now.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Vitthal is our very life. He is the home of all sacred knowledge. Vitthal is the means to every attainment. Vitthal is the rest at the end of meditation. Vitthal is the deity of our family line. Vitthal is our wealth and our kin. Vitthal is our merit, our whole purpose. Only talk of Vitthal pleases us. Vitthal has spread out through all people, filling even the seven netherworlds. Vitthal fills the three worlds. Vitthal lives in the minds of the sages. Vitthal is father, mother, uncle. Vitthal is sister and brother. Tuka says: without Vitthal I want no other bond. Now there is nothing else.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram names Vitthal as the single content of his whole world. One after another he hands over to Vitthal the things a person normally divides up: life and knowledge, the means and the rest of the spiritual path, the family deity, wealth, kin, merit, purpose. Then he widens the claim outward, Vitthal fills all people, the seven netherworlds, the three realms, the minds of the sages, so there is nowhere the Lord is not. He folds in the family ties too: Vitthal is father, mother, sister, brother. The verse closes by emptying the field of every rival attachment; with Vitthal there is simply nothing else left to want.

GATHA 0612

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the journey home

मराठी मूळ

बरवा झाला वेवसाव । पावलों चिंतिला चि ठाव । दृढ पायीं राहिला भाव । पावला जीव विश्रांती ॥1॥
 बरवा फळला शकुन । अवघा निवारिला सिण । तुमचें जालिया दुरुषण । जन्ममरण नाहीं आता ॥ध्रु॥
 बरवें जालें आलों या ठाया । होतें संचित ठायींच पाया । देहभाव पालटली काया । पडली छाया ब्रह्मीची ॥2॥
 जोडिलें न सरे हें धन । अविनाश आनंदघन । अमूर्तमूतिन मधुसूदन । सम चरण देखियेले ॥3॥
 जुनाट जुगादियें नाणें । बहुता काळाचें ठेवणें । लोपलें होतें पारिखेपणें । ठावचळण चुकविला ॥4॥
 आतां या जीवाचियासाठी । न सुटे पडलिया मिठी । तुका ह्मणे सिणलों जगजेठी । न लगो दिठी दुसऱ्याची ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What a blessed transaction this has been. I have reached the very place I longed for.

My devotion has become firm at Your feet, and my soul has found true rest. A good omen has borne fruit, and all weariness has been dispelled.

Now that I have beheld You, there is no more birth or death. I came to this holy place, and my destined merit was waiting right here.

The body-sense has been transformed, and the shadow of Brahman has fallen upon me. The wealth I have gained is inexhaustible, the bliss of imperishable Narayana.

I have seen the even feet of that formless yet embodied Madhusudana. This is an ancient coin from the beginning of the ages, a treasure hidden for so long, lost through estrangement.

Now for the sake of this soul I will not let go of my embrace. Says Tuka, I am weary, O Lord of the World; let no other sight distract me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This has turned out to be a good piece of trade. I have reached the very place I longed for. My love has come to rest, firm at his feet, and my soul has found its rest. The omen has borne good fruit. All my weariness is gone. Now that I have seen you, there is no more birth and death for me. It was good that I came to this place. The merit I had stored was waiting right here. The body-sense has changed; the body itself is changed. The shadow of Brahman has fallen on me. This wealth I have gained does not run out. It is the deathless mass of bliss. I have seen the even feet of Madhusudana, the formless one who took form. This is an old coin from the start of the ages, a treasure kept hidden for a long time, lost through being treated as a stranger. Now, for the sake of this soul, the embrace I have closed will not loosen. Tuka says: I am weary, O Lord of the world; let no other sight catch my eye.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks in the language of a merchant who has finally closed the deal of his life. He arrives at Pandhari, sees Vitthal's even feet, and his roaming soul stops and rests; with that sight, birth and death are over for him. He names what he has gained: not perishable goods but a wealth that never runs out, the deathless mass of bliss, the

formless God who stands here in form. He calls it an ancient coin, a treasure that was always his but had gone missing only because he had treated God as a stranger. Having grasped it, he refuses to let go; the embrace stays shut, and he asks that nothing else ever draw his gaze away.

GATHA 0613

Confession and Sin

Confession, mercy as the only hope

मराठी मूळ

मी तंव अनाथ अपराधी । कर्महीन मतिमंदबुद्धी । तुज म्यां आठविलें नाहीं कधीं । वाचे कृपानीधी मायबापा ॥1॥
 नाहीं ऐकिलें गाडलें गीत । धरिली लाज सांडिलें हित । नावडे पुराण बैसले संत । केली बहुत परनिंदा ॥ध्रु॥
 केला करविला नाहीं उपकार । नाहीं दया आली पीडितां पर । करु नये तो केला व्यापार । वाहिला भार कुटुंबाचा ॥

2॥

नाही केलें तीर्थाचें भ्रमण । पिळला पिंड करचरण । नाहीं संतसेवा घडलें दान । पूजावलोकन मुर्तीचें ॥3॥
 असंगसंग घडले अन्याय । बहुत अधर्म उपाय । न कळे हित करावें तें काय । नये बोलूं आठवूं तें ॥4॥
 आप आपण्या घातकर । शत्रु जालों मी दावेदार । तूं तंव कृपेचा सागर । उतरीं पार तुका ह्मणे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I am helpless and full of offenses, devoid of good deeds, dull of mind and intellect. I have never once remembered You in my speech, O treasury of mercy, my mother and father.

I never listened to or sang Your sacred songs. I held on to shame and abandoned my own welfare.

I had no love for the Puranas or for sitting with the saints; I indulged greatly in slander of others. I neither did nor caused any good deed to be done.

No compassion arose in me when others suffered. I engaged in wrong trade and bore the burden of family.

I made no pilgrimage, performed no offerings with these hands and feet. No service to saints, no charity, no worship of Your image came to pass.

Sins of bad company and many wrongs were committed; I do not know what good I should do. Says Tuka, I have become my own enemy, a claimant against myself. But You are an ocean of mercy; carry me across.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am an orphan and a wrongdoer. I have no good deeds, my mind is dull, my judgment is weak. I never once brought you to mind in my speech, O treasury of mercy, my mother and father. I never listened to your songs or sang them. I held on to my shame and threw away my own good. I had no taste for the Puranas, no taste for sitting with the saints. I slandered others a great deal. I did no kindness and caused none to be done. No pity rose in me for those who suffered. I carried on trade that should not be done. I carried the load of my family. I made no pilgrimage. I kept this body and these hands and feet only for themselves. There was no service to saints, no giving of gifts, no worship and no sight of your image. Through bad company I committed many wrongs. I took many paths of unrighteousness. I do not know what good I should do. It is not fit even to speak it or recall it. I have become my own destroyer. I have turned into my own enemy, the one suing against myself. But you are an ocean of mercy. Tuka says: carry me across.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays out a full ledger of failure and refuses to soften a single line of it. He admits he never remembered God, never sang or listened to the holy songs, slandered others, felt no pity, traded dishonestly, and skipped pilgrimage, service, charity, and worship. The point of the confession is not self-loathing for its own sake; it is that he has made himself his own enemy, the very plaintiff in the case against himself, and so he has no standing to plead his own merits. That is exactly why the abhanga turns on one fact alone: God is an ocean of mercy. Having nothing to offer, he stops offering and simply asks to be carried across.

GATHA 0614

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the soul at its mother's home

मराठी मूळ

आतां पावन सकळ सुखें । खादलें कदा तें नखें । अवघे सरलें पारिखें । सकळ देखें माहियरें ॥१॥
 जवळी विठ्ठल रखुमाई । बहिणी बंधु बाप आई । सकळ गोताची च साई । पारिखें काई ऐसें नेणिजे ॥२॥
 जगदाकारीं जाली सत्ता । वारोनी गेली पराधीनता । अवघे आपुलें चि आतां । लाज आणि चिंता दुःहावली ॥३॥
 वावरे इच्छा वसे घरीं । आपुले सत्तेचे माहेरीं । करवी तैसें आपण करी । भीड न घरी चुकल्याची ॥४॥
 सोसिला होता सासुरवास । बहुतांचा बहुत दिवस । बहु कामें पुरविला सोस । आतां उदास आपुल्यातें ॥५॥
 करिती कवतुक लाडें । मज बोलविती कोडें । मायबाप उत्तरें गोडें । बोले बोबडें पुढें तुका ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now I have attained all joys. The days of biting my nails in anxiety are over.

All that was foreign has ended, and everything feels like my mother's home. Vitthal and Rakhumai are near, like sister, brother, father, and mother.

They are kin to all my people; nothing feels unfamiliar anymore. Sovereignty has come over all the world's forms, and dependence has departed.

Everything is my own now; both shame and worry have been banished. Desire roams freely and dwells at home, in the comfort of its own authority.

Whatever is done, one does it oneself, with no embarrassment over mistakes. I had endured the exile of a daughter-in-law's house for so many long days, fulfilling so many demands.

Now I am free and at ease. They fondle me with loving play, they call me with delight.

Says Tuka, my mother and father speak sweet words, and I babble before them like a child.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now I have come to every joy, made pure. The days of biting my nails in worry are gone. Everything that was foreign has ended. Everywhere I look I see my mother's home. Vitthal and Rakhumai are close to me, like sister and brother, father and mother. They are kin to all my people. I no longer know what a stranger is. Authority has spread over all the forms of the world, and dependence has gone away. Now everything is my own. Shame and worry have both been milked dry and sent off. Desire wanders free and lives at home, in the comfort of its own house. Here you do as you yourself please; you keep no fear of making a mistake. For a long time, for many days, I bore the harsh life of a bride in her husband's house, fulfilling so many demands. Now I am free and at ease with myself. They pet me with love. They call me with delight. Tuka says: my mother and father speak sweet words, and I babble in front of them like a child.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures the soul as a married woman who has finally come home to her parents, where nothing is foreign and no one is a stranger. He has lived the harsh in-law years of worldly life, fulfilling endless demands and biting his nails in worry, and now that he has reached Vitthal and Rakhumai every relation is kin and every place is home. With dependence gone, shame and worry are dismissed and even desire settles down quietly inside its own house. The image is not pride but the relief of belonging; the strain of performing for outsiders is over. He ends as a doted-on child, babbling in front of a mother and father who answer with sweet words.

GATHA 0615

Worldly Life

Worldly life, the prayer for one foothold

मराठी मूळ

सर्वसुखाचिया आशा जन्म गेला । क्षण मुक्ती यत्न नाही केला । हिंडतां दिशा सीण पावला । मायाविष्टला जीव
माझा ॥१॥
माझें स्वहित नेणती कोणी । कांहीं न करितां मजवांचुनी । स्वजन तंव सुखमांडणी । नेणती कोणी आदि अंत ॥
ध्रु.॥
काय सांगों गर्भीची यातना । मज भोगितां नारायणा । मांस मळ मूत्र जाणा । तुज क्षणक्षणा ध्यात असें ॥२॥
मज चालतां प्रयाणकाळीं । असतां न दिसती जवळी । मृत्तके मृत्तका कवळी । एकले मेळीं संचिताचे ॥३॥
आतां मज ऐसें करीं गा देवा । कांहीं घडे तुझी चरणसेवा । तुका विनवीतसे केशवा । चालवीं दावा संसारें ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My whole life has passed in the pursuit of every pleasure, yet not a moment's effort was made toward liberation. Wandering in all directions, I grew weary.

My soul is entangled in maya. No one knows my true welfare; without my own effort nothing can be done.

Relatives are merely arrangements of comfort; none of them know my beginning or end. How shall I describe the torment of the womb, O Narayana? Dwelling amid flesh, filth, and urine, I remembered You every moment.

When my final journey comes, those who were near will not be seen. Earth embraces earth, and one travels alone with one's accumulated deeds.

Now, O God, grant me this much: let some service at Your feet come to pass. Says Tuka, appealing to Keshava, guide me through this worldly trial.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My whole life has gone in hoping for every kind of pleasure. I made no effort, not for a moment, toward liberation. Wandering in all directions, I grew tired. My soul has been wrapped up by maya. No one knows my true good. Nothing can be done about it except by me. My own people are only an arrangement of comfort. None of them knows my beginning or my end. How can I tell the torment of the womb that I suffered, O Narayana? Lying among flesh and filth and urine, I kept meditating on you, moment after moment. When I set out on the final journey, those who were near will not be seen. Earth takes a handful of earth. One goes alone, with the company of one's own stored deeds. Now, O God, do this much for me: let some service at your feet come to pass. Tuka pleads with Keshava: lead me through this trial of worldly life.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures a whole lifetime and finds it spent chasing pleasures, with not one moment given to liberation. He sees through the comforts of family: relatives are an arrangement that eases this life but knows nothing of where the soul comes from or where it goes. At death the picture is stark, the body is just earth folding back into earth, and the soul leaves alone carrying only its accumulated deeds. Against that solitude he recalls how even in the womb's misery he kept turning to God, and on that thread he hangs his single request. He does not ask for rescue from the world, only for enough grace to perform some service at God's feet while he is still passing through it.

GATHA 0616

Prayers

Prayer, the belly and the broken path

मराठी मूळ

अगा ए सावळ्या सगुणा । गुणनिधिनाम नारायणा । आमची परिसा विज्ञापना । सांभाळी दीना आपुलिया ॥1॥
 बहु या उदराचे कष्ट । आह्मांसि केलें कर्मभ्रष्ट । तुमची चुकविली वाट । करीं वटवट या निमित्त्यें ॥ध्रु॥
 जालों पांगिला जनासी । संसाराची आंदणी दासी । न कळे कधीं सोडविसी । दृढपाशीं बहु बांधलों ॥2॥
 येथें तों नये आठव कांहीं । विसावा तो क्षण एक नाही । पडिलों आणिके प्रवाहीं । हित तों कांहीं दिसे चि ना ॥
 3॥
 जीवित्व वेचलों वियोगें । हिंडतां प्रवास वाउगें । कांहीं व्याधि पीडा रोगें । केलिया भोगें तडातोडी ॥4॥
 माझा मीं च जालों शत्रु । कैचा पुत्र दारा कैचा मित्रु । कासया घातला पसरु । अहो जगदु तुका ह्मणे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O dark-complexioned one, O treasure-house of virtues, Narayana, hear our plea and protect Your own helpless ones. Great are the hardships of this belly; they have made us fallen from our duty, led us astray from Your path, and made us chatter for these worldly needs.

I have been scattered among people, given as a servant to worldly life. I do not know when You will free me; I am bound fast in strong bonds.

Here no remembrance arises at all; there is not a moment's rest. I have fallen into another current, and no welfare is in sight.

My life has been spent in separation, wandering on futile journeys, afflicted by disease and suffering. I have become my own enemy.

What son, what wife, what friend is truly mine? Why did You spread this net? Says Tuka, O Lord of the World.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O dark and lovely one with form, O Narayana whose name is the treasure-house of virtues, listen to our request and protect your own poor ones. The hardships of this belly are many. They have made us fall from our right work. They have led us off your path and set us chattering for the sake of these needs. I have been scattered among people, made the bonded servant of worldly life. I do not know when you will set me free. I am bound fast in strong cords. Here no remembrance of you rises at all. There is not a single moment of rest. I have fallen into another current. I can see no good for myself anywhere. My life has been used up in separation, in pointless wandering and travel, worn down by sickness and pain. I have become my own enemy. What son, what wife, what friend is truly mine? Why did you spread out this net? Tuka says: O Teacher of the world.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram traces his lost devotion back to a plain cause: the daily pressure of the belly. The need to feed and provide has dragged him off God's path, scattered him among people, and bound him as a servant to worldly life, until not a single moment of remembrance is left. He does not pretend the burden is light, but he also refuses to mistake it for his true home, asking what son, wife, or friend is finally his own. The blame turns inward, he has become his own enemy, and then outward in a raw question to God: why was this net of attachment spread in the first place? The cry stays a cry; he leaves it open, addressed only to the Teacher of the world.

GATHA 0617

Prayers

Prayer, caught in the wheel of time

मराठी मूळ

आतां मज धरवावी शुद्ध । येथुनी परतवावी बुद्ध । घ्यावें सोडवुनि कृपानिधि । सांपडलों संधीं काळचक्रीं ॥1॥
 करिसील तरि नव्हे काई । राईचा डोंगर पर्वत राई । आपुले करुणेची खाई । करीं वो आई मजवरी ॥२॥
 मागील काळ अज्ञानपणें । सरला स्वभावे त्या गुणें । नेणे आयुष्य जालें उणें । पुढील पेणें अंतरलें ॥३॥
 आतां मज वाटतसे भय । दिवसेंदिवस चालत जाय । येथें म्या येउनिले केलें काय । नाहीं तुझे पाय आठविले ॥४॥
 करुनि अपराध क्षमा । होतील केले पुरुषोत्तमा । आपुले नामीं घ्यावा प्रेमा । सोडवीं भ्रमापासुनिया ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now restore my awareness and turn my mind back from here. Free me, O treasury of mercy; I am caught in the wheel of time.

If You will it, nothing is impossible. A grain of sand becomes a mountain, a mountain becomes a grain.

Open the mine of Your compassion upon me, O Mother. The past was spent in ignorance, passing by its own nature and tendencies.

I did not realize my life was growing short, and the shelter ahead has slipped away. Now fear grips me; day by day time marches on.

What have I accomplished by coming here? I never once remembered Your feet. Forgive, O Purushottama, the offenses already committed.

Instill love for Your name and free me from delusion. May my heart dwell in Your virtues, may I find a place at Your feet.

Says Tuka, let my tongue savor this nectar until it is fully satisfied.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now hold my mind steady. Turn my thoughts back from here. Set me free and take me, O treasury of mercy. I am caught at the joint of the wheel of time. If you will it, what cannot be done? A grain of sand can become a mountain, a mountain a grain of sand. Open the mine of your compassion upon me, O Mother. The time behind me was spent in ignorance, passing away by its own nature and habits. I did not notice that my life had grown short, and the shelter ahead has slipped past me. Now fear comes over me. Day by day the time keeps walking on. What have I done by coming here? I never once brought your feet to mind. Forgive the offenses already done, O Purushottama. Take me into love for your name. Free me from this delusion. Let my heart dwell in your virtues. Let my place be at your feet. Let my tongue drink this nectar until the thirst is fully satisfied. Tuka says this.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays from inside the grinding wheel of time, asking God to halt his scattered mind and turn it back before the machinery carries him off. He confesses the years went by in ignorance almost without his noticing, the lifespan quietly shrank, and the shelter he should have reached has already slipped behind him, which is why fear now sets in. Against that he sets God's sheer power: if God wills it, a grain of sand becomes a mountain, so a wasted life can still be saved. He asks for what he failed to take on his own, forgiveness, love for the Name, a place at the feet, release from delusion. The closing image is thirst: let the tongue keep drinking the nectar of God's praise until it is finally satisfied.

GATHA 0618

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, praise of the giver of life

मराठी मूळ

जेणें हा जीव दिला दान । तयाचें करीन चिंतन । जगजीवन नारायण । गाईन गुण तयाचे ॥१॥
जो या उभा भीवरेच्या तिरिं । कट धरुनियां करीं । पाउलें सम चि साजिरीं । अंतरीं धरोनि राहेन ॥२॥
जो या असुरांचा काळ । भक्तजनप्रतिपाळ । खेळे हीं लाघवें सकळ । तयाच्या भाळ पायांवरी ॥३॥
जो या गोपाळांच्या मेळीं । खेळु खेळे वनमाळी । रसातळा नेला बळी । राहे पाताळीं स्वामी माझा ॥४॥
जो हा लावण्यपुतळा । जयाचे अंगीं सकळ कळा । जयाचे गळां वैजयंतीमाळा । तया वेळोवेळं दंडवत ॥५॥
जयाचे नाम पाप नासी । लक्ष्मी ऐसी जयाची दासी । जो हा तेजोपुंज्यरासी । सर्वभावें त्यासि तुका शरण ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I will meditate upon the One who gave this life as a gift. I will sing the virtues of Narayana, the life of the world.

He who stands on the bank of the Bhima, hands upon His waist, with beautiful even feet, I will hold Him forever in my heart. He who is death to the demons, the protector of His devotees, who plays all these wondrous games, at His feet I bow my head.

He who played among the cowherd boys, that Vanamali, who sent Bali to the netherworld and dwells in the depths, my Lord. He who is an image of beauty, who possesses all arts, who wears the Vijayanti garland around His neck, to Him I prostrate again and again.

He whose name destroys sin, whose servant is Lakshmi herself, who is a mass of radiance, to Him Says Tuka, I surrender with my whole being.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He gave this life as a gift. I will think on him. I will sing the virtues of Narayana, the life of the world. He stands on the bank of the Bhima, hands resting on his waist, his even feet so lovely. I will hold him in my heart and stay there. He is death to the demons and the keeper of his devotees. He plays all these wonders by his sleight. At his feet I lay my brow. He played among the cowherd boys, that Vanamali. He sent Bali down to the lower world and dwells there in the depths, my Lord. He is an image of beauty; in his body are all the arts; around his neck is the Vijayanti garland. Time and again I bow flat before him. His name destroys sin. Lakshmi herself is his servant. He is a heap of pure light. With my whole being, Tuka takes refuge in him.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers the gift of his own life with the only return he can make: continual remembrance and song. He builds up Vitthal feature by feature, the figure standing on the Bhima's bank with hands on his waist, the slayer of demons who shelters his devotees, the cowherd Vanamali who once humbled Bali, the beautiful one garlanded with the Vijayanti. The piling of names and deeds is itself the worship; each one is a reason to bow. By naming that Lakshmi is his servant and his very name destroys sin, Tukaram measures how far this Lord outranks anything else he could turn to. So the abhanga ends where it must, in total surrender of his whole being.

GATHA 0619

Prayers

Prayer, the anxiety of the seeker

मराठी मूळ

काय मी उद्धार पावेन । काय कृपा करील नारायण । ऐसें तुम्ही सांगा संतजन । करा समाधान चित्त माझें ॥१॥
 काय हें खंडील कर्म । पारुषतील धर्माधर्म । कासयानें तें कळे वर्म । ह्यणउनी श्रम वाटतसे ॥२॥
 काय हो स्थिर राहेल बुद्धी । कांहीं अरिष्ट न येल मधीं । धरिली जाईल ते शुद्धी । शेवट कधीं तो मज न कळे ॥
 2॥
 काय ऐसें पुण्य होईल गांठीं । घालीन पायीं देवाचे मिठी । मज तो कृवाळील जगजेठी । दाटइन कंठीं सद्गदित ॥
 3॥
 काय हे निवतील डोळे । सुख तें देखोनी सोहळे । संचित कैसें तें न कळे । होतील डोहळे वासनेसी ॥४॥
 ऐसी चिंता करीं सदा सर्वकाळ । रात्रिदिवस तळमळ । तुका ह्याने नाहीं आपुलें बळ । जेणें फळ पावें निश्चयेसी ॥
 5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Will I ever be redeemed? Will Narayana ever show me mercy? O saints, please tell me so and bring peace to my mind. Will this karma ever be broken? Will right and wrong be resolved? By what means can the secret be known? This is why I feel so troubled.

Will my mind ever become steady? Will no calamity come in between? Will the awareness I have grasped be maintained? I cannot tell when the end will come. Will such merit ever be mine that I may clasp God's feet in embrace? Will the Lord of the World look upon me with kindness, and will my throat choke with devotion? Will these eyes ever be satisfied, seeing that blissful celebration? The nature of my accumulated destiny is unknown; longings stir in desire.

Says Tuka, I carry this anxiety at all times, day and night. I have no strength of my own by which I may attain the fruit with certainty.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Will I be saved? Will Narayana show me mercy? Tell me, O holy people; bring my mind some peace. Will this karma be cut off? Will right and wrong come to an end? By what means is the secret known? This is why I feel such strain. Will my mind stay steady? Will no calamity come in between? Will the awareness I have grasped be kept? I do not know when the end will come. Will I ever hold such merit in hand that I throw my arms around God's feet, that the Lord of the world fondles me, that my throat chokes with feeling? Will these eyes be cooled, seeing that joyful sight? I do not know what my stored deeds are. Longings stir in my desire. I carry this worry always, at every hour, restless night and day. Tuka says: I have no strength of my own by which I would surely reach the fruit.

WHAT IT MEANS

This abhanga is a string of anxious questions, and Tukaram lets them stand unanswered because the anxiety is the honest state of the seeker. He does not know whether his karma will break, whether his mind will hold steady, whether some disaster will cut across his path, or whether he will live to see the day he embraces God's feet with a choked throat. The longing is intense, but so is the uncertainty about what his accumulated deeds have earned. He even turns to the saints and begs them to settle his mind. The closing line names the root of the unrest: he has no strength of his own that could guarantee the fruit, which is precisely why he must throw himself on mercy rather than effort.

GATHA 0620

Prayers

Prayer, asking only for devotion

मराठी मूळ

तूंचि अनाथाचा दाता । दुःख मोह नासावया चिंता । शरण आलों तुज आतां । तारीं कृपावंता मायबापा ॥1॥
 संतसंगति देई चरणसेवा । जेणें तुझा विसर न पडावा । हा च भाव माझिया जीवा । पुरवीं देवा मनोरथ ॥2॥
 मज भाव प्रेम देई कीर्ती । गुण नाम वर्णावया स्तुती । विघ्नां सोडवूनि हातीं । विनंती माझी परिसावी हे ॥3॥
 आणीक कांहीं नाही मागणें । सुखसंपित्तराज्यचाड धन । सांकडें न पडे तुज जेणें । दुजें भक्तीविण मायबापा ॥

4॥

जोडोनियां कर पायीं ठेवीं माथा । तुका विनवी पंढरिनाथा । रंगीं वोडवावी रंगकथा । पुरवीं व्यथा मायबापा ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You alone are the benefactor of the helpless, the destroyer of sorrow, attachment, and anxiety. I have come to You now as a refuge; save me, O merciful mother and father.

Grant me the company of saints and service at Your feet, so that I may never forget You. This is the sole wish of my heart; fulfill it, O God.

Give me devotion, love, and the glory to praise Your virtues and name. Remove all obstacles from my path; please hear this prayer of mine.

I ask for nothing else, no wealth, happiness, kingdom, or riches. Let me not burden You with anything other than devotion, O mother and father.

With folded hands I place my head at Your feet. Says Tuka, appealing to the Lord of Pandhari, drench me in the color of Your story and relieve my suffering, O mother and father.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You alone are the giver to the orphan, the worry that destroys sorrow and attachment. I have come to you now for refuge. Save me, O merciful mother and father. Give me the company of saints and service at your feet, so that I never forget you. This is the one longing of my soul; fulfill my wish, O God. Give me feeling, love, and the gift to praise your virtues and your name. Take the obstacles out of my hands; please hear this request of mine. I ask for nothing else. No happiness, no riches, no kingdom, no wealth. Let me lay nothing on you, mother and father, but devotion. With folded hands I place my head at your feet. Tuka pleads with the Lord of Pandhari: bring out the story rich in color, relieve my pain, O mother and father.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram comes as a refugee and then is careful to ask for the right thing. He explicitly turns away wealth, comfort, kingdom, every prize people usually beg from God, and asks instead only for what keeps him near God: the company of saints, service at the feet, and the love and skill to praise the Name. The single danger he fears is forgetting, so his one petition is the means that prevents it. By insisting he wants to lay no other burden on God but devotion, he frees the prayer of all self-interest. He ends with his head literally at the feet of the Lord of Pandhari, asking only that the colorful story of God keep flowing and his pain be eased.

GATHA 0621

Social Criticism

Social criticism, beggar-gods and the true Lord

मराठी मूळ

सेंदरीं हें देवी दैवतें । कोण तीं पुजी भुतेंकेतें । आपुल्या पोटा जीं रडतें । मागती शितें अवदान ॥1॥
आपुले इच्छे आणिकां पीडी । काय तें देईल बराडी । कळों ही आली तयाची जोडी । अल्प रोकडी बुद्ध अघरा ॥
ध्रु.॥

दासीचा पाहुनरउखतें । धणी देईल आपुल्या हातें । करुणाभाषणउचितें । हें तों रितें सतंत शक्तिहीन ॥2॥
काय तें थिल्लरीचें पाणी । ओठ न भिजे फिटे धणी । सीण तरीं आदीं आवसानीं । क्षोभे पुरश्चरणीं दिलें फळ ॥
3॥

विलेपनं बुजविती तोंड । भार खोल वाहाती उदंड । करविती आपणयां दंड । ऐसियास भांड ह्मणे देव तो ॥4॥
तैसा नव्हे नारायण । जगव्यापक जनादननष । तुका ह्मणे त्याचें करा चिंतन । वंदूं चरण येती सकळें ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

These vermilion-smeared village deities and spirits, who worships them? They themselves cry for their own bellies and beg for scraps of food as offerings. They torment others to fulfill their own desires.

What can such beggars ever give? Their wealth is now known: a petty, shallow, short-lived intelligence. Can a slave's guest expect anything? The master gives with his own hand, with kind and proper words.

But these are empty, always powerless. What is that puddle-water? It cannot even wet the lips, yet the thirst remains.

They labor from start to finish, and anger alone is the fruit of their rituals. They daub faces with paste, carry heavy loads in abundance, and inflict punishment upon themselves.

God calls such ones charlatans. Not so is Narayana, who pervades the world, Janardana.

Says Tuka, contemplate Him, and all beings will come to bow at His feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

These vermilion-smeared village goddesses and godlings, who worships such spirits and ghosts? They themselves cry for their own bellies. They beg for scraps of food as offerings. To get what they want, they torment others. What can such beggars give you? Their worth is known now: a small, ready, low cunning. Does a servant's guest get fed? It is the master who gives with his own hand, with kind and fitting words. These are empty, always weak and powerless. What is this puddle water? It will not wet the lips, and the thirst stays. You labor from start to finish, and the only fruit of the ritual is more anger. They smear paste to cover the face. They carry deep, heavy loads beyond measure. They bring punishment down on themselves. God calls such a one a fraud. Narayana is not like that, the all-pervading one, Janardana. Tuka says: meditate on him. All beings come to bow at his feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram attacks a whole economy of fear-worship: the smeared village godlings and spirits that people propitiate. His argument is hard-headed, not contemptuous of the worshippers but exposing the bargain, since these objects of worship are themselves beggars crying for their own bellies, all they can dispense is a petty cunning, and they extort by tormenting. He uses the homely image of puddle water that will not even wet the lips: such worship costs constant labor and pays back only frustration and self-inflicted punishment. The point lands as a warning to examine where one places one's devotion. Set against the beggar-gods is Narayana, the Lord who actually pervades everything and gives like a master with his own hand; turn there, Tukaram says, and all beings find a place to bow.

GATHA 0622

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the rare human birth wasted

मराठी मूळ

विषयओढीं भुलले जीव । आतां यांची कोण करील कींव । नुपजे नारायणीं भाव । पावोनि ठाव नरदेह ॥1॥
कोण सुख धरोनि संसारीं । पडोनि काळाचे आहारीं । माप या लागलें शरीरीं । जालियावरी सळे ओढिती ॥धु॥
बापुडीं होतील सेवटीं । आयुष्यासवें जालिया तुटी । भोगिले मागें पुढे ही कोटी । होईल भेटी जन्मासी ॥2॥
जंतिली घाणां बांधोनि डोळे । मागें जोडी आर तेणेंही पोळे । चालिलों किती तें न कळे । दुःखें हारंबळे भूकतान ॥

3॥

एवढें जयाचें निमित्त । प्रारब्ध क्रियमाण संचित । तें हें देह मानुनि अनित्य । न करिती नित्य नामस्मरण ॥4॥
तुका ह्मणे न वेंचतां मोल । तो हा यासि महाग विठ्ठल । वेंचितां फुकाचे चि बोल । केवढें खोल अभागिया ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Souls deluded by the pull of sense-pleasures, who will now show them compassion? They do not develop devotion to Narayana even after attaining a human body. What happiness is there in clinging to worldly life while falling prey to Death? The body is already measured; once branded, they are dragged away.

The wretched will suffer at the end when their lifespan is cut short. What was enjoyed before will return; they will meet birth again, millions of times over.

Like oxen yoked to the oil-press, blindfolded, goaded from behind, they walk on not knowing how far, tormented by the ache of hunger and thirst. The body for whose sake all this is done, shaped by fate and destiny, they regard as permanent, yet they never chant the eternal Name.

Says Tuka, Vitthal costs nothing at all, yet to these unfortunate ones He seems too expensive. They spend only cheap words.

How deep is their misfortune.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Souls deluded by the pull of sense-objects, who will now pity them? Devotion to Narayana does not arise in them, even after they have won the place of a human body. What happiness is there in holding to worldly life and falling into the food of Death? The measure has already been set on this body. Once it is marked out, they are dragged off. The wretched will suffer in the end, when the cut comes with the end of life. What was enjoyed before will return; there will be a meeting with birth again, millions of times. Like an ox yoked to the oil-press with its eyes tied shut, goaded from behind so it burns, it walks on, not knowing how far it has gone, broken with the ache of hunger and thirst. The body, for whose sake all this is done, shaped by fate and act and the deeds stored up, they take it to be lasting, and they do not do the daily remembrance of the Name. Tuka says: Vitthal costs nothing to gain, yet to these people he is too dear a price. To spend mere free words, how deep is the misfortune of these unlucky ones.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram aims this at the waste of a human birth, the one chance, he holds, to win devotion, squandered by souls dragged along by the senses. He warns that clinging to worldly pleasure simply feeds the body to Death, whose measure is already taken, and that the cycle of enjoying and being reborn will repeat by the millions. His central

image is the blindfolded ox on the oil-press, goaded in circles, walking endlessly without knowing it has gone nowhere, the picture of a life of effort that never arrives. The bitter twist is the price: Vitthal can be had for nothing, costing only the free breath of saying the Name, yet these people find even that too expensive to spend. The reproach is meant to wake the listener, not to write anyone off; the depth of the misfortune is that the cure is free and still refused.

GATHA 0623

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the terrors of Yama

मराठी मूळ

आले हो संसारा तुह्मी एक करा । मुक्तीमार्ग हळू चि धरा । काळदंड कुंभयातना थोरा । कां रे अघोरा देखसी ना

॥1॥

नाहीं त्या यमासि करुणा । बाहेर काढितां कुडी प्राणा । ओढाळ सांपडे जें धान्या । चोर यातना धरिजेतां ॥2॥

नाहीं दिलें पावडल कैसा । चालतां पंथ तेणें वळसा । नसेल ठाडकें ऐकतो कैसा । नेती बंद जैसा धरोनियां ॥3॥
क्षण एक नागीवा पायीं । न चलवे तया करितां कांहीं । वोढितां कांटवणा सोई । अग्निस्तंभीं बाही कवटाळविती ॥

4॥

देखोनि अंगें कांपती । तये नदीमाजी चालविती । लागे ठाव न लगे बुडविती । वरि मारिती यमदंड ॥5॥

तानभूक न साहावे वेळ । तो राखिती कितीएक काळ । पिंड पाळूनि कैसा सीतळ । तो तप्तभूमीं ज्वाळ लोळविती

॥6॥

ह्मणउनी करा कांहीं सायास । व्हावेल तर व्हा रे उदास । करवेल तर करा नामघोष । सेवा भक्तीरस तुका ह्मणे ॥

7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You have come into this world; now do this one thing. Gently take the path of liberation.

The rod of Death, the torment of Yama's cauldron, these are terrible. Why do you not see the horror? Yama has no compassion when he drags the life-breath out of the body.

Just as a thief caught stealing grain is seized and punished, so it is with the soul. One who has not given charity, how will he fare on that road? The path takes a detour then.

If you do not know, listen now: they seize and lead you away like a prisoner. Not even a moment can you walk barefoot, and nothing avails you then.

They drag you over thorns and force your arms around pillars of fire. Seeing this, bodies tremble as they are made to walk through that dreadful river.

They are plunged in and beaten with Yama's rod upon the surface. You who cannot endure hunger or thirst for even a moment, they will hold you for ages.

The body you pampered in comfort is rolled on burning ground amid flames. Therefore make some effort.

If you can, become detached from the world. If you can, chant the Name aloud.

Says Tuka, taste the nectar of devotion and service.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You who have come into this world, do this one thing. Quietly take hold of the path of liberation. The rod of Death, the great torment of the cauldron, why, O reckless one, do you not see it? That Yama has no pity when he pulls the foul life-breath out of the body. As a stray ox caught in the grain is seized, as a thief is held and tortured, so it goes. One who has given nothing, how will he fare? On that road there is a long detour for him. If you do not already know it, listen to how it goes: they seize you and lead you off bound, like a captive. Not for a moment can you walk barefoot, and nothing you do helps you then. They drag you over thorns. They wind your arms around pillars of fire. The body trembles to see it; they march you into that river. Where there is no footing they drown you, and on the surface they beat you with Yama's rod. You who cannot bear hunger and thirst for an hour, they hold you for ages. The body you kept so cool and pampered, they roll it on burning ground amid the flames. So make some effort. If you can manage it, become detached. If you can manage it, raise the sound of the Name. Tuka says: take to the service and the nectar of devotion.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram preaches here with the full machinery of Yama's hell laid out in front of the listener: the rod, the cauldron, the thorns, the pillars of fire, the river with no footing. The terror is deliberate and pointed, the soul that gave nothing and remembered nothing is dragged off bound like a caught thief, and the very body that was pampered and kept cool is rolled in flames. He drives home the contrast between an hour's hunger we cannot bear now and ages of torment later, so the danger feels real rather than abstract. But the threat is only the setup; the whole point is the way out, named plainly at the end. Take the path of liberation gently, grow detached if you can, and above all raise the sound of the Name and taste the nectar of devotion, while there is still time to choose.

GATHA 0624

Longing and Separation

Insistent pleading, a beggar's standoff

मराठी मूळ

न बोलसी तें ही कळलें देवा । लाजसी आपुलिया नांवा । तुज मी नाहीं घालीत गोवा । भीड केशवा कासयाची ॥

1॥

उतरीं आपुला हा पार । मजशीं बोलोनि उत्तर । माझा तुज नव्हे अंगीकार । मग विचार करीन मी ॥2॥
दात्या आणि मागत्यासी । धर्मनीति तरी बोलिली ऐसी । यथानशक्ति टाकेल तैसी । बाधी दोघांसी विन्मुखता ॥

3॥

ह्मणोनि करितों मी आस । तुझिया वचनाची वास । धीर हा करुनि सायास । न टळें नेमास आपुलिया ॥4॥
तुझें म्यां घेतल्या वांचून । न वजें एथूनि वचन । हा चि माझा नेम सत्य जाण । आहे नाहीं ह्मणे तुका ह्मणे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even what You do not speak, I understand, O God. You feel shame on account of Your own reputation.

I am not putting You in any difficulty; what hesitation can there be, O Keshava? Settle this matter and give me a clear answer. If You will not accept me, tell me plainly, and then I will decide what to do.

The law of giving speaks thus between giver and beggar: whatever one can, one should give; refusal harms both parties. Therefore I persist in hope, waiting for Your word.

With great effort I hold firm and will not abandon my resolve. Until I receive what is Yours to give, I will not leave this place.

This is my true vow. Says Tuka, say whether it shall be or not.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Even the things you do not say, I have understood, O God. You feel shame for your own name. I am not trying to trap you; what need is there for shyness, Keshava? Carry this through to the end. Speak to me, give me your answer. If you will not take me as your own, say so, and then I will decide what to do. The law of giving speaks like this between a giver and a beggar: give what you can; to turn away harms both of you. So I keep on hoping, waiting for your word. I steady myself with great effort, and I will not let go of my vow. Without taking what is yours to give, I will not move from here. Know this is my true vow. Tuka says: tell me, will it be, or not?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram has cornered God like a beggar who will not leave the door. He claims he can already read the silence: God hangs back out of concern for his own reputation as the savior of the lowly, and Tukaram presses exactly there. He invokes the plain ethic between a giver and one who asks: a refusal shames both parties, so God cannot afford to send him away. The vow is a sit-in. He will not move, will not abandon hope, until he receives what is God's to give, and he demands a clear yes or no rather than more silence.

GATHA 0625

Prayers

Refuge from the world, a cry to the Mother

मराठी मूळ

आतां मी न पडें सायासीं । संसारदुःखाचिये पाशीं । शरण रिघेन संतांसी । ठाव पायांपाशीं मागेन त्यां ॥1॥
न कळे संचित होतें काय । कोण्या पुण्यें तुझे लाधती पाय । आतां मज न विसंबें माय । मोकलूनि धाय विनवीतसें
॥2॥
बहुत जाचलों संसारें । मोहमायाजाळाच्या विखारें । त्रिगुण येतील लहरें । तेणें दुःखें थोरें आक्रंदलों ॥3॥
आणीक दुःखें सांगों मी किती । सकळ संसारिस्थती । न साहे पाषाण फुटती । भय चित्तीं कांप भरलासे ॥4॥
आतां मज न साहवे सर्वथा । संसारगंधीची हे वार्ता । जालों वेडा असोनि जाणता । पावें अनंता तुका ह्मणे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now I will not fall again into the traps of worldly sorrow. I will take refuge with the saints and beg for a place at their feet.

I do not know what accumulated merit I had, or by what virtue one attains Your feet. Do not abandon me now, O Mother; I cry out, releasing all restraint.

I have been greatly tormented by worldly life, by the poisonous snares of attachment and illusion. The waves of the three qualities come crashing, and under that great suffering I have wept aloud.

How many more sorrows shall I recount? The whole condition of worldly existence is unbearable; even stones would split. Fear fills my heart and trembling has overtaken me.

Now I can endure no more, not even the faintest whiff of worldly life. Though I have knowledge, I have gone mad.

Says Tuka, come to me, O Infinite One.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now I will not fall again into the traps of worldly sorrow. I will take refuge with the saints and beg for a place at their feet. I do not know what merit I had stored up, or by what good deed one reaches your feet. Do not let go of me now, Mother; I cry out and hold nothing back. The world has worn me down with the poison of attachment and illusion. The waves of the three qualities come crashing in, and under that great pain I have wept aloud. How many more sorrows shall I count? The whole state of worldly life cannot be borne; even stones would crack. Fear fills my heart and trembling has taken hold of me. Now I cannot stand it at all, not even the faintest smell of worldly life. I have gone mad, though I still know. Tuka says: come to me, O Infinite One.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the moment of breaking, where Tukaram swears off the world for good and runs to refuge. He does not claim he earned this turn; he confesses he has no idea what merit brought him near God's feet. The suffering he names is not bad luck but the structure of worldly life itself: attachment, illusion, and the three qualities of nature breaking over him in waves. He describes a fear so total that even stone would split, and a strange double state, mad with grief yet still clear-eyed enough to know where to run. The poem ends as a child's cry to the Mother and to the Infinite: come now.

GATHA 0626

Surrender and Acceptance

Total surrender, the helpless petitioner

मराठी मूळ

आतां तुज कळेल तें करीं । तारिसी तरि तारीं मारीं । जवळी अथवा दुरी धरीं । घाली संसारीं अथवा नको ॥१॥
शरण आलों नेणतपणें । भाव आणि भक्ती कांहीं च नेणें । मतिमंद सर्वज्ञानें । बहु रंक उणें रंकाहुनी ॥२॥
मन स्थिर नाही माझिये हातीं । इंद्रियें धांवतां नावरती । सकळ खुंटलिया युक्ती । शांति निवृत्त जवळी नाही ॥

2॥

सकळ निवेदिला भाव । तुझिये पायीं ठेविला जीव । आतां करीं कळे तो उपाव । तूं चि सर्व ठाव माझा देवा ॥३॥
राहिलों धरुनि विश्वास । आधार नेटीं तुझी कास । आणीक नेणें मी सायास । तुका ह्याने यास तुझें उचित ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now do with me as You see fit. Save me if You will, or destroy me.

Keep me near or cast me far. Throw me back into the world or do not.

I have come to You in my ignorance, knowing nothing of devotion or love. I am dull in all wisdom, more destitute than the poorest wretch.

My mind is not steady; it is not in my control. The senses run wild and cannot be restrained.

All my strategies are exhausted; peace and tranquility are nowhere near. I have surrendered my entire being at Your feet, placed my very life there.

Now apply whatever remedy You know. You alone are my everything, O God.

I remain holding fast to faith, clinging firmly to Your support. Says Tuka, I know no other effort; this matter is Yours to resolve.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now do with me whatever you see fit. Save me or kill me. Keep me close or hold me far off. Throw me back into the world, or do not. I have come to you knowing nothing. I know nothing of faith, nothing of devotion. I am dull in all understanding, poorer than the poorest beggar. My mind is not steady; it is not in my hands. The senses run loose and cannot be reined in. Every plan of mine is finished; peace and stillness are nowhere near me. I have laid bare all that I feel. I have set my very life at your feet. Now apply whatever cure you know. You alone are my whole refuge, O God. I stay here holding to faith, gripping your support hard. I know no other effort. Tuka says: this matter is yours to settle as befits you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram hands over the whole decision and keeps nothing back, even his own fate. He offers no merit and no skill; he confesses an unsteady mind, runaway senses, and a stock of strategies that has run completely dry. This is surrender precisely because he has stopped negotiating outcomes: save or destroy, near or far, the world or not, he leaves all of it to God. Having admitted he can do nothing himself, the only thing he still does is hold on, gripping God's support as his single refuge. The closing line puts the burden of the result where he says it belongs, on God, as fitting God's own nature.

GATHA 0627

The Nature of God

Praise of God's nature, the burden laid down

मराठी मूळ

देवा तूं कृपाकरुणासिंधु । होसी मायबाप आमचा बंधु । जीवनसिद्ध साधनसिंधु । तोडिसी भवबंधु काळपाश ॥१॥
 शरणागता वज्रपंजर । अभयदाना तूं उदार । सकळां देवां तूं अगोचर । होसी अविकार अविनाश ॥२॥
 भागली स्तुति करितां फार । तेथें मी काय तें गव्धार । जाणावया तुझा हा विचार । नको अंतर देऊं आतां ॥३॥
 नेणें भाव परि ह्मणवीं तुझा । नेणें भक्ती परि करितों पूजा । आपुल्या नामाचिया काजा । तुज केशीराजा लागे
 धांवणें ॥३॥
 तुझिया बळें पंढरीनाथा । जालों निर्भर तुटली व्यथा । घातला भार तुझिया माथां । न भीं सर्वथा तुका ह्मणे ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O God, You are an ocean of grace and compassion, our mother, father, and brother. You are the ocean of fulfillment and the ocean of all means. You are the fulfillment of life, the ocean of all means.

You sever the bonds of worldly existence and the noose of Death. For those who surrender, You are an adamant fortress.

In granting fearlessness, You are supremely generous. You are beyond the comprehension of all the gods, unchanging and imperishable.

Even the greatest praises grow weary in singing of You. What then can a fool like me say? Do not keep me at a distance any longer from understanding Your nature.

I do not know devotion, yet I call myself Yours. I do not know worship, yet I perform Your puja.

For the sake of Your own Name, O Keshiraja, You must come running. By Your strength, O Lord of Pandhari, I have become carefree and my suffering has ended.

Says Tuka, I have placed the burden upon Your head and fear nothing at all.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God, you are an ocean of grace and mercy. You are our mother, father, and brother. You are the wealth of life, the ocean of every means. You break the bonds of worldly existence and the noose of Death. For those who surrender, you are a fortress of diamond. In giving fearlessness you are generous. You are beyond the reach of all the gods, changeless and undying. Even great praises grow tired in singing of you. What can a fool like me say? Do not keep me at a distance any longer. I do not know true feeling, yet I call myself yours. I do not know worship, yet I do your puja. For the sake of your own Name, Keshiraja, you must come running. By your strength, Lord of Pandhari, I have grown free of care and my pain has ended. I have laid the load upon your head. Tuka says: I fear nothing at all.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram piles up the names of God's nature, then uses them as leverage. If God is grace, refuge, mother and father, the one who cuts the noose of death, then that very reputation obliges him to come. The devotee admits he has no real feeling and no skill in worship, so his only claim is on God's side, not his own: God must act for the sake of his own Name. The poem's hinge is the transfer of weight. Having set the whole burden on God's head, Tukaram declares himself carefree and free of fear, because the responsibility is no longer his to carry.

GATHA 0628

Worldly Life

Disgust with the world, a pauper at the door

मराठी मूळ

कोण सुख धरोनि संसारीं । राहों सांग मज बा हरी । अवघ्या नाशिवंता परी । थिता दुरी अंतरसी ॥1॥
 प्रथम केला गभाअ वास । काय ते सांगावे सायास । दुःख भोगिलें नव ही मास । आलों जन्मास येथवरी ॥2॥
 बाळपण गेलें नेणतां । तारुण्यदशे विषयव्यथा । वृद्धपणीं प्रवर्तली चिंता । मरें मागुता जन्म धरीं ॥3॥
 क्षण एक तो ही नाहीं विसावा । लक्ष चौऱ्याशीं घेतल्या धांवा ।
 भोवंडिती पाठीं लागल्या हांवा । लागो आगी नांवा माझ्या मीपणा ॥4॥
 आतां पुरे ऐसी भरोवरी । रंक होऊनि राहेन द्वारीं । तुझा दास मी दीन कामारी । तुका ह्मणे करीं कृपा आतां ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What happiness is there in worldly life that I should cling to it? Tell me, O Hari. Everything is perishable; the Eternal One remains distant.

First came the torment of dwelling in the womb. What can be said of those trials? Nine months of suffering were endured before I arrived in this world.

Childhood passed in ignorance, youth was spent in the agony of sense-pleasures, and old age brought nothing but worry. One dies only to be born again.

There is not even a moment's rest. Through eighty-four lakh births I have been driven by cravings chasing me from behind.

Let fire consume my sense of "I" and "mine." Enough of this turmoil. I will become a pauper and stand at Your door.

I am Your servant, a humble laborer. Says Tuka, show me mercy now.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What happiness is there in this world that I should cling to it? Tell me, Hari. It is all perishable, and meanwhile the Eternal stays far from me. First came the dwelling in the womb. What can I say of those trials? Nine months of pain were borne before I came into this life. Childhood went by without my knowing it. Youth was spent in the ache of sense-pleasures. Old age brought worry. One dies only to be born again. There is not a single moment's rest. Through eighty-four lakh births I have been driven, cravings always chasing at my back. Let fire take my sense of "I" and "mine." Enough of this whirling now. I will become a pauper and stand at your door. I am your servant, your lowly laborer. Tuka says: show me mercy now.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram walks through a whole human life and finds no resting place in any stage of it. The womb is torment, childhood passes unnoticed, youth burns in craving, old age sinks into worry, and then death only restarts the round through countless births. His verdict is that the world offers nothing worth clinging to, since all of it perishes while the Eternal stays out of reach. The decisive line is his curse on "I" and "mine": let fire take the ego that drives the whole exhausting chase. Having given up every claim, he chooses the lowest place, a pauper and laborer at God's door, and asks only for mercy.

GATHA 0629

The Power of the Name

The Name, joy in the saints' company

मराठी मूळ

सुख या संतसमागमें । नित्य दुनावे तुझिया नामें । दहन होती सकळ कर्मे । सर्वकाळ प्रेमें डुलतसों ॥१॥
ह्मणोनि नाहीं कांहीं चिंता । तूं चि आमुचा मातापिता । बहिणी बंधु आणि चुलता । आणिकां गोतां सर्वांठायीं ॥

२॥

ऐसा हा कळला निर्धार । मा माझा तुज न पडे विसर । अससी देऊनियां धीर । बाहए अभ्यंतर मजजवळा ॥३॥
दुःख तें कैसें नये स्वप्नासी । भुक्तिमुक्ति जाल्या कामारी दासी । त्यांचें वर्म तूं आह्मांपाशीं । सुखें राहिलासी
प्रेमाचिया ॥४॥

जेथें तुझ्या कीर्तनाचा घोष । जळती पापें पळती दोष । काय तें उणें आह्मां आनंदास । सेवूं ब्रह्मरस तुका ह्मणे ॥

५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In the company of saints, joy grows ever greater through Your Name. All karmas are burned away, and I sway in love at all times.

Therefore I have no worry at all. You alone are our mother and father, sister, brother, uncle, and every relation in every place.

This certainty has become clear to me, and so You will not forget me. You abide giving me courage, outwardly and inwardly, always near me.

Sorrow cannot even approach my dreams. Liberation and worldly enjoyment have become servants to me.

Their secret rests with You, dwelling within us in the joy of love. Where the sound of Your kirtan resounds, sins are burned and faults flee.

What lack could there be in our bliss? Says Tuka, we drink the nectar of Brahman.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Joy grows in the company of the saints, doubling day by day through your Name. All my deeds are burned to ash, and I sway in love at every hour. So I have no worry at all. You alone are my mother and father, sister, brother, and uncle, and every relation in every place. This certainty has become clear to me, and so you will not forget me. You stay close, giving me courage, outside and within, always near. Sorrow cannot even enter my dreams. Liberation and worldly enjoyment have become my serving maids. Their secret rests with you, who live within us in the joy of love. Where the sound of your kirtan rings out, sins burn and faults run away. What could be missing from our bliss? Tuka says: we drink the nectar of Brahman.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the bright counterpart to the poems of dread: in the company of saints and the singing of the Name, the world's terror simply has no foothold. Tukaram says the Name burns away his accumulated deeds and replaces every family tie with God alone, so that he carries no worry. He makes a startling reversal of the usual spiritual goal: liberation itself, along with worldly enjoyment, now waits on him like a servant, because their secret belongs to the God who lives within. Where kirtan resounds, sin and fault flee on their own. The verse ends in the fullness it describes, the taste of Brahman, with nothing left to lack.

GATHA 0630

The Nature of God

God as tender Mother, want abolished

मराठी मूळ

देवा तूं आमचा कृपाळ । भक्तीप्रतिपाळ दीनवत्सळ । माय तूं माउली स्नेहाळ । भार सकळ चालविसी ॥1॥
तुज लागली सकळ चिंता । राखणें लागे वांकडें जातां । पुडती निरविसी संतां । नव्हे विसंबतां धीर तुज ॥2॥
आह्मां भय चिंता नाहीं धाक जन्म मरण कांहीं एक । जाला इहलोकीं परलोक । आलें सकळैकवैकुंठ ॥3॥
न कळे दिवस कीं राती । अखंड लागलीसे ज्योती । आनंदलहरीची गती । वणून कीर्ती तया सुखा ॥4॥
तुझिया नामाचीं भूषणें । तों यें मज लेवविलीं लेणें । तुका ह्मणे तुझियान गुणें । काय तें उणें एक आह्मां ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O God, You are our compassionate protector of devotion, lover of the lowly, tender mother full of affection. You bear the entire burden and carry it forward.

All concern falls upon You. You must watch over us when we stray, and You entrust us again to the saints.

You cannot bear to leave us unattended for even a moment. We have no fear, no anxiety, no dread of birth or death.

The other world has merged into this one, and all of Vaikuntha has arrived here. Day and night cannot be distinguished; an unbroken flame of light blazes constantly.

The waves of bliss are beyond description, and that joy surpasses all praise. You have adorned me with the ornaments of Your Name, bestowing precious jewels upon me.

Says Tuka, by Your virtues, what could we possibly lack?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God, you are merciful to us, protector of devotion, tender to the lowly. You are our mother, the loving one who nurses us. You carry the whole load forward. All the care has become yours. You must guard us when we go crooked, and you hand us over again to the saints. You cannot bear to leave us alone for even a moment. We have no fear, no worry, no dread, none at all, of birth or of death. The other world has merged into this one; all of Vaikuntha has come here. Day cannot be told apart from night; an unbroken flame of light burns steadily. The waves of bliss are beyond telling, and that joy is past all praise. You have dressed me in the ornaments of your Name and laid those jewels on me. Tuka says: by your goodness, what one thing could we lack?

WHAT IT MEANS

Here God is cast above all as the nursing Mother who shoulders the entire burden of her child's life, including the duty of correcting him when he strays. Because that care is wholly God's, the devotee is released from the two great fears, birth and death. Tukaram describes the result as heaven collapsing into the present: Vaikuntha has arrived here, day and night blur into one unbroken light, and bliss runs past anything words can hold. The Name itself is the jewelry God has put on him. The closing question is rhetorical and complete: under such care, nothing whatever is missing.

GATHA 0631

Longing and Separation

Distress and urgency, robbed in broad daylight

मराठी मूळ

न पवे सन्निध वाटते चिंता । वरि या बहुतांची सत्ता । नुगवे पडत जातो गुंता । कर्मा बिळवंता सांपडलों ॥1॥
 बहु भार पडियेला शिरीं । मी हें माझें मजवरी । उघडण नागविलों चोरीं । घरिच्याघरीं जाणजाणतां ॥ध्रु॥
 तुज मागणें इतुलें आतां । मज या निरवावें संतां । जाला कंठस्फोट आळवितां । उदास आतां न करावें ॥2॥
 अति हा निकट समय । मग म्यां करावें तें काय । दिवस गेलिया टाकईल छाय । उरईल हाय रातिकालीं ॥3॥
 होईल संचिताची सत्ता । अंगा येईल पराधीनता । ठाव तो न दिसे लपतां । बहुत चिंता प्रवर्तली ॥4॥
 ऐसी या संकटाची संधी । धांव घालावी कृपानिधी । तुका ह्मणे माझी बळबुद्धी । सकळ सिद्धी पाय तुझे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I feel anxious because You are not near, and on top of that the authority of so many worldly powers presses down. I cannot untangle myself; the knot only tightens.

I am caught in the grip of powerful karma. A great burden has fallen upon my head, this sense of "I" and "mine." I have been robbed in broad daylight, plundered in my own home while fully aware.

I ask You only this much now: entrust me to the saints. My throat is hoarse from calling out to You; do not be indifferent any longer.

The hour is desperately close. What shall I do then? Once the day has passed, the shadow will be cast aside, and only regret will remain in the night.

The force of accumulated destiny will take hold, and dependence will grip my body. No hiding place is visible, and great anxiety has set in.

Says Tuka, in this perilous juncture, rush to me, O treasury of mercy. My strength and wisdom, all my accomplishments, are Your feet alone.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am anxious because you are not near me, and on top of that the power of many worldly things presses down on me. I cannot get free; the knot only tightens as I fall. I have been caught by mighty karma. A heavy load has fallen on my head, this "I" and this "mine." I have been robbed in broad daylight, plundered inside my own house while I watched and knew. I ask you only this much now: hand me over to the saints. My throat is hoarse from calling you; do not be cold to me any longer. The hour is dangerously close. What am I to do then? Once the day is gone, the shade will be thrown off, and only regret will be left in the night. The force of my past deeds will take hold; helplessness will grip my body. I see no place to hide, and great fear has set in. Tuka says: in this tight corner, come running, treasury of mercy. My strength, my wits, all my success, are your feet alone.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram cries out from a sense of siege, hemmed in by worldly powers and by the tightening knot of his own past actions. His sharpest image is the daylight robbery: he watches his own "I" and "mine" plunder him inside his own house, fully aware and still unable to stop it. The urgency is about time, the hour is desperately near, and once the daylight is gone there will be nothing left but regret and the grip of destiny in the dark. His one request is humble and specific: hand me over to the saints. He ends by locating all his strength and success not in himself but only at God's feet, and begs the merciful one to rush in before it is too late.

GATHA 0632

Prayers

Surrender of the sinner, no high or low at God's door

मराठी मूळ

आतां धर्माधमाअ कांहीं उचित । माझें विचारावें हित । तुज मी ठाउका पतित । शरणागत परि जालों ॥1॥
येथें राया रंका एकी सरी । नाहीं भिन्नाभिन्न तुमच्या घरीं । पावलों पाय भलत्या परी । मग बाहेरी न घालावें ॥ध्रु॥
ऐसें हें चालत आलें मागें । नाहीं मी बोलत वाउगें । आपुलिया पडिल्या प्रसंगें । कीतिन हे जगे वाणिजेते ॥2॥
घालोनियां माथां बैसलों भार । सांडिला लौकिक वेव्हार । आधीं हे विचारिली थार । अविनाश पर पद ऐसें ॥3॥
येथें एक वर्म पाहिजे धीर । परि म्यां लेखिलें असार । देह हें नाशिवंत जाणार । धरिलें सार नाम तुझें ॥4॥
केली आराणुक सकळां हातीं । धरावें धरिलें तें चितीं । तुका ह्मणें सांगितलें संतीं । देई अंतीं ठाव मज देवा ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now, setting aside questions of right and wrong, consider my welfare. You know me to be a sinner, yet I have still come as one who surrenders.

Here the king and the pauper stand on equal ground; there is no distinction in Your house. Having reached Your feet by whatever means, do not cast me out again.

This has been the custom from ages past; I do not speak idle words. By the circumstances of my own life, this fame is spoken throughout the world.

I have placed the burden on my head and abandoned worldly propriety and conduct. I considered this course beforehand: the imperishable supreme state.

Here, one thing is needed: patience. But I have deemed the body to be impermanent and worthless, and I have grasped Your Name as the essence.

I have bid farewell to everyone, resolving to hold firm to what I have chosen. Says Tuka, the saints have instructed me. O God, grant me a place at the end.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now set aside questions of right and wrong, and look to what is good for me. You know me as a sinner, yet I have still come to surrender. Here the king and the pauper are equal; in your house there is no high and no low. By whatever means I have reached your feet, do not throw me out again. This has been the way from old times; I am not speaking idle words. By what happened in my own life, this fame of yours is sung throughout the world. I have set the load on my head and let go of worldly custom and dealings. I thought it through first: this is the imperishable, supreme state. One thing is needed here, patience. But I have judged the body to be perishable and worthless, and I have grasped your Name as the one thing that matters. I have taken leave of everyone, holding firm in my heart to what I have chosen. Tuka says: the saints have told me so. Give me a place at the end, O God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks God to suspend the ledger of right and wrong and simply look to his welfare, openly naming himself a sinner who has come anyway. His claim rests on God's own house rule: there king and beggar stand equal, with no distinction, so a soul that has reached the feet by any means at all must not be turned out. He has already paid his side of the bargain, dropping worldly custom and the demands of reputation, judging the body worthless, and clutching the Name as the only thing of substance. The one virtue still required of him is patience. Backed by the instruction of the saints, he asks for the only thing that finally matters, a place with God at the end.

GATHA 0633

Appeals and Exhortations

Gratitude for the human birth, the Mother's child

मराठी मूळ

बरवें झालें आलों जन्मासी । जोड जोडिली मनुष्य देहा ऐसी । महा लाभाची उत्तम रासी । जेणें सुखासी पात्र
होइजे ॥1॥

दिलीं इंद्रियें हात पाय कान । डोळे मुख बोलावया वचन । जेणें तूं जोडसी नारायण । नासे जीवपण भवरोग ॥
धु.॥

तिळेंतीळ पुण्य सांचा पडे । तरि हें बहुतां जन्मीं जोडे । नाम तुझें वाचेसी आतुडे । समागम घडे संतांचा ॥2॥

ऐसिये पावविलों ठायीं । आतां मी कांई होऊं उतराई । येवढा जीव ठेवीन पायीं । तूं माझे आई पांडुरंगे ॥3॥
फेडियेला डोळ्यांचा कवळ । धुतला गुणदोषांचा मळ । लावूनि स्तनीं केलों सीतळ । निजविलों बाळ निजस्थानीं
॥4॥

नाहीं या आनंदासी जोडा । सांगतां गोष्टी लागती गोडा । आला आकारा आमुच्या चाडा । तुका ह्मणे भिडा
भक्तीचिया ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How blessed it is that I was born and received this priceless treasure of a human body. It is the greatest of all gains, the supreme wealth by which one becomes worthy of true joy.

You have given me senses, hands, feet, ears, eyes, and a mouth to speak, by which one may attain You, O Narayana, and the disease of worldly existence may be cured. Grain by grain, merit accumulates, and through many births this human form is earned.

Your Name has come to my tongue, and the company of saints has been granted. Having been brought to this blessed place, how can I ever repay this debt? I will place this very life at Your feet, O Panduranga, my Mother.

The veil over my eyes has been removed, the dirt of virtues and faults has been washed away. Nursing me at Your breast, You cooled me and laid me to rest in my true home.

There is no equal to this bliss. Says Tuka, the telling of it tastes sweet. You have taken form for our sake, compelled by devotion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

How good it is that I came to be born and won a thing like this human body. It is the highest heap of great gain, the wealth that makes one fit for true joy. You gave me senses, hands, feet, ears, eyes, and a mouth to speak, so that I might win you, Narayana, and the sickness of worldly existence would end. Grain by grain the merit gathers, and across many births this is earned. Your Name has come to my tongue, and the company of saints has been given to me. You have brought me to such a place. How can I ever repay it? I will lay this whole life at your feet. You are my Mother, Panduranga. You have lifted the film from my eyes and washed off the stain of my virtues and faults. You held me to your breast, cooled me, and laid your child to sleep in its own true home. There is no equal to this joy. Telling of it tastes sweet. Tuka says: you have taken form for our sake, drawn by devotion.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram counts the human birth as the supreme stroke of fortune, the one form of life equipped to win God and be cured of the disease of worldly existence. The body's faculties are not for indulgence but are tools given for that single purpose, and he reminds himself how rare the chance is, earned grain by grain across many lifetimes. He cannot repay such a debt, so he offers the only thing he has, his whole life laid at the feet. The closing images are wholly maternal: God as Mother lifts the film from his eyes, washes off even his good and bad alike, nurses him cool, and lays the child to rest in its true home. He ends in wonder that God takes form at all, pulled into shape by the love of devotees.

GATHA 0634

Confession and Sin

Confession of nothingness, the body as a cage

मराठी मूळ

अल्प भाव अल्प मती । अल्प आयुष्य नाही हातीं । अपराधाची वोळलो मूर्ती । अहो वेदमूर्ती परियेसा ॥1॥
 किती दोषा देऊं परिहार । गुणदोषें मिळलें अंतर । आदि वर्तमान भविष्याकार । गेला अंतपार ऐसें नाही ॥२॥
 विविध कर्म चौःयाशी फेरा । त्रिविध भोग या शरीरा । कर्मकोठार पांजरा । जन्मजरामरणसांटवण ॥३॥
 जीवा नाही कुडीचें लाहातें । येँ भिन्न पंच भूतें । रचतें खचतें संचितें । असार रितें फलकट ॥४॥
 पुत्र पत्नी सहोदर । मायबाप गोताचा पसर । मिळतां काष्ठें लोटतां पूर । आदळीं दूर होती खलाळीं ॥५॥
 ह्मणोनि नासावें अज्ञान । इतुलें करीं कृपादान । कृपाळु तूं जनादनन । धरुनि चरण तुका विनवी ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My devotion is slight, my intellect is slight, my lifespan is short and not in my hands. I am an embodiment of offenses.

O Lord of the Vedas, please listen. How many faults can I atone for? Virtues and faults have filled the space within.

Past, present, and future stretch on; there is no end in sight. Through varied karmas and eighty-four lakh births, the body endures threefold suffering.

The body is a storehouse of karma, a cage of birth, old age, and death. The soul gets nothing lasting from this body, which is made of five separate elements, assembled and dismantled by accumulated deeds, hollow and fruitless.

Son, wife, siblings, parents, and the entire spread of relations are like logs meeting in a flood; they collide and are swept apart in the torrent. Therefore destroy my ignorance; grant me this one gift of mercy.

You are compassionate, O Janardana. Says Tuka, I clasp Your feet and plead.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My feeling is small, my mind is small, my life is short and not in my hands. I have become an image made of offenses. O embodiment of the Vedas, please listen. How many faults can I make up for? Virtue and fault together have filled the space within me. Beginning, present, and what is to come stretch on with no end in sight. Through varied deeds and eighty-four lakh births, the body bears its threefold suffering. The body is a storehouse of karma, a cage of birth, old age, and death. The soul gains nothing lasting from this body, made of five separate elements, built up and pulled down by past deeds, empty, useless, husk. Son, wife, brother, mother, father, the whole spread of kin, are like logs that meet when the flood drives them together, then strike and are flung apart in the rushing water. So destroy my ignorance; grant me this one gift of mercy. You are merciful, Janardana. Tuka says: I hold your feet and plead.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram empties himself out before God, owning that his feeling, his understanding, and even his lifespan are small and beyond his control, until he is little more than a heap of offenses. He looks at the body coldly: a storehouse of karma and a cage of birth, aging, and death, assembled and dismantled out of five elements, from which the soul gains nothing that lasts. His image for family is unsparing: kin are driftwood swept together by the flood, colliding for a moment and then torn apart, no permanent bond at all. He does not ask to keep any of it. His single request is mercy in one precise form, the destruction of his ignorance, made while clasping the feet of the compassionate Lord.

GATHA 0635

The Power of the Name

Praise of the Names, love as the only key

मराठी मूळ

ऐसी हे गर्जवूं वैखरी । केशव मुकुंद मुरारी । राम कृष्ण नामें बरीं । हरी हरी दोष सकळ ॥1॥
 जनादनना जगजीवना । विराटस्वरूपा वामना । महदादि मधुसूदना । भवबंधना तोडितिया ॥ध्रु॥
 चक्रपाणी गदाधरा । असुरमदनना वीर्यवीरा । सकळमुगुटमणि शूरा । अहो दातारा जगदानिया ॥2॥
 मदनमूर्ती मनमोहना । गोपाळगोपिकारमणा । नटनाटएकौशल्य कान्हा । अहो संपन्ना सर्वगुणें ॥3॥
 गुणवंता आणि निर्गुणा । सर्वसाक्षी आणि सर्वजाणा । करोनि अकर्ता आपणा । नेदी अभिमाना आतळों ॥4॥
 कासयानें घडे याची सेवा । काय एक समर्पवें या देवा । वश्य तो नव्हे वांचुनि भावा । पाय जीवावेगळे न करी
 तुका ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let us make the voice thunder forth: Keshava, Mukunda, Murari! The names Rama and Krishna are beautiful; Hari, Hari destroys all faults. Janardana, life of the world, cosmic form, Vamana, great Madhusudana, the one who severs the bonds of worldly existence.

Wielder of the discus, bearer of the mace, crusher of demons, hero among heroes, the jewel in the crown of all the brave, O generous giver to the world. Beautiful as Madana, enchanter of minds, delight of the gopis and cowherds, skillful dancer, O Kanha, endowed with all virtues.

Lord of qualities and yet beyond qualities, witness of all and knower of all, the doer who remains a non-doer, who never lets pride touch Him. By what means can one serve Him? What can be offered to this God? He cannot be won except through love.

Says Tuka, I will not let His feet be separate from my life.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let us make the voice thunder it out: Keshava, Mukunda, Murari! The names Rama and Krishna are good; Hari, Hari wipes out every fault. Janardana, life of the world, cosmic form, Vamana, great Madhusudana, you who break the bonds of worldly existence. Holder of the discus, bearer of the mace, crusher of demons, hero of valor, jewel in the crown of all the brave, O giver, generous to the whole world. Beautiful as Madana, enchanter of the mind, delight of the cowherds and the gopis, skilled dancer, Kanha, full of every virtue. You have qualities and yet are beyond qualities, witness of all and knower of all, the one who acts and yet is no doer, who never lets pride touch him. By what means can his service be done? What single thing can be offered to this God? He cannot be won by anything but love. Tuka says: I will not let his feet be parted from my life.

WHAT IT MEANS

This abhanga is a garland of the Names, sung out loud so the very voice thunders, because the recitation itself burns away faults. Tukaram heaps up God's titles and deeds, the cosmic form, the slayer of demons, the enchanting cowherd, the lord who has qualities yet stands beyond them and acts while remaining no doer. The point of all this praise is the turn near the end: such a God cannot be bought with offerings or earned by any technique, because nothing matches him. The one thing that wins him is love, pure feeling. So Tukaram closes with the only offering he has, vowing never to let God's feet be separated from his life.

GATHA 0636

Ecstasy and Joy

Joy fulfilled, the vow bears fruit

मराठी मूळ

होतों तें चिंतीत मानसीं । नवस फळले नवसीं । जोडिते नारायणा ऐसी । अविट ज्यासी नाश नाही ॥1॥
 धरिले जीवीं न सोडीं पाय । आलें या जीवित्वाचें काय । कैं हे पाविजेती ठाय । लाविली सोय संचितानें ॥२॥
 मज तों पडियेली होती भुली । चित्ताची अपसव्य चाली । होती मृगजळें गोवी केली । द्रिष्ट उघडली बरें जालें ॥३॥
 आतां हा सिद्ध पावो भाव । मध्ये चंचल्यें न व्हावा जीव । ऐसी तुह्यां भाकीतसें कींव । कृपाळुवा जगदानिया ॥

3॥

कळों येतें आपुले बुद्धी । ऐसें तों न घडतें कधीं । केवढे आघात ते मधीं । लज्जा रिद्धी उभी आड ठाके ॥४॥
 कृपा या केली संतजनीं । माझी अळंकारिली वाणी । प्रीति हे लाविली कीर्तनीं । तुका चरणीं लोळतसे ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What I had been longing for in my heart has come to pass; my vows have borne fruit. I have found union with Narayana, that inexhaustible One in whom there is no destruction.

I have held His feet in my heart and will not let go. What is the worth of this life otherwise? When will I reach that destination? My accumulated merit has shown me the way.

I had been lost in delusion; my mind's course had gone astray. I was deceived by mirages, but now my vision has cleared.

It is well. May this devotion now reach fulfillment, and may the mind not waver in between.

I beseech You thus with compassion, O merciful Lord of the world. My own intellect understands, yet I cannot bring it about on my own.

Great obstacles arise in between; shame and worldly prosperity stand in the way. The saints have shown me grace and adorned my speech.

They have instilled love for kirtan. Says Tuka, I roll at Your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What I longed for in my heart has come to pass. My vows have borne fruit. I have found Narayana, the inexhaustible One, in whom there is no destruction. I have held his feet in my heart, and I will not let go. What is this life worth otherwise? When will I reach that place? My stored-up merit has shown me the way. I had been lost in delusion. My mind ran the wrong way. I was caught in mirages. Now my sight has cleared. It is well. Let this devotion reach its end now, and let my mind not waver in between. I beg you with this plea, O merciful Lord of the world. My own mind understands, yet I cannot bring it about by myself. Great blows fall in between; shame and worldly success stand in the way. The saints have shown me grace. They have adorned my speech. They have set love in my kirtan. Tuka says: I roll at your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming a longing that has finally landed and asking that it not slip away. He has found Narayana, the one thing that does not pass, and he refuses to loosen his grip on those feet, because without them this life has no worth. He admits how he got here: lost in delusion, chasing mirages, until his sight cleared and stored merit pointed the way. Then he names the real danger, which is the gap between now and the end: the mind that wavers, the blows that fall, the shame and the lure of worldly success that block the road. He knows the goal with his head but cannot reach it on his own power, so he hands the work to the Lord's mercy and to the saints who tuned his speech and set love in his song.

GATHA 0637

Prayers

Humble surrender, lead me by your light

मराठी मूळ

तुझिया पार नाहीं गुणां । माझी अल्प मति नारायणा । भवतारका जी सुजाणा । एक विज्ञापना पायांपाशीं ॥1॥
काय जाणावें म्यां दीनें । तुझिये भक्तीचीं लक्षणें । धड तें तोंड धोऊं नेणें । परि चिंतनें काळ सारीं ॥ ध्रु.॥
न लवीं आणीक कांहीं पिसें । माझिया मना वायां जाय ऐसें । चालवीं आपुल्या प्रकाशें । हातीं सरिसें धरोनियां ॥

2॥

तुज समपिनली काया । जीवें भावें पंढरीराया । सांभाळीं समविषम डाय । करीं छाया कृपेची ॥3॥
चतुर तरीं चतुरां रावो । जाणता तरीं जीवांचा जीव । न्यून तो कोण एक ठाव । आरुष भाव परि माझा ॥4॥
होतें तें माझें भांडवल । पायांपें निवेदिले बोल । आदरा ऐसें पाविजे मोल । तुका ह्मणे साच फोल तूं जाणसी ॥

5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is no end to Your virtues, and my intellect is small, O Narayana. O wise one who ferries souls across this world, I make one humble request at Your feet.

What can a pitiable one like me know of the marks of true devotion? I cannot even wash my face properly, yet I spend my time in contemplation of You. Do not let my mind go astray after any other madness.

Lead me by Your own light, holding me hand in hand. I have surrendered this body and soul to You, O King of Pandhari.

Guard me through every twist and turn; shelter me under the shade of Your mercy. You are wise among the wise, the life of all lives.

Where is there any lack? My devotion may be rough and unpolished, yet it is mine. Whatever capital I had, I have offered these words at Your feet.

Says Tuka, what is offered with love receives its due value. You know what is genuine and what is false.

IN PLAIN WORDS

There is no end to your virtues, Narayana, and my mind is small. O wise one who carries souls across this world, I make one request at your feet. What can a poor man like me know of the marks of true devotion? I cannot even wash my own face properly. Still I pass my time thinking of you. Do not let me run after any other madness. Do not let my mind go to waste. Lead me by your own light. Hold my hand and walk with me. I have given you this body, with my whole life and heart, O King of Pandhari. Keep me through every turn, smooth or rough. Make a shade of your mercy over me. You are the wise one among the wise, the life of all that lives. Where is there any lack in you? My devotion is rough and unpolished, but it is mine. Whatever capital I had, I have laid these words at your feet. Tuka says: what is offered with love receives its worth. You know what is real and what is hollow.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram opens by setting the scale: the Lord's virtues have no end, his own mind is small, so he asks for one thing only. He confesses he does not know the marks of real devotion and is barely competent at the smallest tasks, yet he spends his days remembering the Lord. The single request is that he be led, hand in hand, by the Lord's own light, and not let wander after other obsessions. He surrenders the whole of body and life to the King of Pandhari and asks to be guarded through smooth stretches and rough. The closing turn names his fear and his trust at once: his offering is crude, but it is sincerely his, and he leaves it to the Lord, who alone can tell the genuine from the hollow, to set its true value.

GATHA 0638

Longing and Separation

Bold complaint, reveal yourself now

मराठी मूळ

कां हो माझा मानियेला भार । ऐसा दिसे फार । अनंत पावविलीं उद्धार । नव्हे चि थार मज शेवटीं ॥1॥
 पाप बिळवंत गाढें । तुज ही राहों सकतें पुढें । मागील कांहीं राहिलें ओढें । नवल कोडें देखियेलें ॥2॥
 काय मानिती संतजन । तुमचें हीनत्ववचन । कीं वृद्ध जाला नारायण । न चले पण आधील तो ॥3॥
 आतां न करावी चोरी । बहुत न धरावें दुरी । पडदा काय घरच्याघरीं । धरिलें दुरी तेव्हां धरिलें ॥4॥
 नको चाळवूं अनंता । कासया होतोसि नेणता । काय तूं नाहीं धरीत सत्ता । तुका ह्मणे आतां होई प्रगट ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why, does my burden seem so heavy to You? Countless others have been delivered before. Am I the one who can never be saved? Is my sin so formidable that even You cannot stand before it? Has something from the past remained unpaid? What a strange riddle this is.

What will the saints think, hearing such words of helplessness from You? Has Narayana grown old, unable to keep His former promise? Now do not play games or hold me at a distance. Why put up walls within Your own household? What was once grasped, let it remain grasped.

Do not trifle with me, O Infinite One. Why do You pretend not to know? Do You not hold all authority? Says Tuka, reveal Yourself now.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why, does my weight seem so heavy to you? You have saved countless others. Am I the only one who finds no resting place at the end? Is my sin so strong, so massive, that even you cannot stand before it? Has some old debt of mine stayed unpaid? What a strange riddle I am looking at. What will the saints think of you, hearing such words of helplessness? Has Narayana grown old, so that he can no longer keep his earlier promise? Now do not play tricks. Do not hold me so far off. Why a curtain inside your own house? What you have held at a distance, you held at a distance long enough. Do not toy with me, O Infinite One. Why do you act as if you do not know? Do you not hold all power? Tuka says: now show yourself.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses his case against the Lord like a man arguing with one who owes him. He points to the record: countless souls already saved, so why should he alone be left with no resting place, unless his sin is somehow too strong even for God, which he plainly does not believe. He turns the shame back on the Lord, asking what the saints will think of such helpless silence, and whether Narayana has grown too old to keep his ancient promise to deliver. The harshness is aimed at the delay and the hiding, the curtain inside God's own house, not at any real doubt of God's power. The plea lands as a demand born of trust: stop pretending not to know, drop the games, and reveal yourself now.

GATHA 0639

Longing and Separation

Anguished longing, why the silence

मराठी मूळ

मज ते हांसतील संत । जींहीं देखिलेती मूतिनमंत । ह्मणोनि उद्वेगलें चित्त । आहा च भक्त ऐसा दिसें ॥१॥
 ध्यानीं म्या वर्णविति कैसे । पुढें एकीं स्तुति केली असे । तेथूनि जीव निघत नसे । ऐसिये आश लागलोंसें ॥२॥
 कासया पाडिला जी धडा । उगा चि वेडा आणि वांकडा । आह्मां लेंकरांसि पीडा । एक मागें जोडा दुसऱ्याचा ॥

2॥

सांगा कोणाचा अन्याय । ऐसें मी धरीतसें पाय । तूं तंव सम चि सकळां माय । काय अन्याय एक माझा ॥३॥
 नये हा जरी कारणा । तरी कां व्यालेति नारायणा । वचन द्यावें जी वचना । मज अज्ञाना समजावीं ॥४॥
 बहुत दिवस केला बोभाट । पाहातां श्रमलों ते वाट । तुका ह्मणे विस्तारलें ताट । काय वीट आला नेणों स्वामी ॥

5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The saints who have beheld You in visible form will laugh at me. This is why my chitta is troubled; I appear to be a mere devotee in name only.

How shall I describe in meditation what others have already praised before me? My soul cannot depart from that longing; I am bound by such hope. Why have You set me up like this, stumbling and crooked for no reason? We are Your children, and this torment is great; one trouble follows upon another.

Tell me, whose fault is this? I cling to Your feet. You are the same loving mother to all; what is my special offense? If this one is unfit for the purpose, then why did You bring him forth, O Narayana? At least give Your word in answer to my plea and make this ignorant one understand.

I have cried out for many days, and I am weary looking down that path. Says Tuka, the plate has been spread wide. I do not know if You have grown tired of me, O Lord.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The saints who have seen you in visible form will laugh at me. That is why my mind is troubled. I look like a devotee in name only. How shall I describe you in meditation, when others have already praised you to your face? My soul cannot leave that longing. Such a hope holds me. Why have you set me up like this, crooked and stumbling for no reason? We are your children, and this torment is heavy; one trouble follows another. Tell me, whose fault is this? I cling to your feet. You are the same loving mother to all. What is my one special offense? If this one was no good for the purpose, then why did you bring him forth, Narayana? At least give me a word in answer, and make this ignorant one understand. I have cried out for many days. I am worn out watching that road. Tuka says: the plate is spread wide. I do not know, Lord, whether you have grown tired of me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks from the ache of being unanswered while others have already seen God face to face. He fears he is a devotee in name only and will be laughed at by the saints who received the vision he still waits for. The complaint sharpens into a question of fairness: if God is the same loving mother to all her children, why is he the one left crooked, stumbling, and tormented, and what single offense singles him out. He even pushes the logic to its edge, asking why God brought him into being at all if he was unfit for the purpose. Worn out from watching the empty road, he asks for the smallest thing, a single word in reply, and confesses he cannot tell whether the silence means he has wearied his Lord.

GATHA 0640

Surrender and Acceptance

Grateful surrender, safe on the shore

मराठी मूळ

बरें जालें आजिवरी । नाहीं पडिलों मृत्याचे आहारीं । वांचोन आलों एथवरी । उरलें तें हरी तुझां समर्पण ॥1॥
 दिला या काळें अवकाश । नाहीं पावलें आयुष्य नाश । कार्या कारण उरलें शेष । गेलें तें भूस जावो परतें ॥ध्रु॥
 बुडणें खोटें पावतां थडी । स्वप्नीं जाली ओढाओढी । नासली जागृतीची घडी । साच जोडी शेवटीं गोड घास ॥2॥
 तुझासि पावविली हाक । तेणें निरसला धाक । तुमचें भातें हें कवतुक । जे शरणागत लोक रक्षावे ॥3॥
 रवीच्या नावें निशीचा नाश । उदय होतां चि प्रकाश । अतां कैचा आह्मां दोष । तूं जगदीश कैवारी ॥4॥
 आतां जळो देह सुख दंभ मान । न करीं याचें साधन । तूं जगदादि नारायण । आलों शरण तुका ह्मणे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

It is well that until today I have not fallen into Death's jaws. I have survived this far; whatever remains of life, O Hari, I offer to You.

Time has granted me this reprieve; my lifespan has not yet come to destruction. The purpose still has a remainder; let what is gone be gone like chaff.

The fear of drowning vanishes upon reaching the shore. There was a struggle in the dream, but the waking hour has come.

The final morsel is the sweetest. I called out to You, and by that my terror was dispelled.

It is Your nature and Your vow to protect those who seek refuge. As the sun rises, night is destroyed and light appears at once.

What fault then can remain in us? You, Lord of the World, are our champion. Now let the body, comfort, pride, and vanity burn.

I will not pursue them any longer. You are the primal Narayana.

Says Tuka, I have come to Your shelter.

IN PLAIN WORDS

It is well that until now I have not fallen into Death's mouth. I have lived this far. Whatever is left, Hari, I give to you. Time has granted me this room. My life has not yet run to its end. The work still has a remainder. Let what is gone go like chaff. The drowning was false; I have reached the shore. The struggle was in a dream. The waking hour has come. The last morsel is the sweetest. I called out to you, and my fear was cleared away. It is your nature and your vow to protect those who come for refuge. When the sun rises, night is destroyed; light comes the moment it dawns. What fault can be left in us then? You, Lord of the world, are our champion. Now let the body, comfort, pride, and honor burn. I will not work to win them. You are the primal Narayana. Tuka says: I have come to your shelter.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram counts his survival as grace and offers the remainder of his life back to Hari. The years he still has are not his to spend on himself; what is past he lets fall away like chaff, keeping only what serves the real purpose. He reframes his earlier terror as a dream of drowning from which he has now woken safe on the shore, the last stretch of the journey turning out to be the sweetest. His confidence rests not on his own worth but on the Lord's settled nature and vow to protect everyone who takes refuge, the way sunrise simply abolishes the night. From that footing he renounces the chase after the body's comfort, pride, and honor, and stands plainly in God's shelter.

GATHA 0641

Faith and Trust

Settled faith, rest at the feet

मराठी मूळ

आतां माझा नेणों परतों भाव । विसावोनि पायीं ठेविला जीव । सकळां लाभांचा हा ठाव । ऐसा वाव जाला
चिताठायीं ॥१॥

भांडवल गांठी तरि विश्वास । जालों तों जालों निश्चय दास । न पाहें मागील ते वास । पुढती सोस सेवेचा ची ॥
धु.॥

आहे तें निवेदिलें सर्व । मी हें माझें मोडियला गर्व । अकाळीं काळ अवघें पर्व । जाला भरवसा कृपेलाभाचा ॥२॥

वेव्हारीं वेव्हारा अनंत । नाही यावांचुनी जाणत । तरी हें समाधान चित्त । लाभहानी नाही येत अंतरा ॥३॥

करुनि नातळों संसारा । अंग भिन्न राखिला पसारा । कळवळा तो जीवनीं खरा । बीजाचा थारा दुरी आघात ॥४॥

बहु मतापासूनि निराळा । होऊनि राहिलों सोंवळा । बैसल्या रूपाचा कळवळा । तुका ह्मणे डोळां लेइलों तें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now I do not know whether my devotion will turn back. Having found rest, I have placed my life at Your feet.

This is the abode of all gains; such spaciousness has opened in my heart. My capital is faith.

What has happened has happened; I have become Your servant with certainty. I will not look back at the past; from here on, my only longing is for service.

I have offered everything I had; I have broken the pride of "I" and "mine." Every season has become auspicious; confidence in receiving Your grace has taken root. In worldly dealings, O Infinite One, I know nothing other than You, yet my mind is at peace.

Gain or loss does not disturb my depths. I perform the duties of the world yet remain untouched, keeping the body separate from the soul's inner life.

The seed's sprout is kept far from harm. I have become free from all doctrines and opinions, remaining pure.

Says Tuka, the beauty of that form has entered my eyes, and I am adorned with it.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now I do not think my devotion will turn back. I have found rest and laid my life at your feet. This is the home of every gain; such open room has opened in my heart. My capital is trust. What has happened has happened: I have become your servant for certain. I will not look back at the past. From here on, my one longing is for service. I have offered all I had. I have broken the pride of I and mine. Every season has become a festival; confidence in your grace has taken root. In worldly dealings I know nothing but you, O Infinite One, yet my mind is at peace. Gain and loss do not reach my depths. I do the work of the world and stay untouched, keeping the body apart from the soul's inner life. The seed and its sprout are kept far from harm. I have stepped clear of all doctrines and opinions, and stay pure. Tuka says: the beauty of that form has entered my eyes, and I wear it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the steadiness that comes after surrender, when devotion no longer threatens to turn back. Having laid his life at the feet, he finds his heart opened into a place where every true gain is held, and trust, not anything earned, is the capital he trades on. He marks the break as final: the pride of I and mine is broken, the past is not worth a backward glance, and his only remaining want is to serve. The fruit is an even mind that handles the world's dealings, profit and loss alike, without being disturbed at its depths, because he keeps the inner life set apart from the body's affairs. Free of competing doctrines, he says the beauty of the Lord's form has entered his eyes, and he wears it like an ornament.

GATHA 0642

Devotion to Vitthal

Adoration, the Lord on the brick

मराठी मूळ

तुळसीमाळा घालुनी कंठीं । उभा विटेवरी जगजेठी । अवलोकोनि पुंडलीका दृष्टी । असे भीमातटीं पंढरीनाथ ॥1॥
 भुक्तिमुक्ति जयाच्या कामारी । रिद्धिसिद्ध वोळगती द्वारीं । सुदर्शन घट्टी करी । काळ कांपे दुरी धाकें तया ॥2॥
 जगज्जननी असे वाम भागीं । भीमकी शोभली अर्धांगीं । जैसी विद्युल्लता झमके मेघीं । दुरुषणें भंगी महा दोष ॥

3॥

सुखसागर परमानंदु । गोपीगोपाळां गोधनां छंदु । पिक्वशापदां जयाचा वेधु । वाहे गोविंदु पांवा छंदें ॥4॥
 मुखमंडित चतुर्भुजा । मनमोहना गरुडध्वजा । तुका ह्मणे स्वामी माझा । पावे भक्तिकाजा लवलाहीं ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Wearing the tulsi garland around His neck, the Lord of the World stands upon the brick. Gazing upon Pundalika, the Lord of Pandhari rests on the bank of the Bhima.

Liberation and worldly pleasure are His servants; miraculous powers attend His door. The Sudarshana whirls as a protective canopy, and Death trembles in fear of Him from afar.

The Mother of the universe stands at His left side; Bheemaki adorns His other half like lightning flashing in the clouds. Her mere glance destroys the greatest sins.

He is an ocean of bliss, supreme joy, the delight of the gopis, cowherds, and cattle. Even birds and beasts are drawn to Him.

Govinda plays His flute in sweet rhythm. With a beautiful face and four arms, He enchants the mind and bears the Garuda banner.

Says Tuka, my Lord swiftly comes to the aid of His devotees.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The tulsi garland on his neck, the Lord of the world stands on the brick. His eyes resting on Pundalika, Pandharinath stands on the bank of the Bhima. Liberation and worldly pleasure are his serving-maids. Wealth and powers wait at his door. The Sudarshana circles as his guard, and Death trembles far off in fear of him. The Mother of the universe stands at his left side; Rukmini adorns his other half, like lightning flashing in a cloud. One look from her breaks the greatest sin. He is an ocean of bliss, the highest joy, the delight of the gopis, the cowherds, and the cattle. Even birds and beasts are drawn to him. Govinda plays his flute in sweet rhythm. With a lovely face and four arms, he enchants the mind and carries the Garuda banner. Tuka says: my Lord comes swiftly to his devotees' aid.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a portrait of Vitthal standing on the brick at Pandhari, the pose given to him out of love for his devotee Pundalika. Tukaram piles up the marks of his sovereignty: liberation and worldly pleasure serve him as maids, riches and miraculous powers wait at the door, his discus guards him, and even Death keeps its distance in fear. Rukmini, named here as the Mother of the universe, shares his form like lightning in a cloud, her glance alone able to break the worst sin. He is bliss itself, drawing gopis, cowherds, cattle, even birds and beasts, by the sweetness of his flute. The closing line lands the point of all this glory: this Lord of every power comes quickly when his devotees call.

GATHA 0643

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, do not let go of me

मराठी मूळ

हातींचें न संडावें देवें । शरण आलों जीवें भावें । आपुलें ऐसें ह्मणावें । करितों जीवें निंबलोण ॥१॥
 बैसतां संतांचे पंगती । कळों आलें कमळापती । आपुलीं कोणी च नव्हती । निश्चय चित्तीं दृढ जाला ॥२॥
 येती तुझिया भजना आड । दाविती प्रपंचाचें कोड । कनिष्ठीं रुचि ठेऊनि गोड । देखत नाड कळतसे ॥३॥
 मरती मेलीं नेणों किती । तो चि लाभ तयाचे संगती । ह्मणोनि येतों काकुलती । धीर तो चित्तीं दृढ द्यावा ॥४॥
 सुखें निंदोत हे जन । न करीं तयांशीं वचन । आदिपिता तूं नारायण । जोडी चरण तुमचे तें ॥५॥
 आपलें आपण न करुं हित । करुं हें प्रमाण संचित । तरी मी नष्ट चि पतित । तुका ह्मणे मज संत हांसती ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God should not let go of what is already in hand. I have surrendered with my whole life and soul.

Consider me Your own. I offer my life as a waving flame of protection.

Sitting in the company of saints, I have come to understand, O Lord of Lakshmi, that none of these worldly relations are truly mine. This conviction has become firm within me.

Those who obstruct Your worship come showing the allurements of worldly life. They place sweet attraction in low things, but I can see the trap clearly.

So many have died and perished; that is the only gain of their company. Therefore I come to You with humble supplication: grant me firm courage in my heart.

Let the world revile me if it will; I will not quarrel with them. You are the primordial father, Narayana; let me be joined to Your feet.

Says Tuka, if I do not pursue my own true welfare, then I am indeed pitiable; the saints would rightly laugh at me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God should not let go of what is already in his hand. I have come for refuge with my whole life and heart. Call me your own. I wave my life around you to keep you from harm. Sitting in the company of the saints, I came to understand, O Lord of Lakshmi, that none of these worldly people are mine. That certainty has grown firm in my heart. They come to block your worship, showing off the charm of worldly life. They put a sweet taste in low things, but I see the trap clearly. So many have died and perished. That is the only profit of their company. So I come to you, pleading: set firm courage in my heart. Let the world revile me happily; I will not trade words with them. You are the first father, Narayana. Let me be joined to your feet. If I will not work for my own true good, and instead take fate as my excuse, then I am simply ruined and fallen. Tuka says: the saints would laugh at me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram has surrendered fully and now begs the one thing he most fears to lose: that God, having taken him in hand, will not let go. The saints' company has taught him a hard clarity, that the worldly people he counted as his own are not, a conviction now fixed in him. He sees how the lure of ordinary life comes dressed as something sweet to block real worship, and he names its end plainly, that everyone in that company simply dies and is gone. So he asks for firm courage to ignore the world's scorn and stay joined to the Lord's feet. The closing turn is aimed at himself: if he hides behind fate instead of working for his own true good, he would be ruined and rightly laughed at, so the responsibility to hold on is his too.

GATHA 0644

Ecstasy and Joy

Liberation, all of it happened on its own

मराठी मूळ

बरवें जालें लागलों कारणीं । तुमचे राहिलों चरणीं । फेडीन संतसंगती धणी । गर्जइल गुणीं वैखरी ॥1॥
 जीवनीं राखिला जिव्हाळा । जालों मी मजसी निराळा । पंचभूतांचा पुतळा । सहज लीळा वर्ततसे ॥2॥
 जयाचें जया होईल ठावें । लाहो या साधियेला भावें । ऐसें होतें राखियलें जीवें । येथूनि देवें भोवहुनी ॥3॥
 आस निरसली ये खेपे । अवघे पंथ जाले सोपे । तुमचे दीनबंधु कृपे । दुसरें कांपे सत्ताधार्कें ॥4॥
 अंकिले पणें आनंदरूप । आतळों नये पुण्यपाप । सारुनि ठेविले संकल्प । तुका ह्मणे आपें आप एकाएकीं ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How blessed it is that I have been put to good use and have remained at Your feet. I will satisfy my longing in the company of saints, and my voice will resound with Your virtues.

The inmost essence of my life has been preserved. I have become separate from my old self.

This body of five elements moves now in effortless play. What was destined to be understood has been understood; this gain has been won through pure devotion.

This is what had been safeguarded within, kept by God through all the turns. The lingering desires of this journey have been dispelled; all paths have become easy.

By Your grace, O friend of the lowly, all else trembles under Your sovereign authority. Marked as Your own, I abide in bliss.

Sin and merit cannot touch me. All imaginations have been put to rest.

Says Tuka, all of it happened spontaneously, of its own accord.

IN PLAIN WORDS

It is good that I have been put to use, that I have stayed at your feet. I will satisfy my longing in the company of saints, and my voice will ring out with your virtues. The deep love of my life has been kept safe. I have become separate from my old self. This body of five elements moves now in easy play. What each was meant to understand has been understood; this gain was won through pure devotion. This is what had been kept safe within me, guarded by God through all the turns. The desires of this journey have been cleared away. Every path has become easy. By your grace, O friend of the lowly, all else trembles under your rule. Marked as your own, I am bliss itself. Sin and merit cannot touch me. All my plans have been laid to rest. Tuka says: it all happened of itself, all at once.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks back on his release as something done to him, not achieved by him. He is glad to have been put to use and kept at the feet, with the saints' company and the singing of God's virtues to satisfy his longing. The living core of him has been preserved while his old self fell away, so that his five-element body now moves in effortless play, untroubled. The desires that drove the journey are gone, the paths have all turned easy, and marked as God's own he is bliss itself, beyond the reach of sin and merit alike. The signature line carries the whole weight: none of this was his doing; it happened on its own, all at once, by grace.

GATHA 0645

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion in form, the Name is enough

मराठी मूळ

अवध्या दशा येणें साधती । मुख्य उपासना सगुणभक्ती । प्रगटे हृदयींची मूर्ती । भावशुद्ध जाणोनियां ॥१॥
 बीज आणि फळ हरींचे नाम । सकळ पुण्य सकळ धर्म । सकळां कळांचें हे वर्म । निवारी श्रम सकळ ही ॥२॥
 जेथें कीर्तन हें नामघोष । करिती निर्लज्ज हरीचे दास । सकळ वोथंबले रस । तुटती पाश भवबंधाचे ॥३॥
 येती अंगा वसती लक्षणें । अंतरीं देवें धरिलें ठाणें । आपण चि येती तयाचा गुण । जाणें येणें खुंटे वस्तीचें ॥४॥
 न लगे सांडावा आश्रम । उपजले कुळींचे धर्म । आणीक न करावे श्रम । एक पुरे नाम विठोबाचें ॥५॥
 वेदपुरुष नारायण । योगियांचें ब्रह्म शून्य । मुक्ता आत्मा परिपूर्ण । तुका ह्याने सगुण भोळ्या आह्मां ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

All spiritual states are attained through the primary practice of devotion to the Lord in form. The image within the heart reveals itself when it recognizes the purity of one's devotion.

The Name of Hari is both the seed and the fruit, all merit, all righteousness, and the key to every art. It dispels all weariness.

Where the Name is chanted aloud and Hari's devotees sing without shame, all nectar overflows and the bonds of worldly existence are severed. The marks of devotion appear on the body when God has taken His seat within.

His virtues come of their own accord, and the cycle of coming and going ceases. There is no need to abandon one's station in life or the duties of one's heritage.

No other effort is required; the Name of Vithoba alone is enough. The Vedas call Him Narayana; the yogis know Him as the void Brahman; to the liberated He is the perfect Self.

Says Tuka, for us He is the Lord we can enjoy in form.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Every state is reached by this: the chief practice is devotion to the Lord in form. The image hidden in the heart shows itself when it knows that one's love is pure. The Name of Hari is the seed and the fruit, all merit, all duty. It is the heart of every art, and it clears away all weariness. Where the Name is sung aloud, where Hari's servants sing without shame, all the nectars brim over and the cords of worldly bondage are cut. The marks of devotion settle on the body when God has taken his seat within. His virtues come of their own accord, and the coming and going of birth ends. You need not give up your station in life or the duties you were born to. No other labor is needed. The one Name of Vithoba is enough. The Vedas call him Narayana. The yogis know him as the empty Brahman. To the liberated he is the perfect Self. Tuka says: for us he is the Lord we enjoy in form.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is laying out his path plainly: the way to every spiritual state is loving devotion to God in form, and the form hidden in the heart only shows itself once the love is sincere. The engine of it is the Name of Hari, which he calls both seed and fruit, the sum of all merit and duty, enough by itself to cut the bonds of birth and death. He insists the practice needs no withdrawal: keep your place in life and your inherited duties, add no other labor, because the single Name of Vithoba suffices, and the marks of devotion appear once God settles within. The close sets his choice against the alternatives, naming how the Vedas, the yogis, and the liberated each conceive God, and claiming that for ordinary devotees like him the Lord one can love in visible form is the true gift.

GATHA 0646

Devotion to Vitthal

Litany of names, free me from bondage

मराठी मूळ

श्रीअनंता मधुसूदना । पद्मनाभा नारायणा । जगव्यापका जनादनना । आनंदघना अविनाशा ॥१॥
 सकळदेवा आदिदेवा । कृपाळुवा जी केशवा । महा महानुभवा । सदाशिवा सहजरुपा ॥२॥
 चक्रधरा विश्वंभरा । गरुडध्वजा करुणाकरा । सहस्रपादा सहस्रकरा । क्षीरसागरा शेषशयना ॥३॥
 कमलनयना कमलापती । कामिनीमोहना मदनमूर्ती । भवतारका धरित्या िक्षती । वामनमूर्ती त्रिविक्रमा ॥४॥
 अगा ये सगुणा निर्गुणा । जगज्जनित्या जगज्जीवना । वसुदेवदेवकीनंदना । बाळरांगणा बाळकृष्णा ॥५॥
 तुका आला लोटांगणी । मज ठाव द्यावा जी चरणीं । हे चि करीतसें विनवणी । भवबंधनीं सोडवावे ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O infinite Madhusudana, O Padmanabha, Narayana, all-pervading Janardana, fullness of bliss, imperishable one. O God of all gods, primal deity, O merciful Keshava, great among the great, O Sadashiva of innate form.

Bearer of the discus, sustainer of the universe, bearer of the Garuda banner, fountain of compassion, thousand-footed, thousand-armed, resting on the serpent in the ocean of milk. Lotus-eyed, Lord of Lakshmi, enchanter of hearts, beautiful as Madana, upholder of the earth, O Vamana of the Trivikrama form.

O Lord of qualities and beyond qualities, creator and life of the world, O delight of Vasudeva and Devaki, crawling infant, child Krishna. Says Tuka, I have come prostrating. Grant me a place at Your feet.

This alone is my plea: free me from the bonds of worldly existence.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O infinite one, Madhusudana, Padmanabha, Narayana, all-pervading Janardana, dense with bliss, undying one. God of all gods, first deity, merciful Keshava, greatest of the great, Sadashiva, you of the natural form. Bearer of the discus, holder of the universe, you with the Garuda banner, well of compassion, thousand-footed, thousand-armed, you who lie on the serpent in the ocean of milk. Lotus-eyed, Lord of Lakshmi, charmer of hearts, lovely as Madana, ferry across this world, upholder of the earth, Vamana who became Trivikrama. O you who are with form and beyond form, maker and life of the world, delight of Vasudeva and Devaki, crawling child, child Krishna. Tuka has come and fallen flat at your feet. Give me a place there. This is my one plea: free me from the bonds of worldly life.

WHAT IT MEANS

Almost the whole poem is a rolling litany of the Lord's names and forms, each one a fresh angle on the same God. Tukaram heaps them up deliberately, the slayer of Madhu, the lotus-naveled, the discus-bearer asleep on the cosmic serpent, the dwarf Vamana who strode the worlds as Trivikrama, the crawling child Krishna, naming him at once as the one with form and the one beyond form. The piling on is itself the devotion: he is praising God from every direction his mind can reach. Only at the very end does he state his request, and it is a single thing. He falls flat at the feet and asks for a place there, and for release from the bonds of worldly existence.

GATHA 0647

The Power of the Name

The Name, God held in the heart

मराठी मूळ

आतां येणें बळें पंढरीनाथ । जवळी राहिला तिष्ठत । पाहातां न कळे जयाचा अंत । तो चि हृदयांत घालूं आतां ॥

1॥

विसरोनि आपुला देहपणभाव । नामें चि भुलविला पंढरीराव । न विचारी याती कुळ नांव । लागावया पाव संतांचे

॥2॥

बरें वर्म आलें आमुचिया हातां । हिंडावें धुंडावें न लगतां । होय अविनाश सहाकारी दाता । चतुर्भुज संता परि धाकें

॥3॥

होय आवडी सानें थोर । रूप सुंदर मनोहर । भक्तिप्रय लोभापर । करी आदर याचकपणें ॥4॥

तें वर्म आलें आमुच्या हाता । ह्मणोनि शरण निघालों संतां । तुका ह्मणे पंढरीनाथा । न सोडी आतां जीवें भावें ॥

5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now by this power the Lord of Pandhari has remained standing close at hand. Looking upon Him, one cannot fathom His limits, yet that very One I will now place within my heart.

Forgetting all body-consciousness, I have been captivated by the Name alone. The Lord of Pandhari does not consider caste, lineage, or reputation when it comes to touching the feet of saints.

A wonderful secret has come into our hands. Without searching or seeking, the imperishable and generous Giver appears, though He stands in awe before His saints like a four-armed deity.

He becomes large or small according to one's love. His form is beautiful and enchanting.

He loves devotion and shows respect even as a suppliant. That secret has come into our hands, and so I have gone to the saints for refuge.

Says Tuka, O Lord of Pandhari, I will not let go of You now, with all my life and soul.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now by this power Pandharinath has stayed standing close at hand. Look at him, and you cannot find his end; yet that very One I will now set inside my heart. Forgetting all sense of my own body, I am charmed by the Name alone. The Lord of Pandhari does not ask after caste, family, or name when it comes to touching the feet of his saints. A good secret has come into our hands. Without wandering and searching, the undying, generous Giver appears; four-armed, yet he stands in awe before his saints. He grows small or great according to your love. His form is beautiful, stealing the mind. He loves devotion and gives way to it, showing respect like one who comes begging. That secret has come into our hands, and so I have gone to the saints for refuge. Tuka says: O Pandharinath, I will not let you go now, with all my life and heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram has found the secret that lets him hold the boundless God inside his own heart. The endless One, whom no looking can fathom, comes close and stays, drawn not by ritual but by the Name and by love, and he asks nothing about caste, lineage, or reputation when it is his saints he attends to. The wonder Tukaram names is the Lord's strange humility: the four-armed God stands in awe before his devotees, grows small or great according to the love offered him, and behaves like a respectful suppliant before those who love him. Because this secret of the Name has come into his hands, Tukaram takes refuge with the saints who carry it. And having grasped the Lord, he makes the only vow that matters: he will not let go.

GATHA 0648

Confession and Sin

Confession, surrender with empty hands

मराठी मूळ

माझा तंव खुंटला उपाव । जेणें तुझे आतुडती पाव । करुं भक्ति तरि नाही भाव । नाही हातीं जीव कवणेविशीं ॥

1॥

धर्म करुं तरि नाही चित्त । दान देऊं तरि नाही वित्त । नेणें पुजों ब्राह्मण अतीत । नाही भूतदया पोटा हातीं ॥2॥

नेणें गुरुदास्य संतसेवन । जप तप अनुष्ठान । नव्हे वैराग्य वनसेवन । नव्हे दमन इंद्रियांसी ॥3॥

तीर्थ करुं तरि मन नये सवें । व्रत करुं तरि विधि नेणें स्वभावे । देव जरि आहे ह्मणों मजसवें । तरि आपपरावें न

वंचे ॥4॥

ह्मणोनि जालों शरणागत । तुझा दास मी अंकित । यास कांहीं न लगे संचित । जालों निश्चित तुका ह्मणे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My remedies are exhausted; I have no means to reach Your feet. To practice devotion I lack true feeling; I have no control over my life in any way.

To perform charity I have no wealth; to give donations I have no money. I do not know how to honor brahmins or guests.

I have no compassion in my hands or belly to extend to living beings. I do not know the service of a guru, attendance upon saints, chanting, austerity, or ritual practice.

Renunciation and forest-dwelling are beyond me; I cannot subdue my senses. To go on pilgrimage, my mind will not come along.

To keep a vow, I do not know the proper way. If I say God is with me, I deceive both myself and others.

Therefore I have become one who surrenders. I am Your servant, marked as Yours.

This requires no accumulated merit. Says Tuka, I am at peace with this.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My tricks are all used up. I have no way to reach your feet. I try to do devotion, but I have no true feeling. My life is not in my own hands at all. I would do my duty, but my mind will not stay on it. I would give in charity, but I have no wealth. I do not know how to honor a brahmin or a guest. I have no compassion in me to give to living things. I do not know how to serve a guru or wait on the saints. I do not know chanting, austerity, or rites. I have no renunciation, no life in the forest. I cannot rule my senses. I would go on pilgrimage, but my mind will not come along. I would keep a vow, but I do not know the proper way. If I say God is with me, I am lying to myself and to others. So I have come to surrender. I am your servant, marked as yours. This needs no store of merit. Tuka says: I am at peace now.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays out every path to God and admits he can walk none of them. He has no feeling for devotion, no wealth for charity, no knowledge of ritual, no mastery of his senses, no will even for pilgrimage. The point is not self-pity but a clearing of the ground: he refuses to pretend he has earned anything. Having nothing in his hands,

he has only one move left, which is to surrender and become Vitthal's servant outright. The relief in the closing line comes from this: when you stop claiming merit you do not need, peace arrives. Surrender asks for empty hands, not full ones.

GATHA 0649

Prayers

Prayer, the unceasing spring

मराठी मूळ

तरि म्यां आळवावे कोणा । कोण हे पुरवील वासना । तुजवांचूनि नारायणा । लावी स्तना कृपावंते ॥1॥
 आपुला न विचारी सिण । न धरीं अंगसंगें भिन्न । अंगीकारिलें राखें दीन । देई जीवदान आवडीचें ॥२॥
 माझिये मनासिहे आस । नित्य सेवावा ब्रह्मरस । अखंड चरणींचा वास । पुरवीं आस याचकाची ॥३॥
 माझिया संचिताचा ठेवा । तेणें हे वाट दाविली देवा । एवढा आदराचा हेवा । मार्गें सेवादान आवडीनें ॥४॥
 आळवीन करुणावचनीं । आणीक गोड न लगे मनीं । निद्रा जागृती आणि स्वप्नीं । धरिलें ध्यानीं मनीं रूप ॥५॥
 आतां भेट न भेटतां आहे । किंवा नाहीं ऐसें विचारुनि पाहें । लागला झरा अखंड आहे । तुका ह्मणे साहे केलें अंतरीं

॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Then whom shall I call upon? Who will fulfill this longing? Without You, O Narayana, who will nurse me at the breast of mercy? Do not consider Your own weariness; do not hold Yourself apart from me. Having accepted me, protect this helpless one; grant me the gift of life through Your love.

This is the hope of my heart: to drink the nectar of Brahman constantly, to dwell forever at Your feet. Fulfill the desire of this beggar.

My accumulated destiny is my true treasure; it showed me the way to You, O God. Behind this is the yearning for devoted service, given with love.

I will call upon You with words of tenderness; nothing else appeals to my mind. In sleep, waking, and dream, I hold Your form in contemplation.

Now, whether we meet or do not, let me examine this: the spring that has begun to flow is unceasing. Says Tuka, endurance has been established within.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Then whom shall I call on? Who will fill this longing? Without you, Narayana, who will hold me to the breast of mercy? Do not count your own weariness. Do not hold yourself apart from me. You have taken me up; now keep this helpless one. Give me the gift of life out of love. This is the hope of my heart: to drink the nectar of Brahman always, to live forever at your feet. Fill this beggar's hope. My store of destiny is my real treasure; it showed me the way to you, God. Behind it is the longing to serve you with love. I will call you with tender words. Nothing else tastes sweet to my mind. Asleep, awake, and dreaming, I hold your form in my thought. Now, whether we meet or do not meet, let me look and see. The spring has begun to flow, and it does not stop. Tuka says: endurance has been set firm within me.

WHAT IT MEANS

The poem opens in need: with no other refuge, Tukaram turns to Narayana as a child turns to the breast, asking to be held and not held at arm's length. He names his one desire, to drink the nectar of Brahman and dwell at God's feet, and counts his very destiny as treasure because it led him here. Then it shifts. Waking, sleeping, and dreaming, the Lord's form is steadily before his mind, so that whether or not the longed-for meeting comes no longer rattles him. The image of the unceasing spring says it plainly: love has become continuous, self-sustaining, no longer dependent on an answer. The closing word, endurance set firm within, is the fruit. The longing has turned into a settled steadiness.

GATHA 0650

The Power of the Name

The Name, regimen for the soul's cure

मराठी मूळ

हें चि भवरोगाचें औषध । जन्म जरा तुटे व्याध । आणीक कांहीं नव्हे बाध । करील वध षड्वर्गा ॥1॥
 सांवळें रूप ल्यावें डोळां । सा चौ अठरांचा गोळा । पदर लागों नेदी खळा । नाममंत्रमाळा विष्णुसहस्र ॥ध्रु॥
 भोजना न द्यावें अन्न । जेणें चुके अनुपान । तरीं च घेतल्याचा गुण । होईल जाण सत्य भाव ॥2॥
 नये निघों आपुलिया घरा । बाहेर लागों नये वारा । बहु बोलणें तें सारा । संग दुसरा वर्जावा ॥3॥
 पास तें एक द्यावें वरी । नवनीताची होईल परी । होईल गुसिळलें तें निवारी । सार भीतरी नाहीं तया ॥4॥
 न्हायें अनुतापीं पांघरें दिशा । स्वेद निघों दे अवघी आशा । होसिल मार्गे होतासि तैसा । तुका ह्मणे दशा भोगीं
 वैराग्य ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This is the remedy for the disease of worldly existence. It severs the afflictions of birth and old age.

No other harm can stand against it; it will slay the six enemies of the soul. Let the eyes absorb that dark-hued form, the essence that conquers the six senses, the eighteen chapters, and the six philosophies.

Do not let the wicked approach. The garland of the Name, the Vishnu Sahasranama, is the mantra.

Do not feed the body with food that disrupts the proper regimen, for only then will the medicine taken bear fruit and true faith will arise. Do not leave your own home or let outside winds touch you.

Curtail excessive speech; avoid the company of others. Apply one poultice on top: the effect will be like butter churned from buttermilk, separating what is essential from what is not.

Bathe in repentance, clothe yourself in renunciation, and let all craving be sweated out. You will become what you once were.

Says Tuka, experience the state of dispassion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This is the medicine for the disease of worldly life. It cuts off birth, old age, and sickness. No other harm can stand against it. It will kill the six enemies inside you. Take that dark form into your eyes. It is the essence that masters the six senses, the eighteen chapters, the six schools. Let no wicked thing come near. The garland of the Name, the Vishnu Sahasranama, is your mantra. Do not feed the body food that breaks the regimen, for only then does the medicine work and true faith comes. Do not leave your own house; let no outside wind touch you. Cut down too much talk; avoid other company. Lay one poultice on top, and it will turn out like butter churned from buttermilk, the essence parted from what is hollow. Bathe in repentance, wrap yourself in renunciation, sweat out every craving. You will become what you once were. Tuka says: live in the state of dispassion.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram treats the round of birth and death as an illness and prescribes a cure like a physician giving a regimen. The medicine is the dark form of God taken into the eyes and the Name held on the lips. But a medicine fails if the patient breaks the diet, so he lists the conditions: stay home from harmful company, cut idle talk, refuse what disrupts the treatment. The churning image names the goal, to separate the true self from the hollow accretions the way butter is separated from buttermilk. Repentance, renunciation, and sweated-out craving are not punishments but the bath and the cure, and what they restore is your original nature, what you once were before the disease set in.

GATHA 0651

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, do not waste the human birth

मराठी मूळ

मागुता हा चि जन्म पावसी । भोगिलें सुखदुःख जाणसी । हें तों न घडे रे सायासीं । कां रे अंध होसी जाणोनियां ॥

1॥

लक्ष चौःयाशी न चुके फेरा । गर्भवासीं यातना थोरा । येउनि पडसी संदेहपुरा । वोळसा थोरा मायाजाळीं ॥2॥

पशु काय पापपुण्य जाणती । उत्तम मध्यम भोग भोगिती । कांहीं एक उपजतां मरती । बहिरीं अंध होती पांगुळ

मुकीं ॥3॥

नरदेह निधान लागलें हातीं । उत्तम सार उत्तम गती । होइन देव चि ह्मणती ते होती । तरि कां चित्तीं न धरावें ॥4॥

क्षण एक मन िस्थर करूनी । साव होई डोळे उघडोनी । पाहें वेद बोलिले पुराणीं । तुका विनवणी करीतसे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You will take this very same birth again and know the pleasure and pain you have already tasted. This cannot be gained through any effort; why then do you willingly become blind? The cycle of eighty-four lakh births cannot be escaped.

The torments in the womb are immense. You fall again into the city of doubt, entangled deeply in the snare of illusion.

Do animals know sin or virtue? They experience enjoyments of high, middle, and low degree. Some die the moment they are born.

Some are deaf, some blind, some lame, some mute. This human body is a treasure that has come into your hands, the supreme essence, the highest path.

Those who say they will become God themselves do become so. Why then not take it to heart? Make the mind steady for even a moment, become alert, and open your eyes.

Look at what the Vedas and Puranas have declared. Says Tuka, this is my humble plea.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You will be born into this very life again and taste the same pleasure and pain you already know. This birth cannot be won back by any effort, so why do you go blind on purpose? The round of eighty-four lakh births is not escaped. The torment in the womb is great. You fall again into the city of doubt, tangled deep in the net of illusion. Do animals know sin from virtue? They take their pleasures high, middle, and low. Some die the moment they are born. Some are deaf, some blind, some lame, some mute. This human body is a treasure that has come into your hands, the highest essence, the highest path. Those who say they will become God do become God. Why then not take it to heart? Make the mind still for one moment, wake up, open your eyes. Look at what the Vedas and Puranas have said. Tuka says: this is my humble plea.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is shaking a sleeper awake. The human birth, he insists, is a rare treasure, the one form able to tell right from wrong and reach the highest goal, while animals only suffer their lots blindly and many forms perish at once. To squander this birth is to choose blindness with your eyes open, knowing the wheel of countless births and the agony of the womb still turns. The stakes are exact: those who set their will on God actually reach God, so the waste is not of comfort but of the single real chance. The closing plea is not a threat but an appeal: be still for even a moment, look at what scripture says, and use the body you have been given.

GATHA 0652

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the Lord who serves his servants

मराठी मूळ

दास्य करी दासांचें । उणें न साहे तयांचें । वाढिलें ठायींचें । भानें टाकोनियां धांवे ॥1॥
 ऐसा कृपेचा सागर । विटे उभा कटीं कर । सर्वस्वें उदार । भक्तांलागीं प्रगटे ॥ध्रु॥
 हृदयीं श्रीवत्सलांछन । मिरवी भक्तांचें भूषण । नाहीं तयाचा सीण । सुख धरिलें लातेचें ॥2॥
 सत्यभामा दान करी । उजुर नाहीं अंगीकारी । सेवकाच्या शिरीं । धरुनि चाले पादुका ॥3॥
 राखे दारवंटा बळीचा । रथी जाला अर्जुनाचा । दास सेवकांचा । होय साचा अंकित ॥4॥
 भिडा नो बोलवें पुंडलिकाशीं । उभा मर्यादा पाठीशीं । तुका ह्याणे ऐसी । कां रे न भजा माउली ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He serves His own servants and cannot bear any lack in them. He leaves His own seat and runs to provide for them.

Such is that ocean of mercy, standing on the brick with hands on His waist. He is generous with everything He has and manifests for the sake of His devotees.

He wears the Shrivatsa mark upon His chest, displaying the ornament of His devotees' love. He knows no weariness and has embraced the joy of being kicked by the feet of His beloved.

When Satyabhama made a gift of Him, He accepted without objection. He carries the sandals of His servant upon His own head.

He guards the doorway of Bali's realm. He became the charioteer of Arjuna.

He truly becomes the servant of His servants, marked as their own. He will not interrupt Pundalika; He stands patiently behind, honoring his devotion.

Says Tuka, why do you not worship such a Mother?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He serves his own servants. He cannot bear to see them lack anything. He leaves his own seat and runs, scattering the dishes, to feed them. Such is that ocean of mercy, standing on the brick with his hands on his hips. He is generous with all he has, and he shows himself for his devotees' sake. He wears the Shrivatsa mark on his chest, the ornament his devotees' love has placed there. He knows no weariness; he took as joy even being kicked by his beloved's foot. When Satyabhama gave him away as a gift, he accepted with no objection. He carries his servant's sandals on his own head. He guards Bali's doorway. He became Arjuna's charioteer. He truly becomes the servant of his servants, marked as theirs. He will not break in on Pundalika; he stands patiently behind him, honoring his devotion. Tuka says: such a Mother, why will you not worship her?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the usual order upside down: God is not the master to be served but the servant who serves his devotees, running with the food and leaving his own throne behind. He gathers the well-known stories as proof, the Shrivatsa mark, the sage's kick taken as joy, Satyabhama's gift, the sandals carried on his head, Bali's doorway, Arjuna's chariot, and Pundalika kept waiting while God stands patiently behind on the brick at Pandhari. The stakes are a picture of what divine love actually looks like: not lofty distance but eager, self-forgetting attendance. By calling this God a Mother at the end, he closes the gap entirely, and asks the only question that then makes sense: with a Lord like this, why hold back your worship?

GATHA 0653

The Saints

Saints, the free ones who carry Hari's nature

मराठी मूळ

हरि तैसे हरीचे दास । नाहीं तयां भय मोह चिंता आस । होउनि राहाती उदास । बळकट कांस भक्तीची ॥१॥
 धरुनि पाय तजिलें जन । न लगे मान मृत्तिकाधन । कंठीं नाम अमृताचें पान । न लगे आन ऐसें जालें ॥२॥
 वाव तरी उदंड च पोटीं । धीर सिंधु ऐसे जगजेठी । कामक्रोधा न सुटे मिठी । वेठी तरी गिःहे राबवीती ॥३॥
 बळें तरि नांगवती काळा । लीन तरि सकळांच्या तळा । उदार देहासी सकळा । जाणोनि कळा सर्व नेणते ॥४॥
 संसार तो तयांचा दास । मोक्ष तें पाहातसे वास । रिद्धिसिद्ध देशटा त्रास । न शिवति यास वैष्णवजन ॥५॥
 जन्ममृत्युस्वप्नांसारिखें । आप त्यां न दिसे पारखें । तुका ह्याने अखंडित सुखें । वाणी वदे मुखें प्रेमा अमृताची ॥

5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The servants of Hari are just like Hari Himself. They have no fear, no attachment, no worry, no craving.

They remain detached, holding firmly to the rope of devotion. Having clasped His feet, they have abandoned worldly concerns.

They need no honor or earthly riches. With the Name as nectar upon their lips, they desire nothing else.

Their hearts are vast and spacious; their patience is deep as the ocean. These lords of the world have subjugated lust and anger, making them labor as household servants.

In strength they overpower even Death, yet in humility they are the lowest of the low. They are generous with their bodies to all, and though they know all arts, they remain as the unknowing.

Worldly life itself becomes their servant, and liberation waits upon them eagerly. Miraculous powers circle them like anxious attendants yet cannot touch these devotees of Vishnu.

Birth and death are like dreams to them; nothing appears foreign to their eyes. Says Tuka, in unbroken happiness their tongues speak the nectar of love.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The servants of Hari are just like Hari himself. They have no fear, no attachment, no worry, no craving. They stay unconcerned, gripping the rope of devotion hard. They have caught his feet and left the world behind. They want no honor and no earthly riches. With the Name as nectar on their lips, they desire nothing else. Their hearts are wide and open; their patience is deep as the sea. These lords of the world have crushed lust and anger and set them to work like household servants. In strength they overpower even Death; in humbleness they lie below everyone. They are open-handed with their own bodies to all, and though they know every art, they live as if they know nothing. Worldly life becomes their servant; liberation waits eagerly on them. Powers and perfections circle them like nervous attendants and cannot touch these devotees of Vishnu. Birth and death are like dreams to them; nothing looks foreign to their eyes. Tuka says: in unbroken happiness their tongues speak the nectar of love.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes what the saint has become: so wholly given to Hari that he takes on Hari's own nature, free of fear, craving, and worry. The freedom is concrete. Lust and anger, which rule most people, have been mastered and put to labor like servants; honor and wealth hold no pull; even death is overpowered while the saint lies humbly below everyone. The point is that liberation and miraculous powers, the very goals others chase, now wait on the saint and cannot touch him, because he wanted only the Name. Seeing birth and death as passing dreams and nothing as foreign, he lives in steady happiness, and what overflows is not power but love. The poem holds this up not to flatter saints but to show what devotion does to a person.

GATHA 0654

Worldly Life

Worldly life, the cry of the trapped soul

मराठी मूळ

बहुत जाचलों संसारीं । वसें गभाअ मातेच्या उदरीं । लक्ष चौऱ्याशी योनिद्वारीं । जालों भिकारी याचक ॥१॥
जिणें पराधीन आणिकां हातीं । दृढ पाशीं बांधलों संचितीं । प्रारब्ध क्रियमाण सांगाती । भोवंडिती सत्ता आपुलिया
॥२॥

न भरे पोट नाहीं विसांवा । नाहीं नेम एक ठाव गांवा । नाहीं सत्ता न फिरे ऐसी देवा । लाहे जीवा खापरीं तडफडी ॥
२॥

काळ बहुत गेले ऐसिया रीती । आणीक पुढें नेणों किती । खंडणा नाहीं पुनरावृत्ती । मज कल्पांतीं तरी वेगळें ॥३॥
ऐसें दुःख कोण हरील माझें । कोणा भार घालूं आपुलें ओझें । भवसिंधुतारक नाम तुझें । धांवसि काजें आडलिया
॥४॥

आतां धांव घालीं नारायणा । मजकारणें रंका दीना । गुण न विचारिं अवगुणा । तुका करुणा भाकीतसे ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have suffered greatly in worldly life, dwelling in the womb of a mother, wandering through eighty-four lakh lakh forms of birth, becoming a beggar and a supplicant. My existence is dependent on others.

I am bound tightly by the ropes of accumulated karma. Fate, destiny, and ongoing actions are my companions; they spin me around by their own authority.

My belly is never full, there is no rest. There is no settled home, no village, no sovereignty that does not change.

The soul writhes in this broken vessel. Ages have passed in this manner, and I know not how many more lie ahead.

There is no end to this repeated cycle; not even at the end of time will I be freed. Who will remove my sorrow? On whom shall I place the burden of my load? Your name is the raft that carries one across the ocean of worldly existence; You rush to the aid of those in trouble.

Now rush to me, O Narayana, for the sake of this poor, lowly one. Says Tuka, do not weigh my virtues against my faults; I plead for compassion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have suffered much in worldly life. I lived in a mother's womb. Through eighty-four lakh kinds of birth I became a beggar and a supplicant. My life is in others' hands, not my own. I am bound tight by the ropes of stored-up karma. Fate, destiny, and present deeds are my companions, and they spin me around by their own power. My belly is never full; there is no rest. There is no settled home, no village, no power that does not change. The soul writhes in this broken pot. Ages have passed this way, and I do not know how many more lie ahead. There is no end to this returning; not even at the end of time will I be free. Who will take away my sorrow? On whom can I lay down my load? Your name is the raft that carries one over the ocean of worldly life. You run to the aid of those in trouble. Now come running, Narayana, for this poor lowly one. Tuka says: do not weigh my virtues against my faults; I beg for your compassion.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the soul's cry from inside the trap. Tukaram piles up the marks of bondage, the womb, the countless births, the ropes of karma, a belly never filled and a home that never holds, to show a life spun helplessly by forces that are not his own. The despair is real: he sees no end to the returning, not even at the end of time. The turn comes when he names the one thing not bound to that wheel, the Name of God, the raft across the ocean. So the helpless catalogue becomes the ground of his plea: precisely because he can do nothing, he asks Narayana to come running and to grant mercy without first weighing his merits, which he has already confessed he lacks.

GATHA 0655

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, use the time while it lasts

मराठी मूळ

जंव हें सकळ सिद्ध आहे । हात चालावया पाये । तंव तूं आपुलें स्वहित पाहें । तीर्थयात्रे जायें चुकों नको ॥१॥
जंव काळ असे दुरी ठेला । तंव तूं हरिगुण गायें आइक वहिला । मनीं भाव धरुनि भला । न वंचें त्याला चुकों नको

॥२॥

जोडोनि धन न घलीं माती । ब्रह्मवृंदें पूजन इति । सत्य आचरण दया भूतीं । करीं सांगाती चुकों नको ॥३॥
दशा यौवन बाणली अंगीं । पांगिला नव्हे विषयसंगीं । काम क्रोध लोभ मोह त्यागीं । राहें संतसंगीं चुकों नको ॥

॥४॥

मग तेथें न चले कांहीं । सत्ता संपदा राहेल ठायींच्या ठायीं । पुढें संचित जाईल ग्वाही । तुका ह्मणे ते ही यमआज्ञा

॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

While all your faculties are still intact, your hands and feet still move, look to your own welfare. Go on pilgrimage; do not neglect it.

While Death still stands at a distance, sing and listen to the virtues of Hari, quickly. Hold sincere devotion in your heart; do not cheat that impulse.

Do not bury your earned wealth in the ground. Worship the brahmins, practice truth and compassion toward all beings.

Make these your companions; do not neglect them. While the bloom of youth is upon your body, do not scatter yourself in sense-pleasures.

Abandon lust, anger, greed, and delusion. Stay in the company of saints; do not neglect this.

Later, nothing will avail. Wealth and power will remain where they are.

Ahead, only your accumulated deeds will testify. Says Tuka, remember that Yama's judgment awaits.

IN PLAIN WORDS

While everything is still ready, while your hands and feet still move, look to your own good. Go on pilgrimage; do not miss it. While Death still stands far off, sing and hear the praises of Hari, and be quick. Hold good devotion in your heart; do not betray it; do not miss it. Do not bury the wealth you earn in the ground. Worship the company of brahmins. Practice truth and compassion toward all beings. Make these your companions; do not miss them. While the bloom of youth is on your body, do not scatter yourself in sense-pleasures. Give up lust, anger, greed, and delusion. Stay in the company of saints; do not miss it. Later nothing will help. Power and wealth will stay right where they are. Ahead, only your stored-up deeds will speak for you. Tuka says: and that too is Yama's command.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses one point: act now, while you still can. Every line measures the gift against the closing window, hands and feet that still move, Death still at a distance, youth still on the body. He names the things to do while there is time, pilgrimage, the praises of Hari, charity instead of hoarded wealth, truth and compassion, the company of saints, and the abandoning of lust, anger, greed, and delusion. The stakes are stated plainly at the end: when the time runs out, power and wealth stay behind, and only your deeds go forward to testify before Yama, the lord of death. The urgency is not fear for its own sake; it is the simple fact that the chance is held open only for a while.

GATHA 0656

Longing and Separation

Longing, holding God to his word

मराठी मूळ

एक पांडुरंगा एक मात । कांहीं बोलणें आहे एकांत । आह्वां जरी तारील संचित । तरी उचित काय तुझें ॥१॥
 उसनें फेडितां धर्म तो कोण । काय तया मानवेल जन । काय गा मिरवूनि भूषण । वांयां थोरपण जनांमध्ये ॥२॥
 अन्न जरी न मिळे तयासी देणें । आगांतुक पात्र उचित दान । उपकार तरी धनमंत्रीपणें । जरी देणेंघेणें नाहीं आशा
 ॥३॥
 शूर तों तयासी बोलिजे जाणा । पाठीशीं घालूनि राखे दीना । पार पुण्य नाहीं त्या भूषणा । ऐक नारायणा वचन हें
 ॥४॥
 आतां पुढें बोलणें तें काई । मज तारिसी तरी च सही । वचन आपुलें सिद्धी नेई । तुका ह्मणे तई मज कळसी ॥
 ४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Listen, O Panduranga, to one thing. I have something to say in private.

If my accumulated merit alone could save me, then what would be Your role? When one merely repays a debt, what virtue is there in that? Will the world respect such a thing? Why flaunt ornaments of greatness among people for nothing? If a gift is not given to one who has nothing to eat, if charity is not offered to the deserving guest, if beneficence is claimed only through the possession of wealth and power when there is no real selfless giving, then what is it worth? A true hero is one who shelters the weak behind him. There is no limit to the merit of such a one.

Hear this, O Narayana. Now what more is there to say? If You save me, then indeed it is proven.

Fulfill Your own word. Says Tuka, only then will I know You.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Listen, Panduranga, to one thing. I have something to say in private. If my own stored-up merit could save me, then what would your part be? When a man only pays back a debt, where is the virtue in that? Would the world respect it? Why flaunt the ornament of greatness among people for nothing? If you give no food to one who has none, if you offer no charity to the guest who deserves it, if you call it kindness only because you have wealth and power, when there is no real giving, what is it worth? A true hero, know this, is the one who shelters the weak behind him. There is no limit to the merit of that ornament. Hear this, Narayana. Now what more is there to say? If you save me, then it is truly proven. Make your own word come true. Tuka says: only then will I know you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes a quiet, almost legal argument to Panduranga. If his own accumulated merit were enough to save him, God would have no role and would deserve no credit, the way repaying a plain debt earns no gratitude. So he turns it around: real greatness is not in giving to those who can repay or in boasting of wealth, but in sheltering the weak who can offer nothing back. By that standard the truly helpless devotee is exactly the occasion for God to show his glory. The challenge in the closing lines is bold but reverent: God has promised to save those who surrender, so let him make his own word come true, because only then, Tukaram says, will he truly know who God is.

GATHA 0657

The Power of the Name

The Name, the final arrow at the hour of death

मराठी मूळ

चांगलें नाम गोमटें रूप । निवती डोळे हरती ताप । विठ्ठल विठ्ठल हा जप । प्रगट स्वल्प । अति सार ॥1॥
 शस्त्र हे निर्वाणीचा बाण । निकट समय अवसान । कोठें योजेल दश दान । खंडी नारायण दुःख चिंतनें ॥२॥
 सकळ श्रेष्ठांचें मत । पावे सिद्धी पाववी अनंत । ह्यणोनि व्हावें शरणागत । आहे उचित एवढें चि ॥३॥
 ह्यणोनि रुसलों संसारा । सर्प विखार हा पांढरा । तुजशीं अंतर रे दातारा । या चि दावेदारानिमित्त ॥४॥
 येणें मज भोगविल्या खाणी । नसतां छंद लाविला मनीं । माजलों मी माझे भ्रमणीं । जाली बोंडणी विटंबना ॥५॥
 पावलों केलियाचा दंड । खाणी भोगविल्या उदंड । आतां केला पाहिजे खंड । तुका दंडवत घाली देवा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What a beautiful Name, what a lovely form. The eyes find rest and all suffering is removed.

This chant of "Vitthal, Vitthal" is a compact yet supremely potent practice. It is the ultimate weapon, the final arrow.

At the critical hour of death, where can one arrange ten kinds of charity? Narayana destroys all sorrow through contemplation. This is the consensus of all the great ones.

It brings fulfillment and leads to the Infinite. Therefore one should surrender; this much alone is proper.

I have turned away from worldly life in disgust, for it is a white serpent full of poison. I am kept from You, O generous Lord, because of these worldly claimants.

They have made me suffer through countless births, planting unnecessary desires in my mind. I was puffed up with the madness of "I and mine," and was stripped and humiliated.

I have received the punishment for my deeds and endured enormous suffering. Now a stop must be put to all this.

Says Tuka, I prostrate before You, O God.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What a good Name, what a lovely form. The eyes are cooled and the burning is taken away. This chant of Vitthal, Vitthal is small and plain to do, yet it is the very essence. It is the weapon, the last arrow at the end. At the close hour of death, where could you arrange ten kinds of charity? Narayana cuts off all sorrow when you think on him. This is what all the great ones agree. It brings fulfillment and leads to the Infinite. So one should surrender; this much alone is right. So I have grown sick of worldly life; it is a white serpent full of poison. I am kept from you, my generous Lord, by these very claimants. They made me suffer through countless births and planted needless cravings in my mind. I swelled up in the madness of I and mine, and was stripped and shamed. I have taken the punishment for my deeds and suffered through endless births. Now there must be an end to it. Tuka says: I lay myself flat before you, God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram weighs the simple chant of Vitthal's Name against every elaborate rite and finds it the one thing equal to the crisis of death. At that hour you cannot arrange ten kinds of charity, but you can say the Name, which he calls the final arrow, and which the great ones agree leads all the way to the Infinite. Against this he sets worldly life as a white serpent: it looks harmless yet is full of poison, and it is the worldly claims of I and mine that have kept him from God and dragged him through countless births. Having taken the punishment for his own deeds, he asks for the cycle to be cut off. The closing prostration is the whole teaching in one act: stop bargaining, surrender, and let the Name carry you.

GATHA 0658

The Nature of God

Nature of God, every superlative belongs to him

मराठी मूळ

चांगला तरी पूर्णकाम । गोड तरी याचें चि नाम । दयाळ तरी अवघा धर्म । भला तरी दासा श्रम होऊं नेदी ॥1॥
 उदार तरी लक्ष्मीयेसी । जुंझार तरी किळकाळासी । चतुर तरी गुणांची च रासी । जाणता तयासी तो एक ॥ध्रु॥
 जुनाट तरी बहु काळा । न कळे जयाची लीळा । नेणता गोवळीं गोवळा । लाघवी अवळाभुलवणा ॥2॥
 खेळतो येणें चि खेळावा । नट तो येणें चि आवगावा । लपोनि जीवीं न कळे जीवा । धरितां देवा नातुडेसी ॥4॥
 उंच तरी बहुत चि उंच । नीच तरी बहुत चि नीच । तुका ह्मणे बोलिलों साच । नाहीं अहाच पूजा केली ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If one speaks of someone truly excellent, He is perfectly fulfilled. If one speaks of sweetness, His Name alone is sweet.

If one speaks of compassion, He is all righteousness. If one speaks of goodness, He does not let His servants suffer.

If one speaks of generosity, His is the generosity that Lakshmi herself serves. If one speaks of a warrior, He fights Death itself.

If one speaks of cleverness, He is a treasury of virtues. The one who truly knows, He alone is that one.

If one speaks of ancientness, He is older than time, His play beyond comprehension. Among the cowherds, He was an innocent cowherd; yet He is the most skillful trickster and enchanter.

He plays the game only in this manner. He is such an actor.

Hiding within the soul, He is unknown to the soul itself; when you try to grasp Him, He eludes you. If one speaks of height, He is immeasurably high.

If one speaks of lowliness, He is immeasurably low. Says Tuka, I have spoken the truth; this is no flattering worship.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If you speak of the excellent, he is the one whose every wish is full. If you speak of sweetness, only his Name is sweet. If you speak of mercy, he is righteousness itself. If you speak of goodness, he will not let his servant grow tired. If you speak of generosity, his is the giving that Lakshmi herself waits on. If you speak of a warrior, he fights Death itself. If you speak of cleverness, he is a heap of all virtues. The one who truly knows him, he alone is that knower. If you speak of what is ancient, he is older than all time, and his play cannot be understood. Among the cowherds he was an innocent cowherd, yet he is the most skillful trickster and enchanter. He plays the game only in his own way. He is such an actor. Hidden inside the soul, he is unknown to the soul itself; when you try to grasp him, he slips away. If you speak of height, he is far the highest. If you speak of lowliness, he is far the lowest. Tuka says: I have spoken the truth; this is no empty flattering worship.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram runs through one virtue after another and finds that every superlative ends in God: the highest excellence, the only real sweetness, mercy, generosity, courage against Death, cleverness, antiquity, all of them are simply names for him. The poem then catches the paradox at the heart of this God. He is the simple cowherd and the supreme enchanter at once; hidden so deep within the soul that the soul cannot find him, and slipping away the moment you grasp at him; and he is both the very highest and the very lowest. The closing line guards against misreading: this is not flattery heaped on a favorite deity. Tukaram is reporting what he has seen, that there is nothing real left over once you have named God in all these ways.

GATHA 0659

The Nature of God

Nature of God, worship when all is already Him

मराठी मूळ

काय आह्मी भक्ति करणें कैसी । काय एक वाहावें तुझांसी । अवघा भरोनि उरलासी । वाणीं खाणीं रसीं रूपगंधी

॥1॥

कसें करुं इंद्रियां बंधन । पुण्यपापाचें खंडण । काय व्रत करुं आचरण । काय तुजविण उरलें तें ॥2॥

काय डोळे झांकुनियां पाहूं । मंत्रजप काय ध्याऊं । कवणें ठायीं धरुनि भाव । काय तें वाव तुजविण ॥3॥
काय हिंडों कवण दिशा । कवणे ठायीं पाय ठेवूं कैसा । काय तूं नव्हेसि न कळे तैसा । काय मी कैसा पाहों आतां

॥4॥

तुझिया नामाची सकळ । पूजा अर्चन मंत्र माळ । धूप दीप नैवेद्य फळ तांबूल । घेऊं पुष्पांजुळ तुका ह्मणे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What devotion should we perform and how? What offering should we bring to You? You fill everything and overflow. You pervade every store, every mine, every taste, every form, every fragrance.

How shall we restrain the senses? How shall we break the chain of sin and virtue? What vow or observance shall we practice? What remains apart from You? Should we close our eyes to see? What mantra shall we chant? What shall we meditate upon? Where shall we fix our devotion? What is there that is not You? Where should we wander and in which direction? Where and how shall we set our feet? You are everything, though You appear as though You are not. How then shall I look? Your Name itself is all worship, all prayer, all chanting, all garlands, all incense, all lamps, all food-offerings, all fruit.

Says Tuka, we will gather this handful of flowers in Your Name.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What devotion are we to do, and how? What one thing can we bring you? You have filled everything and still overflow. You are in every word, every mine, every taste, every form and fragrance. How shall we bind the senses? How shall we break off sin and virtue? What vow shall we keep, what practice perform? What is left over apart from you? Shall we shut our eyes to see you? What mantra shall we chant, what shall we meditate on? Where shall we fix our devotion? What of any of it is real apart from you? Which way shall we wander? Where, and how, shall we set our feet? You are everything, though you seem as if you are not. How then shall I look? Your Name itself is all the worship, the prayer, the chanting, the garland, the incense, the lamp, the food-offering, the fruit, the betel. Tuka says: in your Name we offer up this handful of flowers.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram faces a real difficulty for the lover of an all-pervading God: if the Lord already fills everything and overflows, what is there to offer, and where could you even turn to make the offering? Question after question, he shows that every ordinary tool of worship, restraining the senses, keeping vows, chanting, meditating, going on pilgrimage, has no separate ground to stand on, because nothing exists apart from God. The puzzle is that God is everything and yet seems hidden, so that the worshipper cannot find a spot outside him from which to bow. The resolution is the Name. Since the Name itself contains all the rites, the incense and lamp and food and flowers, to utter it is to perform the whole of worship at once. Devotion is not adding something to God; it is offering him back to himself.

GATHA 0660

Worldly Life

The body, neither vile nor holy, turn to Hari

मराठी मूळ

शरीर दुःखाचें कोठार । शरीर रोगाचें भांडार । शरीर दुगपधीची थार । नाहीं अपवित्र शरीरा ऐसें ॥1॥
 शरीर उत्तम चांगलें । शरीर सुखाचें घोंसुलें । शरीरें साध्य होय केलें । शरीरें साधलें परब्रह्म ॥ध्रु॥
 शरीर विटाळाचें अळें । मायामोहपाशजाळें । पतन शरीराच्या मुळें । शरीर काळें व्यापिलें ॥2॥
 शरीर सकळ हें शुद्ध । शरीर निधींचा ही निध । शरीरें तुटे भवबंध । वसे मध्यें भोगी देव शरीरा ॥3॥
 शरीर अविद्येचा बांधा । शरीर अवगुणाचा रांधा । शरीरीं वसे बहुत बाधा । नाहीं गुण सुदा एक शरीरीं ॥4॥
 शरीरा दुःख नेदावा भोग । न द्यावें सुख न करीं त्याग । नव्हे वोखटें ना चांग । तुका ह्मणे वेग करीं हरिभजनीं ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The body is a storehouse of suffering, a warehouse of disease, a den of foul odors. There is nothing as impure as the body.

Yet the body is excellent and good. The body is a nest of happiness.

What is to be accomplished is accomplished through the body. Through the body, the Supreme Brahman is realized.

The body is a pit of defilement, a snare of illusion and attachment. Downfall comes because of the body; the body is engulfed in darkness.

Yet the body is entirely pure. The body is the treasure of all treasures.

Through the body the bonds of existence are cut, for God dwells within and enjoys the body. The body is a house of ignorance, a furnace of bad qualities.

Many afflictions reside in the body; there is not a single redeeming quality in it. Do not give the body the pleasure of indulgence; do not give it comfort; do not renounce it either.

It is neither bad nor good. Says Tuka, make haste in the worship of Hari.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The body is a storehouse of suffering, a warehouse of disease, a den of foul odors. Nothing is as impure as this body. And yet the body is excellent and good. The body is a nest of happiness. What must be done is done through the body. Through the body the Supreme Brahman is reached. The body is a pit of defilement, a snare of illusion and attachment. Downfall comes through the body; the body is wrapped in darkness. And yet the body is wholly pure. The body is the treasure of all treasures. Through the body the bonds of existence are cut, for God dwells within and enjoys the body. The body is a house of ignorance, a furnace of bad qualities. Many afflictions live in the body; not one good quality is in it. Do not give the body the pleasure of indulgence. Do not give it comfort. Do not renounce it either. It is neither bad nor good. Tuka says: make haste in the worship of Hari.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram piles up two opposite verdicts on the body and refuses to settle on either. In one breath it is a warehouse of disease and a pit of defilement; in the next it is the treasure of treasures, the very means by which Brahman is reached and the bonds of existence are cut. The point is that the body is not the question. To pamper it or to torture it are both ways of staring at it, and both miss the mark. So he tells you to stop ranking the body and to spend it instead, quickly, on the one thing that settles the matter: the worship of Hari.

GATHA 0661

The Moral Ideal

Moral counsel, faith carries the burden

मराठी मूळ

इतुलें करीं भलत्या परी । परद्रव्य परनारी । सांडुनि अभिलाष अंतरीं । वर्ते वेव्हारीं सुखरूप ॥1॥
 न करीं दंभाचा सायास । शांती राहें बहुवस । जिद्धे सेवीं सुगंधरस । न करीं आळस रामनामीं ॥2॥
 करिसी देवाविण आस । अवघी होईल निरास । तृष्णा वाढविसी बहुवस । कधीं सुखास न पवसी ॥4॥
 धरुनि विश्वास करीं धीर । करितां देव हा चि निर्धार । तयाचा वाहे योगक्षेमभार । नाहीं अंतर तुका ह्मणे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Do this much, by whatever means: abandon in your heart the craving for another's wealth and another's spouse. Live happily in your worldly dealings.

Do not labor at pretense. Dwell in deep peace.

Let the tongue relish the sweet nectar of the Name. Do not be lazy in chanting the Name of Rama.

If you place your hope in anything other than God, all of it will come to nothing. If you keep feeding your cravings endlessly, you will never find happiness.

Hold firm faith and be patient. This is the one certainty: God bears the burden of sustaining those who do so.

Says Tuka, there is no distance between God and such a one.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do this much, however you can: drop from your heart the craving for another's wealth and another's spouse. Live happily in your worldly dealings. Do not toil at pretense. Stay deep in peace. Let your tongue taste the sweet nectar of the Name. Do not be lazy in the Name of Rama. If you put your hope in anything but God, all of it will come to nothing. If you keep feeding your cravings, you will never reach happiness. Hold firm faith and be patient. This is the one certainty: God carries the burden of caring for the one who does this. Tuka says: there is no distance between God and such a one.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strips the moral life down to a few things a person can actually do. Let go of the appetite for what belongs to another, drop the labor of pretending to be holy, and keep the Name on your tongue without slacking. Behind the practical advice is one wager: hope placed anywhere but God collapses, and craving fed endlessly never arrives at rest. The reward he names is not a transaction but a relationship; to the one who holds faith and waits, God himself shoulders the weight of provision, and the gap between the devotee and God closes to nothing.

GATHA 0662

Prayers

Confession, the uncrossable ocean of births

मराठी मूळ

संसारसिंधु हा दुस्तर । नुलंघवे उलंघितां पार । बहुत वाहाविलें दूर । न लगे चि तीर पैल थडी ॥1॥
 किती जन्म जाला फेरा । गणित नाही जी दातारा । पडिलों आवताअ भोंवरा । बहुता थोरा वोळसिया ॥धु॥
 वाढलों परी नेणती बुद्धी । नाहीं परतली धरिली शुद्धी । मग म्यां विचारावें कधीं । ऐसी संधी सांडुनिया ॥2॥
 अनेक खाणीं आहार निद्रा । भयमैथुनाचा चि थारा । बाळत्व तारुण्य जरा । प्रधान पुरा भोग तेथें ॥3॥
 ऐसीं उलंघूनि आलों स्थळें । बहु भोवंडिलों काळें । आतां हें उगवावें जाळें । उजेडा बळें दिवसाच्या ॥4॥
 सांडीन या संसाराची वाट । बहु येणें भोगविले कष्ट । दावी सत्या ऐसें नष्ट । तुका हाणे भ्रष्ट जालों देवद्रोही ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This ocean of worldly life is impossible to cross. However much one tries to swim across, the far shore never comes into view.

O generous Lord, I have been swept far out. How many births have passed in this cycle, I cannot count.

I am caught in whirlpools and vast currents. I have grown in body, but my intellect has not matured.

My awareness never turned back or found its footing. When then shall I reflect, having let go of this opportunity? Through countless births I have known only eating, sleeping, fear, and mating.

Childhood, youth, and old age are the primary experiences there. Having passed through so many stations, spun around by time, now this net must be untangled by the power of daylight.

I will abandon the road of worldly life, which has caused me so much suffering. Says Tuka, it shows the face of truth, yet is utterly false. I have become a traitor to God.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This ocean of worldly life cannot be crossed. However hard I swim, the far shore never comes. O generous Lord, I have been swept far out. How many births this cycle has held, I cannot count. I am caught in whirlpools and in great currents. I have grown in body, but my mind has not grown up. My awareness never turned back, never found its footing. When, then, will I reflect, after letting this chance slip away? Through countless wombs I have known only eating, sleeping, fear, and mating. Childhood, youth, old age: those are the main fare there. I have passed through so many stations, spun around by time. Now this net must be untangled by the power of daylight. I will leave the road of worldly life, which has made me suffer so much. Tuka says: it shows the face of truth, yet is utterly false. I have become a traitor to God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks back over an uncountable string of births and sees only motion without arrival, a swimmer carried farther from shore the harder he strokes. The body has aged again and again while the mind never grew up; awareness never once turned around to find its ground. He names the dull menu of every life, eating, sleeping, fear, mating, childhood to old age, and calls it what it is: a wheel he keeps boarding. The sharp confession at the end is that worldly life wears the face of truth while being utterly false, and that by going along with it he has been a traitor to God; he resolves now, in daylight, to cut the net.

GATHA 0663

Devotion to Vitthal

Adoration, the Lord who feeds every heart

मराठी मूळ

विठ्ठल भीमातीरवासी । विठ्ठल पंढरीनिवासी । विठ्ठल पुंडलिकापासीं । कृपादानाविशीं उदार ॥1॥
 विठ्ठल स्मरणा कोंवळा । विठ्ठल गौरवीं आगळा । आधार ब्रह्मांडा सकळा । विठ्ठल लीळाविग्रही ॥धु.॥
 उभा चि परी न मनी सीण । नाहीं उद्धरितां भिन्न । समर्थाचे घरीं एक अन्न । आर्तभूता क्षणोक्षणा सांभाळी ॥2॥
 रुचीचे प्रकार । आणिताती आदरें । कोठें ही न पडे अंतर । थोरां थोर धाकुटए धाकुटा ॥3॥
 करितां बळ धरितां नये । झोंबतां डोळे मनं च होय । आपुल्या उद्देशाची सोय । जाणे हृदयनिवासी ॥4॥
 पान्हा तरी आल्या अंतर तेथें । तों नाहीं भरिलें रितें । करितों सेवन आइतें । तुका ह्याणे चित्तें चित्त मेळवूनी ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Vitthal dwells on the bank of the Bhima. Vitthal resides in Pandhari.

Vitthal is near Pundalika, supremely generous in bestowing mercy. Vitthal is tender to those who remember Him and surpasses all in honor.

He is the support of the entire creation; Vitthal embodies divine play. He stands and yet never feels weariness.

In granting liberation He makes no distinction. In the house of the Almighty there is one food for all; He cares for the distressed at every moment.

Delicacies of every kind are brought before Him with devotion. He never fails anyone.

He is great to the great and small to the small. He cannot be seized by force; He yields only to the heart and mind.

He who dwells in the heart knows the way of one's own purpose. When the milk of love flows, the distance vanishes; nothing is left empty.

Says Tuka, I partake of what is ready, merging my heart with His.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Vitthal lives on the bank of the Bhima. Vitthal dwells in Pandhari. Vitthal is beside Pundalik, generous in giving mercy. Vitthal is tender to those who remember him, and beyond all in honor. He is the support of the whole creation. Vitthal takes form for the sake of play. He stands and stands, yet feels no weariness. In granting freedom he makes no distinction. In the house of the Almighty there is one food for all; he watches over the distressed at every moment. Dishes of every taste are brought to him with love. Nowhere does he fall short. He is great to the great and small to the small. He cannot be seized by force; he yields only to the heart. The one who dwells in the heart knows the aim of your own purpose. When the milk of love comes, the distance is gone; nothing is left empty. Tuka says: I take what is ready, joining my heart to his.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram fixes Vitthal in place, on the riverbank, in Pandhari, beside Pundalik, and then widens him out into the support of all creation who has only stood there, never tiring, for the sake of his devotees. The heart of the poem is fairness and access: in this Lord's house there is one food for everyone, no rank in who gets liberated, great for the

great and small for the small. What he cannot be is forced; he yields only to the heart, because as the indweller he already knows your true intention. The closing image is a nursing mother whose milk lets down: when love flows, the distance between soul and God simply disappears.

GATHA 0664

Devotion to Vitthal

Adoration, the face that cures existence

मराठी मूळ

ताप हें हरण श्रीमुख । हरी भवरोगा ऐसें दुःख । अवलोकितां उपजे सुख । उभें सन्मुख दृष्टीपुढें ॥१॥
 न पुरे डोळ्यांची धणी । सखोल कृपेची च खाणी । स्तवितां न पुरे वेदवाणी । तो हा समचरणी कृपानिधी ॥२॥
 रामकृष्णध्यान वामननारसिंहीं । उग्र आणि सौम्य कांहीं च नाहीं । सांपडे भरलीये वाही । भाव शुद्ध पाहीं याचें
 भातुकें ॥३॥
 गुणगंभीर चतुर सुजाण । शूर धीर उदार नारायण । व्यापक तरी त्रिभुवन । मनमोहनलावण्य हें ॥४॥
 ठाण हें साजिरें सुंदर । अविनाश अविकार । अनंत आणि अपार । तो हा कटीं कर धरिताहे ॥५॥
 जयाची वाणी सुमनमाळा । परमामृतजिह्वाळा । अनंता अंगीं अनंत कळा । तुका जवळा चरण सेवे ॥६॥
 कान्होबा०नाट अभंग ७

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

His holy face removes all burning pain. It cures the terrible disease of worldly existence.

Beholding it, joy arises; it stands before my eyes in person. The eyes can never have their fill of it.

His mercy is a deep, inexhaustible mine. Even the Vedic hymns cannot praise Him adequately.

This treasury of mercy stands on even feet. In the meditation of Rama, Krishna, Vamana, and Narasimha, there is nothing fierce or mild; all merge into one.

He is found in the full current of pure devotion; sincerity of heart is His delight. He is noble, profound, wise, and discerning.

He is brave, steadfast, generous, Narayana. Though He pervades the three worlds, He is this enchanting, captivating beauty.

His stance is graceful and beautiful, imperishable and unchanging, infinite and boundless. He stands with hands upon His waist.

His words are garlands of flowers, nectar of the highest order. The Infinite One possesses infinite arts.

Says Tuka, I stay close, serving at His feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

His holy face takes away all burning pain. It cures the disease of worldly existence. Looking at it, joy is born; it stands before my eyes in person. My eyes can never get their fill of it. His mercy is a deep, never-emptying mine. Even the speech of the Vedas cannot praise him enough. This treasury of mercy stands on even feet. In meditating on Rama, Krishna, Vamana, Narasimha, there is nothing fierce, nothing mild; all is one. He is found in the full current of pure devotion; a sincere heart is his delight. He is noble, deep, clever, wise. He is brave, steady, generous, Narayana. Though he fills the three worlds, he is this heart-stealing beauty. His stance is graceful and lovely, undying and unchanging, endless and without limit. He stands with his hands upon his waist. His words are garlands of flowers, nectar of the highest kind. The Endless One holds endless arts. Tuka says: I stay close, serving at his feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram gazes at Vitthal's standing form and reports what the sight does: it lifts the fever of worldly life and pours in a joy the eyes can never exhaust. He insists the Vedas themselves run out of praise before this mercy is described, and that across the avatars, Rama, Krishna, Vamana, Narasimha, there is no longer any split between fierce and gentle; all of them resolve into this one even-footed beauty. The form is gorgeous and infinite at once, world-pervading yet standing simply with hands on hips before him. The way in is not force or cleverness but sincerity; a pure heart is what delights him, and that is where Tukaram chooses to stay, at the feet.

GATHA 0665

Devotion to Vitthal

Litany of names, calling on the protector

मराठी मूळ

अगा ये वैकुण्ठनायका । अगा ये त्रैलोक्यतारका । अगा जनादनना जगव्यापका । अगा पाळका भक्तांचिया ॥1॥
 अगा ये वसुदेवदेवकीनंदना । अगा ये गोपिकारमणा । अगा बिळबंध वामना । अगा निधाना गुणनिधी ॥घु॥
 अगा ये द्रौपदीबांधवा । अगा ये सखया पांडवा । अगा जीवाचिये जीवा । अगा माधवा मधुसूदना ॥2॥
 अगा महेश्वरा महाराजा । अगा श्रीहरी गरुडध्वजा । अगा सुंदरा सहस्रभुजा । पार मी तुझा काय वणूप ॥3॥
 अगा अंबर्कृषिपरंपरा । निलारंभ निविनकारा । अगा गोवर्धन धरणीधरा । अगा माहेरा दीनाचिया ॥4॥
 अगा धर्मराया धर्मशीळा । कृपासिंधु कृपाळा । अगा प्रेमाचिया कल्लोळा । सकळकळाप्रवीणा ॥5॥
 अगा चतुरा सुजाणा । मधुरागिरा सुलक्षणा । अगा उदारा असुरमदनना । राखें शरणा तुकयाबंधु ॥6॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O Lord of Vaikuntha, O deliverer of the three worlds, O all-pervading Janardana, O protector of Your devotees. O son of Vasudeva and Devaki, O delight of the gopis, O Vamana who bound Bali, O treasure-house of virtues.

O brother of Draupadi, O friend of the Pandavas, O life of our very life, O Madhava, Madhusudana. O great Lord, O supreme King, O Shri Hari bearing the Garuda banner, O beautiful one of a thousand arms.

How can I describe Your fullness? O heir of Ambarisha's lineage, O spotless one beyond all change, O lifter of Govardhana, O home of the helpless. O righteous one of supreme virtue, O ocean of compassion, O flood of pure love, master of all arts.

O wise and discerning one, of sweet speech and auspicious qualities, O generous crusher of demons, protect Tukayabandhu who comes to Your shelter.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O Lord of Vaikuntha. O deliverer of the three worlds. O all-pervading Janardana. O protector of your devotees. O son of Vasudeva and Devaki. O delight of the gopis. O Vamana who bound Bali. O treasure-house of virtues. O brother of Draupadi. O friend of the Pandavas. O life of our very life. O Madhava, Madhusudana. O great Lord, O supreme King. O Shri Hari with the Garuda banner. O beautiful one of a thousand arms, how can I tell your fullness? O heir of Ambarisha's line. O spotless one beyond all change. O lifter of Govardhana. O home of the helpless. O righteous one of highest virtue. O ocean of compassion. O flood of pure love, master of all arts. O wise and discerning one, of sweet speech and lovely marks. O generous crusher of demons: guard Tukayabandhu, who has come to your shelter.

WHAT IT MEANS

This abhanga is almost entirely an address, name after name laid before the Lord like offerings. Tukaram threads together his cosmic titles, Lord of Vaikuntha, all-pervading Janardana, and his intimate ones, brother of Draupadi, friend of the Pandavas, life of our life, so that the same God is at once beyond the three worlds and bound to those who love him. Each name also recalls a rescue: Vamana who humbled Bali, the lifter of Govardhana, the home of the helpless, the crusher of demons. The long list is itself the prayer; only at the very end does the single request arrive, that this Lord of so many names guard the one who has taken refuge.

GATHA 0666

Devotion to Vitthal

Adoration, the beauty of the standing form

मराठी मूळ

उभा देखिला भीमातीरीं । कर मिरवले कटावरी । पाउलें तरी सम चि साजिरीं । नाम तरी अनंत अतिगोड ॥1॥
 शंखचक्रांकित भूषणें । जडितमेखळा चिद्रत्नें । पितांबर उटी शोभे गोरेपणें । लोपलीं तेणें रवितेजें ॥2॥
 श्रवणीं कुंडलें देती ढाळ । दशांगुळीं मुद्रका माळ । दंतओळी हिरे झळाळ । मुख निर्मळ सुखरासी ॥3॥
 कडीं कडदोरा वांकी वेळा । बाहीं बाहुवटे पदक गळां । मृगनाभी रेखिला टिळा । लवती डोळां विद्युल्लता ॥4॥
 सुंदरपणाची साम्यता । काय वणूप ते पावे आतां । तुकयाबंधु ह्मणे रे अच्युता । धन्य ते मातापिता प्रसवली ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have seen Him standing on the bank of the Bhima, His hands displayed proudly upon His hips. His feet are beautifully even, and His Name is infinitely sweet.

Conch and discus mark His ornaments. A jeweled girdle shines with the gems of consciousness.

A yellow silk garment and sandalwood paste enhance His fair complexion, outshining the radiance of the sun. Earrings cast their glow upon His ears.

Rings adorn His ten fingers alongside a rosary. His row of teeth sparkles like diamonds.

His face is pure and overflows with bliss. A waist-cord and bracelets adorn His waist and wrists.

Armlets grace His arms, a pendant hangs at His throat, and a musk tilak marks His forehead. His eyes flash like lightning.

What comparison can describe such beauty? Says Tukayabandhu, O Achyuta, blessed indeed are the mother and father who gave birth to You.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have seen him standing on the bank of the Bhima, his hands set proudly on his hips. His feet are beautifully even, and his Name is endlessly sweet. Conch and discus mark his ornaments. A jeweled girdle shines with gems of consciousness. A yellow silk robe and sandal paste set off his fair body, outshining the light of the sun. Earrings cast their glow on his ears. Rings adorn his ten fingers, with a rosary among them. His row of teeth sparkles like diamonds. His face is pure, a heap of bliss. A waist-cord and bangles adorn his waist and wrists. Armlets grace his arms, a pendant hangs at his throat, a musk mark is drawn on his brow. His eyes flash like lightning. What can match such beauty? How shall I tell it now? Tukayabandhu says: O Achyuta, blessed are the mother and father who gave you birth.

WHAT IT MEANS

Here Tukaram does nothing but look, head to foot, at Vitthal standing on the Bhima's bank with hands on hips. He moves slowly over the form, the even feet, the conch and discus, the yellow silk and sandal paste, the earrings, rings, rosary, the lightning of the eyes, as if love itself were taking inventory. The jeweled girdle made of gems of consciousness quietly hints that this gorgeous body is woven of more than matter. Overwhelmed, he gives up the catalogue and blesses the very parents who brought such beauty into the world, the worshipper's most personal way of saying that the sight is beyond describing.

GATHA 0667

Prayers

Prayer, only the feet, nothing else

मराठी मूळ

एक मागणें हृषीकेशी । चित्त द्यावें सांगतों वचनासी । मज अंतर तुझ्या चरणासी । न पडे ऐसी कृपा करीं ॥१॥
 नको दुजी बुद्ध आणीक । रिद्धसिद्धी परलोक । तूं स्वामी मी सेवक । खंडणा नको करूं ऐसी ॥२॥
 मना येईल तो जन्म देई । भलते कुळीं भलते ठायीं । तें मी सांकडें घालीत नाहीं । हृदयींहुनीं तूं न वजें ॥३॥
 इतुलें करीं भलत्या परी । भलत्या भावें तुझें द्वारीं । राहेन दास होऊनि कामारी । वदो वैखरी नित्य नाम ॥४॥
 नको विचारूं दुसरें आतां । शरण आलों जी पंढरीनाथा । तुकयाबंधु ह्याणे रे अच्युता । आहेसि तूं दाता दानशूर ॥

4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have one request, O Hrishiksha. Give Your chitta to my words.

Grant me such grace that I am never separated from Your feet. I do not want any other attainment, no miraculous powers, no other world.

You are the master and I am the servant; do not sever this bond. Give me whatever birth pleases You, in any family, in any place.

I do not make demands about that. But do not leave my heart.

Grant me this much, in any manner. By whatever form of devotion, let me remain at Your door as a servant, a laborer.

Let my voice utter Your Name constantly. Consider nothing else now.

Says Tukayabandhu, I have come to You for refuge, O Lord of Pandhari. O Achyuta, You are indeed the most generous giver.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have one request, O Hrishiksha. Give your attention to my words. Grant me such grace that I am never parted from your feet. I want no other gain, no powers, no other world. You are the master and I am the servant; do not break this bond. Give me whatever birth pleases you, in any family, in any place. I make no demands about that. Only do not leave my heart. Grant me this much, in any way at all. By whatever kind of devotion, let me stay at your door as a servant, a laborer. Let my voice say your Name without stopping. Think of nothing else now. Tukayabandhu says: I have come to you for refuge, O Lord of Pandhari. O Achyuta, you are the most generous giver of all.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram brings God a single petition and guards it against being mistaken for greed. He waves away every prize a devotee might be expected to ask for, miraculous powers, a higher world, a better birth, and keeps only one thing: never to be parted from the feet. He hands God complete freedom over his next life, any family, any place, on one condition, that God not vacate his heart. The role he asks for is the lowest, servant or day-laborer at the door, with the Name always on his lips, and he closes by reminding the most generous of givers that a refugee has arrived.

GATHA 0668

Longing and Separation

Longing, when will grace dawn

मराठी मूळ

कई देखतां होईन डोळीं । सकळां भूतीं मूतिन सांवळी । जीवा नांव भूमंडळीं । जळीं स्थळीं काष्ठीं पाषाणीं ॥1॥
 ऐसा कृपा करील नारायण । जीव जगाचा होईन । प्रेमसागरीं बुडईन । होईल स्नान अनुतापीं ॥ध्रु॥
 ऐसा कई येईन दैवास । दृश्य नासोनि जाईल आस । सदा संतचरणीं देहाचा वास । सेवीन शेष धणीवरी ॥2॥
 कई नवसा येतील अंकुर । सुखा नाहीसा होईल पार । अमृत तें पृथ्वीजळ सागर । वाहाती पूर आनंदाचे ॥3॥
 प्रसन्न दया क्षमा शांति । कई नवविधा होईल भक्ति । भोगीन वैराग्यसंपत्ति । मनोरथ कळती तई पुरले ॥4॥
 तुकयाबंधु ह्मणे सांग । नव्हे तुजविण निरसेना पांग । ह्मणोनि घातलें साष्टांग । पांडुरंगा वरी चरणा ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When will I see with these eyes the dark-hued form in all beings, the one who bears the name "soul" throughout the earth, in water, on land, in wood and stone? When will Narayana show such mercy that I become the very life of the world? When will I be drowned in an ocean of love and bathed in the waters of repentance? When will such fortune dawn upon me that all appearance of the visible world dissolves along with all desire? May I dwell always at the feet of saints, partaking of their sacred remnants until fully satisfied. When will the seeds of my vows sprout, and happiness overflow beyond all measure? When the nectar of earth, water, and ocean will flow in floods of bliss.

When will grace, forgiveness, patience, and peace manifest? When will ninefold devotion arise? When will I enjoy the wealth of detachment? Then alone will I know my longings have been fulfilled. Says Tukayabandhu, tell me, for without You this restlessness will not be quieted. Therefore I fall prostrate before the feet of Panduranga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When will I see with these eyes the dark-hued form in all beings, the one who bears the name "soul" across the earth, in water, on land, in wood and stone? When will Narayana show such mercy that I become the very life of the world? When will I be drowned in an ocean of love and bathed in the waters of repentance? When will such fortune dawn on me that all the visible world dissolves along with every desire? Let me dwell always at the feet of the saints, taking their sacred leavings until I am full. When will the seeds of my vows sprout, and happiness pour out past all measure? When will the nectar of earth, water, and ocean flow in floods of bliss? When will grace, forgiveness, patience, and peace appear? When will ninefold devotion arise? When will I enjoy the wealth of detachment? Only then will I know my longings are fulfilled. Tukayabandhu says: tell me, for without you this restlessness will not be stilled. So I fall flat before the feet of Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

The whole abhanga is one long ache of when, a list of graces Tukaram cannot give himself and can only wait for. He wants to see the dark-hued form in every being, in water and stone alike, to be drowned in love and washed clean by repentance, until the visible world and all its desires dissolve. He counts off what he is longing for, a seat at the feet of the saints, ninefold devotion, the wealth of detachment, peace and forgiveness, and recognizes that each is a gift, not an achievement. That is why the question is aimed at God: without him the restlessness will not quiet, so the poem ends face-down before Panduranga's feet, the question turned into surrender.

GATHA 0669

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the warrior protect the wretch

मराठी मूळ

तूं बिळया शिरोमणी । आहेसि माजी ये त्रिभुवनीं । रिघालों पाठी तुझी ह्मणउनी । आतां करीन मी असेल तें ॥१॥
 तूं देवा प्रतापदिनकर । सुरा असुरांचा सुर । महावीरां वीर धनुर्धर । मी तों पामर काय तेथें ॥२॥
 कृपासिंधु दीनवत्सल । फोडिली देवाची बंदशाळ । संहारुनि राक्षसदळ । शरणागत राजीं स्थापिला ॥३॥
 उपकर्म करावा बहुत । तरी तूं जाणसी धर्मनीत । उचित काय तें अनुचित । राखें शरणागत आलों आतां ॥४॥
 किती म्यां काय विनवावें । शरण आलों जीवें भावें । तुकयाबंधु ह्मणे करावें । क्षेम अवघें येणें काळें ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You are the supreme trickster, dwelling within these three worlds. I have taken refuge behind You, and so I will do whatever must be done.

You, O God, are a sun of mighty prowess, a champion among gods and demons, a hero among great warriors and archers. What am I, a lowly wretch, in comparison? O ocean of mercy, lover of the humble, You have broken open the prison of the gods.

Having destroyed the demon armies, You have restored the rightful kings who sought Your protection. If much good is to be done, You know the proper code.

What is fitting and what is not, protect this refugee who has come to You now. How much more shall I plead? I have come to You with all my life and soul.

Says Tukayabandhu, grant safety and well-being in this hour.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You are the supreme champion, the crown of the strong, dwelling within these three worlds. I have taken refuge behind you, and so now I will do whatever must be done. You, O God, are a sun of mighty power, the god above gods and demons, a hero among great warriors and archers. What am I, a poor wretch, beside you? O ocean of mercy, lover of the lowly, you broke open the prison of the gods. You destroyed the armies of demons and set the surrendered kings back on their thrones. If much good is to be done, you know the law of right. What is fitting and what is not, you know; protect this refugee who has come to you now. How much more can I plead? I have come to you with all my life and heart. Tukayabandhu says: grant safety and well-being in this hour.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pleads by leaning his whole weakness against God's strength. He stacks up the heroic titles, sun of power, god above gods and demons, hero among archers, and then sets himself beside them as nothing, a poor wretch with no standing of his own. His confidence does not come from himself but from precedent: this same Lord smashed the prison that held the gods and put surrendered kings back on their thrones. So he leaves the judgment of right and wrong, fitting and unfitting, entirely to God, and asks only the one thing a refugee can ask, to be kept safe in this present hour.

GATHA 0670

Confession and Sin

Confession, naming one's own corruption

मराठी मूळ

देवा मी चांडाळ चांडाळ । ह्मणतां लागताहे वेळ । नसे पाहातां भूमंडळ । ऐसा अमंगळ खळ दुसरा ॥1॥
 जन्मा उपजलियापासुनी । असत्य कर्म तें अझुनी । सत्य आचरण नेणें स्वप्नीं । निखळ खाणी अवगुणांची ॥2॥
 भक्ति दया अथवा कथा । कानीं न साहवे वार्ता । अखंड विषयांची वेथा । अधम पुरता अधमाहुनी ॥3॥
 काम क्रोध दंभ अहंकार । गर्व ताठा मद मत्सर । यांचें तरी माहेरघर । परउपकार वैरी तैसा ॥4॥
 निंदा द्वेष घात विश्वास । करितां नाहीं केला आळस । करूं नये ते केले संतउपहास । अभक्ष तें ही भिक्षलें ॥5॥
 पिळलें नाहीं पितृवचन । सदा परद्वारीं परधनीं ध्यान । बोलों नये घडलें ऐसें अनोविन । दासीगमन आदिकरुनी ॥

6॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O God, even to call myself a wretch takes a long time, for there is no one in all the earth as inauspicious and vile as I. From the very moment of my birth, I have practiced nothing but falsehood.

I do not know righteous conduct even in dreams. I am a pure mine of faults.

Devotion, compassion, sacred stories, I cannot even bear to hear of them. My mind is ceaselessly tormented by sense-pleasures.

I am the lowest of the low, more degraded than the most degraded. Lust, anger, hypocrisy, ego, arrogance, pride, and jealousy, these are my true home.

Kindness to others is my enemy. In slander, malice, treachery, and betrayal, I have shown no laziness.

I have mocked the saints, that which should never be done. I have consumed what should not be consumed.

I did not heed my father's words. My gaze was always fixed on another's door and another's wealth.

Unspeakable deeds have been done, beginning with sins too shameful to name.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O God, even to call myself a wretch takes a long time, for there is no one in all the earth as foul and vile as I. From the very moment of my birth I have done nothing but falsehood. I do not know right conduct even in a dream. I am a pure mine of faults. Devotion, compassion, sacred stories: I cannot even bear to hear of them. My mind is endlessly tormented by sense-pleasures. I am the lowest of the low, more degraded than the most degraded. Lust, anger, hypocrisy, ego, arrogance, stiffness, conceit, jealousy: these are my true home. Doing good to others is my enemy. In slander, malice, treachery, and breaking trust I have shown no laziness. I have mocked the saints, which should never be done. I have eaten what should not be eaten. I did not obey my father's words. My eyes were always on another's door and another's wealth. Things too shameful to speak have been done, beginning with going in to a servant-woman, and worse.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a confession in which Tukaram makes himself the worst man on earth, refusing every comfort of self-excuse. He does not list sins to titillate but to break his own pride: he names lust, anger, hypocrisy and ego as his real household, admits he cannot even stand to hear devotion spoken of, and confesses that doing good to others felt like an enemy. The catalogue runs from slander and betrayal to mocking the very saints and shaming his father, down to deeds he says are too shameful to name. The force of it is self-examination, not despair; by speaking the corruption out loud before God he is dragging it into the light rather than guarding it, which is the first honest move a soul can make.

GATHA 0671

Prayers

Prayer, the runaway mind, come quickly

मराठी मूळ

काय काय करितों या मना । परी नाइके नारायणा । करुं नये त्याची करी विवंचना । पतना नेऊं आदरिलें ॥1॥
भलतिये सवें धांवे सैराट । वाट आडवाट दरे दरकुट । न विचारी कुडें कांहीं कपट । घात बळकट मांडियेला ॥2॥
न पुरती भ्रमणा दाही दिशा । सप्त ही पाताळ आकाशा । घाली उडी बळें चि देखोनि फांसा । केलों या देशा
पाहुणा ॥3॥

चेतवूनि इंद्रियें सकळ । आशा तृष्णा कल्पना काम क्रोध काळ । दुराविली शुद्ध बिद्ध केली राळ । ऐसें चांडाळ
अनिवार हें ॥4॥

आतां काय ऐसें करावें यासी । बहु जाचिलों केलों कासाविसी । तुकयाबंधु ह्मणे हृषीकेशी । धांव मज ऐसी परी
जाली ॥5॥

नाटाचे अभंग समाप्त 63

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What shall I do with this mind, O Narayana? It refuses to listen. It plots what should never be done and drags me toward ruin.

It runs wild in every direction, down roads and byroads, through valleys and ravines, never pausing to consider any deceit or treachery. A great trap has been set.

Not even all ten directions suffice for its wandering, nor the seven nether worlds, nor the skies above. It leaps headlong at the sight of a snare and has made me a stranger in my own land.

It has roused all the senses, along with desire, craving, imagination, lust, anger, and time. It has driven away pure wisdom and reduced my intellect to dust.

This uncontrollable wretch is beyond restraint. Now what can be done with it? I am tormented and made miserable by it.

Says Tukayabandhu, O Hrishiksha, rush to me, for such is my condition.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What, what shall I do with this mind, O Narayana? It will not listen. It plots what should never be done and sets out to carry me to ruin. It runs wild after anything at all, down roads and off roads, through valleys and ravines, never stopping to weigh any deceit or treachery. A heavy trap has been laid. The ten directions are not enough for its wandering, nor the seven nether worlds, nor the skies. It leaps headlong the moment it spots a snare, and has made me a stranger in my own land. It has stirred up all the senses, with desire, craving, imagination, lust, anger, and time. It has driven away clear wisdom and ground my intellect to dust. This is a wretch beyond all restraint. Now what is to be done with it? It has worn me down and made me wretched. Tukayabandhu says: O Hrishiksha, rush to me, for this is the state I am in.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the confession outward onto a single culprit, the mind, which he describes as a runaway that will not obey and actively schemes toward ruin. He pictures it tearing across roads and ravines, through all ten directions and seven worlds, leaping straight at every snare it sees, until he is a stranger even in his own home. It does not act alone; it rouses the senses and yokes desire, craving, lust, anger and time against him, grinding clear judgment to dust. Having admitted plainly that he cannot control this himself, he stops trying and turns it into a cry for rescue: O Hrishiksha, run to me, this is the state I am in.

GATHA 0672

Autobiography

Outcast and slandered, turning to God

मराठी मूळ

काय खावें आतां कोणीकडे जावें । गांवांत राहावें कोण्या बळें ॥1॥
 कोपला पाटील गांवचे हे लोक । आतां घाली भीक कोण मज ॥धु.॥
 आतां येणें चवी सांडिली ह्मणती । निवाडा करिती दिवाणांत ॥2॥
 भल्या लोकीं यास सांगितली मात । केला माझा घात दुर्बळाचा ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे याचा संग नव्हे भला । शोधीत विठ्ठला जाऊं आतां ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What shall I eat now, where shall I go? By what strength shall I remain in this village? The village headman is angry, and these townspeople are hostile. Who will give me alms now? They say I have lost my senses and are passing judgment against me in the village council.

Good people have been told tales about me; the powerful have ruined this poor one. Says Tuka, this company is no good. I will go now in search of Vitthal.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What shall I eat now? Where shall I go? By what strength can I stay in this village? The headman is angry. The townspeople have turned against me. Who will give me alms now? They say I have lost my senses. They are passing judgment on me in the council. They have carried tales about me to the good people. The powerful have ruined this poor man. Tuka says: their company is no good. I will go now in search of Vitthal.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks from the inside of being cast out by his own village. The headman is angry, the people are hostile, the council has ruled against him, and slander has reached even the decent folk, so that a poor man has been crushed by those with power. He names the practical terror of it: no food, no place, no alms, nowhere to stand. Then he turns the whole loss into a verdict on the company that produced it. If this is what their fellowship comes to, he wants none of it, and he leaves to look for Vitthal instead. The ruin pushes him toward God rather than away.

GATHA 0673

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the false devotee

मराठी मूळ

संत मागे पाणी नेदी एक चूळ । दासीस आंघोळ ठेवी पाणी ॥१॥
 संतासी देखोनी होय पाठमोरा । दासीचिया पोरा चुंबन देतो ॥२॥
 संतासी देखोनि करितो ढवाळ्या । भावें धुतो चोळ्या दासीचिया ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे त्याच्या तोंडावरी थुंका । जातो यमलोका भोगावया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When a saint asks for water, this man will not give even a sip. But for his mistress he stores water for her bath.

Seeing a saint, he turns his back, but he kisses the children of his maidservant. Seeing a saint, he makes excuses, yet he lovingly washes the feet of his mistress.

Says Tuka, spit upon the face of such a one. He is bound for Yama's realm of punishment.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When a saint asks for water, this man will not give one sip. But for his mistress he keeps water ready for her bath. Seeing a saint, he turns his back. He kisses the children of his maidservant. Seeing a saint, he makes excuses; but he lovingly washes his mistress's feet. Tuka says: spit on the face of such a one. He is going to Yama's realm to suffer.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets two devotions side by side to expose a man whose worship goes entirely to his appetites. The saint who comes to his door gets nothing, not even a sip of water, while his mistress gets her bath drawn and her feet washed with tenderness, and her servant's children get his kisses. The point is not the woman but the inversion:

every honor owed to the holy is spent instead on lust. Tukaram's harsh line, spit on him, is aimed at this pattern of turning one's back on the sacred while lavishing reverence on indulgence. He warns that such a life ends in Yama's hall of punishment, where the reckoning falls due.

GATHA 0674

Sacred Stories

Mythic tale, God comes running

मराठी मूळ

एक प्रेमगुज ऐकें जगजेठी । आठवली गोष्टी सांगतसें ॥1॥
 एक मृग दोन्ही पाडसांसहित । आनंदें चरत होती वनी ॥2॥
 अवचिता तेथें पारधी पावला । घेऊनियां आला श्वानें दोन्ही ॥3॥
 एकीकडे त्याणें चिरिल्या वाघुरा । ठेविलें श्वानपुत्रा एकीकडे ॥4॥
 एकीकडे तेणें वोणवा लाविला । आपण राहिला एकीकडे ॥5॥
 चहूंकडोनियां मृगें वेढियेलीं । स्मरों तें लागलीं नाम तुझें ॥6॥
 रामा कृष्णा हरी गोविंदा केशवा । देवाचिया देवा पावें आतां ॥7॥
 कोण रक्षी आतां ऐसिये संकटीं । बापा जगजेठी तुजविण ॥8॥
 आइकोनि तुझी तयांचीं वचनें । कृपाअंतःकरणें कळविळलां ॥9॥
 आज्ञा तये काळीं केली पर्जन्यासी । वेगीं पावकासी विझवावें ॥10॥
 ससें एक तेथें उठवुनी पळविलें । तया पाठीं गेली श्वानें दोन्ही ॥11॥
 मृगें चमकोनी सत्वर चाललीं । गोविंदें रिक्षलीं ह्मणोनियां ॥12॥
 ऐसा तूं कृपाळु दयाळु आहेसी । आपुल्या भक्तांसी जीवलग ॥13॥
 ऐसी तुझी कीर्ती जीवीं आवडती । रखुमाईच्या पती तुका ह्मणे ॥14॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Listen, O Lord of the World, to this tale of love; a story has come to mind. A deer with its two fawns was grazing happily in the forest.

Suddenly a hunter arrived, bringing two hunting dogs. On one side he spread his nets, on another he placed his hounds, on a third side he lit a wildfire, and on the fourth he stationed himself.

Surrounded on all sides, the deer began to remember Your Name. "Rama, Krishna, Hari, Govinda, Keshava, O God of gods, come to us now.

Who will protect us in this dire peril, O Father, Lord of the World, if not You?" Hearing their plea, Your heart was moved with tender compassion. You commanded the rain to fall swiftly and extinguish the fire.

Then a hare was startled and set running, and both dogs chased after it. The deer, alert and quick, fled to safety.

Govinda saved them. Such is Your compassion, Your love, and Your tenderness toward Your devotees.

Says Tuka, O Lord of Rakhumai, such is Your fame, dear to my heart.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Listen, Lord of the World, to a tale of love; a story has come to mind. A deer with its two fawns was grazing happily in the forest. Suddenly a hunter came, bringing two dogs. On one side he spread his nets. On another he set his hounds. On a third he lit a wildfire. On the fourth he stood himself. Surrounded on all sides, the deer began to remember Your Name. "Rama, Krishna, Hari, Govinda, Keshava, God of gods, come to us now. Who will protect us in this peril, Father, Lord of the World, if not You?" Hearing their words, Your heart was moved with tender pity. At that moment You ordered the rain to fall and put out the fire fast. A hare there was startled and ran, and both dogs chased after it. The deer, alert and quick, fled to safety. Govinda saved them. Such is Your pity, Your love, Your tenderness toward Your devotees. Tuka says: such is Your fame, dear to my heart, O Lord of Rakhumai.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells a parable to show what the Name does in an hour of total helplessness. The deer and its fawns are boxed in on all four sides, nets, hounds, fire, and the hunter himself, with no opening left by any natural means. Their only act is to cry the Name and ask, who will save us if not You. The poem shows God moved by that cry and answering not with one rescue but with a chain of them: rain to kill the fire, a startled hare to pull the dogs away, an opening through which the deer escape. The lesson Tukaram draws is the character of God revealed in the act: tender toward the devotee, swift when called, glad to be famous for exactly this kind of saving.

GATHA 0675

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the greedy preacher

मराठी मूळ

आशाबद्ध वक्ता । धाक श्रोतयाच्या चित्ता ॥१॥
 वांयां गेलें तें भजन । उभयतां लोभी मन ॥२॥
 बहिर्मुख एके ठायीं । तैसें जालें तया दोहीं ॥३॥
 माप तैसी गोणी । तुका ह्मणे रितीं दोन्ही ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A speaker bound by worldly expectations instills only fear in the hearts of listeners. Such devotion goes to waste, for the minds of both are driven by greed.

Both are turned outward, facing the same direction. Says Tuka, the measure and the sack are alike: both empty.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A speaker bound by his own wants puts only fear in the listeners' hearts. That devotion is wasted, for both minds are ruled by greed. Both face outward, the same direction. Tuka says: the measure and the sack are alike; both are empty.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks at a religious gathering and finds it hollow on both sides. The speaker preaches to get something, not to give, so what reaches the listeners is fear, not love, and the worship is wasted. The trouble is that speaker and hearer are bent the same way, both turned outward toward gain rather than inward toward God. He ends with

a homely image from the grain market: the measuring cup and the sack into which it pours are no different here, because both are empty. The warning is to examine which way one's own devotion faces, and whether anything real is being passed at all.

GATHA 0676

Devotion to Vitthal

Adoration, longing for Vitthal

मराठी मूळ

विठ्ठला रे तूं उदाराचा राव । विठ्ठला तूं जीव या जगाचा ॥1॥
 विठ्ठला रे तूं उदाराची रासी । विठ्ठला तुजपाशीं सकळसिद्धी ॥ध्रु॥
 विठ्ठला रे तुझें नाम बहु गोड । विठ्ठला रे कोड पुरविसी ॥2॥
 विठ्ठला रे तुझें श्रीमुख चांगलें । विठ्ठला लागलें ध्यान मनीं ॥3॥
 विठ्ठला रे वाचे बोला बहुरस । विठ्ठला रे सास घेतला जीवें ॥4॥
 विठ्ठला रे शोक करीतसे तुका । विठ्ठला तूं ये कां झडकरी ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O Vitthal, You are the king of the generous. O Vitthal, You are the life of this world.
O Vitthal, You are the very sum of generosity. O Vitthal, all powers reside with You.
O Vitthal, Your Name is supremely sweet. O Vitthal, You fulfill every longing.
O Vitthal, Your holy face is beautiful. O Vitthal, Your meditation has seized my mind.
O Vitthal, the words from Your mouth overflow with nectar. O Vitthal, my very breath is pledged to You.
Says Tuka, O Vitthal, I grieve in longing. O Vitthal, come to me swiftly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O Vitthal, You are the king of the generous. O Vitthal, You are the life of this world. O Vitthal, You are the very heap of generosity. O Vitthal, all powers rest with You. O Vitthal, Your Name is so sweet. O Vitthal, You fulfill every wish. O Vitthal, Your holy face is beautiful. O Vitthal, Your image has settled in my mind. O Vitthal, the words from Your mouth are full of nectar. O Vitthal, my breath is pledged to You. Tuka says: O Vitthal, I grieve in longing. O Vitthal, come to me quickly.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a litany of praise that builds toward a cry for presence. Tukaram names Vitthal's generosity, His power, the sweetness of His Name, the beauty of His face, the nectar of His speech, each line opening and closing on the name itself, so the praise is also the practice. The repetition shows a mind that has fixed on one object and will not let it go: Vitthal's image has lodged in his thought and his very breath is given over. Then the adoration tips into ache. For all this nearness in the heart, the Lord is not yet here in the flesh, and the poem ends in grief and the plain plea, come quickly.

GATHA 0677

The Necessity of Experience

Spiritual experience, separating truth from self

मराठी मूळ

बाहिर पडिलों आपुल्या कर्तव्यें । संसारासि जीवें वेटाळलों ॥१॥
 एकामध्ये एक नाहीं मिळों येत । ताक नवनीत निवडीलें ॥२॥
 जालीं दोनी नामें एका चि मथनीं । दुसरिया गुणीं वेगळालीं ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे दाखविल्या मुक्ताफळीं । शिंपले चि स्वस्थळीं खुंटलिया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*By my own doings I have strayed outside my own self and become entangled in worldly life with all my heart.
 Yet the two cannot be mixed; buttermilk and butter have been separated.*

*From one single churning two names have arisen, made different by their qualities. Says Tuka, just as shells
 remain behind when pearls are extracted, so do our deceptions end when the truth is found.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

By my own doing I went outside myself and bound my whole life to the world. The two cannot be mixed; buttermilk and butter have been parted. From one churning two names arose, made separate by their qualities. Tuka says: as shells stay behind when the pearl is taken, so deceptions end once the truth is found.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the moment of inward sorting that follows a life spent turned outward. He admits the entanglement was his own work, then says it can now be undone, because the true and the false are no more mixable than butter and the buttermilk left after churning. One process, the churning of a life, yields two distinct things, told apart by their nature. He closes with the image of pearl and shell: when the real thing is found and lifted out, the husk of illusion simply drops away and is left behind. The poem is about discrimination, the labor of separating the self that clung to the world from the self that belongs to God.

GATHA 0678

Devotion to Vitthal

Adoration, the soul absorbed

मराठी मूळ

बरवा बरवा बरवा रे देवा तूं । जीवाहूनी आवडसी जीवा रे देवा तूं ॥१॥
 पाहातां वदन संतुष्ट लोचन । जाले आइकतां गुण श्रवण रे देवा ॥२॥
 अष्टे अंगें तनु त्रिविध ताप गेला सीण । वणितां लक्षण रे देवा ॥२॥
 मन जालें उन्मन अनुपम ग्रहण । तुकयाबंधु ह्मणे महिमा नेणें रे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How beautiful, how beautiful, how beautiful You are, O God. You are dearer to the soul than the soul itself.

Gazing at Your face, the eyes are satisfied. Hearing Your virtues, the ears are fulfilled.

All eight limbs of the body are soothed, and the threefold afflictions of life are dispelled when Your qualities are described. The mind has become absorbed beyond thought.

Says Tukayabandhu, I cannot comprehend this glory.

IN PLAIN WORDS

How beautiful, how beautiful, how beautiful You are, O God. You are dearer to the soul than the soul itself, O God. Gazing at Your face, the eyes are content. Hearing Your virtues, the ears are filled, O God. The whole body in its eight parts is soothed, the threefold afflictions and weariness are gone, when Your marks are described, O God. The mind has passed beyond thought, an unmatched taking-hold. Tukayabandhu says: I do not know this glory.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram, here speaking in his brother's voice, traces beauty entering through every gate of the body until the mind itself dissolves. Sight is satisfied by the Lord's face, hearing by His qualities, and the whole frame is eased so that the three great afflictions and all tiredness lift away. The praise then crosses a threshold: the mind becomes unmana, gone past thought, seized by something beyond compare. The last line is the honest end of such an experience. Having been taken up entirely, the poet says he cannot comprehend the glory that took him; the experience outruns any account of it.

GATHA 0679

The Saints

Praise of the saints, joy in their courtyard

मराठी मूळ

सोलीव जें सुख अतिसुखाहुनि । उभें हें अंगणीं वैष्णवांच्या ॥१॥
 वृंदावन सडे चौक रंग माळा । नाचे तो सोहोळा देखोनियां ॥२॥
 भूषणमंडित सदा सर्वकाळ । मुद्रा आणि माळ तुळसी कंठीं ॥३॥
 नामओघ मुखीं अमृताचें सार । मस्तक पवित्र सहित रजें ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे मोक्ष भक्ताचिया मना । नये हा वासना त्याची करी ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

That pure joy, surpassing all other joys, stands in the courtyard of the Vaishnavas. Tulsi gardens are swept, rangoli patterns and garlands of flowers are arranged, and one dances beholding this celebration.

Adorned with sacred marks at all times, they wear the mudra marks and the tulsi garland around the neck. The Name flows from their lips, the essence of nectar.

Their heads are holy, blessed with the dust of the saints' feet. Says Tuka, liberation itself desires the heart of such a devotee; it waits upon his will.

IN PLAIN WORDS

That pure joy, greater than the greatest joy, stands in the courtyard of the Vaishnavas. Tulsi gardens are swept, squares are drawn with colored powder, garlands are hung, and one dances to see the festival. They are always adorned with sacred marks, wearing the mudra signs and the tulsi beads at the neck. The flood of the Name is on their lips, the essence of nectar. Their heads are holy, blessed with the dust of the saints' feet. Tuka says: liberation itself longs for the heart of such a devotee; it waits upon his will.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says the highest joy is not somewhere far off but standing in the courtyard where the devotees of God gather. He paints the scene with festival detail: swept tulsi plots, rangoli squares, garlands, dancing, bodies marked with the sacred signs and beaded with tulsi, mouths pouring the Name like nectar, heads humbled by the dust of holy feet. The whole picture argues that the company of the saints is itself the goal, not merely the road to it. He lands the claim by reversing the usual hunger: liberation, which everyone chases, here desires the devotee instead, and waits on his pleasure. The one absorbed in the Name no longer needs to seek release; release seeks him.

GATHA 0680

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, only Pandhari counts

मराठी मूळ

तीर्थो केलीं कोटीवरी । नाहीं देखिली पंढरी ॥१॥
जळो त्याचें ज्यालेंपण । न देखे चि समचरण ॥२॥
योग याग अनंत केले । नाहीं समचरण देखिले ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे विठ्ठलपायीं । अनंत तीर्थो घडिलीं पाहीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One may have made ten million pilgrimages and still not seen Pandhari. Let his very birth burn, for it has never beheld the even feet of the Lord.

Infinite rituals and sacrifices may be performed, yet without seeing those even feet, all is in vain. Says Tuka, at the feet of Vitthal, countless holy places are contained.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One may make ten million pilgrimages and still never see Pandhari. Let his very life burn, for it has never seen the even feet of the Lord. He may perform endless yogas and sacrifices, yet has not seen those even feet. Tuka says: at Vitthal's feet, countless holy places are held.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures all sacred effort against one thing: standing before Vitthal on the brick at Pandhari. A man may rack up ten million pilgrimages and perform yoga and sacrifice without end, and Tukaram calls the whole heap empty if it never brought him to those even feet. His harsh line, let such a life burn, is aimed at the pattern of busy religion that misses its own center, not at any person. The closing claim reverses the math: the feet of Vitthal already contain every holy place there is. To reach them is to have made all the pilgrimages at once; to miss them is to have made none.

GATHA 0681

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, refusing to bargain with God

मराठी मूळ

कोणतें कारण राहिलें यामुळें । जें म्यां तुज बळें कष्टवावें ॥1॥
 नाहीं जात जीव नाहीं होत हानी । सहज तें मनीं आठवलें ॥ध्रु॥
 नाहीं कांहीं चिंता मरतों उपवासी । अथवा त्या हौसी गाई व्हाव्या ॥2॥
 हें तों तुज कळों येतसे अंतरीं । लाखणीक वरी साच भाव ॥3॥
 तुका झणे देवा नासिवंतासाठीं । पायांसवें तुटी करिती तुझ्या ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What pressing cause remains that would compel me to trouble You by force? I am not dying, nor is any harm befalling me. What came to mind arose naturally, of its own accord.

I have no worry about starving, nor any need for buffaloes or cows. You know all this within my heart.

The outward display is genuine devotion. Says Tuka, O God, for the sake of perishable things, people sever their connection with Your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What pressing cause is there that I should force You into trouble for me? My life is not leaving. No harm is coming to me. What came to mind came on its own. I have no fear of dying of hunger, no need of buffaloes or cows. You know all of this within my heart. The outward show is true devotion. Tuka says: O God, for the sake of perishable things people break off their hold on Your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram refuses to use God as a means to anything. He checks himself: there is no emergency, no starvation, no loss of cattle, nothing that would justify pestering the Lord for help, and what rose in his mind rose on its own, not as a demand. He trusts that God already reads the heart and knows the difference between asking for things and simply wanting Him. The closing line names the trap he is avoiding: people let go of God's feet for the sake of perishable goods, trading the eternal for what will rot. By wanting nothing from God except God, Tukaram keeps his grip on the feet that do not pass away.

GATHA 0682

Prayers

Prayer, the Lord who takes the lowly

मराठी मूळ

रामा अयोध्येच्या राया । दिनानाथा रे सखया ॥१॥
 पाप ताप विघ्न हरीं । दिनानाथा सुख करीं ॥२॥
 भिलटीचिया रे उच्छिष्टा । स्वीकारिसी रे तूं भ्रष्टा ॥३॥
 मी तों सलगीचें मूल । तुका ह्मणे तू सखोल ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O Rama, king of Ayodhya, O Lord of the lowly, my dear friend. Destroy my sins, afflictions, and obstacles; O Lord of the humble, bring me happiness.

You accepted the half-eaten fruit of the tribal woman Shabari, receiving even polluted offerings. I am Your intimate child.

Says Tuka, and You are deep and generous.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O Rama, king of Ayodhya, Lord of the lowly, my dear friend. Take away my sin, my suffering, my obstacles; Lord of the humble, give me happiness. You took the half-eaten fruit of the tribal woman; You, who accept even the polluted. I am Your own intimate child. Tuka says: and You are deep and generous.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays to Rama by the titles that matter to a sinner: king of Ayodhya, but also friend and Lord of the lowly. He asks for the ordinary relief, removal of sin, affliction, and obstacles, and rests the request on a remembered act of grace. Rama once ate the fruit Shabari had already tasted, accepting what custom called defiled because the love behind it was pure. On that ground Tukaram claims his place not as a stranger but as an intimate child who can speak freely. The whole prayer leans on God's character as deep and generous, the kind of Lord who measures by the heart's love and not by the giver's rank or purity.

GATHA 0683

Prayers

Prayer, asking to see God

मराठी मूळ

तुजवरी ज्याचें मन । दुरुषण दे त्याचें ॥१॥
 कैसा जाती शुद्ध भाव । हात पाव ना वृत्ती ॥२॥
 अवधियांचा करुनि मेळा । तुज डोळां रोखिलें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुज आड । लपोनि कोड दावीं देवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Grant the sight of that one whose mind is fixed upon You. How can pure devotion fade when it has no hands, no feet, no worldly function? Gather up all the faculties and fix them upon You.

Says Tuka, hiding behind me, You reveal Your playful wonders, O God.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Grant me the sight You give to the one whose mind is fixed on You. How can pure feeling fade, when it has no hands, no feet, no worldly function? I have gathered all my faculties and aimed them at You. Tuka says: hiding behind me, You show Your playful wonders, O God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks for the vision granted to a wholehearted devotee, then argues why his own longing will not run out. Pure devotion has no hands or feet or worldly business of its own; having nothing to do but love, it cannot tire or wander off the way ordinary works do. He has bundled every faculty together and pointed them all at God like one aim. The closing line catches the strange game of it: God is not far away but hidden right behind the seeker, putting on His wonders just out of sight. The plea to be shown is really a plea for the hidden, near God to step into view.

GATHA 0684

Worldly Life

Maya's shadow, asking God to untie us

मराठी मूळ

विश्वव्यापी माया । तिणें झाकुळिलें छाया ॥१॥
 सत्य गेलें भोळ्यावारी । अविद्येची चाली थोरी ॥२॥
 आपुलें चि मन । करवी आपणां बंधन ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने देवा । तुझी कोडीं हीं उगवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Maya pervades the whole world and has covered everything with her shadow. Truth has been swallowed up, and ignorance reigns supreme.

One's own mind creates one's own bondage. Says Tuka, O God, please unravel these riddles.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Maya spreads through the whole world. She has covered everything with her shadow. Truth has been swallowed up. Ignorance rules over all. My own mind makes my own bondage. Tuka says: O God, you alone can untie these knots.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram names a single force that has darkened the world: Maya, the power of illusion, which throws her shadow over everything until truth is lost and ignorance takes the throne. Then he turns the blame inward. The bondage is not laid on him from outside; his own mind ties the knot and holds it tight. Having seen that the trap is self-made,

he sees that he cannot cut it himself. So he ends by handing the riddle to God, the only one who can unravel what the mind has knotted.

GATHA 0685

Worldly Metaphors

The body and its kin, no real outsiders

मराठी मूळ

पोटीं जन्मती रोग । तरि कां ह्यणावे आप्तवर्ग ॥1॥
रानीं वसती औषधी । तरि कां ह्यणाव्या निपराधी ॥2॥
तैसें शरीराचें नातें । तुका ह्यणे सर्व आप्तें ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Diseases are born within the body itself; then why call them strangers? Medicinal herbs grow in the wild; then why call them uninvolved? Says Tuka, even so is the body's relationship with all its kin.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Diseases are born inside the body itself. Then why call them strangers? Healing herbs grow out in the wild. Then why call them outsiders? Tuka says: it is the same with the body's ties. All of them are kin.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses two plain facts to break a careless way of thinking. Disease arises from within the very body we call our own, and the herbs that cure us grow far off in the forest, where we never planted them. So the line between what is mine and what is foreign does not hold. He turns this on the bonds of family and relation: we sort people into our own and not our own, but the sorting is arbitrary. Trouble grows from within, help comes from outside, and in truth all of it is one web of kinship.

GATHA 0686

Autobiography

The voice is the Lord's, not mine

मराठी मूळ

नव्हे शब्द एक देशी । सांडी गवशी कोणाला ॥1॥
जाली माझी वैखरी । विश्वंभरी व्यापक ॥ध्रु॥
मोकलिलें जावें बाणें। भाता जेणे वाडलें ॥2॥
आतां येथें कैचा तुका । बोले सिका स्वामीचा ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

These words are not confined to one place; they do not abandon anyone. My voice has become all-pervading, filling the universe.

Like an arrow released from the bow, it cannot return to the quiver that held it. Says Tuka, where is Tuka now? It is the Lord's own teaching that speaks.

IN PLAIN WORDS

These words are not bound to one place. They do not abandon anyone. My voice has become all-pervading; it fills the universe. Like an arrow shot from the bow, it cannot return to the quiver that held it. Now where is Tuka here? Tuka says: it is the Lord's own teaching that speaks.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes what has happened to his own speech: it no longer belongs to him or stays in one spot, but spreads everywhere and turns away no one. He gives the image of an arrow already loosed, which cannot be drawn back into its quiver, because once such words go out they cannot be unsaid or owned. Then he asks where Tuka himself is in all this, and answers that he is not the speaker at all. The teaching is the Lord's; Tuka is only the bow that released it.

GATHA 0687

The Power of the Name

Singing the Name, the rising tide of love

मराठी मूळ

गायनाचे रंगीं । शक्ति अद्भुत हे अंगीं ॥१॥
 हें तों देणें तुमचें देवा । घ्यावी अखंडित सेवा ॥२॥
 अंगीं प्रेमाचें भरतें । नाहीं उतार चढतें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने वाणी । नाम अमृताची खाणी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In the rapture of sacred song, a wondrous power comes over the body. This is Your gift, O God: accept this unbroken service.

The tide of love rises within and never ebbs, only increasing. Says Tuka, the Name from the tongue is a mine of nectar.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In the rapture of song a wondrous power comes over the body. This is your gift, O God; let me give you unbroken service. The tide of love rises in me. It never ebbs; it only climbs higher. Tuka says: the Name on the tongue is a mine of nectar.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks from inside the act of singing, where a strange power floods the body as the bhajan rises. He refuses to claim it as his own attainment; it is God's gift, and his only response is to ask that the service never break off. The love it raises is a tide that does not turn, only swells higher and higher. The reason, he says, is in the Name itself: spoken aloud, it is an inexhaustible mine of nectar, so the source can never run dry.

GATHA 0688

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the measuring cup and the master

मराठी मूळ

माप ह्मणे मी मवितें । भरी धणी ठेवी रितें ॥१॥
 देवा अभिमान नको । माझेठायीं देऊं सकों ॥२॥
 देशी चाले सिका । रितें कोण लेखी रंका ॥२॥
 हातीं सूत्रदोरी । तुका ह्मणे त्याची थोरी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The measuring cup says, "I do the measuring," but it is the master who fills and empties it. O God, do not let pride take residence in me.

The coin that circulates has the king's stamp upon it; who pays heed to an empty pauper? Says Tuka, the greatness belongs to the one who holds the string.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The measuring cup says, I do the measuring. But it is the master who fills it and sets it down empty. O God, do not let pride live in me. Do not let me say the work is mine. The coin that passes from hand to hand carries the king's stamp; who looks twice at an empty pauper? The string is in your hand. Tuka says: the greatness is his.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram catches the soul in the act of self-congratulation and corrects it with a homely image. A measuring cup boasts that it does the measuring, but it has no will of its own; the master fills it and empties it as he pleases. So he prays that the same pride never settle in him, that he never claim the work as his doing. A coin is honored only because the king's stamp is on it, not for itself, just as a puppet moves only because someone holds the string. Whatever greatness shows through him belongs to the one who holds the string.

GATHA 0689

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the Father carried the cup away

मराठी मूळ

कोण सांगायास । गेलें होतें देशोदेश ॥१॥
 नेलें वाऱ्या हातीं माप । समर्थ तो माझा बाप ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे या निश्चयें । माझें निरसलें भय ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Who had gone traveling from land to land to spread this message? The measuring cup was carried away by the Almighty, my Father. Says Tuka, by this certainty, my fear has been dissolved.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Who had gone wandering from land to land to spread this message? No one of mine. The measuring cup was carried off by him. The Almighty is my Father. Tuka says: by this certainty my fear has dissolved.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses the same image of the measuring cup further. He asks who really traveled from country to country to carry his teaching abroad, and answers that he himself did nothing; the cup was simply picked up and carried by God. Calling the Almighty his Father, he places the whole work in stronger hands than his own. Out of that certainty his fear falls away, for if the doing was never his, then neither is the burden, and there is nothing left for him to be afraid of.

GATHA 0690

Autobiography

The porter of the Master's goods

मराठी मूळ

सकिळकांच्या पायां माझी विनवणी । मस्तक चरणीं ठेवीतसें ॥१॥

अहो श्रोते वक्ते सकळ ही जन । बरें पारखुन बांधा गांठी ॥२॥

फोडिलें भांडार धन्याचा हा माल । मी तंव हामाल भारवाही ॥३॥

तुका ह्मणे चाली जाली चहू देशी । उतरला कसीं खरा माल ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I place my humble plea at the feet of all. I bow my head to everyone's feet.

O listeners, speakers, all people, examine well and tie the knot firmly. The treasury has been opened; this is the Master's merchandise.

I am merely a porter, a carrier of the load. Says Tuka, this trade has spread in all four directions. The goods have proven genuine when tested.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I lay my plea at the feet of all. I set my head down at everyone's feet. O listeners, O speakers, all you people: test it well, then tie the knot fast. The treasury has been opened. This is the Master's merchandise. I am only a porter, a carrier of the load. Tuka says: the trade has spread to all four lands. Tested, the goods proved genuine.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram opens by bowing low to everyone, listeners and fellow speakers alike, taking the humblest place. He tells them not to accept his words on trust but to examine the goods well and only then hold on tight. The treasury he has opened is not his own; it is the Master's stock, and he is merely the hired porter who hauls it on his back. He takes no credit for the worth of what he carries. The proof is in the testing: the teaching has spread to the four directions and, weighed and assayed, has come out true.

GATHA 0691

The Nature of God

God past all measure, cling to the saints

मराठी मूळ

कोण त्याचा पार पावला धुंडितां । पुढें विचारितां विश्वंभरा ॥१॥
 अणुरेणु सूक्ष्मस्थूळा पार नाहीं । श्रुती नेती त्या ही खुंटलिया ॥२॥
 फळांत कीटक येवढें आकाश । ऐसीं तरुवरास अनेक किती ॥३॥
 दाविलें अनंतें अर्जुनासि पोटीं । आणीक त्या सिष्ट कृष्णलोक ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Who has found His limits, even after the deepest searching? When one inquires further, O Sustainer of the Universe, there is no end. From the atom to the vast, from the subtle to the gross, there is no measure.

Even the Vedas declaring "not this, not this" have reached exhaustion. Within one fruit lies a tiny insect, within it a sky as vast as all the world, and within that, how many trees beyond counting.

The Infinite One showed Arjuna within His belly yet more creations and worlds of Krishna beyond. Says Tuka, cling to the company of saints. By taking refuge there, save your life.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Who has reached his far edge, however deep the search? Inquire further, O Sustainer of the world, and there is no end. From the atom to the vast, from the subtle to the gross, there is no measure of him. Even the Vedas, saying not this, not this, have worn out and stopped. Inside one fruit is a tiny insect; inside that, a sky as wide as the world; and inside that, trees beyond counting. The Infinite One showed Arjuna within his own belly more creations and more worlds of Krishna still. Tuka says: lay hold of the company of the saints. Take refuge there and your life is saved.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram piles up images to show that God cannot be measured or reached by searching, from the smallest atom to the largest expanse, in the subtle and in the gross alike. Even the Vedas, with their method of negation, not this, not this, finally exhaust themselves and fall silent. He spirals inward and outward at once: a worlds within worlds inside a single fruit, and the vision Krishna gave Arjuna of endless creations held within his own body. The point is not to map the Infinite but to give up the attempt. Since you cannot reach him by your own searching, cling instead to the company of the saints; taking refuge there is what saves your life.

GATHA 0692

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, no division between you and me

मराठी मूळ

जें जें कांही करितों देवा । तें तें सेवा समर्पें ॥१॥
 भेद नाहीं सर्वात्मना । नारायणा तुज मज ॥१॥
 आह्मी दुजें नेणों कोणा । हें चि मना मन साक्ष ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे जगन्नाथा । हें अन्यथा नव्हे कीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Whatever I do, O God, I offer to You as service. There is no division between You and me, O Narayana, for all is one Self.

I know no one else; this is the honest witness of my own mind. Says Tuka, O Lord of the World, this is no falsehood.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whatever I do, O God, I offer to you as service. There is no division, O Narayana, between you and me, for all is one Self. I know no one else. My own mind is the witness of this. Tuka says: O Lord of the world, this is no falsehood.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns every action into worship by offering all of it to God as service, so that nothing he does stands apart from God. He goes further and denies the gap itself: between the worshipper and Narayana there is no real division, since all is one Self. He knows no second, no other to turn to, and he calls his own mind as honest witness that this is so. Lest it sound like a pious boast, he closes by swearing to the Lord of the world that it is not a lie but his settled truth.

GATHA 0693

The Nature of God

Praise that fails, yet the tongue still craves it

मराठी मूळ

स्तुति करुं तरी नव्हे चि या वेदा । तेथें माझा धंदा कोणीकडे ॥१॥
 परी हे वैखरी गोडावली सुखें । रसना रस मुखें इच्छीतसे ॥१॥
 रूप वर्णावया कोठें पुरे मती । रोमीं होती जाती ब्रह्मांडें हीं ॥२॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even the Vedas cannot adequately praise You; where then does my feeble attempt stand? Yet my vaikhari, my articulated speech, has grown sweet with the joy of it, and my tongue craves the taste upon its lips. To describe Your form, where does the intellect suffice? Entire universes arise and vanish in each pore of Your being.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If I try to praise you, even the Vedas cannot do it. Where then does my poor effort stand? And yet my speech has grown sweet with the joy of it. My tongue craves the taste of it on my lips. To describe your form, how can the intellect ever be enough? In each pore of you whole universes arise and pass away.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram admits at once that praising God is beyond him; if even the Vedas fall short, his own attempt is nothing. But the failure does not stop him, because the praising itself has turned sweet, and his tongue keeps reaching for the taste the way one craves a flavor on the lips. He cannot describe the divine form because no intellect is large enough to hold it. He gives the measure of why: in a single pore of God, entire universes are coming into being and dissolving. The mind cannot encompass that, yet the joy of trying is its own reward.

GATHA 0694

The Nature of God

Only God can describe God, only God can reveal himself

मराठी मूळ

तुज वर्णीं ऐसा तुज विण नाहीं । दुजा कोणी तीहीं त्रिभुवनीं ॥१॥
 सहस्रमुखें शेष सिणला बापुडा । चिरलिया धडा जिह्वा त्याच्या ॥२॥
 अव्यक्त अलक्षा अपारा अनंता । निर्गुणा सचिद नारायणा ॥३॥
 रूप नाम घेसी आपुल्या स्वइच्छा । होसी भाव तैसा त्याकारणें ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is no one in the three worlds who can describe You except Yourself. The thousand-mouthed Shesha has grown weary, even with his tongues split into countless parts.

You are unmanifest, imperceptible, boundless, and infinite, O formless Narayana of pure being and consciousness. You take up name and form by Your own will, becoming whatever the devotee's faith requires.

Says Tuka, only if You reveal Yourself, O Narayana, can You be known.

IN PLAIN WORDS

No one can describe you but yourself. In all three worlds there is no second who can. The thousand-mouthed Shesha grew weary, poor thing, his tongues split into countless parts and still he failed. You are unmanifest, beyond sight, boundless, infinite, formless Narayana, pure being and consciousness. You take name and form by your own will. You become whatever the devotee's faith needs you to be. Tuka says: only if you show yourself, O Narayana, can you be known.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says the one who could rightly describe God is God alone; nowhere in the three worlds is there a second fit for the task. Even Shesha, the serpent with a thousand mouths and tongues split many times over, wore himself out and could not do it. In himself God is unmanifest, imperceptible, without limit or form, pure being and

consciousness. Yet by his own free will he takes on name and form, becoming whatever shape the devotee's faith asks for. The conclusion follows: he cannot be reached by our effort to grasp him; he can only be known if he chooses to reveal himself.

GATHA 0695

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the flood of bliss, swim across together

मराठी मूळ

पूर आला आनंदाचा । लाटा उसळती प्रेमाच्या ॥१॥
 बांधूं विठ्ठलसांगडी । पोहुनि जाऊं पैल थडी । अवघे जन गडी । घाला उडी भाई नो ॥२॥
 हें तों नाहीं सर्वकाळ । अमुप अमृतांचें जळ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने थोरा पुण्यें । ओघ आला पंथें येणें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A flood of bliss has arrived, and waves of love surge high. Let us tie the raft of Vitthal's Name and swim to the far shore.

Come, all of you, my companions. Take the plunge, brothers and sisters.

This moment does not last forever; this is the immeasurable water of nectar. Says Tuka, by great merit this current has arrived upon our path.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A flood of bliss has come. Waves of love rise high. Let us tie the raft of Vitthal's Name and swim to the far shore. Come, all of you, my friends. Take the plunge, brothers and sisters. This does not last forever. This is the measureless water of nectar. Tuka says: by great merit this current has come to our path.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram greets a flood of joy as if a real river had risen, its waters surging with waves of love. He calls everyone to use the moment: lash together a raft made of Vitthal's Name and cross on it to the far shore. He will not go alone, summoning all his companions to jump in with him. The urgency is that the flood does not last; this immeasurable water of nectar is here now and may not be here later. He ends by naming it pure grace, a current that has reached their path only through great accumulated merit, so it must not be wasted.

GATHA 0696

Devotion to Vitthal

Single-pointed devotion, Panduranga only

मराठी मूळ

आणीक दुसरें मज नाही आतां । नेमिलें या चित्तापासुनियां ॥१॥
 पांडुरंग मनीं पांडुरंग ध्यानीं । जाग्रतीं स्वप्नीं पांडुरंग ॥२॥
 पडिलें वळण इंद्रियां सकळां । भाव तो निराळा नाही दुजा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नेत्रीं केलें ओळखण । साजिरें तें ध्यान विटेवरी ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is nothing else for me now. This has been decided within my mind once and for all.

Panduranga in my thoughts, Panduranga in my meditation, Panduranga in waking and in dream. All the senses have fallen into this single groove; there is no other feeling, no second allegiance.

Says Tuka, my eyes have recognized Him. That graceful form upon the brick is my meditation.

IN PLAIN WORDS

There is nothing else for me now. My mind has settled it once and for all. Panduranga in my thoughts, Panduranga in my meditation. Panduranga when I am awake, Panduranga in my dreams. All my senses have fallen into this one groove. There is no other feeling in me, no second loyalty. Tuka says: my eyes have learned to know him. That graceful form upon the brick is what I hold.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing a mind that has stopped dividing its attention. He has resolved, deep in his own heart, that there is only one object left for him, and that object is Panduranga, the Lord on the brick at Pandhari. The poem shows the resolve spreading until it covers everything: thought, meditation, waking, even dreaming. Every sense has worn the same single channel, so there is no longer a competing desire or a divided allegiance. What was once an effort of faith has become plain seeing; his eyes simply recognize the one form he meditates on.

GATHA 0697

Confession and Sin

Confession, the helpless servant pleads

मराठी मूळ

मी तों सर्वभावेन अनधिकारी । होइल कैसी परी नेणों देवा ॥१॥
 पुराणींचे अर्थ आणितां मनास । होय कासावीस जीव माझा ॥२॥
 इंद्रियांचीं आह्मी पांगिलों अंकितें । त्यांचे रंगीं चित्त रंगलेसे ॥३॥
 एकाचें ही मज न घडे दमन । अवघीं नेमून कैसीं राखों ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे मज तारीं पंढरीराया । नाही तरी वायां गेलों दास ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I am utterly unqualified in every way. I do not know what will become of me, O God.

When I bring the meanings of the scriptures to mind, my soul becomes distressed. I am a slave to the senses; my heart is colored by their pleasures.

I cannot even subdue one of them; how then shall I tame them all? Says Tuka, save me, O King of Pandhari, lest Your servant be lost in vain.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am utterly unfit, in every way. I do not know what will become of me, O God. When I bring the meanings of the scriptures to mind, my soul grows desperate. I am the bonded slave of my senses; my heart is stained with their pleasures. I cannot subdue even one of them. How then am I to bind them all and keep them in order? Tuka says: save me, O King of Pandhari. If you do not, your servant is lost for nothing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is making an honest confession of weakness and turning it into a plea. He admits he has no qualification for the path on his own strength, and the scriptures only deepen his distress because they show him a standard he cannot meet. He names the real bondage plainly: he is owned by his senses, and his heart is colored by their pleasures. The point he lands on is that self-discipline alone will not work, since he cannot master even a single sense, let alone all of them; his only hope is that the King of Pandhari will rescue him. The self-examination here is the lesson: he stops boasting of effort and throws himself on grace.

GATHA 0698

The Nature of God

Adoration, the formless God made visible

मराठी मूळ

लक्ष्मियां योगी पाहाती आभास । तें दिसे आह्मांस दृष्टीपुढें ॥1॥
 कर दोनी कटी राहिलासे उभा । सांवळी हे प्रभा अंगकांती ॥ध्रु॥
 व्यापूनि वेगळें राहिलेंसे दुरी । सकळां अंतरीं निविनकार ॥2॥
 रूप नाही रेखा नाम ही जयासी । आपुला मानसीं शिव ध्याय ॥3॥
 अंत नाही पार वर्णा नाही थार । कुळ याति शिर हस्त पाद ॥4॥
 अचेत चेतलें भक्ताचिया सुखें । आपुल्या कौतुकें तुका ह्मणे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What the yogis strain to perceive through meditation appears before our eyes in plain sight. He stands with both hands on His waist, a dark-hued radiance upon His body.

He pervades all yet remains apart, dwelling within every being, beyond all change. He has no form, no outline, no name of His own; yet Shiva himself meditates upon Him within his heart.

He has no end, no limit, no station for any color or class, no head, no hands, no feet that can be grasped. The insentient has come alive for the joy of His devotees.

Says Tuka, this is His own delightful play.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What the yogis strain to glimpse in meditation stands plainly before our eyes. He stands with both hands on his waist, a dark radiance shining from his body. He fills everything, yet stays apart and far off; he lives inside every being, and nothing changes him. He has no form, no outline, no name of his own; yet Shiva himself meditates on him in his heart. He has no end, no edge, no place for caste or class, no head, no hands, no feet you can grasp. The unmoving has stirred to life for the joy of his devotees. Tuka says: this is his own delightful play.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is holding two truths about God at once. On one side is the formless absolute that the yogis can barely sense and that even Shiva meditates upon: without form, name, limit, caste, or body, pervading all yet untouched by all. On the other side is Vithoba standing on the brick at Pandhاري, hands on his waist, dark and radiant, visible to ordinary eyes. The poem's wonder is that these are the same one. The boundless, changeless reality has taken a shape and come alive, and Tukaram insists this is not a lessening but the Lord's own free play, undertaken for the sheer joy of his devotees.

GATHA 0699

Prayers

Prayer, teach me how to reach you

मराठी मूळ

कैसें करुं ध्यान कैसा पाहों तुज । वर्म दावीं मज याचकासी ॥1॥
 कैसी भक्ती करुं सांग तुझी सेवा । कोण्या भावें देवा आतुडसी ॥२॥
 कैसी कीर्ती वाणूं कैसा लक्षा आणूं । जाणूं हा कवण कैसा तुज ॥३॥
 कैसा गाऊं गीतीं कैसा ध्याऊं चितीं । कैसी स्थिती मती दावीं मज ॥४॥
 तुका ह्याने जैसें दास केलें देवा । तैसें हें अनुभवा आणीं मज ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How shall I meditate? How shall I behold You? Show me the secret, for I am a beggar. How shall I practice devotion? Tell me what service You require.

By what feeling can You be reached, O God? How shall I sing Your glory? How shall I bring You to mind? How shall I know You? How shall I sing of You in song? How shall I contemplate You in my heart? Show me the right way and understanding. Says Tuka, just as You made me Your servant, O God, so bring me to that experience.

IN PLAIN WORDS

How shall I meditate? How shall I look upon you? Show me the secret, for I am a beggar at your door. How shall I do devotion? Tell me what service you want. By what feeling are you reached, O God? How shall I sing your glory? How shall I bring you to mind? How shall I know you, and who can know you, and how? How shall I sing you in song? How shall I hold you in my heart? Show me the right state and the right understanding. Tuka says: just as you made me your servant, O God, so bring me into that living experience.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praying by piling up questions, and the questions themselves are the prayer. He does not assume he already knows how to meditate, worship, or even recognize God; he begs to be shown the secret like a beggar asking for alms. The repeated how reveals his stance: he will not manufacture devotion out of his own cleverness but waits to be taught the inner method, the feeling that actually reaches God. The closing turn is the heart of it. Since it was God who first made him a servant, he asks God to finish the work and carry him from these questions into direct experience.

GATHA 0700

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, leave the Vedas for the cowherd's house

मराठी मूळ

निगमाचें वन । नका शोधूं करूं सीण ॥१॥
 या रे गौळ्यांचे घरीं । बांधले तें दावें वरी ॥२॥
 पीडलेती भ्रमें । वाट न कळतां वर्में ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे भार । माथा टाका अहंकार ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Do not exhaust yourselves searching the forest of the Vedas. Come to the house of the cowherds, where He is tied up with a rope in plain sight.

Those tormented by confusion have lost the path because they do not know the secret. Says Tuka, throw off the burden of ego from your heads.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do not wear yourselves out searching the forest of the Vedas. Come instead to the cowherds' house, where he stands tied up with a rope in plain sight. People worn down by confusion have lost the road because they do not know the secret. Tuka says: throw the burden of ego off your heads.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is calling seekers away from one path and toward another. The forest of the Vedas stands for endless scriptural searching that only exhausts the searcher; he tells them to stop straining there. Instead he points to the homely image of Krishna in the cowherds' house, the child bound with a rope, God who is near and visible rather than hidden in difficult texts. The reason people miss the road, he says, is that they do not know this simple secret. The thing blocking them is named in the last line: the weight of ego carried on the head, which must be thrown down before the nearby God can be seen.

GATHA 0701

The Necessity of Experience

Inner experience, the mind turned guardian

मराठी मूळ

मन वोळी मना । बुद्ध बुद्धी क्षण क्षणां ॥१॥
मी च मज राखण जालों । ज्याणें तेथें चि धरिलों ॥२॥
जें जें जेथें उठी । तें तें तया हातें कुंटी ॥३॥
भांजिली खांजनी । तुका साक्ष उरला दोन्ही ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The mind folds back into itself; intellect dissolves into intellect, moment by moment. I have become my own guardian, held fast in that very place.

Whatever rises anywhere, it is checked right there by its own hand. The tambourine has been broken.

Says Tuka, only the witness of both remains.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The mind folds back into the mind. The intellect dissolves into intellect, moment after moment. I have become my own watchman, held fast in that very place by the one who holds me. Whatever rises, wherever it rises, is checked right there by its own hand. The tambourine is broken. Tuka says: only the witness of both now remains.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is reporting an inward turning where the faculties no longer reach outward but collapse back into their own source. Mind sinks into mind, intellect into intellect, and he finds himself standing guard over himself, fixed in place by the very power that grasped him. The striking claim is that nothing needs to be suppressed from outside: each impulse that arises is stopped by its own hand in the same instant it appears. The broken tambourine is the end of the noisy activity that used to keep the music going. When the rising and the checking both fall silent, what is left is not another thought but the bare witness of both.

GATHA 0702

The Necessity of Experience

Inner experience, the untouched Brahman

मराठी मूळ

ब्रह्म न लिंपे त्या मेळें । कर्माअकर्मा वेगळें ॥१॥
तो चि एक तया जाणे । पावे अनुभविलें खुणें ॥२॥
शोच अशौचाचे संधी । तन आळा तना चि मधीं ॥३॥
पापपुण्यां नाहीं ठाव । तुका ह्मणे सहज भाव ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Brahman is untouched by any association, separate from both action and inaction. Only that one knows It who has experienced It directly and recognized Its signs.

The boundary between purity and impurity lies within the body itself. Says Tuka, where sin and merit have no place, there abides the natural state.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Brahman is not stained by any of this. It stands apart from action and from inaction alike. Only the one who has tasted it knows it, reaching it by the sign of his own experience. The line between clean and unclean lies inside the body itself. Tuka says: where sin and merit find no place, there the natural state abides.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is pointing to a reality that none of our usual categories can touch. Brahman is not soiled by company, nor caught by doing or not doing, so it cannot be reached by external acts or abstentions. He insists it is known only from inside, by one who has actually experienced it and recognizes it by its own unmistakable mark, not by argument or hearsay. He then collapses the familiar measures we live by: the divide between pure and impure is something the body draws, not an absolute. Where the whole bookkeeping of sin and merit no longer applies, what remains is the natural, effortless state of being itself.

GATHA 0703

True Worship

True worship, outward show is a trap

मराठी मूळ

काय दरा करील वन । समाधान नाही जंव ॥1॥
 तरी काय तेथें असती थोडीं । काय जोडी तयांसी ॥ध्रु॥
 रिगतां धांवा पेंवामध्ये । जोडे सिद्ध ते ठायीं ॥2॥
 काय भस्म करील राख । अंतर पाख नाही तों ॥3॥
 वर्णाआश्रमाचे धर्म । जाती श्रम जालिया ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे सोंग पाश । निरसे आस तें हित ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What can caves or forests do when there is no inner peace? Are there not plenty of creatures already dwelling there? What did they gain? Rushing into a granary does not bring spiritual attainment. What can ash or smearing do when there is no inner rind of devotion? The duties of the four stages of life are futile once they become mere toil.

Says Tuka, outward show is a trap. The real welfare lies in dissolving all desire.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What can a cave or a forest do for you while there is no peace inside? Are there not already plenty of creatures living there? What did they ever gain by it? Diving into a granary does not bring you spiritual attainment. What can ash or smearing do while there is no inner rind of devotion? The duties of caste and life stage are wasted once they turn into mere drudgery. Tuka says: outward show is a trap. The real good lies in dissolving every desire.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is attacking the substitution of external religion for inner change. Fleeing to a cave or forest gives you nothing if your mind is unquiet; he notes wryly that animals already live in those places and gain no enlightenment from the address. Smearing the body with ash is empty when there is no living core of devotion underneath. Even the prescribed duties of caste and life stage lose their value once they become hollow, weary routine. The pattern he points at, and asks the listener to examine in himself, is the wish to look holy on the outside while skipping the costly inner work; the only real welfare is in dissolving desire itself.

GATHA 0704

The Necessity of Experience

Inner experience, neti neti and the natural truth

मराठी मूळ

तें हीं नव्हे जें करितां कांहीं । ध्यातां ध्यायीं तें ही नव्हे ॥१॥
 तें ही नव्हे जें जाणवी जना । वाटे मना तें नव्हे ॥२॥
 तें ही नव्हे जें भोंवतें भोंवे । नागवें धांवें तें ही नव्हे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे एक चि आहे । सहजिं पाहें सहज ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What is done through effort, that is not It. What is reached through meditation, that is not It either.

What is taught to others as knowledge, that is not It. What the mind imagines, that is not It.

What revolves and circles about, that is not It. What runs naked and stripped, that is not It.

Says Tuka, there is only one reality. Look naturally at what is naturally present.

IN PLAIN WORDS

It is not what you reach by doing something. It is not what you reach by meditating either. It is not what is taught to others as knowledge. It is not what the mind imagines. It is not the thing that whirls and circles around. It is not the thing that runs about naked and stripped bare. Tuka says: there is only one reality. Look, simply and naturally, at what is naturally here.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is using a string of denials to clear away every false candidate for the truth, the way the scriptures say not this, not this. He rules out effortful action, deliberate meditation, taught knowledge, and the mind's imaginings, because each is something the seeker produces or grasps. He also rules out restless wandering,

whether the mind spinning in circles or the naked ascetic running about, since outward extremity is no nearer the mark. After stripping all of these away, he points to the one thing left, which is not reached at all but already present. The instruction is to stop straining and simply see, naturally, what is naturally there.

GATHA 0705

Renunciation

Renunciation, easy to say, costly to live

मराठी मूळ

बोल बोलतां वाटे सोपें । करणी करितां टीर कांपे ॥१॥
 नव्हे वैराग्य सोपारें । मज बोलतां न वटे खरें ॥२॥
 विष खावें ग्रासोग्रासीं । धन्य तो चि एक सोसी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे करुनि दावी । त्याचे पाय माझे जीवीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Speaking about it seems easy, but when one attempts to practice it, the body trembles. True renunciation is not a simple matter; when I speak of it, even my own words do not ring true.

To swallow poison with every morsel, blessed indeed is the one who can endure that. Says Tuka, the one who demonstrates it by living it, his feet dwell in my heart.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Talking about it sounds easy. Doing it makes your body shake. Renunciation is no small or cheap thing. When I even speak of it, my own words do not ring true to me. It is like swallowing poison with every mouthful. Blessed is the one, the only one, who can bear that. Tuka says: the one who shows it by living it, his feet I hold in my heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is exposing the gap between speaking of renunciation and actually living it. The words come easily; the deed makes the body tremble, because true vairagya is not the cheap, comfortable thing it is often made out to be. He turns the blade on himself, admitting that even his own talk of it sounds false in his ears when he has not paid its price. He likens the practice to swallowing poison at every meal, a daily, unglamorous endurance that almost no one sustains. So he reserves his reverence not for those who preach it but for the rare one who proves it by living it, and to that person he bows in his heart.

GATHA 0706

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the simple creed of a pilgrim

मराठी मूळ

होईन भिकारी । पंढरीचा वारकरी ॥१॥
 हा चि माझा नेम धर्म । अवघें विठोबाचें नाम ॥२॥
 हे चि माझी उपासना । लागन संतांच्या चरणा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा । करीन ते भोळी सेवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I will become a beggar, a pilgrim of Pandhari. This alone is my creed and religion: nothing but the Name of Vithoba.

This alone is my spiritual practice: to cling to the feet of the saints. Says Tuka, O God, I will offer You only this simple, sincere service.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I will become a beggar, a pilgrim of Pandhari. This alone is my rule and my religion: nothing but the Name of Vithoba. This alone is my worship: to cling to the feet of the saints. Tuka says: O God, the service I will give you is simple and sincere.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is stripping religion down to its barest essentials and choosing them gladly. He is willing to be a beggar and a wandering pilgrim of Pandhari, refusing status and wealth for the road. In place of an elaborate creed he names one rule: the Name of Vithoba and nothing besides. His whole practice reduces to holding fast to the feet of the saints, the company that keeps devotion alive. The closing line owns the manner of it; he offers not learned or showy service but a plain, sincere devotion, and that is exactly what he means to give.

GATHA 0707

Faith and Trust

Faith, Hari in the heart ends all fear

मराठी मूळ

सांटविला हरी । जींहीं हृदयमंदिरीं ॥१॥
 त्यांची सरली वेरझार । जाला सफळ व्यापार ॥२॥
 हरी आला हाता । मग कैची भय चिंता । तुका ह्मणे हरी । कांहीं उरों नेदी उरी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who have stored Hari within the temple of their hearts have ended all their restless striving. Their trade has borne true fruit.

Once Hari has come into one's hands, where is there room for fear or anxiety? Says Tuka, Hari does not allow anything to remain undone.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Those who have stored Hari away in the temple of the heart have finished their restless coming and going. Their trade has borne real fruit. Once Hari has come into your hands, where is there any room for fear or worry? Tuka says: Hari leaves nothing unfinished, no lack and no remainder.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing what changes the moment God is truly held within. He pictures the heart as a temple and Hari as the treasure stored safely inside it; for those who have done this, the endless back and forth of seeking is over. He borrows the language of trade to say the venture has finally paid off, that the lifelong striving has yielded its true profit. With Hari in hand there is simply no space left for fear or anxiety to occupy. The closing assurance is total: Hari finishes the work completely, leaving no deficiency and nothing still owing.

GATHA 0708

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion over liberation, refusing moksha

मराठी मूळ

मोक्ष तुमचा देवा । तुम्ही दुर्लभ तो ठेवा ॥१॥
मज भक्तीची आवडी । नाहीं अंतरीं ते गोडी ॥२॥
आपल्या प्रकारा । करा जतन दातारा ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे भेटी । पुरे एक चि शेवटीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Your liberation, O God, is Your own affair. Keep that difficult treasure for Yourself.

What I love is devotion; I have no taste for the sweetness of final release. Guard Your own possessions carefully, O generous Lord.

Says Tuka, all I ask is one meeting with You, just that, at the very end.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Your liberation is yours, God. Keep that rare treasure for yourself. What I love is devotion. The sweetness of release does not draw my heart. Look after your own things, generous Lord. Tuka says: all I ask is one meeting with you, just one, at the very end.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns down the prize most seekers crave. Moksha, final liberation, is precious and hard to win, and he hands it straight back to God: keep it, it is yours. He has no taste for it; what he wants is the love itself, the act of devotion, not the reward that supposedly ends it. The radical move is to treat release from rebirth as God's private possession rather than the soul's goal. In place of it he asks for one thing only: to meet his Lord face to face, once, at the close of life.

GATHA 0709

Devotion to Vitthal

Form over formless, devotee refuses moksha

मराठी मूळ

नामपाठ मुक्ताफळांच्या ओवणी । हें सुख सगुणीं अभिनव ॥१॥
 तरी आह्मी जालों उदास निर्गुणा । भक्तांचिया मना मोक्ष नये ॥२॥
 द्यावें घ्यावें ऐसें येथें उरे भाव । काय ठाया ठाव पुसोनियां ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां अभयदान करा । ह्मणा विश्वंभरा दिलें ऐसें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The chanting of the Name is like stringing pearls. This joy in the worship of the Lord in form is something new and wondrous.

That is why we have turned away from the formless, indifferent to it. The heart of a devotee does not desire liberation.

Here in devotion, the exchange of giving and receiving keeps love alive. Why should we wipe away the place where this happens? Says Tuka, grant us the gift of fearlessness now. Say, O Sustainer of the Universe, that it is given.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Chanting the Name is like stringing pearls. This joy in the Lord with form is new and wondrous. So we have turned away from the formless; we have no interest in it. The heart of a devotee does not want liberation.

Here in devotion the giving and the taking keep love alive. Why wipe out the very place where this happens? Tuka says: grant us the gift of fearlessness now. Say it, Vishvambhara: it is given.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram chooses the God with form and Name over the formless Absolute, and says plainly why. Chanting strings the Name like pearls and brings a fresh, living delight that the featureless nirguna cannot give. A devotee does not want moksha, because liberation would dissolve the very relationship he loves: the back-and-forth of giving and receiving between worshipper and Lord. To end that exchange would erase the place where love lives. So instead of release he asks the Sustainer of the universe for one assurance, the gift of fearlessness, and asks God to declare it granted.

GATHA 0710

Faith and Trust

Faith, Panduranga the boatman

मराठी मूळ

भवसिंधूचें काय कोडें । दावी वाट चाले पुढें ॥1॥
 तारुं भला पांडुरंग । पाय भिजों नेदी अंग ॥ध्रु॥
 मार्गे उतरिलें बहुत । पैल तिरीं साधुसंत ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे लाग वेगें । जाऊं तयाचिया मार्गे ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What is so difficult about the ocean of worldly life? He shows the way and walks ahead. Panduranga is a fine boatman who does not even let the body get wet.

He has already carried many across; on the far shore stand the saints and sages. Says Tuka, hurry now and follow in His footsteps.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What is so hard about the ocean of worldly life? He shows the way and walks ahead. Panduranga is a good boatman; he does not even let your body get wet. He has already carried many across. On the far shore stand the saints. Tuka says: hurry now, follow close behind him.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers the fear of samsara, the endless ocean of birth and death, by pointing at who is steering. Panduranga goes ahead and shows the path, and he ferries so well that the crossing soul never even gets wet. This is not a lonely struggle: countless people have already been carried over, and the saints are visible waiting on the far bank as proof. The crossing is real and the way is known. So the only task left is to move quickly and stay close behind the one already walking ahead.

GATHA 0711

Devotion to Vitthal

Humility, the dust at the saints' feet

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं साजत हो मोठा । मज अळंकार खोटा ॥1॥
 असें तुमचा रजरेण । संतां पार्यींची वाहाण ॥ध्रु॥
 नाहीं स्वरूपीं ओळखी । भक्तीभाव करीं देखीं ॥2॥
 नाहीं शून्याकारीं । क्षर ओळखी अक्षरीं ॥3॥
 नाहीं विवेक या ठायीं । आत्मा अनात्मा काई ॥4॥
 कांहीं नव्हे तुका । पांयां पडने हें ऐका ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Grand ornaments do not suit me; false decorations are not my portion. I am the dust beneath the feet of the saints, the sandal on their feet.

I have no acquaintance with the formless Self. I practice devotion and worship as I see others do.

I have no knowledge of the void. I do not recognize the imperishable within the perishable.

There is no discrimination here of Self and not-Self. Says Tuka, I am nothing. Listen: falling at Your feet is all I know.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Grand ornaments do not suit me; false finery is not for me. I am the dust under the saints' feet, the sandal on their feet. I have no acquaintance with the formless Self. I do devotion and worship the way I see others do. I know nothing of the void. I cannot find the imperishable inside the perishable. There is no sorting here of Self and not-Self. Tuka says: I am nothing. Listen: falling at your feet is all I know.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strips off every claim to spiritual rank and stands as nothing. The grand ornaments he refuses are the prizes of high knowledge: realizing the formless Self, seeing the void, discerning the eternal within the passing, dividing Self from not-Self. He says flatly that he has none of these, and is not even pretending to; he just worships the way he sees ordinary devotees worship. His whole standing is to be dust beneath the saints' feet, the sandal they tread in. The one thing he knows how to do, and the only thing he claims, is to fall at God's feet.

GATHA 0712

The Power of the Name

The Name, conquering Death

मराठी मूळ

सत्य साच खरें । नाम विठोबाचें बरें ॥१॥
जेणें तुटती बंधनें । उभयलोकीं कीतिन जेणें ॥२॥
भाव ज्याचे गांठी । त्यासी लाभ उठाउठी ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे भोळा । जिंकुं जाणे किळकाळा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The Name of Vithoba is true, honest, and genuine. It severs all bonds and brings glory in both this world and the next.

Whoever holds sincere faith receives its benefit instantly. Says Tuka, even a simple soul can conquer Death itself.

IN PLAIN WORDS

It is true, honest, real: the Name of Vithoba is good. It cuts the bonds that hold you. It brings glory in this world and the next. Whoever carries sincere faith gets the reward at once. Tuka says: even a simple soul learns to conquer Death.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram stakes everything on the plain power of the Name. The Name of Vithoba is no figure of speech; it is true and genuine, and it does real work, severing the bonds of bondage and winning honor in both this life and the life beyond. The condition is not learning or status but sincere faith carried in the heart, and where that faith is present the benefit comes instantly, not after long austerity. The claim lands hard at the end: with the Name even a simple, unlettered soul defeats Death itself, the one enemy no one escapes on their own.

GATHA 0713

Faith and Trust

Faith, service as the eye-salve that sees truth

मराठी मूळ

सत्य तो आवडे । विकल्पानें भाव उडे ॥१॥
 आह्मी तुमच्या कृपादानें । जाणों शुद्ध मंद सोनें ॥२॥
 आला भोग अंगा । न लवूं उसीर त्या त्यागा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने देवा । अंजन ते तुझी सेवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Truth is what we love; doubt makes devotion flee. By Your gift of grace, we can distinguish pure gold from base metal.

When suffering comes to the body, we will not delay in renouncing it. Says Tuka, O God, Your service is the true collyrium for the eyes.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Truth is what I love; doubt makes faith fly away. By your gift of grace we can tell pure gold from base metal. When suffering comes to the body, we will not be slow to let it go. Tuka says: God, your service is the collyrium for my eyes.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes how a devotee learns to see clearly. He loves truth, and warns that doubt, the splitting mind, drives genuine feeling away. The power to discern, to tell real gold from the false, is not his own skill but a gift of God's grace. So when pain comes to the body he will not cling, but will let it go without delay, trusting that vision. He closes with the image of collyrium, the dark salve people line their eyes with to see better: God's service is that salve, the thing that clears his sight.

GATHA 0714

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, longing kept alive

मराठी मूळ

करावें चिंतन । तें चि बरें न भेटून ॥1॥
 बरवा अंगीं राहे भाव । तो गे तो चि जाणा देव ॥ध्रु॥
 दर्शनाची उरी । अवस्था चि अंग धरी ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे मन । तेथें सकळ कारण ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

It is better to contemplate God without meeting Him in person, for then the feeling remains fresh and alive within. That very feeling is God Himself.

When yearning for His sight persists, it takes on a form of its own. Says Tuka, in the end, everything depends upon the mind.

IN PLAIN WORDS

It is better to contemplate God and not meet him in person. Then the feeling stays fresh inside. That very feeling is God himself. When the longing for his sight keeps burning, it takes on a body of its own. Tuka says: it is the mind. Everything turns on that.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes a strange, daring claim: better not to meet God face to face. A finished, satisfied meeting would let the feeling cool, but unmet longing stays alive and fresh, and he says that living feeling is itself God. When the ache to see him keeps burning, the yearning grows so intense it almost takes on its own form. The point is that devotion is not a transaction completed by an encounter; it is an inner state. In the end everything depends on the mind, where the feeling lives.

GATHA 0715

True Worship

True worship, offering and the ego swallowed

मराठी मूळ

जें जें जेथें पावे । तें तें समर्पावें सेवे ॥1॥
 सहज पूजा या चि नांवें । गिळत अभिमानें व्हावें ॥ध्रु॥
 अवघें भोगितां गोसावी । आदीं आवसानीं जीवी ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे सिण । न धरितां नव्हे भिन्न ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Whatever comes at any moment, offer it in service. This is what is truly called worship: to swallow one's ego willingly.

Whether enjoying or renouncing, let the Lord be at the center, from beginning to end. Says Tuka, when you bear no weariness, there is no separation.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whatever comes to you, wherever it comes, offer it in service. This is what is truly called worship: to swallow your own pride. Whether you are enjoying or giving up, keep the Lord at the center, from the start to the very end. Tuka says: carry no weariness, and there is no separation.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram redefines worship as a way of living, not a rite. Whatever arrives, good or hard, you hand it back into service; the real offering is your own ego, swallowed deliberately. This holds whether you are enjoying something or renouncing it, as long as the Lord stays at the center of the act from beginning to end. The closing turn names the stakes: if you carry no inner resistance or weariness about it, there is no gap left between you and God. Separation, then, is something the grudging self manufactures, not a fixed distance.

GATHA 0716

The Power of the Name

The Name, the tongue even when the heart lags

मराठी मूळ

नसे तरी मनो नसो । परी वाचे तरी वसो ॥१॥
 देह पडो या चिंतनें । विठ्ठलनामसंकीर्तनें ॥२॥
 दंभिस्थती भलत्या भावें । मज हरिजन ह्मणावें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे काळें तरी । मज सांभाळील हरी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even if my mind is not in it, let the Name at least dwell upon my tongue. Let this body perish in the chanting of Vitthal's Name and kirtan.

By whatever pretense or state, let people call me a devotee of Hari. Says Tuka, in time, Hari Himself will look after me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Even if my mind is not in it, let it not be in it; only let the Name live on my tongue. Let this body fall away in this remembrance, in the kirtan of Vitthal's Name. By whatever pretense, in whatever state, let people call me a devotee of Hari. Tuka says: in time, Hari himself will look after me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes a frank, almost reckless prayer about a half-hearted heart. He admits his mind may not be present, and rather than wait for perfect feeling he asks that at least the Name keep moving on his tongue, even if the inner devotion is missing. Let the body wear out chanting Vitthal's Name; let him be called a devotee even if his standing as one is partly pretense. The wager is that the practice itself, kept up despite the cold heart, is enough to begin with. He trusts that Hari, given time, will take over and complete what the man cannot yet feel.

GATHA 0717

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, trading on the master's name

मराठी मूळ

नये जरी कांहीं । तरी भलतें चि वाहीं ॥1॥
 ह्मणविल्या ढास । कोण न धरी वेठीस ॥धु.॥
 समर्थाच्या नांवें । भलतैसैं विकारें ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे सत्ता । वरी असते बहुतां ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even if one can bring nothing of real worth, one can carry whatever is at hand. Who would refuse a worker who insists on being employed? In the name of the powerful master, anything can be traded.

Says Tuka, the master's authority covers everything.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Even if I can bring nothing worth anything, I carry whatever is at hand. Who turns away a worker who insists on serving? In the name of the powerful master, anything at all can be traded. Tuka says: the master's authority covers everyone.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures himself as a worthless servant who shows up anyway. He has nothing of real value to offer, so he brings whatever he has, and leans on a simple fact: a master does not refuse a worker who insists on being employed. The leverage is not in the servant but in the name he serves under; backed by a powerful master, even poor goods can be passed off and accepted. This is the logic of surrender: the devotee's standing rests entirely on God's authority, not his own merit, and that authority covers everyone who comes under it.

GATHA 0718

Prayers

Prayer, the unqualified beggar's plea

मराठी मूळ

न संडवे अन्न । मज न सेववे वन ॥1॥
 ह्मणउनी नारायणा । कींव भाकितों करुणा ॥धु.॥
 नाही अधिकार । कांहीं घोकाया अक्षर ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे थोडें । आयुष्य अवघें चि कोडें ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I cannot give up food, and I cannot retire to the forest. Therefore, O Narayana, I plead for compassion.

I have no qualification to chant even a single syllable of scripture. Says Tuka, life is short, and all of it is but play.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I cannot give up food. I cannot go off to the forest. So, Narayana, I beg you for compassion. I have no right to chant even a single syllable of scripture. Tuka says: life is short, and the whole of it is just a game.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays from open weakness instead of strength. He cannot fast away his hunger and cannot renounce the world for the forest, the usual paths of the austere; and he claims no scriptural qualification, not even the standing to recite one sacred syllable. Stripped of every credential, all he can do is beg Narayana for compassion. The bare plea is the whole prayer. He ends by setting it against the size of things: life is short and the whole of it is only a play, so leaning on God's mercy is the sane response, not the qualifications he lacks.

GATHA 0719

The Nature of God

Nature of God, three kinds of people

मराठी मूळ

एकांचीं उत्तरे । गोड अमृत मधुरें ॥१॥
 ऐशा देवाच्या विभुती । भिन्न प्रारब्धाची गती ॥२॥
 एकांचीं वचने । कडु अत्यंत तीक्ष्णें ॥३॥
 प्रकाराचें तीन । तुका ह्याने केले जन ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The words of some are sweet and nourishing like nectar. Such are God's different manifestations; each soul's destiny takes its own course.

The words of others are bitter and piercingly sharp. Says Tuka, God has fashioned people of three kinds.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The words of some are sweet, like nectar, gentle and nourishing. Such are God's different forms; each person's destiny runs its own way. The words of others are bitter, sharp, cutting. Tuka says: God has made people of three kinds.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks at the range of human speech and reads it as God's own diversity. Some people's words are sweet as nectar, gentle and feeding; others' are bitter and cutting; and he names a third kind besides. Rather than judge this, he says these are God's varied manifestations, that the divine shows itself even through clashing temperaments. Each person's prarabdha, the destiny ripening from past action, sends them down its own track. The quiet point for self-examination is to see all three as God's making, including the sharp-tongued one you might rather condemn.

GATHA 0720

The Necessity of Experience

Experience, the middle past speech

मराठी मूळ

वचनें ही नाड । न बोले तें मुकें खोड ॥1॥
 दोहीं वेगळें तें हित । बोली अबोलणी नीत ॥ध्रु॥
 अंधार प्रकाशी । जाय दिवस पावे निशी ॥2॥
 बीज पृथिवीच्या पोटी । तुका ह्मणे दावी दृष्टी ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Speech can bring ruin, and silence can be a defect. True welfare lies apart from both, between speaking and not speaking.

Darkness ends when light comes; the day departs when night arrives. Says Tuka, the seed lies hidden in the belly of the earth, yet in time it shows itself to the eye.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Words can ruin you. To say nothing, to stay mute, is a fault too. The good thing lies apart from both. It is a speaking that is also a not speaking. Darkness goes when light comes. The day leaves when night arrives. The seed lies in the belly of the earth. Tuka says: in time it shows itself to the eye.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is pointing at something that does not fit the choice between speaking and keeping silent. Reckless speech brings ruin, but stubborn muteness is a defect of its own; the welfare he wants sits in neither. He calls it a speech that is also a silence, a way of being that the ordinary pair cannot hold. The images press the same point: light and dark, day and night, follow each other and pass, while the seed hidden in the earth keeps its life and shows itself in its own time. What is real is not the visible move from one opposite to the other but the quiet thing underneath that finally surfaces.

GATHA 0721

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, offer all to God

मराठी मूळ

विचारा वांचून । न पवीजे समाधान ॥1॥
 देह त्रिगुणांचा बांधा । माजी नाहीं गुण सुदा ॥ध्रु॥
 देवाचिये चाडे । देवा द्यावें जें जें घडे ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे होतें । बहु गोमटें उचितें ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Without reflection, one cannot attain peace. The body is a structure of the three gunas, yet the Self within is free of all qualities.

For the love of God, offer to God whatever comes to pass. Says Tuka, this is the finest and most fitting practice.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Without reflection you cannot find peace. The body is a knot of the three gunas. Inside it the Self has no quality at all. For the love of God, give to God whatever happens. Tuka says: this is good, this is the most fitting thing of all.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram joins clear seeing to total surrender. First he says peace will not come without reflection, and the reflection he means is this: the body is woven of the three gunas, while the Self within carries no quality and is untouched by them. Once you see that, the right response is to hand everything that happens, pleasant or painful, back to God as an offering made for love of Him. He calls this the finest and most fitting practice, better than any anxious effort to manage life yourself. Knowing what you are and giving the rest away are one movement.

GATHA 0722

The Power of the Name

The Name, even maya bows

मराठी मूळ

तुटे भवरोग । संचितक्रियमाणभोग ॥१॥
 ऐसें विठोबाचें नाम । उच्चारितां खंडे जन्म ॥२॥
 वसों न सके पाप । पळे त्रिविध तो ताप ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे माया । होय दासी लागे पायां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The disease of worldly existence is destroyed, along with the effects of past, present, and future karma. Such is the Name of Vithoba: by merely uttering it, the cycle of birth is broken.

Sin cannot remain; the threefold suffering flees. Says Tuka, even maya becomes a servant and falls at His feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The disease of worldly life is cut. So are the fruits of past, present, and future deeds. Such is the name of Vithoba: when you speak it, the round of birth is broken. Sin cannot stay. The threefold suffering runs away. Tuka says: maya herself becomes a servant and falls at His feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming the full reach of the divine Name, and he does not soften it. To utter Vithoba's name cuts the sickness of worldly existence and burns up karma in all three directions, the stored, the ripening, and the deeds still to come, so that the cycle of rebirth itself is broken. Where the Name is spoken, sin finds no place to live and

the threefold suffering flees. The boldest claim comes last: maya, the very power that binds everyone, is reduced to a servant girl and falls at God's feet. The point is not magic words but where the whole self turns when the Name is truly taken.

GATHA 0723

*The Necessity of Experience**Experience, the drop in the ocean*

मराठी मूळ

मुसावलें अंग । रंगीं मेळविला रंग ॥१॥
 एकीं एक दृढ जालें । मुळा आपुलिया आलें ॥२॥
 सागरीं थेंबुडा । पडिल्या निवडे कोण्या वाटा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नवें । नव्हे जाणावें हें देवें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The body has been saturated; color has merged with color. The two have become firmly one, returned to their original source.

When a droplet falls into the ocean, by what path can it be separated out again? Says Tuka, know that this is nothing new; God has always known it.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The body has melted away. Color has mixed into color. The two have become firmly one and returned to their own root. A drop falls into the ocean. After that, by what path can you pick it out again? Tuka says: this is nothing new. Know that God has always known it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing union from the inside, where the seer and the seen stop being two. The separate body dissolves; one color runs into another until they are a single dye, and what seemed like two has gone back to the one source it came from. His test is the drop in the ocean: once it has fallen in, no path remains by which it could ever be lifted out as a separate drop. Then he adds the steadying word, that this oneness is not some new event he has produced; it is how things always were, and God has known it from the start. The merging only reveals what was already true.

GATHA 0724

The Moral Ideal

The moral ideal, true repentance

मराठी मूळ

अनुतापें दोष । जाय न लगतां निमिष ॥१॥
 परि तो राहे विसावला । आदीं अवसानीं भला ॥२॥
 हें चि प्रायिश्चत । अनुतापीं न्हाय चित्त ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे पापा । शिवों नये अनुतापा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Through genuine remorse, faults disappear in less than an instant. Then one rests in true peace, good from beginning to end.

This alone is the real atonement: to bathe the mind in sincere repentance. Says Tuka, sin cannot even approach the one who feels true contrition.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Through remorse, faults go. They leave in less than a blink. Then you rest at ease, good from the beginning to the end. This alone is the real atonement: to bathe the mind in true repentance. Tuka says: sin cannot even touch the one who feels true remorse.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes sincere remorse, not ritual penance, the whole of atonement. Genuine contrition wipes out faults in an instant, and the one who feels it comes to rest, sound from start to finish. He says plainly that this bathing of the mind in repentance is the real prayascitta, the true cleansing, over against any prescribed rite. The closing line raises the stakes: sin cannot so much as approach a person whose heart is truly sorry. The work he asks for is inward and honest, a turning of the mind, not an outward transaction.

GATHA 0725

True Worship

True worship, only pure feeling counts

मराठी मूळ

चहूं आश्रमांचे धर्म । न राखतां जोडे कर्म ॥1॥
 तैसी नव्हे भोळी सेवा । एक भाव चि कारण देवा ॥धु.॥
 तपें इंद्रियां आघात । क्षणें एका वाताहात ॥2॥
 मंत्र चळे थोडा । तरि धड चि होय वेडा ॥3॥
 व्रतें करितां सांग । तरी एक चुकतां भंग ॥4॥
 धर्म सत्त्व चि कारण । नाही तरी केला सिण ॥5॥
 भूतदयेसि आघात । उंचनिच वाताहात ॥6॥
 तुका हाणे दुजें । विधिनिषेधाचें ओझें ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The duties of the four stages of life, if not observed, bring karmic consequence. But simple, heartfelt devotion is different; for God, only pure feeling matters.

Austerities that torment the senses can be destroyed in a single moment of carelessness. A mantra, if it wavers even slightly, drives one mad.

Vows performed in full, if one step is missed, are broken entirely. Righteous conduct requires purity of heart; without it, all effort is wasted.

Even compassion for beings, if mixed with notions of high and low, collapses into ruin. Says Tuka, all other paths carry the burden of prescribed dos and don'ts.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Keep the duties of the four life-stages, or fail to, and either way deeds bind you with their fruit. Simple, trusting service is not like that. For God, one thing alone is the cause: pure feeling. Austerities batter the senses, and a single moment of carelessness can ruin them. A mantra that wavers even a little can drive a man mad. Vows done in full are broken if you miss one step. Right conduct needs purity of heart; without it the labor is wasted. Even kindness to creatures collapses into ruin if it is mixed with high and low. Tuka says: every other way carries the load of dos and don'ts.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lines up the demanding paths and shows how brittle each one is, to set off the one path that is not. The duties of the four stages bind you whether you keep them or drop them; austerity is undone by one careless moment; a mispronounced mantra unhinges the mind; a vow missing a single step is wholly broken; even compassion curdles when it is sorted by high and low. All of these stand or fall on getting the rules exactly right, and that is their burden. Against them he sets bholi seva, simple trusting service, where God asks for only one thing, pure feeling. The point is not that effort is bad but that without a clean heart it is wasted, and feeling is what carries no fragile conditions.

GATHA 0726

The Power of the Name

The Name, maya still pursues

मराठी मूळ

सोडिला संसार । माया तयावरि फार ॥१॥
 धांवत चाले मागें मागें । सुखदुःख साहे अंगे ॥२॥
 यानें घ्यावें नाम । तीसीकरणें त्याचें काम ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे भोळी । विठ्ठलकृपेची कोवळी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even after abandoning worldly life, the power of illusion pursues one relentlessly. It runs behind, step by step, sharing in every pleasure and pain.

One should therefore take the Name; that alone accomplishes the work of all three faculties. Says Tuka, this is the tender, gentle grace of Vitthal.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You have left worldly life. Even so, maya hangs heavy on you. She runs along behind, step after step, sharing in every joy and every sorrow. So take the Name. That alone does the work of all three faculties. Tuka says: this is the tender, gentle grace of Vitthal.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram warns the renouncer that walking away from household life does not leave illusion behind. Maya keeps running at your back, step by step, mixed into every pleasure and pain you still feel, so renunciation by itself is no safe ground. His remedy is the Name: taking it does the whole work that body, speech, and mind would otherwise have to do, accomplishing what no separate effort can. And he calls this provision tender and gentle, the soft grace of Vitthal toward those who cannot outrun maya on their own. The Name is given precisely because the struggle alone is not enough.

GATHA 0727

The Power of the Name

The Name, the garland of refuge

मराठी मूळ

बैसों खेळूं जेवूं । तेथें नाम तुझें गाऊं ॥१॥
 रामकृष्णनाममाळा । घालूं ओवुनियां गळा ॥२॥
 विश्वास हा धरूं । नाम बळकट करूं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां । आह्मां जीवन शरणागतां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Whether sitting, playing, or eating, we will sing Your Name. We will string the garland of the names Rama and Krishna and place it around our necks.

We will hold fast to this faith and make the Name our stronghold. Says Tuka, the Name is now the very sustenance of us who have taken refuge.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Sitting, playing, eating, there we will sing Your name. We will thread the garland of the names Rama and Krishna and hang it on our necks. We will hold this faith. We will make the Name our fortress. Tuka says: now the Name is the very life of us who have taken refuge.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets out a way of living where the Name is woven through every ordinary act. Whatever they are doing, sitting, playing, eating, they will be singing it, and they will string the names of Rama and Krishna into a garland worn at the throat. He turns the Name into two things at once: a held faith and a stronghold, a fortress they make strong by repetition. The closing line gives the reason it can bear that weight: for those who have surrendered, the Name is not a practice among others but their very sustenance, the life they live on. Refuge here is continuous, not occasional.

GATHA 0728

Faith and Trust

Faith, no fear for Hari's servants

मराठी मूळ

पाटीं पोटीं देव । कैचा हरिदासां भेव ॥१॥
 करा आनंदें कीर्तन । नका आशंकितमन ॥२॥
 एथें कोठें काळ । करील देवापाशीं बळ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे धनी । सपुरता काय वाणी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God is behind them and before them; what fear can touch the devotees of Hari? Perform kirtan with joy; do not let the mind be apprehensive. Where can Death exert power against God? Says Tuka, is the master so weak that His word fails?

IN PLAIN WORDS

God is behind them and before them. So what fear can the servants of Hari have? Do kirtan with joy. Do not let your mind grow afraid. Here, where can Death use any force against God? Tuka says: is the master so poor that His word would fall short?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks to frighten away fear itself. God stands both behind and in front of His devotees, so there is no gap left for dread to enter; the servants of Hari have nothing to be afraid of. From that he gives a plain instruction: sing kirtan gladly and refuse the anxious, second-guessing mind. He presses it with two questions: how could

Death exert any power in the place where God already stands, and is the Lord such a poor master that His given word would ever fail to hold? The faith he calls for rests on God's nearness and reliability, not on the devotee's own strength.

GATHA 0729

True Worship

True worship, the inner offering

मराठी मूळ

मनोमय पूजा । हे चि पढीये केशीराजा ॥१॥
 घेतो कल्पनेचा भोग । न मानेती बाह्य रंग ॥२॥
 अंतरीचें जाणे । आदिवर्तमान खुणे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने कुढें । कोठें सरे त्याच्या पुढें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The worship of the mind alone is what pleases Keshiraja. He accepts the offerings of imagination; outward show does not satisfy Him.

He knows the inner truth, recognizing every sign from the very beginning. Says Tuka, where can falsehood stand before Him?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Worship made of the mind, that alone is what Keshiraja loves. He takes the offering of your inmost thought. Outward show does not please Him. He knows what is inside. He reads every sign from the very beginning. Tuka says: where can falseness get through, standing before Him?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says God prizes the worship that happens within and is unmoved by display. What pleases Keshiraja is mental worship, the offering shaped by genuine thought and feeling, while outward color and spectacle leave Him cold. The reason is that He sees straight into the heart and has read its signs from the start, so nothing inside can be hidden from Him. The closing question lands the claim: counterfeit devotion has nowhere to stand in front of one who already knows the inner truth. Worship is judged by what is actually in the mind, not by what is performed.

GATHA 0730

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the lover of God

मराठी मूळ

जाणे भक्तीचा जिह्वाळा । तो चि देवीचा पुतळा ॥१॥
 आणीक नये माझ्या मना । हो का पंडित शाहाणा ॥२॥
 नामरूपीं जडलें चित्त । त्याचा दास मी अंकित ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नवविध । भक्ती जाणे तो चि शुद्ध ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The one who knows the warmth of devotion is the true image of the Divine. No scholar or learned man appeals to my heart otherwise.

The one whose mind is absorbed in the Name and form of God, I am that one's servant, marked as his own. Says Tuka, the one who knows the ninefold devotion is the truly pure one.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The one who knows the warmth of devotion, that one is the very image of God. No one else draws my heart, be he a scholar, be he wise. The one whose mind is fixed on the Name and form, I am that one's marked servant. Tuka says: the one who knows the ninefold devotion, that one alone is pure.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets the standard for what makes a person worthy of honor, and it is not learning. The one who knows the inner warmth of devotion he treats as the living image of God, while no scholar or clever man wins his heart for cleverness alone. He goes further and binds himself as servant to anyone whose mind is glued to God's name and form. The closing line names the measure: it is the one who lives the ninefold path of devotion, hearing, praising, remembering, and the rest, who counts as truly pure. Devotion, not erudition, is what he bows to.

GATHA 0731

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, refusing the I-am-Brahman talk

मराठी मूळ

याजसाठी वनांतरा । जातो सांडुनियां घरा ॥१॥
 माझें दिठावेल प्रेम । बिद्ध होईल निष्काम ॥२॥
 अद्वैताची वाणी । नाही ऐकत मी कानीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे अहंब्रह्म । आड येऊं नेदीं भ्रम ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

For this very reason I go to the solitude of the forest, leaving my home behind. My love will become strong and my intellect will be freed from desire.

I do not listen to the talk of non-duality with my ears. Says Tuka, I will not allow the delusion of "I am Brahman" to come in the way.

IN PLAIN WORDS

For this very reason I go off into the forest, leaving my house behind. My love will grow strong. My mind will become free of desire. I will not let the talk of non-duality into my ears. Tuka says: I will not let the delusion "I am Brahman" come in my way.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram defends the lover's path against a high philosophy that would dissolve it. He leaves home for the forest so his love for God can grow strong and his mind can be freed of craving, guarding the very relationship between devotee and Lord. To protect it he refuses even to listen to advaita talk, the doctrine that all is one. The sharp line is the last: he names the idea "I am Brahman" a bhrama, a delusion, and swears not to let it block his way. He is not denying the truth of non-duality so much as refusing a self-claim that would swallow the loving devotion he has chosen to keep.

GATHA 0732

Prayers

Plea for rescue, naming the debt

मराठी मूळ

बुडतां आवरीं । मज भवाचे सागरीं ॥१॥
नको मानूं भार । पाहों दोषांचे डोंगर ॥२॥
आहे तें सांभाळीं । तुझी कैसी ब्रीदावळी ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे दोषी । मी तों पातकांची राशी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Catch me as I drown in this ocean of worldly existence. Do not consider it a burden; do not look at my mountains of faults.

Protect what is Yours; where is Your famous pledge otherwise? Says Tuka, I am sinful, a heap of transgressions.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am drowning in the ocean of this world. Catch hold of me. Do not count it a burden. Do not look at my mountains of faults. Protect what is Yours; otherwise, what becomes of Your famous pledge? Tuka says: I am a sinner, a whole heap of transgressions.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is sinking in the round of worldly life and calls on God to pull him out before he goes under. He does not pretend to be worthy: he names himself a heap of faults, mountains high. His argument is not his own merit but God's reputation. He has heard that God is the rescuer of the fallen, and he holds God to that vow. If God will not save a wretch like him, then the famous pledge means nothing; so the very depth of his sin becomes the proof that God must act.

GATHA 0733

*The Necessity of Experience**Settled certainty, speech falls silent*

मराठी मूळ

अक्षई तें झालें । आतां न मोडे रचिलें ॥1॥
 पाया पडिला खोले ठायीं । तेथें पुढें चाली नाही ॥धु॥
 होतें विखुरलें । ताळा जमे झडती आलें ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे बोली । पुढें कुंटित चि जाली ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What has been built is now imperishable; what has been established cannot be undone. The foundation has been laid deep, and there is no room to advance further in debate.

What was scattered has now come into balance and alignment. Says Tuka, even speech has become humble and still before this.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What has been made is now imperishable. What has been built cannot be undone. The foundation has been laid deep. From there, there is no walking on, no further to go. What was scattered has come into balance; it has fallen into place and is gathered. Tuka says: from here on, even speech stops short.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing the arrival of a state that no longer changes. The realization has been built on a deep foundation, and what is built that way cannot be torn down. He pictures everything in him that was once scattered now settling into alignment and balance. Because the matter is finished, there is nowhere further to advance, no more ground to argue over. Even words give out at the edge of it: speech reaches the boundary and falls silent, because what has happened cannot be spoken, only rested in.

GATHA 0734

*Devotion to Vitthal**Lowly devotion, bring what little you have*

मराठी मूळ

तुझे थोर थोर । भक्त करिती विचार ॥1॥
 करुणावचनें । म्यां भाकावीं तुझां दीनें ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे घेई । माझें थोडें फार ठायीं ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Your great devotees engage in lofty reflection about You. I, a lowly one, can only offer words of tender pleading.

Says Tuka, accept whatever little or much I have, right here.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Your great, great devotees take up lofty reflection about You. I am a lowly one. All I can do is plead to You with tender words. Tuka says: take it, accept whatever I have, a little or a lot, right here.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets himself beside God's mighty devotees and admits he is not of their kind. They reach God through high contemplation; he cannot. What he has instead is helpless, tender pleading, the cry of a poor man. So he does not try to bring what he lacks. He offers exactly what he has, whether it counts for little or much, and asks God to accept it as it is, on the spot. The poem makes lowliness itself the offering.

GATHA 0735

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstatic proclaiming, God walks ahead

मराठी मूळ

लावुनि काहाळा । सुखें करितों सोहोळा ॥१॥
 सादवीत गेलों जना । भय नाहीं सत्य जाणां ॥२॥
 गात नाचत विनोदें । टाळघागःयांच्या छंदें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे भेव । नाहीं पुढें येतो देव ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Sounding the drums, I celebrate with joy. I have proclaimed to all the people: know this for certain, there is nothing to fear.

Singing, dancing, playing with cymbals and drums. Says Tuka, there is no danger; God comes walking ahead.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I sound the drums and keep the festival in joy. I have gone out calling to everyone: know this for certain, there is nothing to fear. Singing, dancing, in play, to the beat of cymbals and bells. Tuka says: there is no danger. God comes walking out in front.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is in the open joy of kirtan, beating the drum and dancing, and he turns it outward into a public announcement. He goes to all the people with one message: do not be afraid. He can say this without doubt because of what walks in front of him: God Himself goes ahead, leading the way. With God out in front there is no danger to meet, so the song and dance are not a distraction from fear but the form his fearlessness takes.

GATHA 0736

Ecstasy and Joy

Nondual fearlessness, no bondage was ever real

मराठी मूळ

मुक्त कासया ह्मणावें । बंधन तें नाही ठावें ॥१॥
 सुखें करितों कीर्तन । भय विसरलें मन ॥२॥
 देखिजेना नास । घालूं कोणावरी कास ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे साहे । देव आहे तैसा आहे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why should one be called liberated when bondage was never real? I perform kirtan in joy; the mind has forgotten all fear. No destruction is visible anywhere; on whom should I lean for support? Says Tuka, God endures; He is as He always was.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why call anyone liberated? The bondage was never even there. I do my kirtan in joy; my mind has forgotten fear. I see no destruction anywhere. On whom, then, would I lean for support? Tuka says: God endures. God is just as God always is.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pushes past the usual talk of liberation. To be freed, there must first have been a real chain; but he says the bondage was never real, so the word liberated has nothing to grip. From that seeing, fear simply drops out of the mind and he sings. He looks for destruction and finds none, and therefore finds no need to clutch at any prop or support. What remains is the one thing that does not come and go: God abides, unchanged, exactly as God has always been.

GATHA 0737

The Necessity of Experience

The rope and the snake, fear is imaginary

मराठी मूळ

ओनाम्याच्या काळें । खडें मांडविलें बाळें ॥१॥
 तें चि पुढें पुढें काई । मग लागलिया सोई ॥२॥
 रज्जु सर्प होता । तोंवरी चि न कळतां ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे साचें । भय नाही बागुलाचें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In the time of ignorance, a child sets up pebbles and plays house. That same game continues forward once the habit takes hold.

The rope appeared to be a serpent, but only so long as one did not know the truth. Says Tuka, the genuine has nothing to fear from the scarecrow.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In the time of not-knowing, a child lines up pebbles and plays at keeping house. The same game runs on and on once the habit sets in. The rope looked like a snake, but only as long as you had not seen the truth. Tuka says: to one who is real, the scarecrow holds no fear.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses three plain pictures for how a false thing frightens or grips us. A child arranges pebbles and treats the pretend household as serious, and the game keeps going by sheer habit, the way we keep mistaking the world for solid. A coiled rope is read as a snake, and the terror lasts exactly as long as the ignorance does, no longer. A scarecrow scares only the one who takes it for a man. In each case the fear is real but its cause is not; the moment you see truly, the snake, the scarecrow, the pebble-house all lose their power.

GATHA 0738

The Power of the Name

Command to the tongue, only the Name

मराठी मूळ

आतां पुढें धरीं । माझे आठव वैखरी ॥१॥
नको बडबडूं भांडे । कांहीं वाउगें तें रांडें ॥२॥
विठ्ठल विठ्ठल । ऐसे सांडुनियां बोल ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे आण । तुज स्वामीची हे जाण ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now, O tongue, hold fast to the remembrance of my Lord. Do not babble uselessly about worthless things.

Leave aside all words except "Vitthal, Vitthal." Says Tuka, this is the command of your master; know it well.

IN PLAIN WORDS

From now on, tongue, hold to one thing: the remembrance of my Lord. Do not babble on, you chattering thing, about worthless nonsense. Drop every word but this: "Vitthal, Vitthal." Tuka says: this is your master's order. Know it well.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns and gives a direct order to his own tongue, the part of him that wanders into idle talk. He scolds it for babbling about worthless things and commands it to fasten onto one task: remembering the Lord. Everything else is to be dropped, and only the Name, Vitthal, Vitthal, is to be spoken. He frames this not as a wish but as a command from the master the tongue belongs to, so that loose speech becomes plain disobedience and the Name becomes the tongue's whole duty.

GATHA 0739

Prayers

Cry for mercy, save my honor

मराठी मूळ

काय नव्हे करितां तुज । आतां राखें माझी लाज ॥१॥
मी तों अपराधाची राशी । शिखा अंगुष्ट तोंपाशीं ॥२॥
त्राहें त्राहें त्राहें । मज कृपादृष्टी पाहें ॥३॥
तुका ह्याने देवा । सत्या घ्यावी आतां सेवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*What is impossible for You? Now protect my honor. I am a heap of offenses from head to toe.**Save me, save me, save me! Look upon me with the eyes of mercy. Says Tuka, O God, accept my sincere service now.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

What is impossible for You? Now guard my honor. I am a heap of offenses from the crown of my head to the tip of my toe. Save me, save me, save me. Look on me with the eyes of mercy. Tuka says: God, take up my service now, truly.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram throws himself entirely on God's power and mercy. He begins by granting that nothing is beyond God, so there is no excuse of difficulty. Then he confesses the worst: he is offense from head to foot, with no clean part to point to. Having no merit, he can only cry out, save me, save me, save me, and beg for the merciful glance. The honor he asks God to protect is finally God's own, for if God lets such a sinner drown, it is God's name that suffers; so he asks God to accept his service even now, as it stands.

GATHA 0740

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, bowing to all beings

मराठी मूळ

वंदीन मी भूतें । आतां अवघीं चि समस्तें ॥१॥
तुमची करीन भावना । पदोपदीं नारायणा ॥२॥
गाळुनियां भेद । प्रमाण तो ऐसा वेद ॥३॥
तुका ह्याने मग । नव्हे दुजयाचा संग ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*I will bow to all beings, to everything that exists. At every step I will see You, O Narayana.**Having strained out all sense of difference, I take the Vedas as my authority in this. Says Tuka, then there is no question of any second or other association.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

I will bow to all beings now, to every one of them. At every step I will hold You in mind, Narayana. I strain out all difference; the Veda itself is my warrant for this. Tuka says: then there is no question of leaning on any second thing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram resolves to honor every creature without exception, because he means to see God in each one. So bowing to beings is not flattery; it is worship of the one Narayana present everywhere, recalled at every step. He filters out the sense of difference between high and low, self and other, and claims the Veda's own authority for doing so. Once difference is gone, there is no second, no other to attach to or rely on; God alone remains, and company with anything else simply has no meaning.

GATHA 0741

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy of kirtan, becoming Vithoba

मराठी मूळ

पूजा पुज्यमान । कथे उभे हरिजन ॥1॥
 ज्याची कीर्ती वाखाणिती । तेथें ओतली ते मुर्ती ॥ध्रु॥
 देहाचा विसर । केला आनंदें संचार ॥2॥
 गेला अभिमान । लाज बोळविला मान ॥3॥
 शोक मोह चिंता । याची नेणती ते वार्ता ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे सखे । विठोबा च ते सारिखे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Both the worshiper and the one worshiped stand together in the kirtan gathering. Where His glory is sung, there His very form is poured out.

The body is forgotten; only bliss moves through them. Ego has departed, shame has been dismissed, and honor cast aside.

They know nothing of grief, delusion, or anxiety. Says Tuka, they have become just like Vithoba Himself.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The worshiper and the worshiped stand together in the kirtan. Where His glory is sung, His very form is poured out there. The body is forgotten; only bliss moves through them. Pride is gone; shame is sent away; honor is let go. They know nothing of grief, of delusion, of worry. Tuka says: these dear ones have become just like Vithoba Himself.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes what happens to God's people in the heat of kirtan. The line between worshiper and worshiped dissolves: where the glory is sung, the very form of God floods the place, so both stand together. The singers lose track of the body, and bliss alone moves through them. With that, the props of the small self fall away: pride,

shame, the craving for honor, and then grief, delusion, and anxiety, which they no longer even recognize. Emptied of all that, they take on the likeness of the one they sing; the devotee becomes like Vithoba Himself.

GATHA 0742

The Necessity of Experience

As the feeling so the fruit, like draws like

मराठी मूळ

भाव तैसें फळ । न चले देवापाशीं बळ ॥१॥
धांवे जातीपाशीं जाती । खुण येरयेरां चितीं ॥२॥
हिरा हिरकणी । काढी आंतुनि आहिरणी ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे केलें । मन शुद्ध हें चांगलें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

As the feeling, so is the fruit; force has no power before God. Like attracts like; each recognizes the other in the heart.

Just as a diamond is drawn from the mine by its own kind, so it is with devotion. Says Tuka, what matters is that the mind be made pure and clean.

IN PLAIN WORDS

As the feeling, so the fruit. Force does not work with God. Caste runs to its own caste; the sign passes between them, heart to heart. A diamond is drawn from the ore by another diamond. Tuka says: what was done that is good is this, that the mind was made pure.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram states a law of the inner life: you reap according to the feeling you bring, not the effort you push. You cannot strong-arm God; pressure has no purchase there. He shows it by likeness. Like seeks like, kind recognizes kind, and a diamond is cut and lifted from the rock by its own kind. So too, a pure heart draws God, who answers in kind. The one thing worth doing, then, is not to force a result but to cleanse the mind, for the purified heart is what the fruit answers to.

GATHA 0743

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the hollow preacher

मराठी मूळ

वरि बोला रस । कथी ज्ञान माजी फोस ॥१॥
ऐसे लटिके जे ठक । तयां येहे ना पर लोक ॥२॥
परिस एक सांगे । अंगा धुळी हे न लगे ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे हाडें । कुतऱ्या लाविलें झगडें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Outwardly his speech drips with nectar, but inwardly his knowledge is hollow and empty. He talks of the touchstone's power, yet its dust never touches his own body.

Such deceivers and frauds possess neither this world nor the next. Says Tuka, it is like a dog fighting over a bone.

IN PLAIN WORDS

On the surface his talk drips like nectar. Inside, his teaching is hollow, all husk. Such liars and cheats own neither this world nor the next. He talks of the touchstone, but its dust never touches his own body. Tuka says: it is like a dog scrapping over a dry bone.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram aims at the gap between fine speech and an empty heart. The man's words are sweet on the outside, but inside the teaching is dry husk with no grain, and pretty talk alone wins nothing. He praises the touchstone that turns iron to gold, yet not even its dust touches him; he speaks of transformation he has never let happen in himself. The warning is to watch for this pattern in oneself, not just in a preacher: such empty cleverness gains neither this world nor the next, and the show of it is as fruitless as a dog gnawing a bare bone.

GATHA 0744

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, worship without distinction

मराठी मूळ

हे चि तुझी पूजा । आतां करीन केशीराजा ॥१॥
 अवघीं तुझींच हें पदें । नमस्कारीन अभेदें ॥२॥
 न वजिनतदिशा । जाय तेथें चि सरिसा ॥३॥
 नव्हे एकदेशी । तुका ह्मणे गुणदोषी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This alone shall be my worship of You henceforth, O Keshiraja. All things are Your feet; I will bow to them without distinction.

Wherever I turn, in every direction, You are equally present. Says Tuka, You are not limited to one place; You pervade both virtue and fault.

IN PLAIN WORDS

From now on, this alone will be my worship of You, O Keshiraja. All of this is Your feet. I bow to it all, making no distinction. Wherever I turn, in every direction, You are right there. You are not held to one place. Tuka says: You are present in virtue and in fault alike.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram redefines worship as a way of seeing rather than a rite to perform. Because Keshiraja, Krishna, is everywhere, every direction he faces is already God's feet, so he bows without sorting things into holy and unholy. He refuses to confine God to a single shrine or a single kind of thing. The hard edge is in the last line: God is not

only in what we call good but equally in what we call fault, so there is nowhere left to withhold reverence.

GATHA 0745

Surrender and Acceptance

Self-emptying, the God who comes running

मराठी मूळ

आपलें तों कांहीं । येथें सांगिजेसें नाही ॥१॥
 परि हे वाणी वायचळ । छंद करविते बरळ ॥२॥
 पंचभूतांचा हा मेळा । देह सत्यत्वे निराळा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे भुली । इच्या उफराटण चाली ॥४॥
 कटीं कर जैसे तैसे । उभा राहिला न बैसे ॥५॥
 न पाहे सिदोरी । जाती कुळ न विचारी ॥६॥
 तुका ह्मणे भेटी । हाका देतां उठाउठीं ॥७॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is nothing of my own to declare here. Yet this voice chatters on, indulging its whims and babbling.

This body is an assembly of five elements; the truth within it stands apart. Says Tuka, delusion makes it all run backwards. He stands with hands on His waist, just as He is, upright and unsitting.

He does not check one's provisions, or inquire into caste and lineage. Says Tuka, at the very first call, He comes running to meet you.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have nothing of my own to declare here. Yet this voice keeps chattering, indulging its whims and babbling on. The body is a gathering of the five elements; the truth within it stands apart. Tuka says: delusion makes it all run backwards. He stands just as He is, hands on His waist, upright, never sitting down. He does not check your provisions; He does not ask your caste or your lineage. Tuka says: at the very first call, He gets up at once and comes to meet you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram first admits he has nothing to offer: the talking self is only restless noise, and the body is borrowed elements while the real self stands apart from it. He names delusion as the force that turns this the wrong way round, making us claim what is not ours. Against that emptiness he sets the figure of Vitthal at Pandhari, standing on the brick with hands on His waist, ready and unmoving. The point of the close is that this God asks for no credential: not your stores of merit, not your caste or family. He answers the first cry instantly, so the only thing required of you is to call.

GATHA 0746

The Nature of God

God's mercy, the lowly are dearest

मराठी मूळ

कृपावंत किती । दीनें बहु आवडती ॥१॥
 त्यांचा भार वाहे माथां । करी योगक्षेमचिंता ॥२॥
 भुलें नेदी वाट । करीं धरुनि दावी नीट ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे जीवें । अनुसरतां एका भावें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How merciful He is. The humble and lowly are most dear to Him.

He carries their burden upon His own head and takes care of their yoga-kshema, their getting and their head and attends to their welfare. He does not let them lose their way; holding them by the hand, He shows them the straight path.

Says Tuka, when one follows Him with single-minded devotion, all this is given.

IN PLAIN WORDS

How merciful He is. The humble and the lowly are most dear to Him. He carries their burden on His own head, and He worries over their getting and their keeping. He does not let them lose the way; He holds them by the hand and shows them the straight path. Tuka says: this is given to the one who follows Him with the soul, in single-hearted faith.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the kind of God he trusts: one whose favorite is not the strong but the poor and helpless. Such a God does not stand back and watch; He shoulders their burden Himself and takes responsibility for their welfare, their getting and their keeping. When they wander, He does not scold from a distance; He takes them by the hand and walks them onto the straight road. The one condition is wholehearted devotion, following Him with the whole soul and a single feeling.

GATHA 0747

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion over learning, faith binds God

मराठी मूळ

नेणती वेद श्रुति कोणी । आह्मां भाविकां वांचुनी ॥१॥
 रूप आवडे आह्मांशी । तैसी जोडी हृषीकेशी ॥२॥
 आह्मीं भावें बिळवंत । तुज घालूं हृदयांत ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुज धाक । देतां पावसील हाक ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Neither the Vedas nor the scriptures know us; we are known only as simple devotees. His form is what delights us; that union is what we hold with Hrishiksha.

By the force of pure faith, we will place You within our hearts. Says Tuka, if we raise a cry to You, You will come running in fear of disappointing us.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The Vedas and the scriptures do not know us; only the simple devotees do. It is Your form that delights us; that is the union we hold with Hrishiksha. By the strength of pure faith we will set You inside our hearts. Tuka says: when we raise a cry to You, You will come running, afraid to fail us.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets the devotee's path apart from the scholar's. The Vedas and learned texts do not recognize people like him; he belongs instead to the company of plain believers whose hold on God is His form, not doctrine. He then makes a bold claim: simple faith is strong enough to place God within the heart and keep Him there. The radical turn is the last line, where the relationship is reversed: God Himself feels bound to answer, hurrying to the devotee's call as though afraid of disappointing him.

GATHA 0748

Worldly Life

The restless mind, the true warrior

मराठी मूळ

मन गुंतलें लुलयां । जाय धांवोनि त्या ठाया ॥१॥
 मार्गे परती तो बळी । शूर एक भूमंडळीं ॥२॥
 येऊनियां घाली घाला । नेणों काय होई तुला ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणें येणें । बहु नाडिले शाहाणे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The mind is entangled in trivialities and runs after them constantly. The one who pulls it back and turns it around is the true warrior, unmatched in all the world.

Once it attacks, there is no telling what it will do to you. Says Tuka, this mind has deceived even the wisest.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The mind is tangled up in trifles and runs off after them. The one who can pull it back and turn it around is the strong one, the only real hero in all the world. Once it strikes, there is no telling what it will do to you. Tuka says: this mind has tripped up even the wise.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the language of valor onto the inner life. The mind is forever entangled in small, trivial things and races toward them on its own. The true warrior, he says, is not the conqueror of others but whoever can rein in his own mind and turn it back. He warns that the mind attacks like an enemy whose next move you cannot foresee,

and that it has brought down even the wisest people. The invitation is to examine where your own mind keeps running, rather than to look down on anyone else's.

GATHA 0749

Devotion to Vitthal

The Name, every sense to Vithoba

मराठी मूळ

घेई माझे वाचे । गोड नाम विठोबाचें ॥1॥
 तुह्मी घ्या रे डोळे सुख । पाहा विठोबाचें मुख ॥ध्रु॥
 तुह्मी ऐका रे कान । माझ्या विठोबाचे गुण ॥2॥
 मना तेथें धांव घेई । राहें विठोबाचे पायीं ॥3॥
 तुका ह्याने जीवा । नको सोडूं या केशवा ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O tongue, take up the sweet Name of Vithoba. O eyes, feast on the joy of Vithoba's face.

O ears, listen to the virtues of my Vithoba. O mind, run and take your place at Vithoba's feet.

Says Tuka, O soul, do not let go of this Keshava.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O my tongue, take up the sweet Name of Vithoba. O eyes, take your joy: look at Vithoba's face. O ears, listen to the virtues of my Vithoba. O mind, run there and stay at Vithoba's feet. Tuka says: O soul, do not let go of this Keshava.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram calls each faculty by name and gives it one task. The tongue is to speak the sweet Name, the eyes to feast on Vithoba's face, the ears to hear His virtues, the mind to run and settle at His feet. He gathers every sense into a single direction so that no part of him is left out of the devotion. The final plea to the soul, never to let go of Keshava, makes clear this is not a passing exercise but the one hold he means to keep for good.

GATHA 0750

Devotion to Vitthal

Adoration, never enough of Panduranga

मराठी मूळ

धणी न पुरे गुण गातां । रूप दृष्टी न्याहाळतां ॥1॥
 बरवा बरवा पांडुरंग । कांति सांवळी सुरंग ॥ध्रु॥
 सर्वमंगळाचें सार । मुख सिद्धीचें भांडार ॥2॥
 तुका ह्याने सुखा । अंतपार नाहीं लेखा ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Singing His virtues, one never has enough; gazing upon His form, the eyes are never satisfied. How beautiful, how beautiful is Panduranga, with His lovely dark-hued radiance.

His face is the essence of all that is auspicious, a treasury of all fulfillment. Says Tuka, there is no end or measure to this happiness.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Singing His virtues, I never have enough; gazing at His form, my eyes are never full. How beautiful, how beautiful is Panduranga, His dark-hued radiance lovely. His face is the essence of all that is auspicious, a storehouse of every fulfillment. Tuka says: there is no end and no measure to this joy.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is pure praise of Vitthal as Panduranga. Tukaram says no amount of singing satisfies him and no amount of looking fills his eyes; the longing only grows with the beholding. He dwells on the dark, glowing beauty of the form and calls that face the source of everything auspicious and the treasury of all fulfillment. The close insists the happiness it gives is boundless, beyond counting, so the lack of satisfaction is not frustration but the mark of an infinite delight.

GATHA 0751

Devotion to Vitthal

The sinner's claim, mercy needs the fallen

मराठी मूळ

जरी मी नव्हतों पतित । तरि तूं पावन केंचा येथ ॥१॥
 ह्यणोनि माझें नाम आधीं । मग तूं पावन कृपानिधी ॥२॥
 लोहो महिमान परिसा । नाहीं तरीं दगड जैसा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्यणे याचकभावे। कल्पतरु मान पावे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If I were not a sinner, how then would You be called the Purifier? Therefore my name must come first, and then Yours as the merciful redeemer. Iron gives the touchstone its glory; without it, the touchstone is just another stone.

Says Tuka, the wishing-tree gains its honor through the one who comes to ask.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If I were not fallen, how could You be called the Purifier here? So my name must come first, and only then Yours, O treasure of mercy. Iron gives the touchstone its glory; without iron the touchstone is just a stone. Tuka says: the wishing-tree wins its honor through the one who comes to ask.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes a daring argument about how mercy works. God's title of Purifier means nothing unless there is someone fallen to purify, so in a real sense the sinner's name must come before God's. He drives it home with two images: the touchstone is only a plain rock until iron is brought to it, and the wishing-tree earns its fame only

when someone comes to ask. The point is not pride but reversal: his own lowliness is exactly what gives God's mercy something to be, so he offers his sin as the very ground of his claim.

GATHA 0752

The Necessity of Experience

Inner experience, remembrance is enough

मराठी मूळ

एक भाव चितीं । तरीं न लगे कांहीं युक्ती ॥१॥
 कळों आलें जीवें । मज माझियाचि भावें ॥२॥
 आठव चि पुरे । सुख अवघें मोहो रे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मन । पूजा इच्छी नारायण ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When there is single-minded devotion in the heart, no technique or strategy is needed. I have come to know this through my own experience and my own feeling.

Mere remembrance is enough; all joy arises from that alone. Says Tuka, the mind itself yearns to worship Narayana.

IN PLAIN WORDS

With one whole feeling in the heart, no technique is needed at all. I have come to know this in my own life, through my own feeling. Remembrance alone is enough; from it comes all joy, all love. Tuka says: the mind itself longs to worship Narayana.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks from what he has tested, not from instruction. Where the heart holds a single, undivided devotion, the elaborate methods and strategies fall away as unnecessary. He says he learned this firsthand, through his own inner experience, not by argument. Simple remembrance of God turns out to be enough, and all joy and love flow from it, so the mind, far from resisting, comes to desire the worship of Narayana on its own.

GATHA 0753

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the saints against God's silence

मराठी मूळ

मज संतांचा आधार । तूं एकलें निविनकार ॥१॥
 पाहा विचारुनि देवा । नको आह्मांसवें दावा ॥२॥
 तुज बोल न बोलवे । आह्मां भांडायाची सवे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तरी । ऐक्यभाव उरे उरी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have the support of the saints, while You stand alone, beyond all change. Consider this carefully, O God, and do not contend with us.

You cannot bring Yourself to speak, but we are well practiced in argument. Says Tuka, yet in the end, only the feeling of oneness remains.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have the saints to lean on; You stand alone, beyond all change. Think it over, God: do not pick a fight with us. You cannot bring Yourself to speak, but we are well practiced at arguing. Tuka says: even so, in the end only the feeling of oneness remains.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram teases God in the voice of an affectionate quarrel. He boasts that he has the company of the saints behind him, while God stands alone and changeless, so God had better not contend with him. The joke is that God is silent and will not argue back, whereas devotees are practiced and stubborn in argument and would surely win. Yet he ends by dissolving the contest: under all the playful sparring, what truly remains is the feeling of oneness between the devotee and God.

GATHA 0754

Devotion to Vitthal

Surrender, asking only for His feet

मराठी मूळ

तुज मागणें तें देवा । आह्वां तुझी चरणसेवा ॥१॥
 आन नेघों देसी तरी । रिद्धि सिद्धि मुक्ती चारी ॥२॥
 संतसंगति सर्वकाळ । थोर प्रेमाचा सुकाळ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाम । तेणें पुरे माझें काम ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What I ask of You, O God, is only the service of Your feet. Even if You offer it, I will not accept miraculous powers, worldly attainments, or the four kinds of liberation.

Let me have the company of saints at all times, an abundance of deep love. Says Tuka, the Name is enough; it fulfills all my needs.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What I beg of You, O God, is only the service of Your feet. Even if You offer them, I will not take riches, powers, or the four kinds of liberation. Give me the company of saints always, and a great abundance of love. Tuka says: the Name is enough; it satisfies all my need.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays out exactly what he wants and what he refuses. The one thing he asks for is to serve at God's feet, nothing more. He turns down the rewards seekers usually crave: wealth, miraculous powers, even the four kinds of liberation, refusing them outright even if offered. What he asks instead is the constant company of the saints

and an overflow of love. The Name of God, he says, already meets every need he has, so there is nothing left to want.

GATHA 0755

Devotion to Vitthal

Belonging, the Name worn as ornament

मराठी मूळ

तुझा शरणागत । जन्मोजन्मींचा अंकित ॥१॥
 आणीक नेणें कांहीं हेवा । तुजवांचूनि केशवा ॥२॥
 हें चि माझें गाणें । तुझें नामसंकीर्तन ॥३॥
 तुझ्या नामाचीं भूषणें । तुका म्हणे ल्यालों लेणें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I am Your devotee, marked as Yours through birth after birth. I know no other longing, O Keshava, apart from You.

This alone is my song: the chanting of Your Name. Says Tuka, I have put on Your Name as my ornament, wearing it as my finest jewel.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have taken refuge in You; I am marked as Yours through birth after birth. I know no other longing, O Keshava, apart from You. This alone is my song: the singing of Your Name. Tuka says: I have put on Your Name as my ornament, worn it as my finest jewel.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram declares an unbroken belonging. He has thrown himself on God's protection and counts himself stamped as God's own across every lifetime, not just this one. He insists he has no other desire pulling at him; Keshava is the whole of his wanting. His only song is the chanting of the Name, and in the close he treats that Name not as a duty but as adornment, the jewelry he chooses to wear, so devotion becomes the thing that makes him beautiful.

GATHA 0756

Ecstasy and Joy

Certainty, crossed to the far shore

मराठी मूळ

उतरलों पार । सत्य झाला हा निर्धार ॥१॥
 तुझें नाम धरिलें कंठी । केली संसारासी तुटी ॥२॥
 आतां नव्हे बाधा । कोणेविशीं कांहीं कदा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कांहीं । आतां उरलें ऐसें नाही ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have crossed over to the other shore; this conviction has become reality. I have held Your Name in my throat and severed all ties with worldly existence.

Now nothing can harm me, from any quarter, ever again. Says Tuka, nothing at all remains to be done.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have crossed to the other shore. This is settled now; it is true. I have held Your Name in my throat. I have cut myself loose from this world. Now nothing can harm me, from any side, ever. Tuka says: there is nothing left to do.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is reporting a thing already finished, not a thing he hopes for. He holds the Name in his throat and with that one act severs his ties to worldly life, and the crossing is done. Because the crossing is done, he says no harm can reach him from any quarter again. The poem ends in the strongest possible rest: nothing at all remains to be done. The whole life of effort closes in the single grip of the Name.

GATHA 0757

Prayers

Surrender, the helpless one

मराठी मूळ

क्रियामतिहीन । एक मी गा तुझें दीन ॥१॥
 देवा करावा सांभाळ । वारीं माझी तळमळ ॥२॥
 नको माझे ठायीं । गुणदोष घालूं कांहीं ॥३॥
 अपराधाच्या कोटी । तुका ह्मणे घालीं पोटी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I am devoid of both action and understanding. I am simply Your helpless one, O God.

Please look after me and quiet my restless anguish. Do not reckon my virtues and faults.

Says Tuka, take my millions of offenses and swallow them in Your great belly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have no good deeds and no understanding. I am only Your helpless one, O God. Look after me. Quiet this restlessness in me. Do not weigh my virtues and my faults at all. Tuka says: take my millions of offenses and swallow them inside You.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram comes to God owning nothing, neither right action nor right knowledge, and makes that emptiness the whole basis of his plea. He asks not to be judged: do not weigh what is good in me against what is bad, because such an accounting would sink me. Instead he asks God to take in his countless offenses and absorb them, the way a belly swallows what is fed to it. This is the logic of grace over merit: the one who can claim nothing throws himself entirely on the mercy of the one who can hide everything.

GATHA 0758

Worldly Metaphors

Teaching by analogy, the unpurified heart

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं निर्मळ जीवन । काय करील साबण ॥1॥
 तैसी चित्तशुद्ध नाही । तेथें बोध करील काई ॥घु॥
 वृक्ष न धरी पुष्पफळ । काय करील वसंतकाळ ॥2॥
 वांजे न होती लेकरें । काय करावें भ्रतारें ॥3॥
 नपुंसका पुरुषासी । काय करील बाइल त्यासी ॥4॥
 प्राण गेलिया शरीर । काय करील वेव्हार ॥5॥
 तुका ह्मणे जीवनेंविण । पीक नव्हे नव्हे जाण ॥6॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If the water is not clean, what can soap do? Likewise, if the chitta is not purified, what can any teaching accomplish? If a tree bears no flowers or fruit, what can the spring season do? If a barren woman has no children, what is the use of a husband? What can a wife do for an impotent man? When the life-breath has departed, what dealings can the body conduct? Says Tuka, know that without the water of devotion, no crop can grow.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If the water is not clean, what can soap do? In the same way, if the heart is not pure, what can teaching do there? If a tree bears no flower and no fruit, what can spring do for it? If a barren woman has no children, what use is a husband? What can a wife do for an impotent man? When the life-breath has left the body, what business can the body do? Tuka says: know this, without the water of life, no crop grows.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram stacks one plain image on another to drive home a single point about readiness. Soap cannot wash in foul water; spring cannot make a dead tree fruit; the things meant to bring life come to nothing when the ground for them is missing. He turns this onto the inner life: if the heart is not yet cleansed, even true teaching lands on it uselessly. The point is not contempt for the unready but an honest naming of order: the inward purification has to come first, or nothing that follows can take root and grow.

GATHA 0759

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, who else will serve You

मराठी मूळ

नवां नवसांचीं । जालों तुझासी वाणीचीं ॥१॥
 कोण तुझें नाम घेतें । देवा पिंडदान देतें ॥२॥
 कोण होतें मागें पुढें । दुजें बोलाया रोकडें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे पांडुरंगा । कोणा घेतासि वो संगी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have made vow after vow to You with my voice. Who else chants Your Name? Who else offers remembrance of the departed? Who stood before or after, willing to speak plainly? Says Tuka, O Panduranga, with whom do You keep company?

IN PLAIN WORDS

Vow upon vow, I have made myself Yours with my voice. Who else takes up Your Name? Who else makes the offering for You? Who else stood behind You or before You, ready to speak straight for You? Tuka says: O Panduranga, whose company will You keep then?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses a bold, almost teasing claim on the Lord: he is the one who actually keeps the vows, chants the Name, and stands up for God in plain speech. The questions are real challenges. If not him, who is doing this work? He reverses the usual posture of the suppliant: it is God who should value the devotee, because devotees like this are rare. The closing line lands the dare gently: O Panduranga, if You let me go, whose company will be left to You?

GATHA 0760

Worldly Metaphors

Teaching by analogy, the seed that must die

मराठी मूळ

एका बीजा केला नास । मग भोगेल कणीस ॥१॥
 कळे सकळां हा भाव । लाहानथोरांवरी जीव ॥२॥
 लाभ नाहीं फुकासाठीं । केल्यावीण जीवासाठीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे रणीं । जीव देतां लाभ दुणी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When a single seed is destroyed, only then does it yield a full ear of grain. Everyone understands this principle, from the smallest to the greatest.

There is no gain without effort; nothing comes without giving of oneself. Says Tuka, the one who gives his life on the battlefield receives double the reward.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One seed is destroyed, and then it gives a full ear of grain. Everyone understands this truth, the small and the great alike. There is no gain for free, nothing without giving of yourself. Tuka says: the one who gives his life on the battlefield wins double the reward.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram takes a fact every farmer knows and makes it a law of the spiritual life: the seed must be buried and broken before it can yield a harvest. From this he draws the plain rule that nothing of worth comes without cost, without something of yourself being given up. He raises the stakes with the image of the soldier who gives his very life in battle and is rewarded doubly. The teaching is that self-surrender is not loss but the only true investment; what you let die is what comes back to you multiplied.

GATHA 0761

Prayers

Cry for help, drowning in the world

मराठी मूळ

आयुष्य गेलें वांयांविण । थोर झाली नागवण ॥1॥
 आतां धांवें धांवें तरी । काय पाहातोसि हरी ॥ध्रु॥
 माझे तुझे या चि गती । दिवस गेले तोंडीं माती ॥2॥
 मन वाव घेऊं नेदी । बुडवूं पाहे भवनदी ॥3॥
 पडिला विषयाचा घाला । तेणें नागविलें मला ॥4॥
 शरण आलों आतां धांवें । तुका ह्मणे मज पावें ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My life has been wasted in vain; I have been grievously deceived. Now hurry, hurry, O Hari.

What are You waiting for? Both You and I share this fate: the days have passed and dust fills our mouths. The mind will not let me come up for air; it seeks to drown me in the river of worldly existence.

The assault of sense-pleasures has struck, and by them I have been stripped bare. I have come now as a refugee.

Says Tuka, rush to me and save me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My life has gone for nothing. I have been badly robbed. Now run to me, run, O Hari. What are You waiting for? You and I share the same fate: the days have passed and dust fills my mouth. The mind will not let me come up for air; it wants to drown me in the river of this world. The blow of the senses has fallen, and they have stripped me bare. I have come to You now for shelter; run. Tuka says: reach me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks from the edge of panic, naming his whole life as wasted and himself as a man already robbed. The danger is inward: his own mind holds him under in the river of worldly existence and will not let him breathe, and the pull of the senses has stripped him of everything. His cry is urgent and almost accusing: why do You wait, Hari, when even You stand to lose by my drowning? Having no strength left, he throws himself down as a refugee at God's door and asks only that help arrive in time.

GATHA 0762

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, I gave You a home

मराठी मूळ

सोसोनि विपत्ती । जोडी दिली तुझे हातीं ॥१॥
 त्याचा हा चि उपकार । अंतीं आह्माशीं वेव्हार ॥२॥
 नामरूपा केला ठाव । तुज कोण ह्मणतें देव ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे हरी । तुज ठाव दिला घरीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

By enduring hardship, I have placed my earnings into Your hands. This alone is the return on the investment: that in the end, our dealings are with You.

I have given name and form a dwelling place. Otherwise, who would call You God? Says Tuka, O Hari, I have given You a home in my own house.

IN PLAIN WORDS

By bearing hardship, I earned, and I placed the earnings into Your hands. This is the only return on it: that in the end my dealings are with You. I gave Your name and form a place to stand. Otherwise who would call You God? Tuka says: O Hari, I have given You a home in my own house.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes his devotion as hard-won earnings, gathered through suffering and then handed straight over to God, with the only profit being that he now has dealings with God alone. Then he turns the relationship around with daring intimacy: it is the devotee who gives the formless Lord a name and a form to inhabit. Without someone to worship Him and house Him, who would even call Him God? The closing line makes it personal and tender: I have given You a home in my own house. Love makes the worshipper the keeper of the One he worships.

GATHA 0763

Longing and Separation

Bold longing, settling accounts

मराठी मूळ

आपुलें मागतां । काय नाहीं आह्मां सत्ता ॥१॥
 परि या लौकिकाकारणें । उरीं ठेविली बोलणें ॥२॥
 ये चि आतां घडी । करूं बैसों ते ची फडी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे करितों तुला । ठाव नाहींसें विठ्ठला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When asking for what is rightfully ours, do we not have the authority? But for the sake of propriety, I have kept my words measured. At this very moment, let us settle accounts.

Says Tuka, I will leave You nowhere to hide, O Vitthal.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When I ask for what is my own, do I have no right to it? But for the sake of how things look, I have held my words back. Right now, this very moment, let us sit and settle the matter. Tuka says: I will leave You nowhere to hide, O Vitthal.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses his claim on God with the confidence of a man asking for what is rightfully his, not begging for a favor. He admits he has kept his demand polite only out of decorum, but now he drops the pretense and calls for an immediate reckoning. The tone is loving boldness, not arrogance: a devotee so sure of his bond that he can corner the Lord. The last line says it plainly: O Vitthal, I will give You no place to slip away; settle Your account with me now.

GATHA 0764

Longing and Separation

Bold longing, holding God to His word

मराठी मूळ

असो आतां किती । तुज यावें काकुलती ॥१॥
 माझें प्रारब्ध हें गाढें । तूं बापुडें तयापुढें ॥२॥
 सोडवीन आतां । ब्रीदें तुझीं पंढरीनाथा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे बळी । तो गांढराचे कान पिळी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How long must I keep pleading with You in supplication? My fate is strong indeed; perhaps You are helpless before it. I will now hold You to Your own pledges, O Lord of Pandhari.

Says Tuka, the strong one twists the ears of the timid.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Enough now. How long should I keep crying to You in supplication? My fate weighs heavy, and before it You look helpless. So I will set You free of it myself by holding You to Your own promises, O Lord of Pandhari. Tuka says: the strong one twists the ears of the weak.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is tired of pleading, so he changes his footing from beggar to claimant. His destiny is so heavy that, he says with affectionate provocation, even God seems unable to lift it. His move is to hold God to the pledges God has publicly made, the titles and vows by which the Lord is known as the rescuer of the helpless. The closing proverb names the new strategy bluntly: the strong one takes the timid one by the ears. By leaning on God's own reputation, the devotee gains a holy leverage over Him.

GATHA 0765

The Power of the Name

The Name, the simple mantra

मराठी मूळ

काय नव्हे केलें । एका चिंतितां विठ्ठलें ॥१॥
 सर्व- साधनांचें सार । भवसिंधु उतरी पार ॥२॥
 योगायागतपें । केलीं तयानें अमुपें ॥३॥
 तुका म्हणे जपा । मंत्र तीं अक्षरी सोपा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What cannot be accomplished by contemplating Vitthal alone? It is the essence of all spiritual practices, carrying one across the ocean of worldly existence. Through Him, immeasurable sacrifices, rituals, and austerities are performed.

Says Tuka, this chant is a simple mantra of just a few syllables.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What cannot be done by thinking on Vitthal alone? It is the essence of every practice. It carries you across the ocean of this world. Through it, countless yogas and sacrifices and austerities are accomplished. Tuka says: chant it. The mantra is easy, only a few syllables.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets the simple remembrance of Vitthal above the whole apparatus of religious effort. To dwell on the Name is the essence that all other practices were only reaching toward, and it alone ferries one across the sea of birth and death. He claims that this single act quietly contains the fruit of countless yogas, sacrifices, and austerities. The point is reassurance and invitation: the highest thing is also the easiest, a mantra of just a few syllables, open to anyone willing to chant.

GATHA 0766

The Power of the Name

The Name, open to all who say it

मराठी मूळ

हो कां दुराचारी । वाचे नाम जो उच्चारी ॥1॥
 नसो भाव चित्तीं । हरिचे गुण गातां गीतीं ॥2॥
 करी अनाचार । वाचे हरिनामउच्चार ॥3॥
 हो कां भलतें कुळ । शुचि अथवा चांडाळ ॥4॥
 ह्मणवी हरिचा दास । तुका ह्मणे धन्य त्यास ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even if one is of wicked conduct, if the tongue utters the Name, it is enough. Even if there is no devotion in the heart, singing the virtues of Hari in song is still blessed.

Even if one practices wrongdoing, the utterance of Hari's Name on the lips is still potent. Be one of any caste, honored or shunned.

Says Tuka, blessed is the one who calls himself a servant of Hari.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let him be a man of wicked conduct: if his tongue speaks the Name, that is enough. Let there be no devotion in his heart: still, singing Hari's virtues in song is blessed. Let him do wrong things: still, the speaking of Hari's Name on the lips has power. Let him be of any caste, the pure or the outcast. Tuka says: blessed is the one who calls himself Hari's servant.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pushes the power of the Name to its most radical edge: it does not wait for the speaker to first become good, sincere, or high-born. Even the wrongdoer, even the one with no devotion in his heart, even the one society shuns as an outcast, is reached the moment the Name is on his tongue. This is not a license for wrongdoing but a demolition of every barrier people place at the door of God. The one thing that matters is calling oneself Hari's servant; by that single claim, anyone at all is made blessed.

GATHA 0767

The Nature of God

Nature of God, He comes running

मराठी मूळ

हाकेसरिसी उडी । घालूनियां स्तंभ फोडी ॥1॥
 ऐसी कृपावंत कोण । माझे विठाईवांचून ॥ध्रु॥
 करितां आठव । धांवोनियां घाली कव ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे गीती गातां । नामें द्यावी सायुज्यता ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

At the very first cry, He leaps forth and bursts open the pillar. Who is as compassionate as my Vitthai, my Mother? At the merest remembrance, He rushes forward and wraps you in His embrace.

Says Tuka, to those who sing His glory, He grants the ultimate union through His Name alone.

IN PLAIN WORDS

At the very first cry, He leaps and bursts open the pillar. Who is as kind as my Vitthai, my Mother? At the least remembrance of Him, He comes running and folds you in His arms. Tuka says: to those who sing His glory, He gives full union through the Name alone.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures God as a mother who cannot bear to delay. He recalls how at the child's cry the Lord tore open the pillar to save the devotee, and asks who could be more tender than this. The smallest act of remembrance is enough; God does not weigh worthiness but simply runs and gathers the one who calls into His embrace. The poem ends with the largest promise on the smallest condition: to those who merely sing His glory, the Name itself grants the final union with God.

GATHA 0768

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, drawn and transformed by God

मराठी मूळ

लोह चुंबकाच्या बळें । उभें राहिलें निराळें ॥१॥
 तैसा तूं चि आह्वांठायीं । खेळतोसी अंतर्बाहीं ॥२॥
 भक्ष अग्नीचा तो दोरा । त्यासि वांचवी मोहरा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे अधीलपणें । नेली लांकडें चंदनें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

As iron stands upright, drawn by the force of a magnet, so You play within us and around us. A wick is consumed by fire, yet the flame protects its glow.

Says Tuka, the fragrance of sandalwood has lifted common logs into its own nobility.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Iron stands up by the force of the magnet, lifted from where it lay. So You play in us, inside and outside both. The wick is food for the fire, yet the flame keeps its own glow alive. Tuka says: by simply being near, plain logs are carried into the nobility of sandalwood.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming, through three images, how God works on a soul that comes close to Him. Iron has no power to rise on its own; the magnet draws it upright, just as Hari plays within us and around us and pulls us toward Himself. The wick is consumed by the flame, yet the flame is what keeps the glow burning, so what looks like

being destroyed is being kept alive. The last image lands the claim: ordinary wood lying beside sandalwood takes on the sandalwood's fragrance, so nearness alone lifts common things into the higher nature. The point is that the change is not earned by the iron, the wick, or the log; it comes from the one they are joined to.

GATHA 0769

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the false holy man

मराठी मूळ

डोई वाढवूनि केश । भूतें आणिती अंगास ॥१॥
 तरी ते नव्हति संतजन । तेथें नाहीं आत्मखुण ॥२॥
 मेळवूनि नरनारी । शकुन सांगती नानापरी ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे मैद । नाहीं त्यापासीं गोविंद ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who grow long matted hair and invite spirits into their bodies are not true saints. The mark of the Self is not found in them.

They gather men and women together and tell fortunes of every kind. Says Tuka, such charlatans have no connection to Govinda.

IN PLAIN WORDS

They grow their hair long and matted. They call spirits down into their bodies. But these are not true saints. The mark of the Self is not in them. They gather men and women together and tell fortunes of every kind. Tuka says: such tricksters do not have Govinda with them.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is exposing a pattern of fake spirituality and naming the test that unmasks it. The long matted hair and the spirit-possession look like signs of holiness, and crowds are impressed, but the outward show proves nothing. The one mark that matters is atmakhun, the sign of having known the Self, and that is exactly what these performers lack. He points to the fortune-telling done before mixed crowds as proof: this is a trade in spectacle, not a life turned toward God. The warning is for the listener too, to test a teacher by the inner mark and not be drawn in by display, for where Govinda is absent the rest is only theater.

GATHA 0770

The Saints

The saints' power, the wicked made spotless

मराठी मूळ

गाढवाचे घोडे । आह्मी करुं दृष्टीपुढें ॥१॥
 चघळी वाहाणा । माघारिया बांडा सुना ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे खळ । करुं समयीं निर्मळ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We can turn donkeys into horses right before your eyes. A dog that chews old shoes, a stubborn barren hound, we can purify.

Says Tuka, we can make even the wicked spotless at the right moment.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We can turn donkeys into horses, right before your eyes. The dog that chews old sandals, the stubborn worthless hound, we can change them. Tuka says: we make even the wicked spotless, in the right moment.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is claiming, in the voice of the saints, that their company can transform anyone. The rough images, a donkey becoming a horse, a shoe-chewing stray dog being purified, stand for people the world has written off as base and incorrigible. The boast is not arrogance about themselves but confidence in what holy company does to a person. The phrase about the right moment matters: the change is real but it comes when the time is ripe, not by force. The point for the listener is that no one is too low to be lifted, so do not despair of yourself or of anyone.

GATHA 0771

Renunciation

Renunciation, freed of attachment

मराठी मूळ

बाईल मेली मुक्ती जाली । देवें माया सोडविली ॥१॥
 विठो तुझें माझें राज्य । नाहीं दुसऱ्याचें काज ॥२॥
 पोर मेलें बरें जालें । देवें मायाविरहित केलें ॥३॥
 माता मेली मज देखतां । तुका ह्मणे हरली चिंता ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My wife has died and liberation has come; God has released Maya. O Vitthal, now Yours and mine is one kingdom; there is no need for anyone else.

My child has died, and that is well; God has made me free of attachment. My mother died before my eyes.

Says Tuka, with that, all anxiety was removed.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My wife has died, and liberation came; God has released me from Maya. Vitho, now the kingdom is Yours and mine; there is no business with anyone else. The child has died, and that is well; God has cut me free of attachment. The mother died before my eyes. Tuka says: with that, the anxiety was gone.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a hard, deliberately shocking abhanga, and it must be heard as being about attachment, not about contempt for the dead. Tukaram takes the losses that ordinarily break a person, wife, child, mother, and reads each one as God prying his grip off the things that bound him to Maya. The strong line, Vitho, the kingdom is now Yours and mine alone, names what is left when every other claim on the heart has fallen away: God and the soul,

with no third. He is not saying he is glad the people died; he is saying the bond that tied his anxiety to them has been broken, and what remains is rest in Vitthal. Read against oneself, it asks how much of our fear is simply our clutching at what we cannot keep.

GATHA 0772

Renunciation

Renunciation, swallow the ego

मराठी मूळ

योग तप या चि नावें । गिळत व्हावें अभिमानें ॥१॥

करणें तें हें चि करा । सत्यें बरा व्यापार ॥२॥

तरि खंडे येरझार। निघे भार देहाचा ॥३॥

तुका ह्मणे मानामान । हें बंधन नसावें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The true meaning of yoga and austerity is this: to swallow one's ego willingly. Practice this one thing, and let your dealings be rooted in truth.

Then the cycle of coming and going will cease, and the burden of embodiment will be lifted. Says Tuka, let there be no attachment to honor or dishonor; that itself is bondage.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Yoga and austerity mean just this: to swallow your own pride. Do only this one thing, and let your dealings be true and good. Then the coming and going ends, and the body's burden falls away. Tuka says: honor and dishonor, do not let them bind you; that itself is the bondage.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is redefining the great spiritual disciplines so they cannot be mistaken for outward feats. Real yoga and tapas, he says, are not postures or fasting but the willing swallowing of one's own ego, backed by honest and upright conduct. Do that single thing and the round of birth and death stops, and the weight of embodiment is lifted. He then names the subtle trap: caring about being honored or insulted is itself a chain, even for someone who has dropped grosser attachments. The teaching turns the listener inward, away from impressive practice and toward the quiet death of pride.

GATHA 0773

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, no God for the half-hearted

मराठी मूळ

करी संध्यास्नान । वारी खाउनियां अन्न ॥१॥
तया नाहीं लाभहानी । आदा वेंचाचिये मानीं ॥२॥
मजुराचें धन । विळा दोर चि जतन ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे नाहीं । अधीरासी देव कांहीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He performs his daily rituals and prayers after filling his belly with food. For him there is neither gain nor loss; he keeps a balance of income and expense.

A laborer's wealth consists of his tools: his spade and his rope. Says Tuka, God does not belong to the impatient.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He does his evening rites and his bathing, but only after he has eaten his fill. For such a man there is no real gain or loss; he just keeps his accounts of income and spending balanced. A laborer's whole wealth is his tools, his spade and his rope. Tuka says: God is not for the impatient.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is satirizing worship done as routine bookkeeping rather than longing. The man performs his prayers and ablutions, but only after his belly is full, so God comes after appetite and ritual is just one more entry in a ledger that always balances out to nothing. The laborer image sharpens it: a hired worker guards only his spade and rope, the bare means of his wage, because his interest stops at the day's pay. The closing line names the stake: God does not yield to the impatient, the ones who will not wait, will not put Him first, will not let devotion cost them. The challenge to the listener is whether worship is a heartfelt seeking or merely a transaction kept in balance.

GATHA 0774

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, do not strike the defenseless

मराठी मूळ

वाखर घेउनि आलें । त्यासी तरवारेणें हालें ॥१॥
नव्हे आपुलें उचित । करुनि टाकावें फजित ॥२॥
अंगुळ्या मोडी । त्यासी काय सिलें घोडीं ॥३॥
नपुंसकासाठीं । तुका ह्मणे न लगे जेठी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who comes with a plough should not be met with a sword. It is not fitting to humiliate someone and cast them aside.

Why crack your knuckles at one who comes unarmed? Says Tuka, for an impotent man, no great display is needed.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One who comes carrying a plough should not be met with a sword. It is not right to shame a man and throw him aside. Why crack your knuckles at someone who comes with empty hands? Tuka says: against a man who cannot fight, no great show of strength is needed.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is laying down a rule of fairness about meeting the weak. The farmer with his plough, the unarmed man, the one who cannot fight back, all stand for those who come with no power to oppose you, and answering them with a sword is shameful, not strong. To humiliate such a person and cast him aside is named as unfitting, beneath what is right. The blunt last line strips the bully of his glory: there is no honor in overpowering someone who was never able to resist. The ideal is restraint and decency toward those at your mercy, and the satire is aimed at the cruelty that mistakes itself for courage.

GATHA 0775

True Worship

True worship, dead while living

मराठी मूळ

वर्णाश्रम करिसी चोख । तरि तूं पावसी उत्तम लोक ॥1॥
 तुजला तें नाही ठावें । जेणें अंगें चि ब्रह्म व्हावें ॥ध्रु॥
 जरि तूं जालासी पंडित । करिसी शब्दाचें पांडित्य ॥2॥
 गासी तान मान बंध । हाव भाव गीत छंद ॥3॥
 जाणसील तूं स्वतंत्र । आगमोक्त पूजायंत्र ॥4॥
 साधनाच्या ओढी । डोळ्यांच्या मोडामोडी ॥5॥
 तुका ह्मणे देहीं । संत जाहाले विदेही ॥6॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If you observe the duties of your caste and stage of life with care, you will reach a good destination. But you do not know the path by which one becomes Brahman itself.

If you have become a scholar, you practice only the cleverness of words. You may sing with proper pitch, rhythm, and melody, with feeling and artistry in song.

You may consider yourself learned in tantric rituals and worship. Yet all such efforts are merely straining the eyes in search.

Says Tuka, the saints who realized the truth became bodiless even while in the body.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Keep your caste and your stage of life spotless, and you will reach a good world. But you still do not know the way to become Brahman in your very being. You may have become a scholar and play with clever words. You may sing with perfect pitch and time and meter, with feeling and art. You may think yourself a master of tantric rites and the machinery of worship. All of it is only straining the eyes after something. Tuka says: the saints became bodiless while still in the body.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is ranking the whole apparatus of religion below one thing it cannot reach. Faithfully keeping caste and life-stage duties does earn a good destination, and scholarship, beautiful singing, and expert ritual are all genuine accomplishments, but he calls them, one after another, a straining of the eyes that never arrives. What none of them gives is the knowledge by which one becomes Brahman in one's own being, not as a reward elsewhere but here and now. The closing line names the real mark of the saints: while still in the body they had become videhi, bodiless, no longer identified with the flesh. The teaching turns the listener from doing more and knowing more toward the inner death of the body-sense that all the performances bypass.

GATHA 0776

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, led by the thread of love

मराठी मूळ

प्रेमसूत्र दोरी । नेतो तिकडे जातो हरी ॥१॥
 सत्ता सकळ तया हातीं । माझी कीव काकुलती ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे ठेवी तैसें । आह्मी राहों त्याचे इच्छे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Hari leads me by the thread of love; wherever He pulls, I follow. All authority rests in His hands; my pleading and supplication are His to answer.

Says Tuka, however He places us, we remain content with His will.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Hari leads me by a thread of love; wherever He pulls, I go. All power is in His hands; my pleading, my crying out, are for Him to answer. Tuka says: however He sets us down, we stay content in His will.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing total surrender as being tied to God by love rather than driven by force. The thread of love means he goes wherever Hari draws him, not as a captive but as one bound by affection. He hands over all control: every authority rests with God, and his own role is reduced to pleading and crying out, which God alone can answer. The closing line completes the giving-up: wherever God places him, in whatever condition, he rests content in that will. The poem holds up a peace that comes not from getting one's way but from wanting only what the Beloved wants.

GATHA 0777

Faith and Trust

Faith, contemplation that arrives

मराठी मूळ

पाववील ठाया । पांडुरंग चिंतिलिया ॥१॥
 त्यासी चिंतिलिया मनीं । चित्ता करी गंवसणी ॥ध्रु॥
 पावावया फळ । अंगीं असावें हें बळ ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे तई । सिद्धि वोळगती पायीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Panduranga will bring you to your destination if you contemplate Him. When you hold Him in your mind, He puts a halter on the wandering heart.

To receive the fruit, one must have the strength within. Says Tuka, then all attainments come to serve at your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Panduranga will bring you to the goal, if you hold Him in your thought. Think of Him in the mind, and He puts a halter on the restless heart. To reach the fruit, you must have this strength in you. Tuka says: then all the powers come and wait at your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is promising that steady contemplation of God carries a person all the way home. To hold Panduranga in the mind is not idle; it is what reins in the wandering, restless heart, the way a halter steadies an animal. He adds a condition: reaching the fruit takes an inner strength, a firmness that does not let the mind slip away. When that holds, the result is striking: the siddhis, the very attainments people chase, come and wait humbly at the devotee's feet instead of being sought. The teaching is to put the whole effort into remembrance and let everything else follow from it.

GATHA 0778

Faith and Trust

Faith, God becomes what the devotee believes

मराठी मूळ

धन्य भावशीळ । ज्याचें हृदय निर्मळ ॥१॥
 पूजी प्रतिमेचे देव । संत ह्मणती तेथें भाव ॥ध्रु॥
 विधिनिषेध नेणती । एक निष्ठा धरुनी चित्तीं ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे तैसें देवा । होणें लागे त्यांच्या भावा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Blessed is the simple devotee whose heart is pure and clean. He worships the deity in the image; the saints say true feeling resides there.

He knows nothing of scriptural prescriptions and prohibitions but holds one single-pointed faith in his heart. Says Tuka, God must become whatever such devotees believe Him to be.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Blessed is the simple devotee whose heart is clean. He worships the god in the image, and the saints say true feeling lives there. He knows nothing of what is allowed and what is forbidden; he holds one single faith in his heart. Tuka says: God must become for them whatever they believe Him to be.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is exalting pure-hearted simplicity over learned correctness. The devotee who worships God in an image, knowing nothing of scriptural dos and don'ts, is called blessed, because the saints locate the truth not in the form but in the bhava, the feeling, that is present there. His ignorance of the rules is not a defect here; it leaves room for one undivided faith. The strong closing claim is that God is bound by such faith: He must show up as whatever the sincere heart believes Him to be. The teaching lifts up the unlearned lover of God and warns the listener that purity of feeling outweighs ritual expertise.

GATHA 0779

Social Criticism

Social criticism, laziness dressed as freedom

मराठी मूळ

आधीं च आळशी । वरी गुरुचा उपदेशी ॥१॥
 मग त्या कैची आडकाठी । विधिनिषेधाची भेटी ॥२॥
 नाचरे धर्म । न करवे विधिकर्म ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ते गाढव । घेती मनासवें धांव ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He was lazy to begin with, and on top of that he received a guru's teaching about the formless. Now what barrier of right and wrong will restrain him? He will not practice any dharma or perform any prescribed ritual.

Says Tuka, such donkeys simply run wherever the mind takes them.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He was lazy from the start. On top of that, a guru taught him about the formless. So now what fence of right and wrong will hold him back? He will not practice any dharma; he will not do a single prescribed rite. Tuka says: such donkeys just run wherever the mind takes them.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is attacking a particular misuse of high teaching, not the teaching itself. A man already lazy hears a guru speak of the formless absolute beyond rituals and rules, and seizes on it as permission to drop all discipline. With the fence of right and wrong knocked away, he abandons dharma and every prescribed observance, calling his idleness freedom. Tukaram bluntly names the result: not liberation but a donkey running after the mind's every whim. The warning, pointed at the pattern in oneself, is that hearing nondual truth before the heart is ready can become a cover for self-indulgence rather than a release from bondage.

GATHA 0780

Devotion to Vitthal

Love of the saints, weeping joy

मराठी मूळ

नाचे टाळी पिटी । प्रेमें अंग धरणीं लोटी ॥१॥
 माझे सखे ते सज्जन । भोळे भाविक हरिजन ॥२॥
 न धरिती लाज । नाहीं जनासवें काज ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे दाटे । कंठ नेत्रीं जळ लोटे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He dances, he claps, he rolls upon the ground in ecstasy. These are my true friends: the simple, faithful devotees of Hari.

They hold no shame; they have no business with the world's opinion. Says Tuka, the throat chokes with emotion and tears stream from the eyes.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He dances. He claps his hands. In love he throws his body down on the ground. These are my dear ones, my true friends: the simple, trusting servants of Hari. They hold no shame. They have no use for what people think of them. Tuka says: my throat chokes, and tears pour from my eyes.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming who he loves and why. The friends he claims are not the learned or the impressive, but the simple devotees of Hari who lose themselves in song; dancing, clapping, falling to the ground in love. Their mark is that they feel no shame and care nothing for public opinion; the world's regard has no hold on them. Watching this, Tukaram is overcome himself, his throat tight and his eyes streaming. The poem says the company of such open-hearted devotees is the thing that moves him most.

GATHA 0781

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the holy costume

मराठी मूळ

टिळा टोपी माळा देवाचें गवाळें । वागवी वोंगळ पोटासाठीं ॥१॥
 तुळसी खोवी कानीं दर्भ खोवी शेंडी । लटिकी धरी बोंडी नासिकाची ॥२॥
 कीर्तनाचे वेळे रडे पडे लोळे । प्रेमेंविण डोळे गळताती ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसे मावेचे मइंद । त्यांपाशीं गोविंद नाहीं नाहीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He wears the tilak, the cap, the garland, all the paraphernalia of God, but carries it all as a filthy pretense just to fill his belly. He tucks tulsi behind his ear and darbha grass in his topknot, and pinches his nose in a show of breath-control.

At the time of kirtan, he weeps and falls and rolls on the ground, though tears pour from his eyes without any real love behind them. Says Tuka, such deceivers are frauds of illusion. Govinda is nowhere near them.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He wears the tilak, the cap, the garland: all the gear of God. He carries it as a filthy disguise, just to fill his belly. He tucks tulsi behind his ear and darbha grass in his topknot. He pinches his nose to fake breath-control. At the time of kirtan he weeps, he falls, he rolls on the ground. The tears come, but there is no love behind them. Tuka says: such men are tricksters of illusion. Govinda is not near them. Govinda is not near them.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is exposing the gap between religious display and the heart. He lists the whole costume of holiness, the marks, the beads, the grass, the staged tears in kirtan, and says it is worn for one reason: to feed the belly. The damning detail is the weeping without love behind it, devotion turned into performance. He calls this a fraud of Maya, an illusion dressed as piety. The pattern to watch is in oneself: religious props and even real tears prove nothing if there is no love; God does not come near a show put on for gain.

GATHA 0782

Autobiography

Autobiography, the holy ground of Dehu

मराठी मूळ

धन्य देहू गांव पुण्य भूमि ठाव । तेथें नांदे देव पांडुरंग ॥1॥
 धन्य क्षेत्रवासी लोक दइवाचे । उच्चारिती वाचे नामघोष ॥2॥
 गरुड पारीं उभा जोडुनियां कर । अश्वत्थ समोर उत्तरामुख ॥3॥
 दिक्षणे शंकर लिंग हरेश्वर । शोभे गंगातीर इंद्रायणी ॥4॥
 लक्ष्मीनारायण बल्लाळाचें वन । तेथें अधिष्ठान सिद्धेश्वर ॥5॥
 विघ्नराज द्वारीं बहिरव बाहेरी । हनुमंत शेजारीं सहित दोघे ॥6॥
 तेथें दास तुका करितो कीर्तन । हृदयीं चरण विठोबाचे ॥7॥
 शाक्तावर - अभंग 13

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Blessed is the village of Dehu, that holy land, that sacred ground where Panduranga Himself dwells. Blessed are those who live in this holy place; they utter the Name with their own voices.

Garuda stands with folded hands at the boundary stone. The Ashvattha tree faces north across from him.

To the south stands the Shiva linga of Hareishwar, and the banks of the Indrayani shine like the Ganga. There are Lakshmi-Narayana and the grove of Ballala, with the Siddheshwar shrine established there.

Vighnaraja guards the gate, Bhairava stands outside, and Hanuman is nearby with both his forms. There the servant Tuka performs kirtan, holding the feet of Vithoba in his heart.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Blessed is the village of Dehu, that holy land, that sacred place. There God Panduranga dwells. Blessed are the people who live in this holy ground; with their own mouths they cry out the Name. Garuda stands with folded hands at the boundary stone. The ashvattha tree faces north across from him. To the south is the Shiva linga of Hareishwar, and the bank of the Indrayani shines like the Ganga. There are Lakshmi-Narayana and the grove of Ballala, with the Siddheshwar shrine set up there. Vighnaraja guards the gate, Bhairava stands outside, and Hanuman is nearby in both his forms. There the servant Tuka does kirtan, holding the feet of Vithoba in his heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praising his own village, Dehu, as holy ground and walking the listener through its shrines. He names the place where Panduranga dwells and blesses the people there because they call out the Name aloud. Then he maps the sacred geography: Garuda at the boundary, the ashvattha tree, the Shiva linga, the Indrayani river bright as the Ganga, the shrines of Lakshmi-Narayana, Ballala, Siddheshwar, Vighnaraja, Bhairava, and Hanuman. The point of the catalog is the last line: in the middle of all this, Tuka simply does kirtan, carrying Vithoba's feet in his heart. The holiness of the place is real, but the living center is the servant who keeps the Lord's feet inside him.

GATHA 0783

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the false guru's theatre

मराठी मूळ

टंवकारुनि दृष्टी लावुनियां रंग । दावी झगमग डोळ्यांपुढें ॥1॥
 ह्मणती शिष्यासी लागली समाधी । लटकी चि उपाधी झकविती ॥ध्रु॥
 दीपाचिया ज्योती कोडियेलें तेज । उपदेश सांजरात्रीमाजी ॥2॥
 रांगोळ्या चौक शृंगारुनी वोजा । आवरण पूजा यंत्र करी ॥3॥
 पडदा लावोनियां दीप चहूं कोनीं । बैसोनि आसनीं मुद्रा दावी ॥4॥
 नैवेद्यासी ह्मणे करावें पक्वान्न । पात्रासी दिव्यान्न परवडी ॥5॥
 जाला उपदेश कवळ घ्या रे मुखीं । आपोशन शेखीं बुडविलें ॥6॥
 पाषांड करोनि मांडिली जीविका । बुडवी भाविकां लोकांप्रती ॥7॥
 शुद्ध परमार्थ बुडविला तेणें । गुरुत्वभूषणें भोग भोगी ॥9॥
 विधीचा ही लोप बुडविला वेद । शास्त्रांचा ही बोध हरविला ॥10॥
 योगाची धारणा नाहीं प्राणायाम । सांडी यम नेम नित्यादिक ॥11॥
 वैराग्याचा लोप हरिभजनीं विक्षेप । वाढविलें पाप मतिलंडें ॥12॥
 तुका ह्मणे गेलें गुरुत्व गुखाडी । पूर्वजांसी धाडी नर्कवासा ॥13॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He fixes his gaze and creates a dazzling display, showing flashing lights before the eyes. They tell the disciple, "You have entered samadhi," but this is mere deception and fraud.

The light of a lamp is enclosed within a container, and the initiation is conducted in the dim of twilight. He draws rangoli designs and decorates the seat with elaborate rituals, then sits displaying mudras behind a curtain with lamps in four corners.

For the offering, he demands rich delicacies and sumptuous food on fine plates. He says, "The initiation is complete; now take a morsel," and drowns the whole thing in ceremony.

He has built a livelihood on hypocrisy and leads the faithful astray. He has submerged genuine spiritual life under the pretense of being a guru, enjoying comforts in its name.

He has destroyed the authority of the Vedas and obliterated the guidance of the scriptures. He has no yogic discipline, no breath-control, and has abandoned all rules and daily observances.

He has ruined the path of renunciation and created obstacles in the worship of Hari, increasing sin through his cunning mind. Says Tuka, the status of the guru has gone to ruin, and he sends his own ancestors to hell.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He fixes his stare and works the mood. He makes a dazzling display, flashing lights before the eyes. They tell the disciple: you have entered samadhi. It is a lie, a trick that cheats him. A lamp's flame is shut inside a box. The initiation is done in the dark of twilight. He draws rangoli, decorates the seat with care, sets up the ritual diagram and the offerings. He hangs a curtain, puts lamps in the four corners, sits on his seat, and shows off his mudras. For the offering he demands rich sweets, fine food on fine plates. He says: the initiation is finished, now take a morsel; and drowns the whole thing in ceremony. He has built a living out of fakery and leads the faithful astray. He has sunk true spiritual life under the guru's costume, and lives in comfort on its name. He has wiped out the authority of the Vedas and lost the teaching of the scriptures. He has no yogic discipline, no breath-control. He throws away the rules and the daily duties. He has ruined renunciation and thrown obstacles into the worship of Hari. With his cunning mind he piles up sin. Tuka says: the dignity of the guru has gone to ruin; he sends his own ancestors to hell.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is dissecting the machinery of a fraudulent guru point by point. The hypnotic stare, the flashing lights, the curtain and lamps and mudras, the twilight initiation, the demand for rich food: every step is staging, designed to make a disciple believe he has reached samadhi when nothing has happened. The charge is that this man has turned a sacred office into a paying trade, set genuine practice aside, and discarded the Vedas, the scriptures, yoga, and daily discipline while living in comfort on the guru's reputation. The harm runs both ways: he obstructs real devotion to Hari and degrades the very dignity of the teacher's seat. The test the poem leaves for the reader is plain: a guru is known by discipline and self-emptying, not by spectacle and fees, and any teaching aimed at comfort and effect should be suspected.

GATHA 0784

Social Criticism

Social criticism, devotion turned to license

मराठी मूळ

शाक्त गधडा जये देशीं । तेथें राशी पापाच्या ॥1॥
 सुकृताचा उदो केला । गोंधळ घाला इंद्रियें ॥ध्रु॥
 क्रोधरूपें वसे काम । तीचें नाम जपतसे ॥2॥
 मद्यभक्षण मांगिण जाती । विटाळ चितीं सांटविला ॥3॥
 स्तवुनियां पूजी रांड । न लजे भांड दाढीसी ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे भगवती । नेइल अंतीं आपणापें ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In the land where a Shakta donkey holds sway, heaps of sin abound. He proclaims the merit of his practice while the senses run riot in revelry.

Lust dwells there in the guise of anger, and he chants the name of the goddess. He eats meat and drinks liquor, belonging to the lowest ways, and stores defilement in his heart.

He worships and praises a wanton spirit and feels no shame, even with his graying beard. Says Tuka, his goddess-worship will lead him straight to her own abode of ruin.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In the land where such a man holds sway, sin piles up in heaps. He announces the merit of his practice, while the senses run riot. Lust lives there dressed up as anger, and he chants the name of the goddess. He eats meat and drinks liquor, keeping to the lowest ways, and stores up defilement in his heart. He worships and praises a corrupt spirit and feels no shame, even with a graying beard. Tuka says: this worship will carry him off at the end to its own place of ruin.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is attacking a religion that uses the name of the divine to license appetite. The man claims spiritual merit while his senses run wild; lust hides behind ritual, and meat and drink are called worship. The sharp line is that he keeps doing this without shame even into old age, the gray beard that should have brought sobriety. Tukaram's warning is that worship shaped to feed craving leads only to the ruin it serves, not to release. The pattern to examine is the use of holy words as cover for indulgence; the name of God does not sanctify what the heart is actually chasing.

GATHA 0785

Social Criticism

Social criticism, corruption spreads to the land

मराठी मूळ

राजा प्रजा द्वाद देश । शाक्त वास करिती तो ॥१॥
 अधर्माचें उबड पीक । धर्म रंक त्या गांवीं ॥२॥
 न पिके भूमि कांपे भारें । मेघ वारें पीतील ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे अवघीं दुःखें । येती सुखें वस्तीसी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Where the king, the people, and the land are corrupt, that is where the Shakta cult makes its home.
 Unrighteousness grows there like a wild, uncontrolled crop, while true dharma is reduced to poverty.*

The earth cannot bear the weight and trembles; even the clouds and winds conspire to afflict. Says Tuka, all sorrows come to take up residence where such practices dwell.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Where the king, the people, and the land are all corrupt, that is where this cult settles in. Unrighteousness grows there like a wild, untended crop, and true dharma is left poor in that village. The earth cannot bear the weight and trembles; the clouds and the wind turn against it. Tuka says: all sorrows come gladly to take up residence there.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram widens the lens from a single hypocrite to a whole society. Where rulers, people, and land are corrupt together, a religion of license takes root, and wrongdoing spreads like a weed while real dharma is reduced to poverty. He pictures the consequences in the world itself: the earth trembling under the burden, the weather turning hostile, every kind of suffering moving in to stay. The poem is naming the cost of letting corruption become the public norm. The stake is that a society's moral state and its very wellbeing are tied together; sorrow comes to live where dharma has been starved out.

GATHA 0786

Social Criticism

Social criticism, priests who drop the Name

मराठी मूळ

ऐसें कलियुगाच्या मुळें । जालें धर्माचें वाटोळें ॥१॥
 सांडुनियां रामराम । ब्राह्मण ह्मणती दोमदोष ॥२॥
 शिवों नये तीं निळीं । वस्त्रें पांघरती काळीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे वृत्त । सांडुनि गदा मागत जाती ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In this Kali Yuga, righteousness has been utterly destroyed. Abandoning the name of Rama, the brahmins chant impure formulas.

They shun those they deem beneath them, yet they themselves wear dark and black garments. Says Tuka, they have abandoned their true calling and go begging with clubs in hand.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Because of this Kali Yuga, dharma has been wrecked. The brahmins have dropped Rama, Rama from their lips and chant impure formulas instead. They will not touch those they think beneath them, yet they themselves go about wrapped in dark, black cloth. Tuka says: they have abandoned their own true calling, and now they go begging with clubs in their hands.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the criticism on the brahmins who have left their proper work. Instead of the Name of Rama, they recite tainted formulas; they keep up rules of untouchability against others while wearing the dark garb that marks the very practices they should shun. The bite is in the last line: having abandoned the calling that was theirs, they end up wandering as armed beggars. He blames the age, Kali Yuga, for the collapse of dharma, but the failure he points to is concrete. The thing to examine is the hollowing out of a sacred vocation: keeping the outward marks of purity while letting go of the Name that gave the calling its meaning.

GATHA 0787

Social Criticism

Social criticism, prayer for distance

मराठी मूळ

अवध्या पापें घडला एक । उपासक शक्तीचा ॥१॥
 त्याचा विटाळ नको अंगा । पांडुरंगा माझिया ॥२॥
 काम क्रोध मद्य अंगीं । रंगला रंगीं अवगुणी ॥३॥
 करितां पाप न धरी शंका । ह्मणे तुका कोणी ही ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

All sins are gathered in one: the worshiper of Shakti. O my Panduranga, let not his pollution touch my body.

He is steeped in lust, anger, and intoxicants, colored through and through with faults. When committing sin, he feels no hesitation.

Says Tuka, he fears no one at all.

IN PLAIN WORDS

All sins are gathered into one in him: this worshiper of Shakti. O my Panduranga, do not let his defilement touch my body. Lust, anger, and drink are in him; he is dyed through and through with faults. When he commits sin he feels no hesitation at all. Tuka says: he is afraid of no one.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays to be kept clear of a man he sees as the sum of every vice. He gathers the charges into one figure, the worshiper who has made his religion a cover for lust, anger, and drink, and is stained through and through. What disturbs him most is the lack of any check: the man sins without hesitation and fears no one, no human and no God. So Tukaram turns to Panduranga and asks not to be touched by that defilement. The poem names a real spiritual danger, the company of someone who has lost all fear and shame, and the honest response of asking the Lord for distance from it.

GATHA 0788

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the warning that fails

मराठी मूळ

वारितां बळें धरितां हातीं । जुलुमें जाती नरकामधीं ॥१॥
 रंडीदासाप्रति कांहीं । उपदेश तो ही चालेना ॥२॥
 जन्म केला वाताहात । थोर घात येठायीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे पंढरीनाथा । तुझी कथा दूषीती ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even when they are warned and restrained by force, they push their way stubbornly into hell. Like those given over to vice, no teaching or counsel will change their course.

They have ruined their human birth; the greatest harm is done right here. Says Tuka, O Lord of Pandhari, they slander Your sacred story.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Even when they are warned, even when they are held back by force, they shove their way into hell anyway. For men given over to vice, no teaching, no counsel works. They have wasted their human birth; the great ruin is done right here. Tuka says: O Lord of Pandhari, they slander Your sacred story.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes people so set in their course that nothing reaches them. They are warned and even physically restrained, yet they force their way toward ruin; advice and teaching simply do not take. The tragedy he names is the waste of a human birth, the one chance squandered here and now, and the final injury is that they slander the Lord's own story while doing it. He says this turning to Vithoba, the Lord of Pandhari, as a lament. The poem holds up the hard limit of counsel: a person who refuses every warning cannot be saved by more words, and the loss is theirs to make.

GATHA 0789

Social Criticism

Social criticism, contempt for a debased cult

मराठी मूळ

शाक्तांची शूकरी माय । विष्टा खाय बिदीची ॥१॥
 तिची त्या पडली सवे । मार्गे धावें ह्मणोनि ॥२॥
 शाक्तांची गाढवी माय । भुंकत जाय वेसदारा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे शिंदळीचे । बोलतां वाचे निंघ ते ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The mother-goddess of the Shaktas is a sow that eats filth from the streets. Her followers have fallen into her habits and chase after her.

The mother-goddess of the Shaktas is a she-donkey, braying at every village gate. Says Tuka, to speak of such disgraceful things even with one's voice is shameful.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The mother-goddess these people worship is a sow that eats filth in the streets. They have fallen into her ways and run after her. Their mother-goddess is a she-donkey, braying at every village gate. Tuka says: even to speak such disgraceful things aloud is shameful.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is Tukaram at his most savage, mocking a degraded cult by likening its goddess to a sow eating street filth and a braying she-donkey, and saying the followers have sunk into those same habits. The fury is aimed at a worship he sees as feeding on filth and noise rather than truth. He turns the blade on himself at the end, admitting that merely saying such things aloud is itself shameful, as if disgusted that the subject forces such words from his mouth. The point is not contempt for any person but horror at a practice that drags devotion down to the lowest appetites. The self-examination is built into the closing line: even naming the degradation is a stain one would rather not carry.

GATHA 0790

Social Criticism

Social criticism, devotion misplaced on petty spirits

मराठी मूळ

हरिहर सांडूनि देव । धरिती भाव क्षुल्लकीं ॥1॥
 ऐका त्यांची विटंबणा । देवपणा भक्तांची ॥घु.॥
 अंगीं कवडे घाली गळां । परडी कळाहीन हातीं ॥2॥
 गळां गांठा हिंडें दारीं । मनुष्य परी कुतरीं तीं ॥3॥
 माथां सेंदुर दांत खाती । जेंगट हातीं सटवीचें ॥4॥
 पूजिती विकट दौंद । पशु सोड गजाची ॥5॥
 ऐशा छंदें चुकलीं वाटा । भाव खोटा भजन ॥6॥
 तुका ह्मणे विष्णुशिवा । वांचुनि देवा भजती ती ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Abandoning Hari and Shiva, they fix their devotion on petty spirits. Hear of the degradation of such devotees.**They hang cowrie shells around their necks and carry baskets, devoid of skill. They wear strings of charms and wander from door to door, appearing human but living like dogs.**With vermilion on their heads and teeth stained red, they carry the implements of the she-demon. They worship grotesque images and the trunk of Ganesha merely as an animal form.**By such practices they have lost their way; their worship and their devotion are false. Says Tuka, those who worship anything other than Vishnu and Shiva have gone astray.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Leaving Hari and Shiva, they fix their faith on petty spirits. Hear how these devotees disgrace themselves and call it godliness. They hang cowrie shells around their necks and carry begging baskets, with no real skill. They wear strings of charms and wander door to door; they look like people, but they live like dogs. Vermilion on their heads, teeth stained red, the she-demon's rattle in their hands. They worship grotesque, swollen images, the elephant's trunk as nothing more than a beast. By such fashions they have lost the road; their faith is false and their worship is false. Tuka says: those who worship anything but Vishnu and Shiva have gone astray.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is grieving over devotion poured into the wrong objects. People leave Hari and Shiva and fasten their faith on petty spirits and demon-cults, taking up cowries, charms, vermilion, and rattles, and wandering door to door for alms. He says they keep the human shape but live like dogs, and even reduce a great form like Ganesha's to a mere animal trunk, worship without understanding. His verdict is that the whole bent is a false faith that has lost the road. The standard he sets is exclusive and deliberate: real worship is fixed on Vishnu and Shiva, and devotion scattered onto lesser powers leads the devotee astray. The pattern to examine is where one actually places trust, since faith aimed at petty powers degrades the one who offers it.

GATHA 0791

Social Criticism

Social criticism, knowledge bought cheap

मराठी मूळ

कांधासाठी जालें ज्ञान । तेणें जन नाडिलें ॥१॥
 ऐकाकाम क्रोध बुचबुची । भुंके पुची व्यालीची ॥२॥
 पूजेलागीं द्रव्य मागे। काय सांगे शिष्यातें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे केंचें ब्रह्म । अवघा भ्रम विषयांचा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

For the sake of an onion, this so-called knowledge arose, and by it the people were misled. Listen: lust and anger seethe within, like the pup of a bitch that barks and snaps.

For performing worship he demands money. What does he teach his disciples? Says Tuka, where is Brahman in all this? The whole thing is nothing but delusion about sense-pleasures.

IN PLAIN WORDS

For the sake of an onion this so-called knowledge sprang up, and by it the people were cheated. Listen: lust and anger seethe and boil in him; he yelps like a bitch's pup, barking and snapping. For doing worship he demands money. What can such a man teach his disciples? Tuka says: where is Brahman in any of this? The whole thing is nothing but delusion about the pleasures of the senses.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is dismissing a cheap, commercial sort of teaching that misleads ordinary people. He says this knowledge arose for the price of an onion, worthless and bought low, and inside the teacher lust and anger are still boiling. The man charges money for performing worship, so Tukaram asks what such a person could possibly pass on to a disciple. His blunt question is the heart of it: where is Brahman in any of this? He answers himself, calling the whole enterprise a delusion built on sense-pleasure. The test left for the reader is whether a teaching points beyond craving toward the Real, or merely dresses up appetite and sells it.

GATHA 0792

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, only one God

मराठी मूळ

सांडुनियां पंढरीराव । कवणातें ह्मणों देव ॥१॥
 बहु लाज वाटे चित्ता । आणिकांतें देव ह्मणतां ॥२॥
 सांडुनियां हिरा । कोणें वेचाव्या त्या गारा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे हरिहर । ऐसी सांडुनियां धुर ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Having abandoned the Lord of Pandhari, whom else can I call God? It fills my heart with shame to call anything else divine. Having set aside a diamond, who would go picking up pebbles? Says Tuka, why abandon the supreme ones, Hari and Shiva?

IN PLAIN WORDS

If I set aside the Lord of Pandhari, whom else can I call God? It shames my heart to call anything else divine. Once you have a diamond, why go picking up pebbles? Tuka says: why abandon the supreme ones, Hari and Shiva?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says his devotion has only one place to go. Having known Vitthal, the Lord of Pandhari, he finds he cannot give the name of God to any other power; even the wish to do so makes him ashamed. He frames the choice with a plain image: a man who holds a diamond does not stoop for pebbles. To leave the highest, Hari and Shiva, for lesser gods would be exactly that exchange, and so he refuses it.

GATHA 0793

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the wasted life

मराठी मूळ

बहुतें गेलीं वांयां । न भजतां पंढरीराया ॥१॥
करिती कामिकांची सेवा । लागोन मागोन खात्या देवा ॥२॥
अवघियांचा धनी । त्यासी गेलीं विसरोनि ॥३॥
तुका ह्याणे अंतीं । पडती यमाचिया हातीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

So many have wasted their lives by not worshiping the Lord of Pandhari. They serve petty deities, grasping and clinging to consuming gods.

They have forgotten the master of all. Says Tuka, in the end they fall into the hands of Yama.

IN PLAIN WORDS

So many lives have gone to waste, lived without worshiping the Lord of Pandhari. They serve petty gods, begging and clinging, gods who only consume. They forget the master of all. Tuka says: in the end they fall into the hands of Yama.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram warns that a life can be spent and still come to nothing. The waste he names is the failure to worship the Lord of Pandhari, while energy goes instead to smaller deities approached for what they can give. He calls this serving gods who only take and never save, and he says it amounts to forgetting the one master of all. The cost falls due at death, when such a person is handed over to Yama, the lord of the dead.

GATHA 0794

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, turning to the Name

मराठी मूळ

असो आतां ऐसा धंदा । तुज गोविंदा आठवूं ॥१॥
 रिक्षता तूं होसी जरी । तरि काय येरीं करावें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे गाइन गीतीं । रूप चित्तीं धरुनियां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Enough of these futile pursuits. Let me remember You, O Govinda.

If You are the one who saves, then what can anyone else do? Says Tuka, I will sing Your songs, holding Your form in my heart.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Enough now of this futile work. Let me remember You, Govinda. If You are the one who saves, then what can anyone else do? Tuka says: I will sing Your songs, holding Your form in my heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns away from pointless effort and toward remembrance. He calls his worldly striving a dead-end occupation and resolves to fill that place with the memory of Govinda. His reasoning is simple: if rescue comes from God alone, then no other power can add or subtract anything. So he chooses the one work that matters, singing God's praises while keeping the divine form fixed in his heart.

GATHA 0795

Autobiography

Self-defense, peace amid slander

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं आह्मी विष्णुदास । करीत आस कोणांची ॥१॥
 कां हे नष्ट करिती निंदा । नेणों सदा आमुची ॥२॥
 असों भलते ठायीं मनं । समाधानें आपुलिया ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे करुं देवा । तुझी सेवा धंदा तो ॥३॥ ॥१३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We are servants of Vishnu; we do not depend upon anyone. Why then do these wicked people always slander us? Let us dwell wherever we please, at peace within ourselves.

Says Tuka, O God, serving You is our only occupation.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We are servants of Vishnu; we depend on no one. Why then do these wicked people always slander us? Let us live wherever we please, at peace within ourselves. Tuka says: O God, serving You is our only work.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers his slanderers by stating where he stands. As a servant of Vishnu he owes nothing to anyone, so the attacks puzzle him: there is no debt or rivalry to explain them. Rather than fight back, he claims his freedom to live anywhere and stay settled within himself, untouched by the noise. The whole of his life, he says, is one occupation only, the service of God, and that is enough.

GATHA 0796

Autobiography

Self-defense, the ignorant judge

मराठी मूळ

पाखांडांनीं पाठी पुरविला दुमाला । तेथें मी विठ्ठला काय बोलों ॥१॥
 कांधाचा खाणार चोजवी कस्तुरी । आपुलें भिकारी अर्थ नेणे ॥२॥
 न कळे तें मज पुसती छळूनी । लागतां चरणीं न सोडिती ॥३॥
 तुझ्या पांयांविण दुजें नेणें कांहीं । तूं चि सर्वांठाहीं एक मज ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The hypocrites have spread their influence behind my back. What shall I say about that, O Vitthal? One who eats onions presumes to judge musk; he does not recognize even his own poor worth.

They harass me with questions about things I do not know, and once they grab my feet, they will not let go. I know nothing apart from Your feet; You alone are everything to me, everywhere.

Says Tuka, let their mouths be sealed. How long shall I argue with these quarrelsome debaters?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The hypocrites have worked behind my back. What can I say to that, Vitthal? A man who eats onions sets himself up to judge musk; the beggar does not know his own worth. They badger me with questions about things I do not know, and once they seize my feet they will not let go. Apart from Your feet I know nothing; You alone are everything to me, everywhere. Tuka says: let their mouths be stopped. How long must I argue with these quarrelers?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram protests against critics who undermine him while pretending to piety. He exposes the absurdity with one image: a man whose taste runs to onions presumes to appraise musk, blind even to his own poverty. The same people corner him with learned questions he cannot answer and will not release him once they have hold. Against all this he names his one ground, that he knows nothing except Vitthal's feet and that God is his all, and he asks only to be left in peace rather than dragged endlessly into debate.

GATHA 0797

Social Criticism

Social criticism, words without deeds

मराठी मूळ

कलियुगीं कवित्व करिती पाषांड । कुशळ हे भांड बहु जाले ॥1॥
 द्रव्य दारा चित्तीं प्रजांची आवडी । मुखें बडबडी कोरडा चि ॥ध्रु॥
 डंव करी सोंग मानावया जग । मुखें बोले त्याग मनीं नाहीं ॥2॥
 वेदाज्ञो करोनि न करिती स्वहित । नव्हती अलिप्त देहाहुनी ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे दंड साहील यमाचे । न करी जो वाचे बोले तैसें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In this Kali Yuga, poets compose works of hypocrisy. These skilled buffoons have multiplied greatly.

Their minds are set on wealth, women, and worldly desire, while their mouths rattle on with empty words. They put on a show of pretense to impress the world.

They speak of renunciation, but it is not in their chitta. They invoke the authority of the Vedas yet do not pursue their own salvation.

They are not free from attachment to the body. Says Tuka, the one whose actions do not match his words will bear the rod of Yama.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In this Kali age, poets make verses of hypocrisy; these clever clowns have multiplied. Their minds are fixed on money, women, and worldly wants, while their mouths rattle on, dry and empty. They put on a show to impress the world; they speak of renunciation, but it is not in their hearts. They quote the Vedas yet do nothing for their own good, and they are not free from the body. Tuka says: the one whose deeds do not match his words will bear the rod of Yama.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram attacks the gap between sacred talk and actual life. He sees a crowd of skilled performers who dress up greed for wealth, sex, and status in pious verse, and whose fine words are hollow because nothing inside answers to them. They preach detachment they do not feel and cite scripture without ever using it to save themselves, still bound fast to the body they claim to have left. The warning lands on the pattern itself: when speech and deed split apart, the punishment of Yama is what waits, and the test he sets is one any of us can turn on our own talk.

GATHA 0798

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the terror of hell

मराठी मूळ

विषयाचें सुख एथें वाटे गोड । पुढें अवघड यमदंड ॥१॥
 मारिती तोडिती झोडिती निष्ठ । यमाचे किंकर बहुसाल ॥२॥
 असिपत्रीं तरुवरखैराचे विंगळ । निघतील ज्वाळ तेलपाकीं ॥३॥
 तप्तभूमीवरि लोळविती पाहीं । अग्निस्तंभ बाहीं कवळविती ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The pleasure of the senses seems sweet here, but ahead lies the dreadful punishment of Yama. His servants beat, hack, and thrash without mercy, in great numbers.

In the forest of sword-edged leaves and thorn-trees, flames leap from cauldrons of boiling oil. On scorching ground they roll the sinner, and burning pillars are clasped to his arms.

Says Tuka, I come to You in humble supplication. Enough now of womb-dwelling and the cycle of births.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The pleasure of the senses tastes sweet here, but ahead lies the dreadful rod of Yama. His servants beat and hack and thrash without mercy, in great numbers. In the forest of sword-leaved trees and thorns, flames leap from cauldrons of boiling oil. On scorching ground they roll the sinner, and burning pillars are clasped against his arms. So Tuka comes pleading: enough now of the womb and the round of births.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets the brief sweetness of sense pleasure against the long horror that follows it. He paints the hells of Yama in hard detail, the merciless blows, the forest of blade-leaved trees, the cauldrons of boiling oil, the scorching ground, the embrace forced upon red-hot pillars, so the cost of present indulgence cannot be ignored. The aim is not cruelty but warning: what feels sweet now buys this later. From that fear he turns to prayer, begging God to end the whole cycle of rebirth and womb-dwelling for him.

GATHA 0799

Prayers

Prayer, show me Your feet

मराठी मूळ

अल्प माझी मती । ह्मणोनि येतों काकुलती ॥१॥
 आतां दाखवा दाखवा । मज पाउलें केशवा ॥२॥
 धीर माझ्या मना । नाहीं नाहीं नारायणा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे दया । मज करा अभागिया ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My intellect is small; therefore I come to You in humble supplication. Now show me, show me, show me Your feet, O Keshava.

My mind has no steadiness at all, O Narayana. Says Tuka, have mercy on this unfortunate one.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My understanding is small, so I come to You pleading. Now show me, show me Your feet, Keshava. There is no steadiness in my mind, none at all, Narayana. Tuka says: have mercy on this unfortunate one.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays from his own weakness rather than any strength. He admits his understanding is too small to manage on its own, and that is exactly why he throws himself on God. His one urgent request, repeated, is simply to be shown Keshava's feet, the place of refuge. He confesses his mind has no steadiness left in it and asks Narayana to show mercy to him as the helpless, luckless one he knows himself to be.

GATHA 0800

Longing and Separation

Longing, watching the road

मराठी मूळ

वाटुली पाहातां सिणले डोळुले । दाविसी पाउलें कइं वो डोळां ॥१॥
 तूं माय माउली कृपेची साउली । विठले पाहिली वास तुझी ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझ्या असांवल्या बाहेरा । तुज क्षेम घाया पांडुरंगा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My eyes are weary from watching the road. When will You show Your feet to my gaze? You are the mother, the nurturing shade of mercy.

O Vitthal, I have waited long for You. Says Tuka, my arms reach out, longing to embrace You, O Panduranga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My eyes are tired from watching the road. When will You show Your feet to my eyes? You are the mother, the nursing shade of mercy. O Vitthal, long have I waited for You. Tuka says: my arms reach out to embrace You, Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the cry of one who waits and aches for the sight of God. Tukaram has worn his eyes out staring down the road for Vitthal's coming and asks how much longer until those feet appear. He calls God his mother, the cool shade of mercy that shelters a child, naming the tenderness he is starving for. The poem ends in pure bodily longing: his arms are already open, reaching out to hold Panduranga close.

GATHA 0801

*The Power of the Name**The Name, the body made Brahman*

मराठी मूळ

देह हा सादर पाहावा निश्चत । सर्व सुख एथें नाम आहे ॥१॥
 ब्रह्म जें देखणें द्वैत जेव्हां गेलें । शरीर तें जालें ब्रह्मरूप ॥२॥
 यजन याजन तप व्रतें करिती । विकल्पें नागवती शुद्ध पुण्या ॥३॥ ॥१३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This body should be regarded carefully and with certainty. All happiness resides here in the Name.

When Brahman is truly seen and duality has departed, the body itself becomes Brahman. Those who perform rituals, sacrifices, austerities, and vows are cheated of their pure merit by doubts and mental constructions.

Says Tuka, all joy is right here. Cast delusion far away and see clearly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Look closely at this body, and be sure: all happiness is here, in the Name. When Brahman is truly seen and duality is gone, the body itself becomes Brahman. Those who pile up sacrifices, austerities, and vows are robbed of their pure merit by their doubts and notions. Tuka says: all joy is right here; throw delusion far away and see.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says the goal people seek elsewhere is already present in the body, by way of the Name. When Brahman is genuinely seen and the sense of two, self and God, falls away, the very body is found to be Brahman; nothing has to be reached for. He warns that those who trust instead in heaped-up rites, austerities, and vows lose their merit to the doubts and mental constructions that come with such effort. His call is to stop the striving, drop the delusion of distance, and see that all joy is here now in the Name.

GATHA 0802

The Nature of God

Nature of God, measured by love alone

मराठी मूळ

तुझे वणूप गुण ऐसी नाहीं मती । राहिल्या त्या श्रुती मौन्यपणें ॥१॥
 रूप तुझें ऐसें डोळां न देखवे । जेथें हें झकवे ब्रह्मादिक ॥२॥
 ब्रह्मादिक देवा कर्माची कचाटी । ह्मणोनि आटाटी फार त्यांसी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुझें गुण नाम रूप । आहेसी अमुप वाणूं काई ॥४॥
 भक्तीचिया मापें मोजितों अनंता । इतरानें तत्वता न मोजवे ॥५॥
 योग याग तपें देहाचिया योगें । ज्ञानाचिया लागें न सांपडेसी ॥६॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी भोळ्या भावें सेवा । घ्यावी जी केशवा करितों ऐसी ॥७॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I lack the intellect to describe Your virtues; even the Vedic hymns have fallen silent before them. Your form is such that even the eyes cannot fully see it; Brahma and other gods are baffled.

Brahma and the gods are caught in the trap of karma; therefore they too suffer greatly. Says Tuka, Your virtues, Name, and form are immeasurable. How can I describe them? I measure You, O Infinite One, with the cup of devotion.

By any other means, You cannot truly be measured. Through yoga, rituals, and austerity, through the efforts of the body, through the path of knowledge, You cannot be captured.

Says Tuka, we are simple devotees; accept the service we offer with love, O Keshava.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have not the wit to tell Your qualities; the Vedas themselves fell silent before them. Your form cannot be fully seen by the eye, the form that baffles Brahma and the other gods. Brahma and the gods are caught in the trap of karma, and so they too suffer much. Tuka says: Your qualities, Your Name, Your form are beyond measure; how can I describe them? I measure You, Infinite One, with the cup of devotion; by no other means can You truly be measured. Not by yoga, sacrifice, austerity, not by the body's effort, not by the path of knowledge, are You caught. Tuka says: we are simple devotees; accept the service we offer with love, Keshava.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram confesses that God is beyond all description and then names the one thing that can reach Him. He places himself below the silenced Vedas and the baffled gods: even Brahma cannot fully see this form, and the high gods are themselves still bound in karma and suffering. So learning, ritual, yoga, austerity, and the body's effort all fail to grasp the Infinite. The one measure that works is devotion, the cup of love, and on that ground he simply asks Keshava to accept the humble service of plain devotees.

GATHA 0803

Prayers

Prayer, blessing the true seeker

मराठी मूळ

देवा ऐसा शिष्य देई । ब्रह्मज्ञानी निपुण पाहीं ॥१॥
 ऐशा युक्ति ज्याला बाणे । तेथें वैराग्याचें ठाणें ॥२॥
 ऐसा जाला हो शरीरी । तुका लिंबलोण करी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O God, grant me a disciple like this: adept and steeped in the knowledge of Brahman. Where such wisdom has taken root, there the seat of true renunciation is established.

When such a one appears in bodily form, Says Tuka, I will wave a protective flame of blessing over him.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God, grant me a disciple like this: skilled and steeped in the knowledge of Brahman. Where such wisdom has taken root, there stands the seat of true renunciation. Tuka says: when such a one appears in the flesh, I will wave a lamp of blessing over him to ward off all harm.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays not for himself but for the kind of person he longs to see. The disciple he asks God to send is one truly grounded in the knowledge of Brahman, not in mere talk. He notes the mark of the real thing: where that wisdom has actually rooted, genuine renunciation stands as well; the two come together. And his response to meeting such a soul is tender, not proud, he says he would perform the loving rite of waving a protective flame over him, the way one wards harm from a beloved child.

GATHA 0804

Devotion to Vitthal

Pandhari, where liberation walks

मराठी मूळ

जंव नाहीं देखिली पंढरी । तोंवरी वणिनसी थोर वैकुंठीची ॥१॥
 मोक्षसिद्ध तेथें हिंडे दारोदारी । होऊनि कामारी दीनरूप ॥२॥
 वृंदावन सडे चौक रंग माळा । अभिन्नव सोहोळा घरोघरी ॥३॥
 नामघोष कथापुराणकीर्तनी । ओविया कांडणीं पांडुरंग ॥४॥
 सर्व सुख तेथें असे सर्वकाळ । ब्रह्म तें केवळ नांदतसे ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे जें न साधे सायासें । तें हें प्रत्यक्ष दिसे विटेवरि ॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Until you have seen Pandhari, you go on praising the distant Vaikuntha. Liberation itself wanders door to door in Pandhari, appearing as a humble servant.

Tulsi gardens are swept, courtyards are decorated with rangoli, garlands, and colors; a wondrous celebration fills every home. The Name of Panduranga resounds in kirtan, stories, and Puranas, even in the songs women sing while grinding grain.

All joy is present there at all times; Brahman itself dwells there in full. Says Tuka, what cannot be attained through any effort is visible right there, standing upon the brick.

IN PLAIN WORDS

As long as you have not seen Pandhari, you keep praising the far-off Vaikuntha. Here, liberation itself wanders door to door. It comes as a humble servant, with a poor face. The tulsi gardens are swept; the courtyards are drawn with rangoli, garlands, and color. A fresh wonder fills every house. The Name of Panduranga sounds in kirtan, in stories, in the Puranas; even the women grinding grain sing it in their songs. All joy is there at every hour. Brahman itself lives there, whole. Tuka says: what cannot be reached by any effort is seen here plainly, standing on the brick.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is overturning the usual map of holiness. People praise Vaikuntha, the distant heaven, because they have not seen what is already present at Pandhari. There, he says, liberation does not have to be earned in some far place; it walks the streets door to door, wearing the face of a humble servant, woven into swept yards, rangoli, garlands, kirtan, the Puranas, even the grinding songs of working women. The claim is bold: the full Brahman, the thing no austerity can purchase, stands openly on the brick at Pandharpur for anyone to see. The point is that the goal is not elsewhere; it is here, ordinary and visible, in the life of the holy town.

GATHA 0805

Prayers

Grief at others turning away

मराठी मूळ

दुःख वाटे ऐसी ऐकोनियें गोष्टी । जेणें घडे तुटी तुझ्या पायीं ॥१॥
येतो कळवळा देखोनियां घात । करितों फजित नाइकती ॥२॥
काय करूं देवा ऐसी नाहीं शक्ति । दंडुनि पुढती वाटे लावूं ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे मज दावूं नको ऐसे । दृष्टीपुढें पिसे पांडुरंगा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

It pains me to hear any talk that would cause separation from Your feet. Seeing people harming themselves, compassion arises in me, and I try to correct them, but they will not listen.

What can I do, O God? I lack the power to punish them and set them right. Says Tuka, O Panduranga, do not show me such sights before my eyes.

IN PLAIN WORDS

It pains me to hear any talk that would break me from your feet. When I see people harming themselves, pity rises in me. I try to set them right, but they will not listen. What can I do, O God? I have no power to discipline them and turn them around. Tuka says: O Panduranga, do not put such sights before my eyes.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praying out of grief for others, not for himself. Anything that would loosen his hold on Vitthal's feet hurts him to hear, and the same love makes him ache when he watches people ruin themselves spiritually. He has the compassion to try to correct them, but not the authority to force them; they simply will not listen. So he turns his helplessness into a prayer: rather than be made to watch self-destruction he cannot stop, he asks God to spare his eyes the sight. The pain is in his powerlessness before another's free refusal, and he hands even that over to Panduranga.

GATHA 0806

Worldly Metaphors

Satire, the taste for filth

मराठी मूळ

शूकरासी विष्ठा माने सावकास । मिष्टान्नाची त्यास काय गोडी ॥१॥
 तेवीं अभक्तांसी आवडे पाखांड । न लगे त्यां गोड परमार्थ ॥२॥
 श्वानासी भोजन दिलें पंचामृत । तरी त्याचें चित्त हाडावरि ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे सर्पा पाजिलिया क्षीर । वमितां विखार विष जालें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A pig finds comfort in filth; what taste can it have for fine food? In the same way, those without devotion love hypocrisy; genuine spiritual truth holds no appeal for them. If a dog is fed a feast of the five nectars, its heart still craves a bone.

Says Tuka, if a serpent is fed milk, when it vomits, it produces only poison.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A pig is content with dung; what sweetness can rich food hold for it? In the same way, the one without devotion loves falsehood. Real spiritual truth has no taste for him. Feed a dog a banquet of the five nectars, and its heart still runs to a bone. Tuka says: pour milk into a serpent, and when it spits it out, it has turned to poison.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming a pattern, not condemning a soul: appetite decides what you can receive. Just as a pig prefers filth to fine food and a dog leaves a feast for a bone, a heart with no devotion is drawn to hypocrisy and finds genuine truth tasteless. The serpent image goes further: feed it pure milk and it returns only venom, because the poison is inside, not in the food. The challenge is to examine your own taste. If real teaching seems flat to you while falsehood appeals, the lack is in what you have made yourself crave, and that craving has to change before the truth can ever be sweet.

GATHA 0807

Worldly Metaphors

Satire, teaching the unwilling

मराठी मूळ

रासभ धुतला महा तीर्थांमाजी । नव्हे जैसा तेजी शामकर्ण ॥१॥
 तेवीं खळा काय केला उपदेश । नव्हे चि मानस शुद्ध त्याचें ॥२॥
 सर्पासी पाजिलें शर्करापीयूष । अंतरीचें विष जाऊं नेणे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे श्वाना िक्षरीचें भोजन । सर्वें चि वमन जेवी तया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even if a donkey is bathed in the holiest waters, it does not become a fine horse. Likewise, what good is teaching to a wicked person? His mind can never be made pure.

Even if a serpent is fed sugar and nectar, the venom within will not depart. Says Tuka, even if a dog is fed a meal of milk and rice, it vomits it up right away.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Wash a donkey in the holiest waters, and it still does not become a noble black-eared horse. In the same way, what use is teaching to a wicked man? His mind is never made pure by it. Feed a serpent sugar and nectar, and the venom inside it does not leave. Tuka says: feed a dog a meal of milk and rice, and it vomits it up at once.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is pressing the point that instruction alone cannot transform a heart that will not be changed. A donkey bathed in sacred rivers is still a donkey; teaching poured over a hardened mind does not purify it. The deeper image is the serpent fed nectar, whose inner poison stays poison, and the dog that throws up the very meal it is given. The teaching is not contempt for these people but a warning about a real possibility in oneself. Outer exposure to truth, holy water, sweet food, good words, accomplishes nothing if the inside is set against it; what must change is the inner nature, not the input.

GATHA 0808

Worldly Metaphors

Diagnosis, the soul in fever

मराठी मूळ

जेवीं नवज्वरें तापलें शरीर । लागे तया क्षीर विषातुल्य ॥१॥
 तेवीं परमार्थ जीहीं दुराविला । तयालागीं झाला सन्निपात ॥२॥
 कामिनी जयाच्या जाहाली नेत्रासी । देखी तो चंद्रासी पीतवर्ण ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Just as a body burning with fever finds even milk to taste like poison, so too one who has turned away from spiritual truth suffers a delirium of the soul. The one in whose eyes lust has taken hold sees even the moon as yellow and distorted.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Just as a body burning with new fever finds even milk to taste like poison, so the one who has pushed spiritual truth away has fallen into a delirium. The man whose eyes are seized by lust sees even the moon as sickly yellow.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is diagnosing why truth can seem repellent to some people. A fevered body tastes nourishing milk as poison; the fault is in the sickness, not the milk. So too, the person who has driven spiritual truth away is in a kind of soul-delirium, and what is good seems bad to him. The last image makes it personal: lust in the eyes makes even the clear moon look diseased and yellow. The point is self-examination. If holy things look distorted or sour to you, suspect the fever and the craving in your own seeing before you blame what you are looking at.

GATHA 0809

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, drop the faithless

मराठी मूळ

आतां असों मना अभक्तांची कथा । न होई दिशचता हरिनामीं ॥१॥
 नये त्याची कदा गोष्टी करूं मात । जिद्धे प्रायिश्चत त्याच्या नांवें ॥२॥
 प्रभातें न घ्यावें नांव माकडाचें । तैसें अभक्तांचें सर्वकाळ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां आठवूं मंगळ । जेणें सर्व काळ सुखरूप ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now let us set aside the tales of the faithless, so that no anxiety enters the worship of Hari's Name. One should never speak of them or tell their stories; the tongue requires penance just for uttering their names.

Just as one should not speak the name of a monkey at dawn, so should one avoid the names of the faithless at all times. Says Tuka, let us now remember only what is auspicious, so that all our hours may be filled with joy.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now let the mind set aside the talk of the faithless, so that no anxiety enters the Name of Hari. Never speak of them or repeat their stories; the tongue needs a penance just for saying their names. As one does not utter a monkey's name at dawn, so avoid the names of the faithless at all times. Tuka says: now let us remember only what is auspicious, so that every hour is filled with joy.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is giving practical advice about what the mind dwells on. Brooding over the faithless and their stories breeds anxiety and disturbs the inner worship of Hari's Name, so he says to drop that subject entirely. The folk note about not naming a monkey at dawn shows his register: he treats such talk as a small inauspicious habit best

simply avoided, not as a license to hate anyone. The instruction turns the attention away from grievance and toward what is auspicious. Fill the hours with the Name and with what is good, and the joy that follows leaves no room for the corrosive talk he is warning against.

GATHA 0810

Devotion to Vitthal

Longing, the body spent in song

मराठी मूळ

नाम आठवितां सद्गदित कंठीं । प्रेम वाढे पोटीं ऐसें करीं ॥१॥
 रोमांच जीवन आनंदाश्रु नेत्रीं । अष्टांग ही गात्रीं प्रेम तुझें ॥२॥
 सर्व ही शरीर वेचो या कीर्तनीं । गाऊं निशिदिनीं नाम तुझें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे दुजे न करीं कल्पांतीं । सर्वदा विश्रान्ति संतां पाई ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When the Name is remembered, let the throat choke with emotion and let love swell within the belly. Let there be goosebumps over the whole body and tears of bliss in the eyes; let all eight limbs be saturated with Your love.

Let this entire body be spent in kirtan; let me sing Your Name day and night. Says Tuka, I will do nothing else until the end of time. May I always find rest at the feet of the saints.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When the Name is remembered, let the throat choke with feeling and love swell within me. Let goosebumps cover the body and tears of bliss fill the eyes; let all eight limbs be soaked in your love. Let this whole body be spent in kirtan; let me sing your Name night and day. Tuka says: I will do nothing else till the end of time. May I always rest at the feet of the saints.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praying not for liberation but for the signs of love itself. He asks that remembering the Name break him open: a choked throat, swelling love, goosebumps, tears, the whole body trembling with devotion. He wants no other use for his body than kirtan, and no other occupation, day or night, until the end of time. This is the bhakti claim that the love is the reward, not a means to something further. The closing wish, to rest always at the feet of the saints, places that whole life of singing inside the company of the holy, where such love is kept alive.

GATHA 0811

The Nature of God

Surrender, life in Vitthal's hands

मराठी मूळ

जननी हे जाणे बाळकाचें वर्म । सुख दुःख धर्म जें जें कांहीं ॥1॥
 अंधापुढें जेणें दिधला आधार । त्याचा हा विचार तो चि जाणे ॥ध्रु॥
 शरणागता जेणें घातलें पाठीशीं । तो जाणे तेविशीं राखों तया ॥2॥
 कासे लागे तया न लगती सायास । पोहोणारा त्यास पार पावी ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे जीव विठ्ठलाचे हातीं । दिला त्याची गति तो चि जाणे ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A mother knows the secret nature of her child, every joy and sorrow, every dharma. The one who gave support to the blind, only He understands how to continue guiding them.

The one who has sheltered the refugee behind His back, He alone knows how to guard that one. For the one who holds on to Him, no effort is needed; the strong swimmer carries the clinging one across.

Says Tuka, I have placed my life in Vitthal's hands; He alone knows the course of my destiny.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A mother knows the hidden nature of her child, all its joys, sorrows, and ways. The one who gave the blind man support, he alone knows how to keep guiding him. The one who has set the refugee behind his own back, he alone knows how to guard him. For the one who only holds on, no effort is needed; the strong swimmer carries the clinging one across. Tuka says: I have placed my life in Vitthal's hands; he alone knows where it goes.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing surrender through plain images of dependence. A mother knows her child better than the child knows itself; one who has taken on a blind man knows how to lead him; one who has sheltered a refugee knows how to protect him. The swimmer image is the key: the one being carried does not swim, he only holds on, and the strong swimmer does all the work of reaching the far shore. So Tukaram concludes that having handed his very life to Vitthal, the responsibility for its course is now God's, not his. The whole effort of the devotee shrinks to one thing, holding on; the carrying is God's business.

GATHA 0812

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, hold the gain

मराठी मूळ

नका वांटूं मन विधिनिषेधांसी । स्मरावा मानसीं पांडुरंग ॥१॥
 खादलिया अन्ना मासी बोलों नये । अवघें चि जाये एका घासें ॥२॥
 जोडी होते परी ते बहु कठिण । करितां जतन सांभाळावें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणें येथें न मना विषाद । निंबेंविण व्याध तुटों नये ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Do not scatter your mind among rules and prohibitions. Remember Panduranga within your heart.

Once food has been eaten, one should not speak ill of it; a single morsel can ruin the entire meal. The gains of spiritual life are hard-won; one must carefully guard and preserve them.

Says Tuka, there should be no despair here; without the proper medicine, the ailment cannot be cured.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do not split your mind among rules and prohibitions. In your heart, remember Panduranga. Once you have eaten the food, do not speak ill of it; one bad word can spoil the whole meal. The gain comes, but it is very hard-won; guard it and keep it with care. Tuka says: let no despair enter here. Without the right medicine, the disease cannot be cured.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is steadying a devotee against two dangers: scattered effort and second-guessing. Do not let the mind fragment among endless rules and prohibitions; keep it gathered on Panduranga in the heart. His image of food already eaten warns against criticizing the path once you are on it, since a single sour word can ruin the whole nourishment. The point is that devotion is a hard-won gain that must be protected, not undermined by doubt or despair. And like an illness that yields only to the correct medicine, the soul's cure comes only through this one remedy, the Name, so stay with it rather than dividing yourself.

GATHA 0813

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, do not spoil the good

मराठी मूळ

नको होऊं देऊं भावीं अभावना । या चि नांवें जाणा बहु दोष ॥१॥
 मेघवृष्टि येथें होते अनिवार । जिद्दाळ्यां उखर लाभ नाड ॥२॥
 उत्तमा विभागें कनिष्ठाची इच्छा । कल्पतरु तैसा फळे त्यासी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणें जिणें बहु थोडें आहे । आपुलिया पाहें पुढें बरें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Do not allow faithlessness to corrupt what is already good. This itself, know well, is the gravest of faults.

The rains pour down ceaselessly, but on barren land they are wasted, bringing no harvest. If a lesser person, by his own choosing, desires the portion of the greater, the wish-fulfilling tree grants him accordingly.

Says Tuka, this life is very short. Look ahead to your own welfare.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do not let faithlessness ruin what is already good in you; know that this itself is a great fault. The rain pours down without limit, but on barren ground it is wasted and yields no harvest. If a lesser man, by his own choosing, asks for the share of the greater, the wish-granting tree gives him just that. Tuka says: this life is very short. Look ahead to your own good.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram warns that doubt can spoil faith you already have, and he treats that spoiling as among the worst faults. His farming image makes the stakes plain: grace falls like endless rain, but a barren, faithless heart wastes it and brings in no harvest. The wish-fulfilling tree gives each person exactly what he chooses to ask for, so a small ask yields a small life; the limit is set by the asker, not the giver. Since human life is short, the exhortation is to aim high and guard the faith you have. Do not let unbelief turn fertile ground to waste, and choose your own true welfare while there is time.

GATHA 0814

Renunciation

Renunciation that came unbidden

मराठी मूळ

त्याग तंव मज न वजतां केला । कांहीं च विठ्ठला मनांतूनि ॥१॥
 भागलिया आला उबग सहज । न धरितां काज जालें मनीं ॥२॥
 देह जड जालें ऋणाच्या आभारें । केलें संवसारें कासावीस ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे गेला आळसकिळस । अकर्तव्य दोष निवारिले ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Renunciation came to me without even trying, O Vitthal. I did not cast anything out of my mind deliberately.

Exhaustion itself bred disgust, and detachment arose naturally in the heart. The body had grown heavy under the burden of obligations; worldly life had made me miserable.

Says Tuka, laziness, apathy, and the tendency toward wrongdoing have all been removed.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Renunciation came to me without my even trying, O Vitthal. I cast nothing out of my mind on purpose. Weariness brought disgust of itself, and without my holding to it, detachment settled in the heart. The body had grown heavy under the weight of debts; worldly life had worn me out. Tuka says: laziness and apathy are gone, and the pull toward wrong deeds has been cleared away.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is being honest that his renunciation was not a heroic act of will. He did not deliberately renounce anything; exhaustion with the world bred a natural disgust, and detachment arose on its own. He names the plain causes: a body bent under debt and a worldly life that had simply ground him down. Out of that ordinary failure and fatigue, something good came: the laziness, apathy, and drift toward wrongdoing fell away. The quiet point is that God can use even our being worn out and defeated. What looked like mere collapse turned, in Vitthal's hands, into a real and cleansing detachment.

GATHA 0815

Appeals and Exhortations

Urgency, use the human body

मराठी मूळ

मढें झांकुनियां करिती पेरणी । कुणबियाचे वाणी लवलाहें ॥1॥
 तयापरी करीं स्वहित आपुलें । जयासी फावलें नरदेह ॥ध्रु॥
 ओटीच्या परिस मुठीचें तें वाढे । यापरि कैवाडें स्वहिताचें ॥2॥
 नाहीं काळसत्ता आपुलिये हातीं । जाणते हे गुंती उगविती ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे पाहें आपुली सूचना । करितो शाहाणा मृत्युलोकीं ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The farmer covers the corpse of a dead animal and ploughs right over it, quickly putting it to use as manure. In just that way, pursue your own spiritual good while this human body is available.

What is sown by the fistful grows more than what is scattered by the handful; such is the leverage of working for one's own salvation. The power of Death is not in your own hands; the wise unravel this tangle while they can.

Says Tuka, look to your own welfare. The shrewd one makes his preparations in this mortal world.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The farmer covers the dead carcass with earth and ploughs straight over it, quickly turning it to use, just as a cultivator does. In the same way, work for your own true good while you have this human body. What is sown by the fistful grows more than what is scattered by the handful; such is the leverage of working for your own salvation. The power of Death is not in your hands; the wise untangle this knot while they still can. Tuka says: look to your own counsel. The shrewd man makes his preparation here in the land of the dying.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses the shortness and uncertainty of life into urgency. The farmer who buries a carcass and ploughs it into manure shows the lesson: even what seems waste can be put to use now, so put this human birth to use while you have it. His sowing image says effort placed wisely yields far more than effort thrown about carelessly, so concentrated work toward salvation pays back many times over. The hard fact behind it all is that death is not under your control; you cannot choose your hour. So the wise untangle the knot of worldly attachment while they still can, making their preparation here, in this passing mortal world, before the chance is gone.

GATHA 0816

The Nature of God

The mark of grace, God in the house

मराठी मूळ

राजा चाले तेथें वैभव सांगातें । हें काय लागतें सांगावें त्या ॥१॥
 कोणी कोणा एथें न मनी जी फुका । कृपेविण एका देवाचिया ॥२॥
 शृंगारिलें नाहीं तगोयेत वरि । उमटे लौकरि जैसे तैतें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे घरीं वसे नारायण । कृपेची ते खुण साम्या येते ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When the king travels, grandeur accompanies him naturally. Does anyone need to tell the king this? No one here values anyone else for free, not without the grace of God alone.

An image that has not been properly adorned will soon show its true nature underneath. Says Tuka, when Narayana dwells in the house, the signs of His grace become evident.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When a king travels, his splendor goes with him. No one needs to tell the king this. Here no one values anyone for free; it comes only from the grace of the one God. A thing that has not been truly adorned cannot hold its shine on top; the truth under it shows up soon enough. Tuka says: when Narayana lives in the house, the sign of His grace is the evenness that comes.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming what real worth looks like and where it comes from. As a king carries his grandeur with him by nature, so a soul in whom God dwells carries something that needs no announcing. Worth here is not given freely or earned by show; it comes from the grace of the one God alone. Mere outer decoration, paint laid on top, soon peels and the true nature underneath shows; only what is genuine lasts. The sign that Narayana truly lives in a person is an inward evenness, a settled sameness, that no borrowed ornament can fake.

GATHA 0817

The Necessity of Experience

Love as instinct, experience speaks

मराठी मूळ

वत्स पळे धेनु धांवे पाठीलागीं । प्रीतीचा तो अंगीं आयुर्भाव ॥१॥
 शिकविलें काय येईल कारणा । सूत्र ओढी मना आणिकांच्या ॥२॥
 सांडिलें तें नाहीं घेत मेळवितां । ह्मणऊनि लाता मागें सारी ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे आग्रह करावा न लगे । सांगतसे अंगें अनुभव ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When a calf runs, the cow chases after it. The natural impulse of love is in her very being.

Can what is taught ever serve the same purpose? The inner thread pulls the minds of all beings. What has been truly abandoned cannot be reclaimed by force; therefore she kicks away the pretender.

Says Tuka, there is no need to insist; direct experience speaks for itself.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When the calf runs off, the cow runs after it. That love is born in her very body. Can anything taught do the same work? An inner thread pulls the minds of all beings. What she has truly let go of she will not take back when you try to give it again; so she kicks away the pretender. Tuka says: there is no need to insist. Direct experience tells you itself, in your own body.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram contrasts learned behavior with love that rises on its own. The cow chasing her calf shows a love that is not instructed but native, born in the body itself; an inner thread draws every creature without being told. Real devotion is like this: it cannot be installed by teaching, and once the heart has genuinely let something go, no force can press it back, the way the cow kicks off a calf that is not her own. The point is that you do not have to argue or insist about God; lived experience makes its own case in you directly.

GATHA 0818

The Nature of God

All beings are kin, one thread

मराठी मूळ

देवाच्या संबंधें विश्व चि सोयरे । सूत्र ओढे दोरे एका एक ॥१॥
 आहाच हें नव्हे विटायसारिखें । जीव जीवनीं देखें सामावलें ॥२॥
 आणिकांचें सुख दुःख उमटे अंतरीं । एथील इतरीं तेणें न्यायें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ठसावलें शुद्ध जाती । शोभा चि पुढती विशेषता ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Through its connection with God, the whole world becomes family. One thread pulls all into relation with each other.

This is no mere gesture to be wearied of; life is absorbed into life, as I see it. The joys and sorrows of others arise within one's own heart, and by the same principle, what is here is also there.

Says Tuka, what is stamped in purity only grows more beautiful with time.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Through the bond with God, the whole world is family. One thread pulls each into relation with each. This is no thin gesture you grow tired of; life is taken up into life, as I see it. The joy and sorrow of others rise in your own heart, and by that same rule, what is here is also there. Tuka says: what is stamped in pure birth only grows more beautiful afterward.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lands the claim that devotion to God makes the whole world one's own family. The relation is not loose sentiment that wears thin; it is life absorbed into life, a single thread tying everyone to everyone. The test of it is that another's joy and sorrow rise inside your own heart, and by the same law your own state is mirrored in others. He says this kinship, once stamped purely into a person, does not fade with use but grows more beautiful over time.

GATHA 0819

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, setting down the burden

मराठी मूळ

अवघा वेंचलों इंद्रियांचे ओढी । जालें तें तें घडी निरोपिलें ॥१॥
 असावा जी ठावा सेवेसी विचार । आपुला म्यां भार उतरिला ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे करुं येईल धावणें । तरि नारायणें सांभाळावें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have been entirely spent in the pull of the senses. Whatever happened, moment by moment, I have reported to You.

May You kindly attend to this matter of service. I have set down my own burden.

Says Tuka, if in the future something goes wrong, may Narayana Himself take care of it.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am all spent in the pull of the senses. Whatever happened, moment by moment, I reported to You. Please give thought to this matter of service. I have set down my own burden. Tuka says: if in time something needs running to fix, then let Narayana take care of it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes a frank act of surrender after admitting failure. He confesses he has been worn out by the constant pull of the senses, and that he has kept nothing hidden, reporting each thing to God as it happened. Having owned his weakness, he lays down the whole weight of his own keeping and asks God to take charge of his service. The last line hands over even the future: if anything goes wrong and needs urgent rescue, that too is now Narayana's responsibility, not his.

GATHA 0820

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the vision held fast

मराठी मूळ

राहो आतां हें चि ध्यान । डोळा मन लंपटो ॥१॥
 कोंडकोंडुनि धरीन जीवें । देहभावें ओंवाळीन ॥२॥
 होईल येणें कळसा आलें । स्थिरावले अंतरीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे गोजिरिया । विठोबा पायां पडों द्या ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let this meditation remain now. Let the eyes and mind be fixed upon it.

With all my might I will hold on to this vision, offering up my body-consciousness as a waving flame. This is the culmination; all has settled and become still within.

Says Tuka, O beautiful Vithoba, let me fall at Your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let this meditation stay now. Let my eyes and mind cling to it. With all my life I will hold it shut inside me; with my whole body-sense I will wave the lamp before it. With this it has come to its peak; it has grown steady within me. Tuka says: O lovely Vithoba, let me fall at Your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays to keep the vision he has reached and never lose it. He asks that this meditation hold, that eyes and mind stay fastened on it, and he vows to grip it with his whole life, offering his very body-consciousness as the waved lamp of worship. He names this the crowning point, the place where everything inside him has finally come to rest and steadiness. The poem ends in plain longing: let me, he asks beautiful Vithoba, simply fall at Your feet.

GATHA 0821

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, the lamp and the master's treasury

मराठी मूळ

आदि मध्य अंत दाखविला दीपें । हा तों आपणापें यत्न बरा ॥१॥
 दाशत्वे दाविलें धन्याचें भांडार । तोंतों नव्हे सार एथुनियां ॥२॥
 उपायानें सोस नासला सकळ । सत्ते सत्ताबळ अंगा आलें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे दृष्ट सकळांचे शिरीं । वचन चि करी बैसोनियां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The lamp has illuminated the beginning, the middle, and the end. This effort of making it visible was well worth it.

The attendant has been shown the treasury of the master, but the treasure is not his to keep. Through this remedy all restlessness has been dispelled, and the strength of true authority has entered the body.

Says Tuka, his gaze is upon the heads of all, and seated, he governs by word alone.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The lamp has shown the beginning, the middle, and the end. This effort to make it seen was well worth it. The servant has been shown the master's treasury, but the treasure is not his to keep from here on. By this means all craving has been destroyed; the strength of true authority has come into the body. Tuka says: his gaze rests on the heads of all, and seated, he rules by his word alone.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses two images for what realization gives and withholds. The lamp standing for divine light reveals the whole of things, start to finish, and that revealing was worth all the effort. Yet he is careful: the realized one is like a servant shown the master's full treasury; he may see and use it, but it is not his own possession to hoard. The fruit is that craving is burned away and a true, steady authority enters him, so that, without striving, his very presence and word govern, his gaze resting over all heads.

GATHA 0822

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, the open shop of the Name

मराठी मूळ

सांटविले वाण । पैस घातला दुकान ॥१॥
जें ज्या पाहिजे जे काळीं । आहे सिद्ध चि जवळी ॥२॥
निवडिलें साचें । उत्तममध्यमकनिष्ठाचें ॥३॥
तुका बैसला दुकानीं । दावी मोला ऐसी वाणी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The goods have been stocked the capital has been invested, and the shop has been opened. Whatever anyone needs, at any time, is ready and available at hand.

The finest, the middling, and the ordinary have all been sorted. Says Tuka, I sit in this shop, displaying wares and naming each one's worth.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The goods are stocked, the capital put in, the shop opened. Whatever anyone needs, at any time, is ready right here at hand. The finest, the middling, and the plainest have all been sorted out. Tuka says: I sit in this shop, showing the wares and naming each one's worth.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures himself as a shopkeeper whose merchandise is the teaching, freely laid out. The shop is stocked and open, ready to supply whatever anyone needs at any time, with nothing hidden away. He has sorted the goods into best, middling, and plain, meeting each seeker at the level he can take. He says he simply sits there displaying the wares and naming their true value, leaving the choosing to those who come.

GATHA 0823

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, the mother bears all weight

मराठी मूळ

लागलिया मुख स्तनां । घाली पान्हा माउली ॥१॥
 उभयतां आवडी लाडें । कोडें कोड पुरतसे ॥ध्रु॥
 मेळवितां अंगें अंग । प्रेमें रंग वाढतो ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे जड भारी । अवघें शिरीं जननीचे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When the infant's lips meet the breast, the mother's milk flows forth. Both are delighted; love and play fulfill each longing.

When body presses against body, the color of love deepens. Says Tuka, all the weight, the whole heavy burden, rests upon the mother's head.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When the baby's lips touch the breast, the mother lets her milk flow. Both are glad; love and play fill each one's longing. As body presses against body, the color of love deepens. Tuka says: all the weight, the whole heavy load, rests on the mother's head.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram draws God's care in the image of a nursing mother. The infant only has to reach for the breast and the milk comes; the bond satisfies both child and mother in delight. As the two press close, the love between them only grows richer. The point of the figure is the last line: the whole burden of caring, the entire heavy load, falls on the mother and not on the helpless child, just as the devotee may rest his whole weight on God.

GATHA 0824

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, do not glorify the fault

मराठी मूळ

अवगुण तों कोणीं नाहीं प्रतिष्ठले । मागें होत आले शिष्टाचार ॥१॥
 दुर्बळाच्या नांवें पिटावा डांगोरा । हा तों नव्हे बरा सत्यवाद ॥ध्रु॥
 मद्य आणि मधु एकरासी नांवें । तरि कां तें खावें आधारें त्या ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझा उच्छिष्ट प्रसाद । निवडी भेदाभेद वृष्टिन्यायें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

No one has ever dignified a fault. From the very beginning, this has been the established conduct of the wise.

To announce only the name of the weak is not truthful speech. Liquor and honey may share a common name, but should one consume liquor on that basis? Says Tuka, my leftover food becomes sacred offering. Let the distinction between unity and difference be made fairly, like rain that falls equally upon all.

IN PLAIN WORDS

No one has ever given a fault a place of honor. From of old this has been the conduct of the wise. To beat the drum only against the name of the weak is not honest speech. Liquor and honey may go by one common name, but should you drink the liquor on that account? Tuka says: my leftover food becomes a holy offering. Let unity and difference be told apart fairly, like rain that falls the same on all.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram defends honest discernment against both flattery and cheap attack. He insists no wise tradition has ever dignified a real fault, and equally that loudly shaming only the weak while sparing the powerful is not truthful speech. His example: two things sharing a single name, like an intoxicant and honey, are not therefore the same, so you must not swallow the harmful one just because the word is shared. He asks that the line between true sameness and real difference be drawn fairly and impartially, the way rain falls alike on everyone, the call is to clear sight, not to contempt.

GATHA 0825

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, teach by fitness

मराठी मूळ

भूतीं भगवंत । हा तों जाणतो संकेत ॥१॥
 भारी मोकलितों वाण । ज्याचा त्यासी कळे गुण ॥२॥
 करावा उपदेश । निवडोनि तरि दोष ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने वाटे । चुकतां आडरानें कांटे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I know the principle that God dwells in all beings. I release my goods freely; let each one recognize the quality for himself.

Instruction should be given after discerning the readiness of the student; otherwise it becomes harmful. Says Tuka, those who stray from the path will find only thorns on the byroads.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God dwells in all beings: this is the sign I know. I let my goods go freely; let each one find for himself what they are worth. Instruction should be given only after weighing the fault, the unreadiness, in the hearer; else it does harm. Tuka says: those who miss the road find only thorns on the wild byways.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram holds together two truths about teaching. He starts from the principle that God lives in every being, so he offers his teaching openly and lets each person discover its worth for himself. Yet he warns that instruction must be fitted to the hearer; given to one not ready for it, weighed first for what would harm him, the same words

can do damage instead of good. The closing image makes the stakes plain: a seeker who strays from the proper path does not wander free but lands among thorns in the trackless wild.

GATHA 0826

Autobiography

Autobiography, no market for the counterfeit

मराठी मूळ

आह्मां हें कवतुक जगा द्यावी नीत । करावे फजित चुकती ते ॥१॥
 कासयाचा बाध एकाच्या निरोपें । काय व्हावें कोपें जगाचिया ॥२॥
 अविद्येचा येथें कोठें परिश्रम । रामकृष्णनाम ऐसे बाण ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे येथें खऱ्याचा विकरा । न सरती येरा खोटण परी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

For us this is sport; to the world we give its proper teaching. Those who stumble are corrected.

What harm can come from serving under one master's command? Why should we be troubled by the anger of the world? Ignorance has no foothold here. The names Rama and Krishna are our arrows.

Says Tuka, there is no market here for counterfeit goods; they will not pass muster.

IN PLAIN WORDS

For us this is sport: to give the world its right teaching, and to set straight those who stumble. What harm comes from working under one master's command? Why should we be troubled by the world's anger?

Ignorance has no labor to do here. The names Rama and Krishna are our arrows. Tuka says: here there is no sale for false goods; unlike elsewhere, the counterfeit will not pass.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes his work and what shields him in it. Teaching the world rightly and correcting those who go astray is, for him, a kind of joyful play, not a burden. Serving under God's single command, he feels no harm in it and refuses to be shaken by the world's displeasure. Ignorance gains no foothold where the names of Rama and Krishna are wielded like arrows; and in this place, unlike the ordinary market, nothing false or counterfeit can be passed off as real.

GATHA 0827

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, the fault that calls the truth crooked

मराठी मूळ

दर्पणासी नखटें लाजे । शुद्ध खिजे देखोनि ॥१॥
 ऐसें अवगुणांच्या बाधें । दिसे सुदें विपरीत ॥२॥
 अंधव्यास काय हिरा । गारां चि तो सारिखा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे भुंके सुनें । ठाया नेणे ठाव तो ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

An ugly person is offended by the mirror; seeing purity, the impure become angry. Such is the effect of faults: what is straight appears crooked.

What use is a diamond to a blind person? To him it is just another pebble. Says Tuka, a dog barks without knowing who stands there.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The ugly one is shamed by the mirror; seeing what is pure, the impure grows angry. Such is the harm of faults: what is straight looks crooked. What use is a diamond to a blind man? To him it is just like a pebble. Tuka says: a dog barks, not knowing who stands there.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram explains why goodness so often draws hostility. A person carrying faults is like an ugly face shamed by a mirror, or an impure heart angered by the sight of purity; the defect in the seer makes the straight thing look bent. He adds that the blind cannot tell a diamond from a gravel stone, and a dog barks at whoever passes without knowing who it is. The figures all point the same way, and inward: the failure to recognize what is true and good lies in the flaw of the one looking, not in the thing seen.

GATHA 0828

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the wicked guest

मराठी मूळ

नावडे तरि कां येतील हे भांड । घेउनियां तोंड काळें येथें ॥१॥
 नासोनियां जाय रस यासंगती । खळाचे पंगती नारायणा ॥२॥
 तोंडावाटा नर्क काढी अमंगळ । मिष्टान्ना विटाळ करी सुनें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं संतांची मर्यादा । निंदे तो चि निंदा मायझवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If they do not like it, why do these quarrelsome ones come here with darkened faces? In their company, all sweetness is destroyed. O Narayana, at the table of the wicked, all is spoiled.

A dog fouls delicacies from its mouth; it contaminates fine food with its filth. Says Tuka, the one who does not respect the honor of the saints, his own slander becomes his greatest shame.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If they do not like it, why do these quarrelers come here with their faces gone black? In their company all the sweetness is ruined. O Narayana, at the table of the wicked everything is spoiled. A dog drags foul filth out of its mouth; it defiles fine food. Tuka says: the one who keeps no respect for the saints, his own slander turns back as his shame.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing what one bitter, contemptuous person does to a gathering. The quarreler arrives unwilling, dark-faced, and his presence sours the whole table, the way a dog fouls good food it has touched. The frame the poem leaves unspoken is that the table here is the company of the saints and the sweetness is satsang itself. Tukaram names the real cost: the slanderer who shows no reverence for holy people does not bring them down, he only fouls what he eats and brings disgrace back on himself. The warning is for the listener to examine his own scorn before he carries it into good company.

GATHA 0829

The Nature of God

God as parent, rescued from drowning

मराठी मूळ

लेकरा आईतें पित्याची जतन । दावी निजधन सर्व जोडी ॥1॥
 त्यापरि आमचा जालासे सांभाळ । देखिला चि काळ नाहीं आड ॥ध्रु॥
 भुकेचे संनिध वसे स्तनपान । उपायाची भिन्न चिंता नाहीं ॥2॥
 आळवूनि तुका उभा पैलथडी । घातली या उडी पांडुरंगें ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A father guards and preserves his wealth for his child, showing the heir all that has been earned. In just that way, we have been protected.

Death has never been allowed to stand in the way. Nourishment lies close at hand, like a mother's breast near the hungry infant; there is no separate anxiety about finding a remedy.

Says Tuka, he called out from the far bank, and Panduranga leapt in to save him.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A father guards his wealth for his child and shows the heir all he has earned. In just that way I have been kept. Death has never been let to stand in my way. Food is close at hand, like a mother's breast near the hungry baby; there is no separate worry about finding a cure. Tuka says: I called out from the far bank, and Panduranga leapt in to save me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming the kind of care God gives, using two everyday pictures. God is the father who hoards nothing back but shows the child the whole inheritance, and the mother whose milk is already there before the infant's hunger becomes a problem. The point is that the devotee never has to scheme for his own rescue; the remedy waits closer than the need. He ends with the stark image of himself stranded on the far bank, and Panduranga not calling instructions across but leaping into the water to bring him over. The claim is that grace acts first and acts completely.

GATHA 0830

True Worship

True worship, the free secret

मराठी मूळ

शुद्ध चर्या हें चि संताचें पूजन । लागत चि धन नाही वित्त ॥१॥
 सगुणाचे सोई सगुण विश्रांती । आपण चि येती चोजवीत ॥२॥
 कीर्तनीं चि वोळे कृपेचा वोरस । दुरीपणें वास संनिधता ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे वर्म सांगतों सवंगें । मन लावा लागें स्वहिताच्या ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Pure conduct itself is the worship of the saints. It does not cost any wealth or money.

In the manner of the devotee in form, those who are at rest in form come on their own to observe and appreciate. Grace overflows in kirtan itself; closeness is experienced even from a distance.

Says Tuka, I tell you the secret freely: set your mind upon your own spiritual good.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Pure living is itself the worship of the saints. It costs no wealth, no money. Where there is a devotee in form, those at rest in form come on their own to look and to bless. In the kirtan itself the flood of grace overflows; nearness is felt even across distance. Tuka says: I am telling you the secret freely. Turn your mind toward your own good.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is correcting a common assumption that worshipping holy people takes expensive offerings. He says the real offering is a clean life, and it is free. When a true devotee lives that way, God in form and the saints come of their own accord to witness and to pour out grace, and the singing of God's praise is enough to close the distance between the soul and the Lord. He stresses that he is handing this over plainly, not hiding it as some costly initiation. The closing line lands the stakes: this is for your own benefit, so set your mind to it.

GATHA 0831

The Moral Ideal

Moral counsel, reading the heart and the hour

मराठी मूळ

जीवींचें जाणावें या नांवें आवडी । हेंकड तें ओढी अमंगळ ॥1॥
 चित्ताच्या संकोचें कांहीं च न घडे । अतिशयें वेडे चार तो चि ॥ध्रु॥
 काळाविण कांहीं नाहीं रुचों येत । करुनि संकेत ठेवियेला ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे कळे वचनें चांचणी । काय बोलवूनि वेळोवेळां ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Loving attentiveness means knowing what is in another's heart. Stubbornness and willfulness are inauspicious.

When the mind is constricted, nothing of value can be accomplished. The greatest madness is simply the right behavior at the right time.

Nothing is palatable before its season; the proper moment has been arranged by design. Says Tuka, one can test sincerity through words, by drawing a person out again and again in conversation.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To love someone is to know what is in their heart. Stubbornness and willfulness are foul things. When the mind is shut tight, nothing good can be done. The real madness is just doing the right thing at the right time. Nothing is to your taste before its season; the proper moment is set by design. Tuka says: sincerity is known through words, by drawing a person out again and again in talk.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is giving practical counsel on how to live rightly with others. Real affection is not indulgence but attentiveness: you take the trouble to know what another truly carries inside, while obstinacy and a closed mind ruin everything. He turns the word madness on its head, saying the only worthwhile intensity is fitting your action to its right moment, since things have their appointed season. The last verse points to discernment: you test whether a person is sincere not by one word but by drawing them out in conversation over and over. The poem asks the listener to cultivate patience, openness, and a careful reading of both heart and timing.

GATHA 0832

The Moral Ideal

Moral warning, lust and greed

मराठी मूळ

कामातुर चवी सांडी । बरळ तोंडीं बरळे ॥1॥
 रंगलें तें अंगीं दावी । विष देववी आसडे ॥ध्रु॥
 धनसोसें लागे वेड । ते बडबड शमेना ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे वेसनें दोन्ही । नर्कखाणी भोगावया ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who is overcome with lust loses all taste and babbles senselessly. Whatever has taken hold of the body shows itself outwardly; it flings poison at others in its frenzy.

Obsession with wealth drives one mad; that babbling will not be calmed. Says Tuka, both of these addictions are mines of hell, meant to be suffered.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The man sick with lust loses all taste and babbles nonsense. Whatever has gripped his body shows itself; in his frenzy he flings poison at others. Hunger for wealth drives a man mad, and that babbling will not be stilled. Tuka says: both of these cravings are mines of hell, made to be suffered.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets two cravings side by side, lust and greed, and shows them as the same disease. Each one takes over the body and spills out as senseless, poisonous talk that the person cannot stop. The picture is of a mind no longer its own, ruled by what has seized it. He names the stakes flatly: both are mines that dig straight into hell, yielding only suffering. The poem points not at one named sinner but at the pattern itself, so the listener watches for these obsessions taking root in his own life.

GATHA 0833

The Necessity of Experience

Experience, cleared sight and rest

मराठी मूळ

कृष्णांजनें जाले सोज्जळ लोचन । तेणें दिले वान निवडुनी ॥१॥
 निरोपाच्या मापें करीं लडबड । त्याचें त्यानें गोड नारायणें ॥२॥
 भाग्यवंतांघरीं करितां विश्वासें । कार्य त्यासरिसें होईजेतें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याणे पोट भरे बरे वोजा । निज ठाव निजा निजस्थानीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The eyes, anointed with divine collyrium, have become clear. By that vision, all things have been sorted and distinguished.

With the measuring cup of the Lord's instruction, I handle the goods. Narayana Himself has made each thing sweet in its own way.

When one works faithfully in the house of the fortunate, the task naturally succeeds. Says Tuka, the belly is filled, the burden is properly settled; now rest in your own true place, in your original home.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My eyes, anointed with the dark salve of Krishna, have become clear. By that sight I have sorted out what is true from what is not. With the measuring cup of the Lord's word I handle the goods; Narayana himself has made each thing sweet in its own way. When you work in faith in the house of the fortunate, the task comes right of itself. Tuka says: the belly is filled, the load is set down well; now rest in your own true place, your own first home.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing what happens after grace clears the inner sight. The eye salve is the Lord's own touch, and once the eyes are clear he can tell the real from the false and weigh everything by God's word rather than his own appetite. Working in trust in the house of the fortunate, meaning in God's keeping or among the saints, the work simply succeeds without his striving. The poem ends in deep rest: the hunger satisfied, the burden laid down, the soul settling back into its original home, which is God. The unspoken frame is that this peace is not earned by labor but received once the seeing is healed.

GATHA 0834

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the divine thief of hearts

मराठी मूळ

मैंद आला पंढरीस । हातीं घेउनि प्रेमपाश ॥1॥
 पुढें नाडियलें जग । नेतो लागों नेदी माग ॥२॥
 उभारोनि बाहे । दृष्टादृष्टी वेधीताहे ॥3॥
 वैकंठीहुनि पेणें । केलें पंढरीकारणें ॥4॥
 पुंडलिकें यारा । देउनि आणिलें चोरा ॥5॥
 तुका ह्मणे चला । तुह्मी आह्मी धरूं त्याला ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This enchanter has come to Pandhari, carrying the snare of love in His hands. He has captivated the whole world and leads them on, never letting anyone trace His path.

Raising His arms, He draws people with a single glance. He has moved His dwelling from Vaikuntha and established it in Pandhari.

Pundalika gave this thief safe passage and brought Him here. Says Tuka, come, let us all join hands and catch Him together.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This enchanter has come to Pandhari, the snare of love in his hands. He has cheated the whole world and leads it on, never letting anyone find his track. He raises his arms and pulls people in with a single glance. He has moved his home from Vaikuntha and set it up here for Pandhari's sake. Pundalika gave this thief safe passage and brought him here. Tuka says: come, you and I, let us all join hands and catch him.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram plays with the image of God as a charming thief who steals hearts. Vitthal has come to Pandhari carrying a noose, but the noose is love, and with one look from his upraised arms he draws people to himself and leaves no trail to follow. The astonishing turn is that the Lord has abandoned even Vaikuntha, his own heaven, to dwell here, and it was the devotee Pundalika who brought this thief in. The closing invitation reverses the chase with delight: rather than fleeing the one who captures us, let us all band together and catch him. The whole poem makes surrender to God sound like joyful conspiracy.

GATHA 0835

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the mother who plays at quarrels

मराठी मूळ

भांडवी माउली कवतुके बाळा । आपणा सकळां साक्षत्वेसीं ॥१॥
 माझी माझी ह्मणे एकएकां मारी । हें तों नाहीं दुरी उभयतां ॥२॥
 तुझें थोडें भातें माझें बहु फार । छंद करकर वाद मिथ्या ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे एके ठायीं आहे वर्म । हें चि होय श्रम निवारितें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A mother playfully sets her children quarreling, watching as a witness to them all. "Mine, mine," she says, making each one hit the other, though in truth there is no distance between any of them.

"You have little; I have much more." Such petty disputes and squabbles are all false. Says Tuka, the secret lies in one place alone, and that is what puts an end to all strife.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A mother sets her children squabbling for fun, watching them all as a witness. "Mine, mine," she makes them say, setting each to strike the other, though in truth there is no distance between any of them. "You have a little; I have far more." Such fussing and false disputes. Tuka says: the secret lies in one single place, and that alone ends all the strife.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures God as a mother who playfully eggs her children into rivalry while she watches, untroubled, knowing they are all one family. The children fight over mine and yours, who has more, but their quarrels are make-believe, because no real separation divides them. The frame the poem supplies is the world of "mine" and "more," all our possessive disputes, seen as a game God watches from within. The teaching lands in the last line: there is one place, one truth, where this difference dissolves, and finding it is what ends every quarrel. The listener is asked to see through the game of separateness to the single ground beneath it.

GATHA 0836

Worldly Life

Worldly life, hoarding and waking

मराठी मूळ

लटिकियाच्या आशा । होतों पडिलों वळसा । होउनियां दोषा । पात्र मिथ्या अभिमानें ॥१॥
 बरवी उघडली दृष्टी । नाहीं तरी होतों कष्टी । आक्रंदते सृष्टी । मात्र या चेष्टांनीं ॥२॥
 मरणाची नाहीं शुद्धी । लोभीं प्रवर्तली बुद्धी । परती तों कधीं । घडे चि ना माघारीं ॥३॥
 सांचूनि मरे धन । लावी पोरांसी भांडण । नाहीं नारायण । तुका ह्मणे स्मरीला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*I had been caught in the snare of false hopes. Through worthless pride I had become a vessel for blame.
But now my vision has cleared; otherwise I was in misery. The whole creation groans under such follies.
There was no awareness of death; the mind was driven by greed. It never turns back, never retreats.
One hoards wealth and then dies, leaving only quarrels among the children. Says Tuka, Narayana was never once remembered.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

I had been caught in false hopes, fallen into the whirlpool. Through empty pride I had made myself fit for blame. Now my sight has opened well; otherwise I was in misery. The whole world cries out under just these follies. There was no awareness of death; the mind ran after greed and never once turned back. A man hoards wealth and then dies, leaving only quarrels among his children. Tuka says: Narayana was never once remembered.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks back on his own near miss with the trap most people never escape. He had been spun in the whirlpool of false hope and hollow pride until something opened his eyes; he says plainly that without that he would still be wretched, and that the whole world groans under the same follies. The core blindness he names is forgetting death while greed drives the mind forward with no turning back. The bitter end of that life is a man who dies clutching his hoard, leaving his children only something to fight over, having never once remembered God. The poem points the listener at his own forgetfulness, asking whether his days are spent storing wealth or remembering Narayana.

GATHA 0837

The Power of the Name

The Name, treasure at the lips

मराठी मूळ

जवळी मुखापाशीं । असतां नेघे अहनिनशीं ॥१॥
भवनिदानळण नाम । विठ्ठल विठ्ठल नासी काम ॥२॥
सुखाचें शेजार । करुं कां नावडें घर ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे ठेवा । कां हा न करी चि बरवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*It is right here, near your very lips, yet you will not take it, day or night. The Name destroys worldly existence; chanting "Vitthal, Vitthal" annihilates all lust and desire.
When comfort lies next door, why refuse to make your home there? Says Tuka, why does no one recognize this treasure and make good use of it?.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

It is right here, near your very lips, and still you will not take it, day or night. The Name burns up worldly existence; saying "Vitthal, Vitthal" destroys all craving. When comfort lives right next door, why refuse to make your home there? Tuka says: why does no one see this treasure and put it to good use?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is astonished at how close the remedy lies and how stubbornly people leave it untaken. The Name of God is already at the mouth, free and constant, yet day and night people will not speak it. He states what it does: chanting "Vitthal, Vitthal" consumes the cycle of worldly existence and dissolves desire at the root. He frames it as a house of comfort standing right next door, a treasure within arm's reach, and the only mystery is human refusal. The poem presses the listener with the plain question of why one would walk past such a gift instead of taking it up.

GATHA 0838

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the pilgrimage rewarded

मराठी मूळ

बरवें देशाउर जालें । काय बोलें बोलावें ॥१॥
 लाभें लाभ दुणावला । जीव धाला दुरुषणें ॥२॥
 भाग्यें जाली संतभेटी। आवडी पोटी होती ते ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे श्रम केला । अवघा आला फळासी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What a blessed pilgrimage this has been. What words can express it? Gain has doubled upon gain; the soul is satisfied by this holy sight.

By great fortune the meeting with saints has taken place; the longing I carried in my heart has been fulfilled. Says Tuka, all the effort I have made has finally come to fruition.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What a blessed journey this has been. What words can say it? Gain has doubled on gain; the soul is filled by the holy sight. By great fortune the meeting with the saints has come about; the longing I carried in my heart is fulfilled. Tuka says: all the effort I made has at last come to fruit.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is overflowing after a pilgrimage and a meeting with the saints, and admits words cannot hold the joy. The gain keeps multiplying, and the darshan, the holy sight, leaves the soul satisfied rather than still wanting. The unspoken frame is that he had carried a long inner longing for this company, and now it has been answered. He closes by naming the whole arc: the effort and hardship of the path were not wasted, they have ripened into this fruit. The poem is the relief and gratitude of a seeker whose striving has finally landed.

GATHA 0839

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, joy beyond words at the saints' feet

मराठी मूळ

सांगतां हें नये सुख । कीर्ती मुख न पुरे ॥१॥
 आवडीनें सेवन करु । जीवींचें धरुं जीवीं च ॥२॥
 उपमा या देतां लाभा । काशा शोभा सारिखी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नुचलीं डोई । ठेविली पायीं संतांचे ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This joy cannot be told in words; singing His glory, the mouth is never satisfied. Let us partake of it with love, holding what is in the heart within the heart itself.

When one tries to compare this gain, what likeness is worthy of it? Says Tuka, I have not lifted my head; I have kept it placed at the feet of the saints.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This joy cannot be told; singing his glory, the mouth is never satisfied. Let us taste it with love, holding what is in the heart within the heart itself. When you look for something to compare this gain to, what beauty is its match? Tuka says: I have not lifted my head; I have laid it at the feet of the saints.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is trying, and gladly failing, to describe a joy that has no words and a praise the mouth can never exhaust. He counsels savoring it inwardly with love, keeping the heart's experience held within the heart rather than spending it in talk. When he reaches for a comparison, nothing in the world is fine enough to stand beside this gain. The poem ends in the posture that holds it all: he has not raised his head in pride or even to look, he has simply laid it down at the feet of the saints. The unspoken claim is that this surrender is itself the place where the unspeakable joy is found.

GATHA 0840

Devotion to Vitthal

Joy of arrival, the body offered

मराठी मूळ

आपुलाला लाहो करुं । केणें भरुं हा विठ्ठल ॥१॥
 भाग्य पावलों या ठाया । आतां काया कुरवंडी ॥२॥
 पुढती कोठें घडे ऐसें । बहुतां दिसें फावलें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे जाली जोडी । चरण घडी न विसंभें ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let each one claim their own share and fill their vessel with Vitthal. What fortune that I have reached this holy place.

Now let my body be an offering. When will such an occasion arise again? After many days this chance has come.

Says Tuka, this union has been won. I will not leave His feet for a single moment.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let each one take their own share. Let everyone fill their vessel with this Vitthal. What good fortune, that I have reached this place. Now let my body be the offering. When will such a moment come to me again? After so many days, this chance has come at last. Tuka says: this union is won. I will not let go of his feet for even one moment.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is standing where he longed to stand, and he names both the gift and his answer to it. Vitthal is not a private hoard; he tells everyone to come and fill their own vessel. For himself, having reached this holy place, the only fitting return is to lay down his own body as the offering. He treats the moment as rare and not to be wasted, a chance that came after long waiting. Now that the union is finally his, he refuses to loosen his hold on the feet for a single instant.

GATHA 0841

Ecstasy and Joy

The found treasure, sealed in the heart

मराठी मूळ

उजळलें भाग्य आतां । अवघी चिंता वारली ॥१॥
 संतदर्शनें हा लाभ । पद्मनाभ जोडला ॥२॥
 संपुष्ट हा हृदयपेटी । करुनि पोटीं सांठवूं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे होता ठेवा । तो या भावा सांपडला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My fortune has blazed bright; all worry has been dispelled. Through the sight of the saints, this gain has been won: Padmanabha has been found.

I will seal this treasure within the chest of my heart and store it safely. Says Tuka, the treasure that always existed has now been found through this pure devotion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My fortune has blazed up bright. Now all my worry is gone. Through the sight of the saints, this gain came: Padmanabha is found. I will make my heart into a chest and shut this treasure safely inside it. Tuka says: the treasure was always there. Through this love, it has been found.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the moment of finding God as a sudden clearing of all anxiety. He credits it to the sight of the saints, whose company gave him Padmanabha, the Lord. Having found this, he wants to keep it the way one keeps a treasure, sealing it inside the heart so it cannot be lost. The last line turns the finding inside out: the treasure was never absent, it was there all along, and what changed was that pure devotion finally laid hold of it.

GATHA 0842

Prayers

Lost at sea, a cry for the pilot

मराठी मूळ

आह्मां आपुलें नावडे संचित । चरफडी चित्त कळवळ्यानें ॥१॥
 न कळतां जाला खोळंब मारगा । जगीं जालों जगा बहुरूपी ॥२॥
 कळों आलें बरें उघडले डोळे । कर्णधार मिळे तरि बरें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे व्हाल ऐकत करुणा । तरि नारायणा उडी घाला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I am not pleased with my own destiny. My heart is agitated by this world's sharp edges.

Without understanding, I stumbled and lost my way, becoming a many-faced player in the world's theater. But now my eyes have opened and I see clearly.

If only a pilot could be found to steer me right. Says Tuka, if you will hear this cry of compassion, O Narayana, then take the plunge and come.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am not pleased with what my past has earned me. My heart frets at the sharp edges of this world. Without seeing it, my road got blocked. In this world I became a man of many faces. Now I have understood; my eyes are open. If only a pilot would come to steer me, that would be good. Tuka says: if you will listen to this cry, then Narayana, leap in and save me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram confesses he is unhappy with his own lot and torn by the harshness of worldly life. He admits that, without noticing, he lost his way and became a many-faced player, fitting a different face to each situation. The change is that his eyes are now open: he sees the trouble clearly and knows he cannot steer himself out of it. So he asks for a helmsman, and the helmsman he wants is God; he begs Narayana to hear his cry and dive in to pull him out.

GATHA 0843

Worldly Metaphors

Social criticism, the incorrigible glutton

मराठी मूळ

बरगासाठीं खादलें शेण । मिळतां अन्न न संडी ॥१॥
 फजित तो केला आहे । ताडण साहे गौरव ॥२॥
 ओढाळाची ओंगळ ओढी । उगी खोडी नवजाय ॥३॥
 तुका फजीत करी बुच्या । विसरे कुच्या खोडी तेणें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

For lack of proper food he ate dung, but once real grain was found, he would not give it up. He has already been shamed and humiliated; he endured beatings but also received honor.

A glutton's greed is filthy and incorrigible; his bad habits simply will not cease. Says Tuka, he makes a spectacle of the stubborn ones and shames them, yet even by that they do not forget their old ways.

IN PLAIN WORDS

For lack of food he ate dung. But once real grain came, he would not give it up. He has already been shamed. He took the beatings, and he took the honor too. A glutton's pull is filthy and dragging. The bad habit simply will not leave him. Tuka says: he makes a public spectacle of the stubborn ones and shames them, yet even by that they do not forget their old ways.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram paints a picture of a person ruled by appetite and uses it to expose a pattern in all of us. The eater started on dung out of need, but then clung to grabbing food even when good grain was offered, the habit outliving the reason for it. Public shame, beatings, even occasional honor, nothing reaches him; the craving is incorrigible. The warning is for the listener too: a fixed habit can survive every embarrassment and correction, so the work is to watch the pull itself, not just to mock the one who is dragged by it.

GATHA 0844

Longing and Separation

Longing for the Mother, unbearable separation

मराठी मूळ

धांव घालीं आई । आतां पाहातेसी काई ॥१॥
 धीर नाहीं माझे पोटी । जालें वियोगें हिंपुटीं ॥२॥
 करावें सीतळ । बहु जाली हळहळ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे डोई । कधीं ठेवीन हे पार्यीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Rush to me, O Mother. What are you waiting for? I have no patience left within me; separation has made me utterly forlorn.

Cool this burning pain; the anguish has grown unbearable. Says Tuka, when will I lay this head at Your feet?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Come running, O Mother. What are you waiting for now? There is no patience left inside me. This separation has worn me down. Cool this burning. The ache has grown too great. Tuka says: when will I lay this head down at your feet?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram cries out to God as Mother, demanding she stop delaying and come at once. He says he has no patience left and that being apart has worn him to nothing. The pain is a burning he begs her to cool, because the ache has passed what he can bear. The poem ends not in despair but in one waiting question: when will he finally rest his head at her feet, which is the only thing that would end the longing.

GATHA 0845

The Nature of God

Gratitude, the rescue of nothing

मराठी मूळ

तुझां ठावा होता देवा । माझें अंतरींचा हेवा ॥१॥
होती काशानें सुटका । तरि हे वैकुंठनायका ॥२॥
नसतें सांभिळलें । जरि तुझीं आश्वासिलें ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे कृपाळुवा । बरवा केला सावाधावा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You knew all along, O God, the longing hidden within my heart. How could there have been any escape from that? O Lord of Vaikuntha, tell me.

You rescued me even when there was nothing real to rescue, simply because You had given me assurance. Says Tuka, O merciful One, You made a fine rescue indeed.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You knew it all along, O God. You knew the longing hidden in my heart. By what means could I ever have escaped it? Tell me, Lord of Vaikuntha. There was nothing real in me to guard, yet you guarded me, because you had given me your word. Tuka says: O merciful one, you made a fine rescue.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram marvels that God saw the secret longing in his heart before he could even voice it, and that there was never any way for him to wriggle free of it. He puts the question to the Lord of Vaikuntha as half wonder, half complaint. The strange grace he names is that God protected him when there was nothing worth protecting, doing it simply to keep his own promise. So the closing line is plain gratitude: the merciful one carried out the rescue beautifully, and the saving was all God's doing, not his own merit.

GATHA 0846

Devotion to Vitthal

Adoration, the incomparable Lord

मराठी मूळ

देऊं ते उपमा । आवडीनें पुरुषोत्तमा ॥१॥
 पाहातां काशा तूं सारिखा । तिंहीं लोकांच्या जनका ॥१॥
 आरुष हे वाणी। गोड वरुनि घेतां कानीं ॥२॥
 आवडीनें खेळे । तुका पुरवावे सोहाळे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What comparison can I offer You with love, O Purushottama?

Looking carefully, who in all three worlds resembles You, O Father of all?

This voice of mine is rough and harsh; yet taken into the ears, it turns sweet.

Says Tuka, with love He plays; let these celebrations of joy be fulfilled.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What likeness shall I offer you, with love, O Purushottama? Look as I will, who in the three worlds is like you, Father of all? This voice of mine is rough. Yet taken into the ear, it turns sweet. Tuka says: with love he plays. Let these celebrations of joy be fulfilled.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram wants to praise God with a comparison and finds none, because nothing in the three worlds resembles Purushottama, the Father of all. He knows his own poetry is rough and unpolished, but he trusts that love makes it sweet once it reaches the listening ear, so the lack of skill is no barrier. Behind the praise is a sense that God himself plays in this exchange, delighting in the devotee's offering. The poem closes as a wish that this play of joy go on and be completed.

GATHA 0847

Longing and Separation

Longing, the soul gone ahead to the feet

मराठी मूळ

दर्शनाची आस । आतां ना साहे उदास ॥१॥
 जीव आला पायांपाशीं । येथें असें कलिवरेंसीं ॥१॥
 कांहीं च नाठवे । ठायीं बैसलें नुठवे ॥२॥
 जीव असतां पाहीं । तुका ठकावला ठायीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The longing for darshan can no longer endure this separation.

*My soul has already gone to Your feet; only this body remains here.
Nothing else is remembered; what has settled in its place will not be dislodged.
Says Tuka, while the soul still lingers, it has been arrested right where it stands.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

The longing for darshan can bear this no more. The sadness is too much now. My soul has already gone to your feet. Only this body stays here. Nothing else comes to mind. What has settled in that place will not be moved. Tuka says: while the soul still lingers there, Tuka stands here, arrested where he is.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a longing for the sight of God that has reached its limit and can no longer endure the separation. He feels his very soul has already traveled ahead to God's feet, leaving only his body behind. With the soul fixed there, nothing else can enter his attention; what has lodged at the feet cannot be dislodged. The result is a man held in place, stopped and unable to move, because the deepest part of him is already gone where he wants to be.

GATHA 0848

The Necessity of Experience

Surrender, leaving the estate to its Master

मराठी मूळ

भोगावरि आह्मीं घातला पाषाण । मरणा मरण आणियेलें ॥१॥
विश्व तूं व्यापक काय मी निराळा । काशासाठीं बळा येऊं आतां ॥२॥
काय सारुनियां काढावें बाहेरी । आणूनि भीतरी काय ठेवूं ॥३॥
केला तरी उरे वाद चि कोरडा । बळें घ्यावी पीडा स्वपनींची ॥४॥
आवघे चि वाण आले तुह्यां घरा । मजुरी मजुरा रोज कीदव ॥५॥
तुका ह्मणे कांहीं नेणें लाभ हानी । असेल तो धनी राखो वाडा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have placed a stone over all worldly enjoyment. I have brought death to death itself.

You pervade the universe; am I something separate? Why should I now exert any force?

What should I push outside, and what should I bring within? Even if we argue, only dry debate remains; why forcibly take on the suffering of a dream?

All goods have come to Your house, O Lord; the laborer is owed his daily wage.

Says Tuka, I know nothing of profit or loss. Let the Master guard His own estate.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have laid a stone over all worldly pleasure. I have brought death to death itself. You fill the whole universe. Am I something apart from you? Why should I strain with force now? What is there to push outside, and what to bring within? Even if I try, only dry argument is left. Why take on, by force, the suffering of a dream? All the goods have come to your house, Lord. The laborer is owed his daily wage. Tuka says: I know nothing of profit or loss. Let the Master keep watch over his own estate.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram declares he has shut the lid on worldly enjoyment and even put an end to death by giving up the self that dies. His reasoning is that God pervades everything, so he is not a separate someone who must struggle to push pleasures out or pull goods in. Such effort would only be empty debate, like fighting the hardships of a dream as if they were real. So he hands the whole concern over: the goods belong to God's house, and he is content to be the hired laborer waiting for his wage. Knowing nothing of gain and loss, he leaves the Master to guard his own estate, which is the posture of complete surrender.

GATHA 0849

Longing and Separation

Lover's complaint, why the delay

मराठी मूळ

कां हो एथें काळ आला आह्मां आड । तुह्मांपाशीं नाड करावया ॥1॥
 कां हो विचाराचें पडिलें सांकडें । काय ऐसें कोडें उपजलें ॥ध्रु॥
 कां हो उपजेना द्यावी ऐशी भेटी । काय द्वैत पोटीं धरिलें देवा ॥2॥
 पाप फार किंवा जालासी दुर्बळ । मागिल तें बळ नाहीं आतां ॥3॥
 काय जालें देणें निघालें दिवाळें । कीं बांधलासि बळें ऋणेंपायीं ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे कां रे ऐसी केली गोवी । तुझी माझी ठेवी निवडुनियां ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Has Death come between us, to work mischief against us? Has some difficulty of understanding arisen? What strange riddle is this?

Why do You not arrange for us to meet? Have You harbored duality within You, O God?

Is my transgression too great, or have You grown weak? Have You lost the power You once had?

Has Your treasury gone bankrupt? Are You bound in chains by some debt?

Says Tuka, why have You made such a tangle? Separate clearly what is Yours and what is mine.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why has death come and stood between us, to do us harm? Why has some trouble of thought fallen on you? What strange riddle is this? Why will you not arrange for us to meet? Have you taken some duality into your heart, O God? Is my sin too great, or have you grown weak? Have you lost the strength you used to have? Has your treasury gone bankrupt? Are you tied down, bound by some debt? Tuka says: why have you made such a tangle? Sort out clearly what is yours and what is mine.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram, kept from the meeting he longs for, presses God with a chain of half-teasing questions, the way a lover badgers the beloved who stays away. He runs through every possible cause for the delay: has death blocked the road, has God grown troubled, has he started seeing them as two and not one, is his own sin the obstacle, or has God somehow weakened, gone broke, fallen into debt. None of these is offered as a real charge; together they expose how absurd any excuse for the distance is. The closing demand is for clarity: untangle this knot and settle, once and for all, what belongs to you and what to me.

GATHA 0850

Prayers

Prayer, austerities offered for one gift

मराठी मूळ

काय देह घालूं करवती करमरी । टाकुं या भितरी अग्नीमाजी ॥१॥
 काय सेवूं वन शीत उष्ण तान । साहों कीं मोहन धरुनी बैसों ॥२॥
 काय लावूं अंगीं भस्म उधळण । हिंडूं देश कोण खुंट चारी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे काय करावा उपाव । ऐसा देई भाव पांडुरंगा ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Should I saw this body to pieces, or fling it into fire?

Should I endure the forest's cold and heat and thirst, or sit fixed, holding to Mohan?

Should I smear ash over my body and wander to the four corners of the earth?

Says Tuka, what remedy shall I try? O Panduranga, just grant me that very bhav.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Shall I put this body to the saw, or fling it into the fire? Shall I live in the forest, bearing cold and heat and thirst, or sit holding fast to Mohan? Shall I smear ash on my limbs and wander to all four corners of the land? Tuka says: what remedy shall I try? Just give me that one love, O Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays out the whole catalog of hard penances a seeker might attempt: cutting the body, throwing it into fire, enduring the forest's extremes, sitting in fixed meditation, smearing on ash and wandering everywhere. He raises each one only to ask whether any of them is the right remedy. The answer the poem points to is that none of these austerities is what he needs. What he begs Panduranga for instead is bhav, true devotion, the one inward gift that all the outward hardships could never earn.

GATHA 0851

Confession and Sin

Confession, the trap of pretense

मराठी मूळ

दंभें कीतिन पोट भरे मानी जन । स्वहित कारण नव्हे कांहीं ॥1॥
 अंतरती तुझे पाय मज दुरी । धरितां हे थोरी जाणिवेची ॥२॥
 पिंडाच्या पाळणें धांवती विकार । मज दावेदार मजमाजी ॥2॥
 कैसा करुं घात आपुला आपण । धरुनि गुमान लोकलाज ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे मज दावी तो सोहोळा । देखें पाय डोळां तुझे देवा ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Through pretense one may fill the belly and win the world's respect, but none of it serves one's true welfare.

Your feet grow distant from me when I cling to the pride of being a knower.

The sense-desires that arise from nursing this body are claimants against me from within my own self.

How can I bring about my own destruction by clinging to vanity and the fear of public opinion?

Says Tuka, show me that celebration. Let my eyes behold Your feet, O God.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Through pretense, fame and a full belly come, and people honor me. But none of it serves my real good. Your feet move far from me when I hold on to the pride of being a knower. The desires bred by pampering this body run loose; they are claimants against me from inside my own self. How can I work my own ruin like this, clinging to vanity and the fear of what people will say? Tuka says: show me that celebration. Let my eyes see your feet, O God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram confesses the quiet danger of religious show: putting on a pious front does win food, reputation, and respect, yet it does nothing for his actual welfare. Worse, the pride of posing as a knower pushes God's feet further away. He sees that the appetites he feeds by indulging the body have turned into enemies pressing their claims from within. He asks how he can keep ruining himself for the sake of vanity and the fear of public opinion, and turns the whole confession into a single plea: drop the act, and let his eyes simply behold God's feet.

GATHA 0852

The Moral Ideal

Adoration, the worth of the master

मराठी मूळ

धिग जिणें त्याचा स्वामी हीन वर । मरण तें बर भलें मग ॥१॥
 ऐका जी देवा ऐसी आहे नीत । काय तें उचित सांभाळावें ॥२॥
 देशोदेशीं धाक जयाच्या उत्तरें । तयाचें कुतरें परि भलें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे हें कां सुचलें उत्तर । जाणोनि अंतर ओळखावें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Cursed is the life of one whose master is degraded. Better then is death.

Listen, O God, this is the rightful order. What is fitting must be honored.

In a land where a great king's word commands awe, even his dog is treated well.

Says Tuka, why has this plain truth come to mind? Knowing this, may You recognize what I am to You.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A life is a curse when its master is low. Better to die than to live like that. Listen, O God, this is how it rightly works; what is fitting must be honored. In a land where a great king's word strikes fear from country to country, even his dog is treated well. Tuka says: why has this plain truth come to me? Knowing it, know in Your heart what I am to You.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures the servant by the master, and makes God measure Himself the same way. A servant of a degraded lord lives a wretched life; better to die. But a great king's reputation lifts even the lowest creature in his household, so that even his dog is honored. Tukaram presses the point home: he is God's servant, so let God see what that makes Tukaram, and treat him as belonging to a great Lord. The argument is also a prayer, asking God to honor the bond by honoring the one who depends on it.

GATHA 0853

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the pampered children

मराठी मूळ

आतां गाऊं तुज ओविया मंगळीं । करुं गदारोळी हरिकथा ॥१॥
 होसि निवारिता आमुचें सकळ । भय तळमळ पापपुण्य ॥२॥
 भोगिले ते भोग लावूं तुझे अंगीं । अलिप्त या जगीं होउनि राहों ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी लाडिकीं लेकरें । न राहों अंतरे पायांविण ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now I will sing to You auspicious songs and raise a joyous clamor of sacred stories.

You are the remover of all that troubles us: fear, anguish, sin, and merit alike.

Whatever experiences we have lived through, we will lay them at Your account. In this world we will remain unattached and free.

Says Tuka, we are Your pampered children; we cannot endure a moment's separation from Your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now I will sing You auspicious songs and raise a joyous din of sacred stories. You remove all that troubles us: fear, anguish, sin and merit alike. Whatever we have lived through, we lay it at Your account; in this world we stay unattached and free. Tuka says: we are Your pampered children. We cannot bear a moment away from Your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets devotion in the key of song and noise, the loud kirtan of Hari's stories. He claims that God takes away everything that weighs a person down, not only fear and anguish and sin but merit too, since clinging to one's good deeds also binds. So he refuses to carry his own record: he charges every experience to God's account and stays free inside the world. The closing image is intimate and bold. The devotees are spoiled children who simply will not endure separation from God's feet, and that refusal is itself their claim on Him.

GATHA 0854

The Saints

Saints, the longing fulfilled

मराठी मूळ

सर्व सुखें आजी एथें चि वोळलीं । संतांचीं देखिलीं चरणांबुजें ॥१॥
सर्वकाळ होतों आठवीत मनीं । फिटली ते धणी येणें काळें ॥२॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

All joys have gathered here today. I have beheld the lotus feet of the saints.

I had been remembering them in my mind at all times, and now, at last, that longing has been fulfilled.

IN PLAIN WORDS

All joys have gathered here today. I have seen the lotus feet of the saints. I was remembering them in my mind at every hour, and now, at last, that longing is full.

WHAT IT MEANS

This short abhanga is the moment of meeting after long waiting. Tukaram says every joy has come together in one place, and the place is the feet of the saints, now before his eyes. He had been holding them in mind constantly, carrying an unsatisfied hunger. To see the saints in person is what finally fills that hunger to the brim. For Tukaram the company of holy people is not a lesser blessing; it is where all the joys arrive at once.

GATHA 0855

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, God filling everything

मराठी मूळ

विठ्ठल सोयरा सज्जन सांगाती । विठ्ठल या चित्तीं बैसलासे ॥1॥
 विठ्ठलें हें अंग व्यापिली ते काया । विठ्ठल हे छाया माझी मज ॥ध्रु॥
 बैसला विठ्ठल जिद्धेचिया माथां । न वदे अन्यथा आन दुजें ॥2॥
 सकळां इंद्रियां मन एक प्रधान । तें ही करी ध्यान विठोबाचें ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे या विठ्ठलासी आतां । नये विसंबतां माझें मज ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Vitthal is my kinsman, my companion, my friend. Vitthal has seated Himself within my chitta.

Vitthal has pervaded my body and my being. Vitthal is my own shadow following me.

Vitthal has settled on my tongue; it will not utter anything other than His Name.

Of all the senses, the mind is the chief, and even it meditates upon Vithoba alone.

Says Tuka, now I cannot be separated from this Vitthal even for a moment.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Vitthal is my kinsman, my good companion, my friend; Vitthal has taken His seat in my mind. Vitthal has filled this body, this whole frame; Vitthal is my own shadow, mine to me. Vitthal sits on the tip of my tongue; it will speak nothing else, nothing other. Of all the senses the mind is chief, and even it meditates on Vithoba alone. Tuka says: now I cannot let this Vitthal slip from me for a moment.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lists the places God has occupied until nothing is left over for anything else. Vitthal is his relative and friend, seated in his mind; Vitthal fills his body and follows him like his own shadow. The Name is on his tongue, which will say nothing else, and the mind, the ruler of all the senses, meditates on Vithoba alone. Sense by sense, the self is taken over from within. The result is total dependence: he can no longer let go of Vitthal even for an instant.

GATHA 0856

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, become a pilgrim

मराठी मूळ

होयें वारकरी । पांहे पांहे रे पंढरी ॥1॥
 अभिमान नुरे । कोड अवघें चि पुरे ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे डोळां । विठो बैसला सांवळा ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Become a pilgrim. Go, go, and see Pandhari.

All pride will vanish and every longing will be fulfilled.

Says Tuka, the dark-hued Vitthal has taken His seat within my eyes.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Become a Varkari. Go, go and see Pandhari. Pride will not remain; every longing is filled. Tuka says: the dark Vitho has taken His seat in my eyes.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram calls the listener onto the pilgrim road. Become a Varkari, he urges, and go to look upon Pandhari. He names what the journey does: it dissolves pride and satisfies every craving, because both are emptied out before the deity. Then he speaks from his own experience to seal the call. The dark-hued Vitthal now sits within his very eyes, which is what waits for anyone who goes.

GATHA 0857

Devotion to Vitthal

Pandhari, the place that purifies

मराठी मूळ

पंढरीसी जाय । तो विसरे बापमाय ॥१॥
 अवघा होय पांडुरंग । राहे धरुनियां अंग ॥२॥
 न लगे धन मान । देहभावे उदासीन ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मळ । नासी तात्काळ तें स्थळ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who goes to Pandhari forgets even mother and father.

One becomes entirely Panduranga, for He takes hold of the entire being.

Wealth and honor lose their value; one becomes indifferent to the body.

Says Tuka, that holy place instantly destroys all impurity.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One who goes to Pandhari forgets even mother and father. One becomes wholly Panduranga, who takes hold of the whole being. Wealth and honor lose their pull; toward the body one grows indifferent. Tuka says: that place destroys every impurity at once.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes what Pandhari does to the one who goes there. The pull of family loosens, even the deep ties to mother and father, because God takes possession of the whole person and the pilgrim becomes wholly Panduranga's. Wealth and honor stop mattering, and even attachment to the body falls away. The closing line names the power directly: simply being in that holy place burns off impurity at once, with no slow effort required.

GATHA 0858

Confession and Sin

Confession, the painted actor

मराठी मूळ

बळें बाह्यात्कारें संपादिलें सोंग । नाहीं जाला त्याग अंतरींचा ॥1॥
 ऐसें येतें नित्य माझ्या अनुभवा । मनासी हा ठावा समाचार ॥ध्रु॥
 जागृतीचा नाहीं अनुभव स्वप्नीं । जातों विसरुनि सकळ हें ॥2॥
 प्रपंचाबाहेरि नाहीं आलें चित्त । केले करी नित्य वेवसाय ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे मज भोरप्या चि परी । जालें सोंग वरी आंत तैसें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

By great effort and outward force I have fashioned a show of renunciation, but the inner letting go has not truly happened.

This is what comes to me daily in my own experience; my mind knows this report well.

The wakefulness I practice does not carry into dreams; I forget everything there.

My chitta has not come out from the grip of worldly concerns; it continues its habitual business day after day.

Says Tuka, like a painted actor: the outward show is complete, but within, everything remains the same.

IN PLAIN WORDS

By force, by an outward push, I have put on a show of renunciation; the inner letting go has not happened. This comes to me daily in my own experience; my mind knows this report well. What I keep awake to does not reach into dreams; there I forget all of it. My mind has not come out from the world's grip; it goes on with its old business every day. Tuka says: I am like a painted actor. The show outside is complete, and within it stays the same.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the satire on himself and confesses that his renunciation is staged. He has forced an outward appearance of giving up, but inside nothing has been let go, and he admits his own daily experience tells him so. The test he applies is sharp: what is real reaches even into sleep, yet his discipline vanishes in dreams, and his mind never actually leaves its worldly business. He names himself a bhorpi, a painted performer whose costume is perfect while the man underneath is unchanged. The abhanga asks the listener to apply the same honest test to their own piety.

GATHA 0859

Confession and Sin

Confession, the hollow servant

मराठी मूळ

ह्मणवितों दास ते नाहीं करणी । आंत वरी दोन्ही भिन्न भाव ॥1॥
 गातों नाचतों तें दाखवितों जना । प्रेम नारायणा नाहीं अंगीं ॥ध्रु॥
 पाविजे तें वर्म न कळे चि कांहीं । बुडालों या डोहीं दंभाचिया ॥2॥
 भांडवल काळें हातोहातीं नेलें । माप या लागलें आयुष्यासी ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे वांयां गेलों ऐसा दिसें । होईल या हांसें लौकिकाचें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I call myself a servant, but the conduct does not match. Inside and outside are two different things, with separate feelings.

I sing and dance, but that is only a display for people. True love for Narayana is not present in my being.

The secret of real attainment remains unknown to me. I have drowned in the deep pool of pretense.

Time has stolen this capital of life, moment by moment. My lifespan is being measured out.

Says Tuka, I appear to have been wasted. The world will laugh at this spectacle.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I call myself a servant, but the deeds do not match; inside and outside are two different things. I sing, I dance, I show it to people, but love for Narayana is not in me. The secret of true attainment I do not grasp at all; I have drowned in this deep pool of pretense. Time has carried off the capital of my life from hand to hand; my lifespan is being measured out. Tuka says: I look like one who has been wasted. The world will laugh at this spectacle.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram accuses himself of being a servant in name only, split between an outward act and an empty inside. His singing and dancing are a display for onlookers, while real love for Narayana is missing. He has not found the secret of true attainment and is sinking in a deep pool of pretense, even as time silently steals the capital of his life and his allotted days run down. He fears the verdict: a wasted life that the world will rightly mock. The poem turns the listener's eye to the gap between public devotion and the heart, and to how little time there is to close it.

GATHA 0860

Prayers

Prayer, come dwell within

मराठी मूळ

न कळतां काय करावा उपाय । जेणें राहे भाव तुझ्या पायीं ॥१॥
 येऊनियां वास करिसी हृदयीं । ऐसें घडे कई कासयानें ॥२॥
 साच भावें तुझें चिंतन मानसीं । राहे हें करिसी कैं गा देवा ॥३॥
 लटिकें हें माझें करुनियां दुरी । साच तूं अंतरीं येउनि राहें ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*I do not know what remedy to apply so that my devotion remains fixed at Your feet.**When will You come and dwell within my heart? How can this ever come to pass, and by what means?**When will genuine contemplation of You remain steady within my mind? When will You bring this about, O God?**Remove all that is false in me, and come truly to abide within.**Says Tuka, protect this fallen one by Your own sovereign power, O Panduranga.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Not knowing, what remedy can I use so that devotion stays at Your feet? When will You come and dwell in my heart? How can this ever happen, and by what means? When will true contemplation of You stay steady in my mind? When will You make it so, O God? Take away all that is false in me, and come truly to live within. Tuka says: protect this fallen one by Your own power, O Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays out of his own helplessness, confessing he does not know the method to keep his devotion fixed. He asks again and again when God will come and abide in his heart, since he cannot make steady contemplation happen by himself. He asks God to remove the falseness in him and to come truly inside in its place. The closing line lays the whole burden on God. He cannot save himself, so he asks Panduranga to protect a fallen man by God's own sovereign power, not by Tukaram's effort.

GATHA 0861

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the one who reads the heart

मराठी मूळ

चिंतिलें तें मनिकें जाणें । पुरवी खुणे अंतरीचें ॥1॥
 रात्री न कळे दिवस न कळे । अंगीं खेळे दैवत हें ॥ध्रु॥
 नवसियाचे नव रस । भोगी त्यास भिन्न नाही ॥2॥
 तुका ह्याने सम चि देणें । समचरण उभा असे ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He knows what is wished for in the mind, and fulfills the inner longing by its signs.

Night or day, one cannot tell; the Deity plays within the body.

The one who has made a vow enjoys all nine rasas; nothing is withheld from them.

Says Tuka, He gives equally to all, standing with even feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He knows what is wished in the mind, and fulfills the inner longing by its signs. Night or day cannot be told apart; this Deity plays within the body. The one who has made his vow tastes all nine rasas; nothing is kept back from him. Tuka says: He gives to all alike, standing with even feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a God who needs no words because He already reads the heart. He knows the mind's wish and fulfills the inner longing from its hidden signs. He plays within the body so closely that day and night blur together, the ordinary markers of time falling away. To the one who has vowed himself to God, every flavor of experience is given freely, the full nine rasas with nothing withheld. The closing image of Vitthal standing with even feet says it plainly: He gives to everyone equally, with no favoritism.

GATHA 0862

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the rescuer in danger

मराठी मूळ

उधाराचा संदेह नाही । याचा कांहीं सेवकां ॥1॥
 पांडुरंग अभिमानी । जीवदानी कोवसा ॥ध्रु॥
 बुडतां जळीं जळतां अंगीं । ते प्रसंगीं राखावें ॥2॥
 तुका ह्याने आह्मांसाठीं । कृपा पोटीं वागवी ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is no doubt of being redeemed for His servants.

Panduranga takes pride in them, the giver of jiva, tender as a new shoot.

When drowning in water or burning in fire, He rescues them in that very moment.

Says Tuka, He carries compassion for us within His very belly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

There is no doubt of being saved for His servants; there is none at all. Panduranga takes pride in them, the giver of life, tender as a new shoot. When they drown in water or burn in fire, at that very moment He rescues them. Tuka says: for our sake He carries compassion in His very belly.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram states the servant's security plainly: for those who belong to God there is no doubt of being saved. Panduranga is proud of His servants and is the giver of life, tender toward them as a fresh shoot. The promise is tested at the extreme. When they are drowning or burning, He saves them in that very instant, not after. The closing image makes the rescue come from love, not duty: God carries compassion for His own inside His very belly, the way a mother holds a child.

GATHA 0863

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the Name over renunciation

मराठी मूळ

काय विरक्ति कळे आह्मां । जाणों एका नामा विठोबाच्या ॥१॥
 नाचों सुखें वैष्णवमेळीं । टाळघोळीं आनंदें ॥२॥
 शांति क्षमा दया मी काय जाणें । गोविंद कीर्तनेवांचूनियां ॥३॥
 कासया उदास असों देहावरी । अमृतसागरीं बुडोनियां ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मां ऐसा भरवसा । विठ्ठल सरसा चालतसे ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What do I know of renunciation? I know only the one Name of Vithoba.

Let us dance joyfully in the company of Vaishnavas, in the swirl of cymbals, in bliss.

What do I know of peace, forgiveness, or compassion, apart from the kirtan of Govinda?

Why should I be indifferent toward this body when I am immersed in an ocean of nectar?

Why should I seek solitude in the forest when bliss itself resides among the people?

Says Tuka, we have this firm confidence: Vitthal walks alongside us.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What do I know of renunciation? I know only the one Name of Vithoba. Let us dance in joy in the company of Vaishnavas, in the clash of cymbals, in bliss. What do I know of peace, forgiveness, or mercy, apart from the kirtan of Govinda? Why be indifferent to this body when I am drowned in an ocean of nectar? Why seek solitude in the forest when bliss itself lives among the people? Tuka says: this is our firm trust. Vitthal walks right alongside us.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets the warm path of the Name above the cold disciplines of the renouncer. He claims no skill in renunciation, no separate practice of peace or forgiveness or mercy; he knows only the one Name and the kirtan of Govinda, danced out loud among the Vaishnavas. From there he answers the ascetic directly. Why mortify the body when devotion has already plunged him into an ocean of nectar, and why flee to the forest when bliss is found right in the midst of people. The ground of this confidence is the last line: Vitthal walks beside the devotee, so the company of God's people, not lonely austerity, is the road.

GATHA 0864

The Saints

Praise of the Vaishnava land

मराठी मूळ

जेथें वैष्णवांचा वास । धन्य भूमी पुण्य देश ॥१॥
 दोष नाहीं ओखदासी । दूत सांगे यमापाशीं ॥२॥
 गरुडटक्यांच्या भारें । भूमि गर्जे जेजेकारें ॥३॥
 सहज तयां जनां छंद । वाचे गोविंद गोविंद ॥४॥
 तुळसीवनें रंगमाळा । अवघा वैकुंठसोहळा ॥५॥
 तुका ह्याने भेणें । काळ नये तेणें राणें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Where Vaishnavas dwell, that land is blessed and the country is holy.

There is no need of a remedy for any blemish; the messenger tells Yama himself to stay away.

Under the weight of the Garuda-standard processions, the earth resounds with cries of victory.

Naturally, on the tongues of those people: Govinda, Govinda.

Tulsi gardens and festive garlands of color: the full splendor of Vaikuntha itself.

Says Tuka, out of sheer fear, Death does not enter that domain.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Where the Vaishnavas live, that land is blessed; that country is holy. There is no need of any cure for sin there. The messenger tells Yama himself to keep away. Under the weight of the Garuda banners in procession, the earth roars with cries of victory. On those people's tongues, without effort: Govinda, Govinda. Tulsi groves and bright garlands of color. It is the whole festival of Vaikuntha. Tuka says: out of sheer fear, Death does not enter that domain.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praising the place where devotees of Vishnu gather and saying what such a place becomes. The land itself turns holy, and the usual machinery of judgment loses its grip: no remedy for sin is needed, and Yama's own messenger is told to stay away. He fills in the scene, the standards and processions, the constant Govinda on every tongue, the tulsi and the garlands, until the village looks like Vaikuntha brought down to earth. The claim he lands is that death itself is afraid to enter where the Name is sung; the company of the devout is not a comfort but a stronghold.

GATHA 0865

The Nature of God

Adoration, God as Guru and guardian

मराठी मूळ

माझ्या विठोबाचा कैसा प्रेमभाव । आपण चि देव होय गुरु ॥१॥
 पढिये देहभावे पुरवितो वासना । अतीं तें आपणापार्शीं न्यावे ॥२॥
 मार्गे पुढें उभा राहे सांभाळीत । आलिया आघात निवारावे ॥३॥
 योगक्षेम जाणे जडभारी । वाट दावी करीं धरुनियां ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं विश्वास ज्या मनीं । पाहावे पुराणीं विचारुनी ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How wonderful is the love of my Vithoba. He Himself becomes both God and Guru.

With fond, embodied care He fulfills every deep longing, and in the end takes one to Himself.

He stands guard before and behind, watching over everything, warding off all approaching dangers.

He knows the yoga-kshema even of the dull and heavy ones, and leads them by the hand, showing the way.

Says Tuka, if the mind does not believe this, let it examine the Puranas and consider.

IN PLAIN WORDS

How wonderful is the love of my Vithoba. He himself becomes both God and Guru. With fond, bodily care he fulfills every longing, and in the end he takes one to himself. He stands guard in front and behind, watching over everything, warding off every blow that comes. He knows the needs even of the dull and heavy ones, and leads them by the hand, showing the way. Tuka says: if the mind does not believe this, let it look into the Puranas and consider.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming the completeness of Vithoba's care and how rare it is. The same God is also the teacher; the one you adore is the one who instructs you, so there is no gap to be bridged by another. He describes a love that meets you on the bodily level where you actually live, satisfies your longings, and only at the end draws you fully home. He insists this guardian goes before and behind, takes responsibility for your welfare even when you are too dull to manage your own, and leads you by the hand. To the doubting mind he offers not argument but the witness of scripture: look, and see that this is so.

GATHA 0866

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the Name as whole dharma

मराठी मूळ

सकळ धर्म मज विठोबाचें नाम । आणीक त्यां वर्म नेणें कांहीं ॥1॥
 काय जाणों संतां निरविलें देवें । करिती या भावें कृपा मज ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझा कोण अधिकार । तो मज विचार कळों यावा ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The Name of Vithoba is my entire dharma. I know no other secret.

Perhaps God has entrusted me to the saints; by their grace they show me mercy.

Says Tuka, what qualification do I have? Let that discernment come to me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

All dharma, for me, is Vithoba's Name. I know no other secret than this. Perhaps God has handed me over to the saints, and out of this feeling they show me mercy. Tuka says: what qualification do I have? Let that discernment come to me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is reducing the whole of religious duty to a single thing: the Name of Vithoba. He claims no esoteric method and no learning; the Name is the only secret he knows. He guesses that God has entrusted him to the saints, and that their kindness to him flows from that, not from anything he has earned. The poem ends not in confidence but in an honest question about his own worthiness; he asks for the clear seeing that would let him understand by what right such grace is given to him at all.

GATHA 0867

Faith and Trust

Faith over cleverness

मराठी मूळ

उदंड शाहाणे होत तर्कवंत । परि या नेणवे अंत विठोबाचा ॥1॥
 उदंडा अक्षरां करोत भरोवरी । परि ते नेणवे थोरी विठोबाची ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं भोळेपणाविण । जाणीव ते सिण रितें माप ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Countless wise and learned debaters have tried, yet none can fathom the mystery of Vithoba.

Let them pile up endless words and fill volumes, yet they cannot know the greatness of Vithoba.

Says Tuka, without guilelessness, all cleverness is merely tiresome labor, an empty measure.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let the wise and the clever debaters be ever so many; still they cannot know the end of Vithoba. Let them pile up countless words and fill volumes; still they cannot know the greatness of Vithoba. Tuka says: without simple trust, all this knowing is only weariness, an empty measure.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is setting reasoning against simple faith and saying which one reaches God. However many sharp debaters try, and however many words they amass, they cannot touch the limit or the greatness of Vithoba; the reach of cleverness stops short. The point is not that learning is wicked but that it is the wrong instrument for this. Without guilelessness, the unguarded trust of a simple heart, all that intellectual effort is just tiring labor and a measure that comes up empty; the knowing mind weighs and weighs and holds nothing.

GATHA 0868

True Worship

True worship, against dry knowledge

मराठी मूळ

आधारावांचुनी । काय सांगसी काहाणी ॥१॥
 ठावा नाही पंढरीराव । तोंवरी अवघें चि वाव ॥२॥
 मानिताहे कोण । तुझें कोरडें ब्रह्मज्ञान ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याणे ठेवा । जाणपण एक सवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Without a foundation, why tell stories?

Until you know the Lord of Pandhari, everything is empty air.

Who will accept your dry knowledge of Brahman?

Says Tuka, set aside this one conceit of being a knower.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Without a foundation, why do you tell your story? Until you know the Lord of Pandhari, all of it is empty air. Who is going to accept your dry knowledge of Brahman? Tuka says: set aside this one conceit, the pride of being a knower.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is challenging the person who talks about God without having met him. Knowledge that has no ground in the living Lord of Pandhari is just talk; until that knowing is real, every word is wind. He calls book-learned talk of Brahman dry, knowledge with no juice, no devotion, and asks who could be nourished by it. The thing to drop is not learning itself but the conceit that comes with it, the satisfaction of counting oneself a knower; that single pride is what hollows the whole effort out.

GATHA 0869

The Nature of God

Refuge of the helpless

मराठी मूळ

अनाथांची तुझा दया । पंढरीराया येतसे ॥१॥
 ऐसी ऐकोनियां कीतिन । बहु विश्रांति पावलों ॥२॥
 अनाथांच्या धांवा घरा । नामें करा कुडावा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे सवघड हित । ठेवूं चित्त पायांपें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You have compassion for the helpless, O Lord of Pandhari.

Hearing this fame of Yours, I have found great peace.

You rush to the homes of the destitute; surround them with Your Name as a protecting fence.

Says Tuka, the easy path to true welfare is to fix the chitta at Your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You have mercy on the helpless, O Lord of Pandhari; it rises in you on its own. Hearing this fame of yours, I have found great rest. You run to the homes of the destitute; make a fence around them with your Name. Tuka says: the welfare close at hand is this, to keep the mind at your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is leaning on Vithoba's reputation for compassion and resting his whole weight there. He says mercy for the abandoned simply arises in the Lord; it is the Lord's nature, not a favor to be bargained for. That fame alone has already given him peace, before any rescue. He asks the Lord to do what he is famous for, to run to the poor and surround them with the Name as a protecting wall, and he names the simplest practice within everyone's reach: not a feat, just keeping the mind fixed at God's feet.

GATHA 0870

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the impermanence of all

मराठी मूळ

येथें नाहीं उरों आले अवतार । येर ते पामर जीव किती ॥१॥
 विषयांचे झणी व्हाल लोलिंगत । चेवलिया अंत न लगे मज ॥२॥
 वाहोनियां भार कुंथसील ओंझे । नव्हे तें चि माझें थीता त्याग ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कैसी नाहीं त्याची लाज । संतीं केशीराज साधियेला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even the great incarnations did not endure in this world forever; how much less so these ordinary souls?

Beware of wallowing in sense-pleasures. Once fully seized by them, you cannot reach the end.

Carrying and groaning under a heavy load does not make it yours; true renunciation is relinquishing what is not yours to begin with.

Says Tuka, have they no shame? The saints have already won Keshiraja.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Not even the great avatars stayed here forever; how much less these ordinary souls. Beware that you do not lie sunk in the pleasures of the senses. Once you are seized by them, there is no reaching the end for me. You groan under a heavy load you carry, but carrying it does not make it yours; true renunciation is giving up what was never yours. Tuka says: have they no shame? The saints have already won Keshiraja.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is shaking the listener awake with the fact of death. If even God's own incarnations did not remain in this world, no ordinary person should imagine he will; so do not lie wallowing in sense-pleasure, because once it has you completely there is no climbing back out. He turns to possessions: you strain under the load of what you call yours, but carrying a thing never made it yours, and real renunciation is just letting go of what was never yours in the first place. Then he names the shame of inaction by holding up the contrast: the saints have already won Keshiraja, the Lord; what is your excuse?

GATHA 0871

The Saints

Saints, fed on love

मराठी मूळ

हीं च त्यांचीं पंचभूतें । जीवन भातें प्रेमाचें ॥१॥
कळवळा धरिला संतीं । ते निगुती कैवाड ॥२॥
हा च काळ वर्तमान । साधन ही संपत्ती ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे दिवसरातीं । हें चि खाती अन्न ते ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

These same five elements are theirs. Their daily rice is love itself.

The saints have held compassion within them. That is their innermost championship of us.

This present moment is their practice. This itself is their wealth.

Says Tuka, day and night, this is the food they eat.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The same five elements are theirs as ours. Their daily food is love itself. The saints have held tenderness within them; that is their hidden care for us. This present moment is their whole practice. This itself is their wealth. Tuka says: day and night, this is the food they eat.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing what makes the saints saints, given that they are made of the same flesh as anyone. They are built of the same five elements, yet what truly sustains them is love, as if love were their daily rice. The compassion they hold inside is quietly their championing of ordinary people. They do not defer practice to a special time; the present moment is their sadhana, and that nearness to God is their only riches. He repeats it to fix it: morning and night, love is what they live on, the food they actually eat.

GATHA 0872

The Power of the Name

The Name as wealth

मराठी मूळ

दीप न देखे अंधारा । आतां हें चि करा जतन ॥१॥

नारायण नारायण । गांठी धन बळकट ॥२॥

चिंतामणीपाशीं चिंता । तत्वता ही नयेल ॥३॥

तुका ह्याने उभयलोकीं । हे चि नुकी सामोग्री ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A lamp knows no darkness. Now guard this alone with care.

Narayana, Narayana. This Name is wealth, held firm in the knot of your garment.

Near the chintamani, no worry can truly approach.

Says Tuka, for both worlds, this is the finest provision of all.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A lamp never meets darkness. Now keep only this with care. Narayana, Narayana. This Name is wealth; tie it firmly in the knot of your cloth. Beside the wish-granting jewel, no worry can really come near. Tuka says: for both worlds, this is the best provision of all.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is urging the listener to guard the one thing that matters. As a lamp can never know darkness, the Name carries its own light, so hold to it alone. He calls Narayana's Name true wealth and tells you to tie it tight in the knot of your garment the way a traveler secures his money. He likens the Name to the chintamani, the jewel that grants wishes: stay near it and anxiety simply cannot approach. The claim he lands is that this is the finest supply for the whole journey, in this world and the next alike.

GATHA 0873

The Saints

Saints, the cutting of doubt

मराठी मूळ

धन्य काळ संतभेटी । पायीं मिठी पडिली तो ॥१॥
 संदेहाची सुटली गांठी । जालें पोटीं शीतळ ॥२॥
 भवनदीचा जाला तारा । या उत्तरा प्रसादें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मंगळ आतां । कोण दाता याहूनि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Blessed is the hour when the saints are met. That was the moment I fell, embracing their feet.

The knot of doubt came undone. It became cool within my belly.

By the grace of their words, I was ferried across the river of worldly existence.

Says Tuka, now all is auspicious. What giver is greater than this?

IN PLAIN WORDS

Blessed is the hour when the saints are met. That was the moment I fell and held their feet. The knot of doubt came undone. It grew cool inside me. By the grace of their words I was carried across the river of worldly life. Tuka says: now all is auspicious. What giver is greater than this?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is recounting what the meeting with the saints did for him and calling it the turning point. He marks the moment he embraced their feet as a blessed hour, not a small courtesy. What it accomplished was inward: the tight knot of his doubt loosened, and the burning in him went cool. He credits their words, their grace, with ferrying him over the river of worldly existence, the crossing he could not make alone. He ends in gratitude that overflows into a question: now that everything is auspicious, what greater giver could there be than the saints?

GATHA 0874

Autobiography

Kirtan as one's whole life

मराठी मूळ

दिनरजनीं हा चि धंदा । गोविंदाचे पवाडे ॥१॥
 संकिल्पला देह देवा । सकळ हेवा तये ठायीं ॥२॥
 नाहीं अवसान घडी । सकळ जोडी इंद्रियां ॥३॥
 कीतिन मुखें गर्जे तुका । करी लोकां सावध ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Day and night this alone is my occupation: singing the glories of Govinda.

This body has been pledged to God. All my burning zeal is fixed on that alone.

There is no end to this work, not a moment's rest. Every faculty is gathered into this pursuit.

Says Tuka, through the mouth of kirtan he roars. He makes the people wakeful and alert.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Day and night this alone is my work: the glories of Govinda. This body has been pledged to God; all my longing is fixed there. There is no end to it, not a moment's rest. Every sense is gathered into this one work. Tuka roars the glory with his mouth, and makes the people wakeful.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing how the singing of God's praise has taken over his entire life. From morning to night his single occupation is Govinda's glories, and he has handed his very body over to God so that all his desire has one object. There is no stopping point and no rest, because every faculty he has is pooled into this one act. The kirtan is not private comfort either: with his mouth he roars the praise aloud so that the people around him are shaken awake; his devotion becomes a service that rouses others.

GATHA 0875

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the self as instrument

मराठी मूळ

खरें नानवट निक्षेपीचें जुनें । काढिलें ठेवणें समर्थाचें ॥१॥
मजुराच्या हातें मापाचा उकल । मी तों येथें फोल सत्ता त्याची ॥२॥
कुलाळाच्या हातें घटाच्या उत्पत्ति । पाठवी त्या जाती पाकस्थळा ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे जीवन तें नारायणीं । प्रभा जाते कीणाअ प्रकाशाची ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This is genuine treasure, manifold and old, from the treasury. Brought forth is the deposit of the Capable One.

By the laborer's hand the measure is opened. I am merely empty here; the authority is His.

By the potter's hand, vessels come into being and are sent on their way to the kitchen.

Says Tuka, life belongs to Narayana. The radiance that goes forth is a ray of His light.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This is genuine treasure, old and abundant, brought out from the store. It is the deposit of the Capable One. By the laborer's hand the measure is opened. I am only empty here; the power is his. By the potter's hand the pots come into being and are sent off to the kitchen. Tuka says: life belongs to Narayana. The radiance that goes out is a ray of his light.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is denying that anything he does is his own and giving it all back to God. What seems to pass through him is real treasure, but it is the deposit of the Capable One, God; it was never his stock. He casts himself as the hired laborer who only opens the measure, the empty hand through which another's authority works. The potter

image makes it plainer still: the pots are made and dispatched by the potter, not by themselves. So too his life is Narayana's, and whatever light shines out of him is only a ray of God's own light, never a source of its own.

GATHA 0876

Worldly Metaphors

Devotion, God held in the heart

मराठी मूळ

गंगेचिया अंताविण काय चाड । आपुलें तें कोड तृषेपाशीं ॥1॥
 विठ्ठल हे मूतिन साजिरी सुंदर । घालीं निरंतर हृदयपुटीं ॥ध्रु॥
 कारण तें असे नवनीतापाशीं । गबाळ तें सोसी इतर कोण ॥2॥
 बाळाचे सोईतें घांस घाली माता । आटाहास चिंता नाहीं तया ॥3॥
 गाऊं नाचों करुं आनंदसोहळा । भाव चि आगळा नाहीं हातां ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे अवघें जालें एकमय । परलोकींची काय चाड आतां ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What need is there to seek the very end of the Ganga? One's own longing is met right there, at the place of thirst.

This beautiful, graceful form of Vitthal: place it within the hollow of your heart and keep it there always.

The essence lies in the fresh butter; who else will endure the refuse left behind?

A mother feeds the child mouthfuls suited to its size; there is no straining or worry in that.

Let us sing, dance, and celebrate in bliss. All we have is bhava; nothing greater is within our hands.

Says Tuka, everything has become one. What need is there now for the other world?

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why go searching for where the Ganga ends? My own longing is met right here, where I am thirsty. This beautiful, graceful form of Vitthal: place it in the hollow of your heart and keep it there always. What matters lies in the fresh butter; who else would put up with the leftover dross? A mother feeds the child mouthfuls the right size for it; there is no straining, no worry in that. Let us sing, let us dance, let us keep this feast of joy. All we have is bhava; nothing greater is in our hands. Tuka says: everything has become one. What need have I now for the other world?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is saying the goal is close, not far off, and the way to it is simple. You do not have to trace the Ganga to its source; your thirst is quenched right where you stand. So fix Vitthal's lovely form in your heart and keep it there. He uses the churning of milk: the worth is in the butter, not the watery refuse, and God like a mother feeds each soul a portion it can take. All that the devotee actually holds is bhava, loving feeling, and that is enough; singing and dancing in joy, Tuka finds everything fused into one and stops hankering after any heaven beyond.

GATHA 0877

Prayers

Prayer, the desires I cannot master

मराठी मूळ

स्त्रीपुत्रादिकीं राहिला आदर । विषयीं पडिभर अतिशय ॥१॥
 आतां हाता धांवा नारायणा । मज हे वासना अनावर ॥२॥
 येउनियां आड ठाके लोकलाज । तें हें दिसे काज अंतरलें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मां जेथें जेथें गोवा । तेथें तुझीं देवा सांभाळावें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*My affection for wife and children remains; I am still deeply drawn to sense-pleasures.**Now rush to my aid, O Narayana. These desires are beyond my control.**Social shame stands in the way and blocks the path; the goal appears to have receded from reach.**Says Tuka, wherever we are entangled, there You must come and care for us, O God.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

My fondness for wife and children stays with me; I am still pulled hard toward the pleasures of the senses. Now run to my aid, Narayana. These desires are beyond my control. Fear of what people will say stands in the way and blocks the road; the goal seems to have slipped out of reach. Tuka says: wherever we get entangled, there You must come and watch over us, God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays as a man who knows his own weakness and refuses to hide it. He still loves his family and is still dragged by appetite, and he admits these desires are stronger than his will. On top of that, the fear of social shame blocks the very path he wants, so the goal feels lost. Rather than claim he can fix himself, he hands the trouble back to God: come exactly where I am snared, and guard me there. The plea is honest surrender, not self-improvement.

GATHA 0878

The Power of the Name

The Name, rescue from the senses

मराठी मूळ

पडिलों भोवणीं । होतों बहु चिंतवणी ॥१॥
 होतों चुकलों मारग । लाहो केला लाग वेगें ॥२॥
 इंद्रियांचे संदी । होतों सांपडलों बंदी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे बरें जालें । विठ्ठलसें वाचे आलें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*I had been spinning in circles, lost in too much thinking.
 I had gone astray, lost the path; quickly I seized the gain.
 I had been caught in the crevice of the senses, held in their prison.
 Says Tuka, it is well that the Name of Vitthal has come to my tongue.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

I had been spinning in circles, sunk in too much thinking. I had gone off the road, lost the path; then quickly I caught hold of the gain. I had been caught in the gap of the senses, held there as in a prison. Tuka says: it is good, the name of Vitthal has come onto my tongue.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a turn from confusion to rescue. He had been going round and round, lost in his own anxious thinking, off the road and trapped in the senses as in a jail. What freed him was not effort or argument but the Name: when Vitthal's name came to his tongue, he seized hold of his real gain. The poem treats the Name as the one thing that breaks the spinning. That it simply arrived on his lips is the whole good news.

GATHA 0879

Renunciation

Renunciation, the burden laid down

मराठी मूळ

बरें जालें आलीं ज्याचीं त्याच्या घरा । चुकला पांहेरा ओढाळांचा ॥1॥
 बहु केलें दुखी त्यांचिया सांभाळें । आतां तोंड काळें तेणें लोभें ॥२॥
 त्यांचिया अन्यायें भोगा माझें अंग । सकळ ही लाग द्यावा लागे ॥३॥
 नाहीं कोठें स्थिर राहों दिलें क्षण । आजिवरी सिण पावलों तो ॥४॥
 वेगळाल्या खोडी केली तडातडी । सांगावया घडी नाहीं सुख ॥५॥
 निरवूनि तुका चालिला गोवारें । देवापाशीं भार सांडवूनि ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*It is well that everything has gone back to its rightful owner. The wayward ones have missed their homecoming visit.
 I suffered greatly tending to them. Now the face is blackened by that very greed.
 Because of their wrongdoing, my body bore the punishment. I had to pay the price for every one of their offenses.
 They never let me rest for a single moment; until now I have endured that weariness.
 Each separate flaw has been dealt with decisively; there is not a moment of pleasure in describing all this.
 Says Tuka, having resolved the entanglement, I walk on, having laid the burden down at God's feet.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

It is good that everything has gone back to its rightful owner. The wayward ones have missed their homecoming. I was made very unhappy looking after them; now my face is blackened by that very greed. For their wrongdoing my own body bore the punishment; I had to pay the price for every offense of theirs. They never let me rest for a single moment; until now I have borne that weariness. Each separate fault has been settled, once and for all; there is not a moment's pleasure in telling it all out. Tuka says: having sorted out the tangle, I walk on, the burden set down at God's feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is speaking of breaking free from things and bonds that were never truly his to carry. The senses and worldly attachments, the wayward ones, are handed back to their owner, and good riddance. He names the cost without flinching: tending them wore him out, shamed him, and made his own body pay for their faults, with no rest. Now each account is closed for good. He does not pretend the reckoning was sweet; he simply lays the whole weight down at God's feet and walks on free.

GATHA 0880

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, trade only in the eternal

मराठी मूळ

न करावी आतां पोटासाठीं चिंता । आहे त्या संचिता माप लावूं ॥१॥
 दृष्ट ते घालावी परमार्थाठायीं । क्षुल्लका उपायीं सिण जाला ॥२॥
 येथें तंव नाहीं घेइजेसैं सवें । कांहीं नये जीवें वेचों मिथ्या ॥३॥
 खंडणें चि नव्हे उद्वेग वेरझारीं । बापुडे संसारीं सदा असों ॥४॥
 शेवटा पाववी नावेचें बैसनें । भुजाबळें कोणें कष्टी व्हावें ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां सकळांचें सार । करावा व्यापार तरी ऐसा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Do not worry about the belly any longer. Let us put the measure to whatever destiny has provided.

Fix your gaze upon the spiritual path; pursuing trivial schemes has only brought exhaustion.

Nothing from here can be taken along; why spend your life on what is false?

There is no end to the agitation and the coming and going; the poor wretch remains forever in worldly life.

Sitting in the boat brings you to the far shore; why should anyone toil with the strength of their own arms?

Says Tuka, this is the essence of everything: if you are going to do business, let it be of this kind.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do not worry any longer about feeding the belly. Let us measure out whatever fate has already stored up. Turn your gaze toward the spiritual path; chasing small schemes has only worn you out. Nothing here can be carried along with you; why spend your life on what is false? The agitation never ends, this endless coming and going; the poor creature stays forever in worldly life. Sitting in the boat carries you to the far shore; why should anyone wear himself out with the strength of his own arms? Tuka says: this is the heart of it all. If you are going to do business, let it be business of this kind.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram urges a change of investment: stop straining over food and survival, since what destiny stored for you will be measured out anyway, and fix your eyes on the spiritual goal. The little schemes only exhaust you, and nothing you grasp here goes with you past death, so spending a life on the false is waste. He pictures worldly life as endless restless traffic that keeps the soul trapped. The boat is the better way: let it carry you to the far shore instead of swimming on your own strength. Devotion, the surrender that lets grace carry you, is the only trade worth doing.

GATHA 0881

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, God brought near and made mine

मराठी मूळ

आमच्या हें आलें भागा । जीव्हार या जगाचें ॥१॥
 धरुनियां ठेलों जीवें । बळकट भावें एकविध ॥२॥
 आणूनियां केला रुपा । उभा सोपा जवळी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने अंकित केला । खालीं आला वचनें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*This has come to us as our rightful share: the very life-marrow of this whole world.**I have held it fast with my very life, with firm and single-minded devotion.**I brought it into form and made it near, standing simple and close beside me.**Says Tuka, I made Him mine. He came down at my words.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

This has come to us as our share: the very life-marrow of this whole world. I have held it fast with my life, with strong and single-hearted love. I brought it into form and made it stand simple and close beside me. Tuka says: I made Him mine. He came down at my words.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram exults that the very core of all existence has fallen to him as his portion. He did not win it by cleverness but by holding on with his whole life in firm, undivided love. By that love he drew the formless into a form, near and plain, standing right beside him. The last claim is the boldest: God came down at the devotee's word and let Himself be owned. The poem dares to say that pure single-minded bhava can bring the Infinite close enough to call your own.

GATHA 0882

Worldly Metaphors

Devotion, the inexhaustible capital

मराठी मूळ

खरें भांडवल सांपडलें गांठी । जेणें नये तुटी उदमासी ॥१॥
 संवगाचें केणें सांपडलें घरीं । भरुनि वैखरी सांटविलें ॥२॥
 घेतां देतां लाभ होतसे सकळां । सदेवां दुर्बळा भाव तैसा ॥३॥
 फडा आलिया तो न वजे निरासे । जरि कांहीं त्यास न कळतां ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

True capital has been found and secured, of the kind that never exhausts the trade.

The rare commodity has arrived at the house; I have stocked my vaikhari full of it.

In giving and taking, there is profit for all; for the fortunate and the wretched alike, the bhava is the same.

No one who comes to this counter leaves empty-handed, even if they do not know what they need.

Says Tuka, now I am at peace. I will hold no other thing in my chitta.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have found the true capital and tied it in my purse, the kind that never runs the trade to a loss. The rare goods have come to my house; I have filled my speech with them and stored them up. In the giving and taking there is profit for everyone; for the fortunate and the wretched alike, the bhava is the same. No one who comes to this counter goes away disappointed, even if he does not know what he needs. Tuka says: now I am at peace. I will hold nothing else in my heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses the language of a merchant to speak of God's Name and devotion. He has found capital that never depletes and that never lets the trade fall into loss; the precious stock has come to his house, and he keeps it stored on his very tongue, in vaikhari. This is a trade that profits everyone who comes, rich or poor, because what counts is bhava, the same loving feeling in each. No one leaves this counter empty, even the one who does not yet know his own need. Having found it, Tuka rests and refuses to hold any other thing in his heart.

GATHA 0883

The Necessity of Experience

Experience, the small self made all-pervading

मराठी मूळ

पदोपदीं दिलें अंग । जालें सांग कारण ॥१॥
 रुधवूनि ठेलों ठाव । जगा वाव सकळ ॥२॥
 पुढती चाली मनालाहो । वाढे देहो संतोष ॥३॥
 । तुका ह्मणे क्षरभागीं । जालों जगीं व्यापक ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

At every step I have offered myself; the cause is now complete.

I have sealed and held this place; the whole world has room enough.

The mind moves forward. The body's delight grows.

Says Tuka, in this mortal portion I have become all-pervading in the world.

IN PLAIN WORDS

At every step I have given myself; now the work is complete. I have sealed and held this place; the whole world has room enough. The mind moves on ahead; the body's joy keeps growing. Tuka says: in this perishable portion I have become spread through the whole world.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reports the fruit of total self-offering. By giving himself away at every step, the whole purpose has been fulfilled. He has secured an inner ground so firm that the entire world fits within it, his mind carries forward and even the body fills with growing delight. The closing line states the paradox at the heart of the experience: in this small mortal body, this perishable portion, he has become all-pervading. Complete surrender of the little self opens into a self that pervades everything.

GATHA 0884

Worldly Metaphors

Devotion, the butter for the discerning

मराठी मूळ

निवडुनि दिलें नवनीत । संचित ते भोगीत ॥१॥
 आतां पुढें भावसार । जीवना थार पाहावया ॥२॥
 पारखियाचे पडिलें हातीं । चांचपती आंधळीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे सेवन घडे । त्यासी जोडे लाभ हा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The butter has been separated and handed over. Those who have accumulated are now enjoying it.

Ahead lies the essence of pure devotion, the resting-ground of life to be sought and found.

What has come into the hands of the discerning, the blind can only grope at.

Says Tuka, the one who partakes of this gains the true profit.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The butter has been separated out and handed over; those who have gathered it now enjoy it. Ahead lies the essence of pure bhava, the resting-ground of life, to be sought and found. What has fallen into the hands of the one who can tell true from false, the blind only grope after. Tuka says: the one who truly partakes of this gains the real profit.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram returns to the churning image: the butter, the real worth of devotion, has been parted from the rest and given to those who gathered with love, and they enjoy it. What still lies ahead is the essence of bhava, the firm resting place of life, which the seeker must look for. He draws a line between the discerning, who recognize this treasure when it comes to hand, and the blind, who can only fumble past it. The difference is not luck but seeing. Whoever actually takes and lives this devotion wins the only profit that counts.

GATHA 0885

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the showy false teacher

मराठी मूळ

उचित न कळे इंद्रियाचे ओढी । मुखें बडबडी शिकलें तें ॥१॥
 आपण जाऊन न्यावीं नरकास । बळें बेताळीस कुळें जग ॥२॥
 अबोलणें बोले डोळे झांकुनियां । बडबडी वांयां दंभासाठीं ॥३॥
 तुका हाणे आह्मी तेथील पारखी । नाचे देखोवेखीं जाणों खरें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He does not know what is proper, pulled along by the senses. His mouth merely repeats what it has been taught.

He himself goes to hell and by sheer force drags forty-two lineages and the whole world there with him.

He speaks the unutterable with closed eyes and babbles away in vain, all for the sake of show.

Says Tuka, I am the appraiser of that realm. I know the genuine; we recognize it by what dances before us.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He does not know what is fitting, dragged along by his senses; his mouth just rattles off what it was taught. He goes to hell himself and by sheer force drags forty-two generations and the whole world down with him. He speaks the unspeakable with his eyes shut tight and babbles on in vain, all for show. Tuka says: I am the appraiser of that realm. I know the genuine; we can tell it by what shows itself before us.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is exposing the hollow pretender who poses as a knower while still led by appetite. Such a one only parrots learned words and, mistaking display for realization, ruins not only himself but everyone who follows him, the whole line of his house. The shut eyes and grand talk are theatre, dambha, performance done for show and not from any inner truth. Tukaram claims the right to test such claims, because true devotion shows itself in the living, not in posture. The warning is for each of us to check our own show: are the eyes shut on emptiness, or open on what is real?

GATHA 0886

*Surrender and Acceptance**Surrender, the single undivided mind*

मराठी मूळ

एक मन तुझ्या अवघ्या भांडवला । वांटितां तें तुला येई कैसें ॥१॥
 ह्यणउनि दृढ धरीं पांडुरंग । देहा लावीं संग प्रारब्धाचा ॥२॥
 आणिका संकल्पा नको गोऊं मन । तरी च कारण साध्य होय ॥३॥
 तुका ह्यणे ऐसें जाणावें उचित । तरी सहज स्थित येईल कळीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You have one mind as your entire capital. If you divide it among many, how will it serve you?

Therefore hold firmly to Panduranga, and let the body keep company with its destiny.

Do not entangle the mind in other plans; only then can the true goal be achieved.

Says Tuka, know this to be the proper way, and the natural state will reveal itself.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You have only one mind as your whole capital. If you split it among many things, how will it ever serve you? So hold firmly to Panduranga, and let the body keep the company its destiny gives. Do not entangle the mind in other plans; only then is the true aim reached. Tuka says: know this to be the right way, and the natural state will reveal itself on its own.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram counsels the soul that its one asset is the mind, and a mind divided among many wants is spent for nothing. The remedy is to gather it onto one hold, Panduranga, and let the body simply live out whatever destiny, prarabdha, has assigned it. As long as the mind is scattered into other schemes the goal stays out of reach; undistracted, it is reached. He calls this the fitting way, and promises that when the mind is held single in this manner the natural, settled state of the self shows itself without forcing.

GATHA 0887

The Necessity of Experience

Experience, the mind held in the song

मराठी मूळ

गावे ह्यणउनि गीत । धरुनि राहे तैसें चित्त ॥१॥
 हें चि थोर अवघड आहे । अन्न देखोनि भूक राहे ॥२॥
 ऐकावी ह्यून कथा । राहे तैसें धरुनि चित्ता ॥३॥
 तुका ह्यणे धणी । नव्हे जेविल्यावांचुनि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One wishes to sing a song; the chitta too must remain absorbed in it just so.

This alone is the truly difficult thing: that seeing food, the hunger should remain.

One wishes to hear the sacred story; the chitta must be held in it just so.

Says Tuka, satisfaction does not come without eating.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One wishes to sing a song; the heart too must stay held in it just so. This is the truly hard thing: that you see the food and yet the hunger stays. One wishes to hear the sacred story; the heart must be held in it just so. Tuka says: there is no being full without actually eating.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram points to the gap between outward practice and inward absorption. To really sing, the mind must rest in the song, not merely the lips; to really hear the holy story, the heart must stay inside it. He names the strange difficulty with a homely image: it is like seeing food set before you while the hunger refuses to go, the going through the motions without being fed. The closing line lands it plainly: you are not satisfied until you actually eat. Devotion only nourishes when the heart truly partakes, not when the form is merely performed.

GATHA 0888

The Necessity of Experience

The mark of God, true sight

मराठी मूळ

कळल हे खुण । तरि दावी नारायण ॥१॥
 सत्य संतांपाशीं राहे । येरां भय आड आहे ॥२॥
 अनुचिया ऐसें । असे भरलें प्रकाशें ॥३॥
 इंद्रियांचें धनी । ते हे जाती समजूनि ॥४॥
 तर्क कुतर्क वाटा । नागवण घटापटा ॥५॥
 तुका ह्यणे ल्यावें । डोळां अंजन बरवें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If you have recognized this mark, then Narayana reveals himself.

Truth abides with the saints; for others, fear stands as an obstruction.

It is filled with light without cause, spontaneously, pervading all.

Those who have become masters of the senses move forward with this understanding.

The paths of argument and counter-argument, the pot-and-cloth debates, lead only to being stripped bare.

Says Tuka, apply the good collyrium to the eyes.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If you have known this mark, then Narayana shows himself to you. Truth stays close to the saints; for the rest, fear stands in the way. He is filled with light, with no cause, on his own, spread through everything. Those who have become masters of their senses go forward knowing this. The roads of argument and counter-argument, the pot-and-cloth disputes, leave you stripped bare. Tuka says: put the good collyrium on your eyes.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is saying that God reveals himself only to one who can recognize a certain sign, and that sign is truth. Truth lives with the saints; whoever stays apart from them is kept back by fear. The light of God shines everywhere, uncaused and self-existing, and only one who has gained command over the senses can move toward it. Mere clever debate, the endless pot-and-cloth wrangling of the schools, gains nothing and leaves the arguer empty-handed. The collyrium Tuka prescribes is the clear inner sight that the company of the saints, not argument, can give.

GATHA 0889

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the shameless traveler

मराठी मूळ

जातो न येतिया वाटा । काय निरवितो करंटा ॥1॥
 कैसा जालासे बेश्रम । लाज नाहीं न ह्मणे राम ॥ध्रु॥
 पाहे वैरियाकडे । डोळे वासुनियां रडे ॥2॥
 बांधुनियां यमा हातीं । दिला नाहीं त्याची खंती ॥3॥
 नाहीं यापें काम । ऐसें जाणे तो अधम ॥4॥
 अझुन तरि मुका । कां रे जालासि ह्मणे तुका ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He walks the road of no return, yet what provisions does this pitiable one carry?

How shameless he has become; he does not even utter the name of Rama.

He gazes toward his enemies and weeps with eyes wide open.

He has been handed over, bound, into the hands of Yama, yet has no concern for that.

He who considers these things beneath him is the most degraded of all.

Says Tuka, even now, why have you become mute?

IN PLAIN WORDS

He walks the road from which no one returns. What does this wretched one carry for the way? How shameless he has become; he feels no shame, and he will not say the name of Rama. He looks toward his enemies and weeps with his eyes wide open. He has been bound and handed over to Yama, and even that does not trouble him. The man who thinks these things are beneath him is the lowest of all. Tuka says: even now, why have you gone dumb?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is shaking awake a person heading toward death with nothing laid up for the journey. The one provision that matters is the name of Rama, and the shameless man will not even speak it. Instead he clings to the very things that betray him, weeping over enemies while death already holds him bound, untroubled by his own ruin. To scorn the Name as beneath you, Tuka says, is to be the most degraded of all. His closing question is aimed at the listener: your mouth still works, so why has it gone silent on the one word that could save you?

GATHA 0890

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, take your share now

मराठी मूळ

वांटा घेई लवकरि । मागें अंतरसी दुरी । केली भरोवरी । सार नेती आणीक ॥१॥
 ऐसीं भांमावलीं किती । काय जाणों नेणों किती । समय नेणती । माथां भार वाहोनि ॥२॥
 नाहीं सारिलें तोंवरी । धांव घेई वेग करीं । घेतलें पदरीं । फावलें तें आपुलें ॥३॥
 फट लंडी ह्मणे तुका । एक न साहावे धका । तरि च या सुखा । मग कैसा पावसी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Take your share quickly; if you delay, you will be left behind. Others carry off the treasure and the essence, while you stand with your burden on your head.

How many have been thus deceived? I cannot count how many. They do not recognize the moment, bearing the load on their heads.

Run, make haste while it has not yet been swept away. Whatever you have gathered into your lap is your own.

Says Tuka, shame on the shameless wretch. If you cannot bear even a single push, how will you ever reach that joy?

IN PLAIN WORDS

Take your share quickly. If you hold back, you fall behind. Others have already loaded up and are carrying off the essence. How many have been fooled this way; I cannot say how many. They do not know the right moment, and they go on carrying a load on their heads. While it has not yet been swept away, run, make haste. Whatever you have taken into your lap is your own. Tuka says: shame on you, you coward. If you cannot bear even one shove, how will you ever reach this joy?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses the picture of a market or a harvest being divided up: the goods are God and his Name, and the time to claim your portion is now. Those who delay are deceived, and countless people lose their chance because they do not recognize the moment and waste their lives carrying useless burdens. Only what you actually gather into your own lap, your own devotion, becomes truly yours. Tuka turns sharp at the end, calling the timid soul a coward: if you flinch at one small hardship or push, you will never come through to the joy on the other side. The harshness is meant to push the listener past hesitation, not to despise him.

GATHA 0891

The Necessity of Experience

Experience cannot be told

मराठी मूळ

चालावा पंथ तो पाविजे त्या ठाया । ऐकिल्या वांयां वारता त्या ॥१॥
 ऐका जी वोजे पडतसें पायां । भावाचि तें जायावाट नव्हे ॥२॥
 व्याली कुमारीचा अनुभवं अनुभव । सांगतां तो भाव येत नाही ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे येथें पाहिजे आरालें । बिंबीं निवळलें तरि भासे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One must walk the path to reach the destination. Merely hearing the news is of no use.

Listen, I fall at your feet with all my weight. The path of going is not by feeling alone.

A virgin who has given birth: only she knows it from experience. Describing that bhava, it does not come across.

Says Tuka, here one must peer closely with strained attention. Only when the image is clear does the reflection appear.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You must walk the path to reach that place. Just hearing the news of it is useless. Listen, I fall at your feet with all my weight: the way there is not by feeling alone. A virgin who has given birth knows it only by going through it; tell it to another, and that state will not come across. Tuka says: here you must look with close, strained attention. Only when the image is clear does the reflection show.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is saying that the truth he points to has to be lived, not merely heard about. Secondhand report and even inward sentiment cannot carry you to the destination; you have to walk the road yourself. He uses a deliberately impossible image, a virgin who has borne a child, to say that this is an experience no description can transfer to someone who has not had it. The seeing he calls for is exact and effortful: just as a reflection appears only when the mirror or water is perfectly still and clear, the real thing shows itself only to attention that has been made clear. The teaching can point; the experience must be earned.

GATHA 0892

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, the man no teaching reaches

मराठी मूळ

काय नाहीं लवत झाडें । विसरे वेडें देहभाव ॥१॥
जया न फळे उपदेश । धस ऐसा त्या नावें ॥२॥
काय नाहीं असत जड । दगड तो अबोलणा ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे कुचर दाणा । तैसा ह्मणा डेंग हा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Do not trees also bow their branches? Does a lunatic not also forget body-consciousness?

One upon whom no teaching has any effect: call such a one a blockhead.

Are stones not also hard and inert? A stone too remains speechless.

Says Tuka, a cracked grain is what such a swaggering fool is: call him that.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do not trees also bow their branches? Does a madman not also forget the body? The one whom no teaching can ripen: call him by that name, a blockhead. Are stones not also hard and dumb? A stone too says nothing. Tuka says: he is like a hollow, cracked grain; call this swaggering fool exactly that.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is exposing outward signs of holiness that have no inner reality. A tree bends its branches and a lunatic forgets his body too, but neither bowing nor self-forgetting proves anything by itself. The real test is whether teaching can take root and bear fruit in a person; the one in whom it never ripens is simply dull, hard and silent like a stone, however pious he looks. He compares such a swaggering man to a grain that is cracked and empty, looking like seed but unable to grow. The point is self-examination: ask whether the teaching is actually ripening in you, or whether you are only imitating the postures.

GATHA 0893

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the borrowed airs

मराठी मूळ

देखीचा दिमाख शिकोनियां दावी । हिंया ऐसी केवीं गारगोटी ॥१॥
मर्यादा ते जाण अरे अभागिया । देवाच्या ऐसिया सकळ मूतिन ॥२॥
काय पडिलेंसी लटिक्याचे भरी । वोंवाळुनि थोरी परती सांडीं ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे पुढें दिसतसे घात । करितों फजित ह्मणउनी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He copies the outward manner of another and puts it on display. But his inner being is hard as a pebble.

Know your limits, O unfortunate one. All these are forms that are like God himself.

Why have you fallen into the snare of falsehood? You have flaunted this air of greatness; now set it aside.

Says Tuka, I see ruin ahead. That is why I will bring you to public disgrace.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He learns another man's manner and puts it on show, but inside he is hard as a pebble. Know your place, you unfortunate one: all these forms are forms of God himself. Why have you fallen for what is false? You have flaunted this air of greatness; now throw it away. Tuka says: I see ruin ahead for you, and that is why I am putting you to public shame.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is attacking the borrowing of a holy man's outward style by someone whose heart stays stony and unchanged. He calls the man to know his true measure and to remember that every creature is a form of God, so the airs of superiority are an offense as well as a fraud. The pretender has trapped himself in falsehood and paraded a false greatness that he is now told to drop. Tuka says plainly that he exposes the man in public because he foresees the disaster that this pretense leads to. The disgrace is a hard mercy aimed at the pattern of pretense, meant to wake the man before his ruin arrives.

GATHA 0894

Renunciation

Renunciation, the false renunciant

मराठी मूळ

संसाराचा माथां भार । कांहीं पर न ठेवीं ॥1॥
 भक्तीची ते जाती ऐसी । सर्वस्वासी मुकावें ॥ ध्रु.॥
 भिक्षाणी वेवसाव । काला करितो गाढव ॥2॥
 करुनि वस्ती बाजारीं । ह्यणवी कासया निस्पृही ॥3॥
 प्रसादा आडुनि कवी । केलें तुप पाणी तेवीं ॥4॥
 तुका ह्यणे होंई सुर । किंवा निसुर मजुर ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Do not leave any part of the worldly burden unlet-go.

The way of devotion is such: one must be stripped of everything.

A beggar who runs a trade, having a donkey do the grinding work.

Living in the marketplace, why claim to be a renunciant?

Using prasad as a cover, he has turned the ghee into water.

Says Tuka, be either a person of virtue or a plain laborer.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The burden of the world is on your head: do not keep back any part of it unlet-go. The way of devotion is like this: you must be stripped of everything. A beggar who runs a business, who keeps a donkey to do the grinding. He lives right in the marketplace; why does he call himself one who wants nothing? Using the offering as a cover, he has turned the ghee into water. Tuka says: be a person of real virtue, or else a plain laborer.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is exposing the half-hearted renunciant who claims to have given up the world while quietly holding on to it. True devotion, he says, asks for everything: you cannot set down only part of the worldly load. The beggar who runs a trade, lives in the market, and still calls himself desireless is a fraud, and using religious offerings as a screen for gain only waters down what should be pure, like ghee turned to water. Tuka's demand is for honesty over pretense: be genuinely virtuous and renounce in truth, or drop the costume and earn your bread as an ordinary worker. The attack is on the hypocrisy, not on poverty or labor themselves.

GATHA 0895

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, a word to the willing

मराठी मूळ

तेज्या इशारती । तटा फोक वरी घेती ॥१॥
 काय सांगावें त्याहूनी । ऐका रे धरा मनीं ॥२॥
 नव्हे भांडखोर । ओढूनि धरुं पदर ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तोंड । काळें करा खालीं मुंड ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Spirited horses respond to a mere gesture; they take only a light tap on the back.

What more need be said? Listen and hold it in the mind.

I do not wish to quarrel or drag anyone by their garment.

Says Tuka, blacken your faces and bow your heads down in shame.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Spirited horses move at a mere signal; they need only a light tap on the back. What more is there to say than that? Listen, and hold it in your mind. I do not want to quarrel, or pull anyone back by the edge of his garment. Tuka says: blacken your faces and bow your heads in shame.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram contrasts the willing listener with the obstinate one. A good horse obeys the lightest sign, and a person ready to learn needs only a hint and should take it to heart. He says he has no wish to fight or to drag the unwilling along by force. The closing line turns sharp toward those who will not listen, telling them to bow their heads in shame, because the failure is theirs and not the teacher's. The verse leaves each hearer to decide which he will be: the responsive horse, or the one left disgraced by his own refusal.

GATHA 0896

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the warned-of age

मराठी मूळ

मार्गे संतीं होतें जें जें सांगितलें । तें येऊं लागलें अनुभवा ॥1॥
 आचारभ्रष्ट होती लोक कळी । पुण्य क्षीण बळी जालें पाप ॥धु.॥
 वर्णधर्म कोण न धरी विटाळ । घालिती गोंधळ एके ठायीं ॥2॥
 वेदाचे पाठक सेवितील मद्य । न देखती भेद विषयीं भांड ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे किती करावे फजित । ते चि छंद नित्य बहु होती ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What the saints had warned of long ago is now coming to pass in our experience.

People have become corrupt in conduct. Merit has dwindled; sin has grown mighty in force.

No one observes the purity of caste-duties or holds to any sense of defilement. They all jumble together in one heap.

Those who recite the Vedas drink liquor. They see no distinction and fight over sensual things like brazen scoundrels.

Says Tuka, how much of this disgrace should I recount? These very cravings keep multiplying day by day.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whatever the saints warned of long ago is now coming true in front of us. People have grown corrupt in conduct; this is the Kali age. Merit has worn thin, and sin has grown strong. No one keeps the duties of his order or holds to any sense of purity; they all jumble together in one heap. Those who recite the Vedas drink liquor. They see no line they will not cross, and they brawl over their appetites like shameless men. Tuka says: how much of this disgrace should I keep counting? These same cravings only multiply by the day.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says the decay the old saints predicted is now visible everywhere in the age of Kali. Right conduct has collapsed, good has weakened, and wrongdoing has gained the upper hand. People no longer keep the discipline of their station or any sense of what defiles, and even those who chant the Vedas drink and quarrel over their appetites without restraint. He breaks off the list because the catalogue of disgrace would never end, since the cravings driving it keep growing. The verse is a lament over a pattern of self-indulgence loosed from all limits, naming the sickness of the time rather than condemning any one person.

GATHA 0897

The Necessity of Experience

Experience, the ripened harvest

मराठी मूळ

अक्षरांचा श्रम केला । फळा आला तेणें तो ॥१॥
 अवघियाचा तळ धरी । जीवा उरी नुरउनी ॥२॥
 फळलें तें लवे भारें । पीक खरें आलें तई ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा । पुढें भाव सारावा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*The labor of learning has borne its fruit.**It holds the very depths of all things, leaving no residue remaining in the soul.**When the harvest bends low under its own weight, only then has the true crop truly come.**Says Tuka, O God, let the devotion now move further forward still.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

The labor over the letters has borne its fruit. It holds the bottom of everything, leaving nothing of the self left over. When the ripe grain bends low under its own weight, then the real crop has truly come in. Tuka says: O God, let the devotion move on further still.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks back on his long labor of learning and finds it has finally ripened into fruit. That fruit reaches to the depths of all things and leaves no separate self standing, the ego emptied out. He marks the sign of true ripeness with a farmer's image: the loaded ear of grain bows low, just as real attainment makes a person humble rather than proud. Even so, he does not stop at the harvest but prays to God that his devotion keep advancing further, treating arrival as one more starting point.

GATHA 0898

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, right first, then the saints' word

मराठी मूळ

उचित जाणावें मुख्य धर्म आधीं । चित्तशुद्ध बुद्धी ठायीं िस्थर ॥१॥
 न घलावी धांव मनाचिये ओढी । वचन आवडी संताचिये ॥२॥
 अंतरीं या राहे वचनाचा विश्वास । न उगे उपदेश तुका ह्मणे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Know first and foremost what is right. Dharma is primary: let chitta-shuddhi and buddhi be firm and steady.**Do not go chasing after the pull of the mind. Hold dear the words of the saints above all.*

Says Tuka, let faith in those words abide within. Teaching does not take root on its own.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Know first of all what is right; dharma comes first. Let the heart be pure and the mind held steady in its place. Do not go running after the pull of your own mind. Hold dear the words of the saints. Tuka says: let trust in those words stay within you. Teaching does not take root on its own.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays out an order for the spiritual life. The first thing is to know what is right and to keep dharma primary, grounding it in a purified heart and a mind held firm. He warns against chasing wherever the restless mind pulls, and sets against that the words of the saints, which are to be loved and trusted above one's own impulses. The closing line gives the reason: teaching does not plant itself, so faith in the saints' word is what lets it take hold within. The verse is about which voice you will follow, your own wandering mind or the steady counsel of the saints.

GATHA 0901

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, leave the wicked company

मराठी मूळ

जीवन हे मुक्त नर जाले पावन । तजा हो दुर्जनसंगति ही ॥१॥
बहुत अन्न विष मोहरीच्या मानें । अवघें चि तेणें विष होय ॥२॥
तुका ह्याने जेणें आपलें स्वहित । तैसी करीं नीत विचारुनि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Living beings are liberated; people are made holy and pure. By this alone: abandon the company of the wicked.

A great quantity of food with even a mustard seed's measure of poison in it: all of it becomes poison entire.

Says Tuka, consider carefully what serves your own true welfare, and act accordingly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Living beings are set free; people are made pure. By this one thing: give up the company of the wicked. A great heap of food with even a mustard seed of poison in it: all of it turns to poison. Tuka says: think carefully about what truly serves your own good, and act that way.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes a single practical demand: leave the company of the wicked, for that one step is what makes people pure and frees them. He drives it home with a sharp image: a huge amount of good food is wholly ruined by even a mustard seed's worth of poison. So too a little bad company can spoil a whole life, no matter how much good is mixed in. The closing line turns it back on the listener as a matter of clear-eyed self-interest: weigh what really serves your own welfare, and let your conduct follow that judgment.

GATHA 0902

The Power of the Name

The Name as the only wealth

मराठी मूळ

द्रव्याचा तो आह्मी धरितों विटाळ । तया पाठी काळ लाग करी ॥1॥
 करोनियां हें चि राहिलों जीवन । एक नारायण नाम ऐसें ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे हें चि करुनि जतन । आलिया ही दान याचकासी ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I regard wealth itself as a source of contamination, for Death follows close behind it. I have kept this as my sole sustenance: the one Name of Narayana and nothing else.

Says Tuka, having guarded this treasure carefully, I will share it freely with any who come asking.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I hold wealth itself to be a defilement. Death follows close behind it. So I have made only this my whole living: the one Name of Narayana, nothing else. Tuka says: I have guarded this treasure with care, and to anyone who comes asking, I will give it freely.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the usual sense of riches upside down. He calls money a contamination, because death always trails after it; whatever you pile up, you will leave behind in dread. In its place he keeps one possession only, the Name of Narayana, and lives off it as his daily bread. Then he names the strange economics of that wealth: he hoards it carefully, yet hands it out free to whoever asks, because the Name is the one treasure that grows by being given away.

GATHA 0903

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, take the lasting wealth

मराठी मूळ

द्रव्याचिया मागें किळकाळाचा लाग । ह्मणोनियां संग खोटा त्याचा ॥1॥
 निरयाचें मूळ घालुनिया मागें । मांडिली प्रसंगें कथा पुढें ॥ध्रु॥
 आजिच्या प्रसंगें हा चि लाभ घ्यावा । पुढील भार देवावरी घाला ॥2॥
 प्रालब्ध कांहीं न पालटे सोसें । तृष्णेचें हें पिसें वांयांविण ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे घेई राहे ऐसें धन । सादर श्रवण करोनियां ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The shrieking one pursues wherever wealth is found; therefore its company is false.

Planting the root of hell behind him, a man sets up his story ahead.

In this present moment, take this one gain; place the burden of what is to come upon God.

Prarabdha does not change through any amount of bearing; this lunacy of thirst is without purpose.

Says Tuka, take hold of the kind of wealth that remains, having listened with care and attention.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Where wealth is, Death comes chasing after it; so its company is false. A man buries the root of hell behind him and sets up his story for the road ahead. Take the one gain that this present moment offers; lay the burden of what is to come upon God. No amount of bearing changes what is already fixed; this madness of craving is for nothing. Tuka says: take hold of the wealth that stays, and listen to it with care.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram warns that worldly riches are bad company, because death hunts wherever wealth gathers. The greedy man plants the seed of his own ruin and then makes grand plans for a future he will never safely reach. So the abhanga points to the one thing in reach now: take this present gain, the Name and the holy story, and hand the worry about the future over to God. Straining and scheming will not alter what destiny has set; the thirst for more is wasted lunacy. The wealth worth seizing is the kind that does not leave you, received through attentive listening.

GATHA 0904

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, the gem on the wrong neck

मराठी मूळ

रडे अळंकार दैन्याचिये कांती । उतमा विपित्तसंग घडे ॥१॥
एकाविण एक अशोभ दातारा । कृपेच्या सागरा पांडुरंगा ॥२॥
रांधूं नेणे तया पुढील आइतें । केलें तें सोडतें वायां जाय ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे चिंतामणि शेळी गळा । पावे अवकळा ह्मणउनी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

An ornament weeps when placed upon a body degraded by misery. When the noble one encounters adversity, this is what happens.

One without the other is unbecoming, O giver, O ocean of compassion, O Panduranga.

One who does not know how to cook wastes even what is already prepared and set before him; what was carefully arranged goes to waste.

Says Tuka, when a wish-fulfilling gem is tied around the neck of a goat, it meets with disgrace.

IN PLAIN WORDS

An ornament weeps when it is worn on a body wasted by misery. When a noble thing meets bad fortune, this is what happens. One without the other looks wrong, O giver, O ocean of mercy, Panduranga. A man who cannot cook spoils even the food set ready before him; what was carefully prepared goes to waste. Tuka says: a wish-granting gem tied at a goat's neck is brought to disgrace.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is saying that a good thing put in the wrong place is shamed, not honored. A fine ornament looks pitiable on a body broken by want; the worthy and the unfit do not belong together. He turns to Panduranga, the ocean of compassion, as the giver who alone joins the worthy gift to a worthy keeper. The point lands in two homely pictures: the man who cannot cook ruins even a meal already prepared for him, and the priceless wish-fulfilling jewel is degraded when it hangs on a goat. So examine whether you are fit to hold what you have been given, lest the treasure be wasted on you.

GATHA 0905

Worldly Life

Worldly life, the harvest of past deeds

मराठी मूळ

दुःखाचे डोंगर लागती सोसावे । ऐसें तंव ठावें सकळांसीं ॥1॥
 भोग कळों येतो मागिल ते जन्म । उत्तम मध्यम कनिष्ठ ते ॥2॥
 तुका ह्याने येथें झांकितील डोळे । भोग देतेवेळे येइल कळों ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Mountains of suffering must be endured; this much is known to everyone.

The quality of past lives can be inferred from the kind of experience one receives: superior, middling, or inferior.

Says Tuka, those who close their eyes here will come to know it when the time of bearing one's fruits arrives.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Mountains of suffering must be borne; everyone knows this much. From the kind of lot you receive you can read your past births: superior, middling, or low. Tuka says: those who shut their eyes here will come to know it when the time comes to bear the fruit.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram states plainly what no one really doubts: heavy suffering must be endured, and no one is spared. He reads present experience as a ledger of the past; the quality of the life you are handed, high, middling, or low, reflects deeds already done. The warning is in the last line: closing your eyes to this now does not make it go away. When the appointed time of reaping arrives, the truth you refused to see will make itself known. So the call is to look honestly now, rather than be forced to learn it later.

GATHA 0906

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, wake up while you can

मराठी मूळ

सदैव तुझां अवघें आहे । हातपाय चालाया ॥१॥
 मुखीं वाणी कानीं कीर्तन । डोळे मूर्ती देखाया ॥२॥
 अंध बहिर ठकलीं किती । मुकीं होती पांगुळें ॥३॥
 घरास आगि लावुनि जागा । न पळे तो गा वांचे ना ॥४॥
 तुका झणे जागा हिता । कांहीं आतां आपुल्या ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*You are fortunate, for you still have everything. Your hands and feet still move.**Your mouth has speech, your ears can hear kirtan, your eyes can behold the divine form.**Think of how many are blind, how many deaf, how many mute, lame, or crippled.**One who sets fire to one's own house and does not flee cannot survive.**Says Tuka, wake up now; attend to your own welfare.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

You are fortunate: you still have everything. Your hands and feet still move. Your mouth has speech, your ears can hear kirtan, your eyes can behold the form of God. Think how many are blind, how many deaf, how many mute, how many lame. A man who sets fire to his own house and does not run out cannot live. Tuka says: wake up now; attend to your own good while there is time.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram counts the blessings most people overlook: working limbs, a voice, ears that can hear the holy story, eyes that can see the divine form. He sets them against all those who lack these very things, so the listener will stop treating them as nothing. Then comes the sharp image: to keep these gifts and waste them is like staying inside a burning house and refusing to flee. The call is urgent and personal: wake up and use this rare chance for your own welfare now, before the fire takes everything.

GATHA 0907

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, seize the chance now

मराठी मूळ

ऐसे पुढती मिळतां आतां । नाहीं सत्ता स्वतंत्र ॥१॥
 म्हणउनि फावलें तें घ्यावें । नाम गावें आवडी ॥२॥
 संचित प्रारब्ध गाढें । धांवे पुढें क्रियमाण ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे घुबडा ऐसें । जन्म सरिसे शुकराचें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Even if such an opportunity comes again hereafter, there will be no independent agency.**Therefore seize what is available now and sing the Name with love.**Sanchita and Prarabdha are powerful; Kriyaman races on ahead.**Says Tuka, otherwise life passes birth after birth like the owl's or the pig's.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Even if such a chance comes again later, you will have no free power to use it. So take what is given now and sing the Name with love. Sanchita and Prarabdha are heavy; Kriyaman runs on ahead. Tuka says: otherwise life passes, birth after birth, like the owl's or the pig's.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses the rarity of a human chance to turn toward God. Another such opening may come, but you may have no freedom then to act on it, so the time to seize it is now, by singing the Name with love. He names the weight of karma: the store of past deeds and the destiny already ripening are heavy, and fresh action keeps racing ahead, piling up more. The bare alternative is the last line: miss this, and you drift through birth after birth as dull and aimless as an owl or a pig. The whole force of it is, do not let this one usable life slip.

GATHA 0908

Renunciation

Renunciation, weary of all but the saints

मराठी मूळ

सर्वविशीं माझा त्रासलासे जीव । आतां कोण भाव निवडे एक ॥१॥
 संसाराची मज न साहे चि वार्ता । आणीक ह्मणतां माझें कोणी ॥२॥
 देहसुख कांहीं बोलिले उपचार । विष तें आदर बंद वाटे ॥३॥
 उपाधि दाटणी प्रतिष्ठा गौरव । होय माझा जीव कासावीस ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे कांहीं आणीक न साहे । आवडती पाय वैष्णवांचे ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My soul is weary of everything. Now which single feeling shall I choose?

I cannot even bear to hear talk of worldly life, nor the claim that anything is "mine."

Bodily pleasures and the treatments offered for the body feel like poison received with honor.

The burden of obligations, prestige, and recognition make my soul miserable.

Says Tuka, I can endure nothing else. The feet of the Vaishnavas alone are dear to me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My soul is weary of everything. Now what single feeling can I settle on? I cannot bear even to hear talk of worldly life, nor anyone calling a thing "mine." The comforts and treatments offered to the body feel like poison handed to me with honor. The press of obligations, of prestige and praise, makes my soul wretched. Tuka says: I can bear nothing else; only the feet of the Vaishnavas are dear to me.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is Tukaram describing a total exhaustion with the world. He is so tired of everything that he can hardly choose one thing to want; even hearing about household life, or hearing anyone claim ownership of anything, has become unbearable. The honors and comforts people offer his body strike him as poison served politely, and the whole apparatus of duty, status, and praise only tortures him. The one thing left that he can stand is the company of God's devotees. The abhanga names the turning point of renunciation: when the world has gone tasteless, the feet of the Vaishnavas become the only sweetness.

GATHA 0909

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, beyond sectarian dispute

मराठी मूळ

आणीक कांहीं या उत्तराचें काज । नाहीं आतां मज बोलावया ॥१॥

भिन्न भेद हे भावनास्वभाव । नव्हे कांहीं देव एकविध ॥२॥

गुण दोष कोणें निवडावे धर्म । कोण जाणे कर्म अकर्म तें ॥३॥

तरिच भलें आतां न करावा संग । दुःखाचा प्रसंग तोडावया ॥४॥

तुका ह्मणे गुण गाई या देवाचे । घेई माझे वाचे हे चि धणी ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have no more need to argue or reply.

These distinctions and differences are matters of temperament and disposition. God is not of any one single kind.

Who can sort out virtue and fault between the traditions, or tell the difference between action and inaction?

It is better, then, to abandon such company so as to cut off the occasions of sorrow.

Says Tuka, let my voice take its fill singing the virtues of this God.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have no more need to answer or argue. These divisions and differences come from temperament and disposition; God is not of any one single kind. Who can sort out virtue and fault among the traditions, or tell action from inaction? Better, then, not to keep such company, so as to cut off the occasions of sorrow. Tuka says: let my voice take its fill singing the praises of this God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram steps out of the endless quarrel between schools and sects. He sees that their fixed differences spring from people's varying dispositions, not from God, who cannot be boxed into one form. No one, he says, can finally rank one tradition's virtues and faults over another's, or settle what counts as right action and wrong. Rather than be dragged into that dispute, which only breeds grief, he chooses to leave the disputing company. What is left for him is simple and whole: to spend his voice singing the praise of God, and let that be enough.

GATHA 0910

Autobiography

Self-counsel, silence over debate

मराठी मूळ

आपुल्या विचार करीन जीवाशीं । काय या जनाशीं चाड मज ॥1॥
 आपुलें स्वहित जाणती सकळ । निरोधितां बलें दुःख वाटे ॥ध्रु॥
 आडको नाडको कथा कोणी तरी । जाऊनियां घरीं निजो सुखें ॥2॥
 माझी कोण वोज जाला हा शेवट । देखोनियां वाट आणिकां लावूं ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे भाकुं आपुली करुणा । जयाची वासना तथा फळे ॥4॥
 विधिनिषेध उर फोडी । जंव नाहीं अनुभवगोडी ॥ध्रु॥
 वाढे तळमळ उभयता । नाहीं देखिलें अनुभवितां ॥2॥
 अपुल्या मते पिसें । परि तें आहे जैसेतैसें ॥3॥
 साधनाची सिद्ध । मोन करा िस्थर बुद्ध ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे वादें । वांयां गेलीं ब्रह्मवृंदें ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I will take counsel within my own jiva. What concern of mine are these people?

Everyone knows their own welfare; to restrain them by force only causes sorrow.

Let whoever wishes to hear the sacred story listen; otherwise, let them go home and sleep in peace.

What is my concern? This has reached its end. Having seen the path, I will set others on it.

Says Tuka, I will plead before God's own compassion. Each one's desire bears its own fruit.

The clash of prescriptions and prohibitions splits the chest open, so long as one has not tasted experience directly.

Restlessness grows on both sides when one has not personally realized the truth.

In one's own opinion it seems like madness, but the truth remains exactly as it is.

The fulfillment of practice is silence; make the buddhi steady.

Says Tuka, through mere argument, even the assemblies of Brahmins have been wasted.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I will take counsel within my own soul. What do I owe to these people? Everyone knows their own good; force them and you only cause pain. Let whoever wishes hear the sacred story; the rest can go home and sleep in peace. What is it to me? This has reached its end. Having seen the path, I will set others on it. Tuka says: I will plead my case before God's own mercy; each one's desire bears its own fruit. The clash of rule and prohibition splits the chest open, so long as one has not tasted experience itself. Restlessness grows on both sides while the truth has not been lived. In one's own opinion it looks like madness, but the truth stands just as it is. The fulfillment of practice is silence; make the mind steady. Tuka says: through mere argument, even whole assemblies of Brahmins have come to nothing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram resolves to stop wrestling with other people and to take the matter inward instead. He sees that everyone already knows their own good, and forcing them only causes pain, so he leaves it open: let whoever wants the sacred story listen, and let the rest go sleep. His own work, he feels, is done; having found the path, he can only point it out and leave each person's longing to bear its own fruit before God. Then he diagnoses why the arguing hurts so much: as long as a person only debates rules and prohibitions without tasting the reality for themselves, both sides stay torn and restless. The truth does not change to suit anyone's opinion, even when it looks like madness to them. So the real end of practice is silence and a steadied mind; arguing has wasted even gatherings of learned Brahmins.

GATHA 0911

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, the futile harvest of debate

मराठी मूळ

कुशळ गुंतले निषेधा । वादी प्रवर्तले वादा ॥१॥
 कैसी ठकलीं बापुडीं । दंभविषयांचे सांकडीं ॥२॥
 भुस उपणुनि केलें काय । हारपले दोन्ही ठाय ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे लागे हातां । काय मथिलें घुसिळतां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The clever ones are ensnared in prohibitions. The debaters are swept away in debate.

How pitifully they are caught in the tight trap of pretense and sense-objects.

What is gained by winnowing only chaff? Both grounds are lost.

Says Tuka, what comes into hand from all that churning?

IN PLAIN WORDS

The clever ones are tangled up in prohibitions. The debaters are carried off into debate. See how pitifully they are caught in the tight trap of pretense and the senses. What is won by winnowing only chaff? Both grounds are lost. Tuka says: from all that churning, what comes into the hand?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks at the learned and the argumentative and sees them snared, not freed, by their cleverness. The sharp ones get knotted in what is forbidden, and the debaters are swept off into endless dispute, all of them trapped by show and by appetite for the senses. He puts the waste in plain images: winnowing chaff yields no grain, and the disputer loses both grounds at once, this world and the truth alike. The closing question, what comes into the hand from all that churning, points the listener at their own arguing: examine whether your zeal is producing anything real, or only empty effort dressed up as wisdom.

GATHA 0912

Autobiography

Humility, God is the speaker

मराठी मूळ

संतांचीं उच्छिष्टें बोलतों उत्तरें । काय म्यां गद्दारे जाणावें हें ॥१॥
 विठ्ठलाचे नाम घेता नये शुद्ध । तेथें मज बोध काय कळे ॥२॥
 करितो कवतुक बोबडा उत्तरी । झणी मजवरि कोप धरा ॥३॥
 काय माझी याति नेणां हा विचार । काय मी तें फार बोलों नेणें ॥४॥
 तुका ह्याने मज बोलवितो देव । अर्थ गुह्य भाव तो चि जाणे ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I speak only the leftovers of the saints. What should a simpleton like me know on my own?

I cannot even utter the Name of Vitthal with purity. How then would any understanding dawn in me?

I sport with these words in lisping, babbling speech. Let no anger be held against me.

What, do you not know my caste? Consider this. How much can one like me say?

Says Tuka, it is God who makes me speak. He alone knows the meaning, the secret, and the devotional mood.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The words I speak are only the leftovers of the saints. What would an ignorant man like me know on my own? I cannot even utter Vitthal's Name purely; how then could any understanding dawn in me? I play with these words in lisping, babbling speech; do not hold any anger against me. Do you not know my caste? Think on that. How much can one like me say? Tuka says: it is God who makes me speak. He alone knows the meaning, the secret, and the inner mood.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram empties himself of any claim to authorship. He says his words are only the saints' leavings, that an unlettered man like him knows nothing on his own, and that he cannot even pronounce Vitthal's Name perfectly, let alone arrive at wisdom by himself. He asks the listener not to be angry at his stumbling, babbling speech, and

points to his low birth as proof that the eloquence is not his doing. The turn comes at the end: it is God who speaks through him, and God alone holds the true meaning and inmost feeling of what is said. The abhanga makes humility itself the credential; the poet steps aside so that the words can be God's.

GATHA 0913

Autobiography

Self-examination, the test of the pure heart

मराठी मूळ

चंदनाच्या वासें धरितील नाक । नावडे कनक न घडे हें ॥1॥
 साकरेसी गोडी सारिखी सकळां । थोरां मोट्यां बाळां धाकुटियां ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझें चित्त शुद्ध होतें । तरि का निंदितें जन मज ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If someone covers their nose at the fragrance of sandalwood, that does not make the sandalwood less than gold. This simply cannot be.

The sweetness of sugar is the same for all: for the great, the old, the young, and the small.

Says Tuka, if my chitta were pure, then why do people criticize me?

IN PLAIN WORDS

If someone holds his nose at the smell of sandalwood, that does not make the sandalwood worth less than gold. It simply cannot be. The sweetness of sugar is the same for everyone: for the great and the small, the old and the young. Tuka says: if my heart were truly pure, then why would people criticize me?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram offers two images of things whose worth does not depend on how they are received. Sandalwood stays precious even if one person turns away from its scent, and sugar tastes equally sweet to everyone, great or small, old or young, because real goodness is constant and impartial. Then he turns the test on himself rather than on his critics: if his own heart were genuinely pure, would people still be finding fault with him? Instead of resenting the criticism, he treats it as a mirror, asking whether the fault may lie in him. The abhanga makes the blame an occasion for honest self-examination, not for defense.

GATHA 0914

The Nature of God

Praise, God who lifts the lowly

मराठी मूळ

तुज ऐसा कोण उदाराची रासी । आपुलें चि देसी पद दासा ॥1॥
 शुद्ध हीन कांहीं न पाहासी कुळ । करिसी निर्मळ वास देहीं ॥2॥
 भावें हें कदान्न खासी त्याचे घरीं । अभक्तांची परी नावडेती ॥3॥
 न वजासी जेथें दुरी दवडितां । न येसी जो चित्ता योगियांच्या ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसीं ब्रीदें तुझीं खरीं । बोलतील चारी वेद मुखें ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Who is as generous as You, who gives His own divine state to His servants?

You do not look at whether one is pure or lowly, nor at one's caste. You make Your dwelling even in impure bodies.

With love You eat the coarse food at a devotee's home, yet feasts without devotion do not please You.

You go where You are driven away, yet You do not come to the chitta of the yogis who seek You.

Says Tuka, these are Your true titles, proclaimed by the four Vedas themselves.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Who is as generous as you? You give your own state to your servants. You do not look at whether a man is pure or low; you do not look at his caste. You make your home even in unclean bodies. You eat the coarse food in a devotee's house, and you eat it with love. But a feast without love does not please you. You go where you are driven away. You do not come to the minds of the yogis who chase you. Tuka says: these titles of yours are true. The four Vedas speak them with their own mouths.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram praises God by the company he keeps. The point is not that God is mighty, but that he turns toward the lowest and away from the proud. He ignores caste and purity, dwells in bodies the world calls unclean, and prefers a poor man's coarse food given in love over a grand feast given without it. The last turn is the sharpest: God walks into the house that drives him out, yet stays away from the yogis who use their practice to seize him. Love draws him; striving repels him, and Tukaram says the Vedas themselves attest to this.

GATHA 0915

The Nature of God

Longing for solitude, weariness of the crowd

मराठी मूळ

तरि कां नेणते होते मागें ऋषी । तींहीं या जनासी दुराविलें ॥1॥
 वोळगती जया अष्टमासिद्ध । ते या जनबुद्धी नातळती ॥2॥
 कंदमूळें पाला धातूच्या पोषणा । खातील वास राणां तरी केला ॥3॥
 लावुनियां नेत्र उगे चि बैसले । न बोलत ठेले मौन्यमुद्रे ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसें करीं माझ्या चित्ता । दुरावीं अनंता जन दुरी ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Then why were the ancient sages unknowing? They distanced themselves from ordinary people.
 Those whom the eight supernatural powers serve do not touch the minds of ordinary folk.
 They ate roots and leaves to nourish their bodily elements, and yet made their dwelling in the forest.
 Closing their eyes, they sat still, sealed in silence, speaking nothing.
 Says Tuka, do the same to my chitta, O Ananta. Drive the world far away from me.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Were the old sages then unknowing? They kept themselves far from ordinary people. The ones whom the eight powers serve do not touch the minds of common folk. They ate roots and leaves to keep the body alive. They made their home in the forest. They closed their eyes and sat still. They spoke nothing; they were sealed in silence. Tuka says: do this same thing to my mind, O Ananta. Drive the crowd far away from me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks at the ancient sages and reads their withdrawal as wisdom, not ignorance. They held mastery over great powers, yet they would not mix their minds with the crowd; they lived on roots in the forest, eyes closed, sealed in silence. He is not condemning people so much as naming a danger to his own attention. So he turns it into a prayer: let my mind be drawn away from the crowd the way theirs was, O Ananta, that I may rest in you undistracted.

GATHA 0916

Prayers

Doubt and resolve, the unlettered devotee

मराठी मूळ

कोणाच्या आधारें करूं मी विचार । कोण देइल धीर माझ्या जीवा ॥१॥
 शास्त्रज्ञ पंडित नव्हे मी वाचक । यातिशुद्ध एक ठाव नाही ॥२॥
 कलियुगीं बहु कुशळ हे जन । छिळतील गुण तुझे गातां ॥३॥
 मज हा संदेह झाला दोहीं सवा । भजन करूं देवा किंवा नको ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां दुरावितां जन । किंवा हें मरण भलें दोन्ही ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*On whose support shall I reflect? Who will give courage to my jiva?**I am no learned scholar, no reader of scriptures, and I have not even one footing of caste purity.**In this Kali Yuga, people are cunning and will mock me for singing Your virtues.**I am caught in doubt on both sides: should I worship You, O God, or should I not?**Says Tuka, either let the world shun me, or let death come. Both are good.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

On whose support shall I think this through? Who will give courage to my soul? I am no learned scholar. I am no reader of scriptures. I do not have even one footing of caste purity. In this Kali Yuga people are clever. They will mock me when I sing your praises. I am caught in doubt on both sides: should I worship you, God, or should I not? Tuka says: now either let the world shun me, or let death come. Both of these are good.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays out his disadvantage plainly: no learning, no scripture, no caste standing, and a clever, mocking age that will jeer at his singing. The doubt is real and he names it: should he even worship at all, when worship will draw scorn? Then he refuses the trap of that doubt. He chooses God over the world's opinion so completely that both being shunned by the world and dying lose their sting. Either outcome is good, because either one leaves him with God and free of the crowd's verdict.

GATHA 0917

Longing and Separation

Loving complaint, demanding to be claimed

मराठी मूळ

काय उणें जालें तुज समर्थासी । ऐसा मजपाशीं कोण दोष ॥1॥
 जो तूं माझा न करिसी अंगीकार । सांगेन वेव्हार संतांमधीं ॥2॥
 तुजविण रत आणिकांचे ठायीं । ऐसें कोण ग्वाही दावीं मज ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे काय धरुनी गुमान । सांग उगवून पांडुरंगा ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*What have You lost, O Capable One? What fault do You find in me, that You will not accept me as Your own?**I will take this matter before the saints.**Show me one witness who can prove I am devoted to anyone but You.**Says Tuka, why do You hold this pride? Settle the matter clearly, O Panduranga.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

What have you lost, you who are able to do anything? What fault do you find in me? You will not accept me as your own. I will take this matter before the saints. Show me one witness who can prove that I am devoted to anyone but you. Tuka says: why do you hold this pride? Settle the matter clearly, O Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a lover's lawsuit, not a humble petition. Tukaram presses God like a plaintiff: you lose nothing by taking me, so what is the fault that makes you withhold yourself? He threatens to bring the case before the saints, the only court he trusts, and dares God to produce a single witness that his heart has gone to any other god. The boldness is the devotion: he is so sure he belongs to God that he treats God's apparent silence as an unpaid debt. Settle it openly, Panduranga; stop holding back.

GATHA 0918

Devotion to Vitthal

Exclusive devotion, the one Name

मराठी मूळ

काय करूं आन दैवतें । एका विण पंढरीनाथें ॥1॥
 सरिता मिळाली सागरीं । आणिकां नांवां कैची उरी ॥ध्रु॥
 अनेक दीपीचा प्रकाश । सूर्य उगवतां नाश ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे नेणें दुजें । एका विण पंढरीराजें ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What shall I do with other deities, when I have the Lord of Pandhari alone?

When a river has merged into the ocean, what trace of its former name remains?

The light of many lamps is destroyed when the sun rises.

Says Tuka, I know no second. There is none but the King of Pandhari.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What shall I do with other gods, when I have the Lord of Pandhari alone? When a river has merged into the ocean, what is left of its old name? The light of many lamps is gone when the sun rises. Tuka says: I know no second. There is none but the King of Pandhari.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram declares that one God has swallowed every other. He gives two images for what happens to the rest: a river that reaches the ocean keeps no separate name, and many small lamps simply vanish when the sun comes up. This is not contempt for other deities but a description of what total devotion feels like from inside. Once Vitthal fills the field, no second object of worship can survive as anything distinct. He knows no other; there is only the King of Pandhari.

GATHA 0919

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion past works, God who is never spent

मराठी मूळ

काय करुं कर्माकर्म । बरें सांपडलें वर्म ॥१॥
होसी नामा च सारिका । समजाविली नाहीं लेखा ॥२॥
नाहीं वेचावेच जाला । उरला आहेसी संचला ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे माझें । काय होईल तुझ्यां ओझें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What need have I for debates about action and inaction? I have found the secret.

You are like a myna bird of the Name, beyond all counting.

There is no spending and no loss; You remain ever full.

Says Tuka, what burden of mine could weigh upon You?

IN PLAIN WORDS

What shall I do with debates about action and inaction? I have found the secret. You are like a myna bird of the Name, beyond all counting. There is no spending and no losing in you; you stay forever full. Tuka says: what burden of mine could ever weigh on you?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets aside the endless arguments about right action and renunciation, saying he has found the real secret underneath them. The secret is the Name, repeated freely like a bird's song, past all reckoning and bookkeeping. He fixes on God's inexhaustibility: nothing you draw from God diminishes him; he stays full no matter how much

is taken. So the question that ends the poem is almost a laugh: if you can never be spent or burdened, why would my sins or needs be too heavy for you to carry?

GATHA 0920

The Saints

Humility before the saints, mercy over might

मराठी मूळ

एकाएकीं हातोफळी । ठाया बळी पावले ते ॥1॥
 आह्मी देवा शक्तिहीनें । भाकुं तेणें करुणा ॥ध्रु॥
 पावटणी केला काळ । जया बळ होतें तें ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे वीर्यावीर । संतधीर समुद्र ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those mighty ones reached that exalted place in an instant, in a single stroke.

We who are without strength, O God, plead for Your mercy with our very lowliness.

Those who had strength made even time their stepping stone.

Says Tuka, the saints are heroes of valor, patient and vast as the ocean.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Those mighty ones reached that high place in a single moment, in one stroke. We have no strength, God. With this very weakness we beg for your mercy. Those who had strength made time itself their stepping stone. Tuka says: the saints are heroes of valor. They are patient and vast as the ocean.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram contrasts two ways to reach God. The mighty saints crossed in an instant; they were strong enough to make even time a stair beneath their feet. He places himself outside that company, owning that he has no such strength. But he turns the lack into his plea: weakness itself becomes the appeal to mercy, the one thing the helpless can offer. He still honors the saints as true heroes, ocean-deep and patient, while staking his own hope not on strength but on God's compassion for those who have none.

GATHA 0921

Prayers

Prayer, carry me where the saints have gone

मराठी मूळ

पुढिलाचें इच्छी फळ । नाहीं बळ तें अंगीं ॥1॥
 संत गेले तया ठाया । देवराया पाववीं ॥ध्रु॥
 ज्येष्ठांचीं कां आह्मां जोडी । परवडी न लभों ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे करीं कोड । पुरवीं लाड आमुचा ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I desire the fruit that the great ones attained, but I lack their strength.

O Lord, lead me to the place where the saints have gone.

How can we be matched with the elders? We cannot attain that station.

Says Tuka, fulfill my longing; indulge this wish of mine.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I want the fruit that the great ones reached. But I do not have their strength in me. The saints have gone to that place; O Lord, bring me there too. How can we be matched with the elders? We cannot reach that high station on our own. Tuka says: grant my wish; indulge this longing of mine.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram wants the very destination the great souls attained, and admits at once that he lacks the power to climb there himself. He will not pretend to be the equal of the elders; he says plainly that their station is beyond his reach by his own effort. So the whole abhanga becomes a request for transport rather than achievement: take me to where the saints already are. He asks God to indulge him, to treat his longing as a child's wish a father would simply fulfill out of love.

GATHA 0922

Prayers

Plea to a rich Father, ask for my share

मराठी मूळ

कैवल्याच्या तुझां घरीं । रासी हरी उदंड ॥१॥
 मजसाठीं कां जी वाणी । नव्हे धणी विभागा ॥२॥
 सर्वा गुणीं सपुरता । ऐसा पिता असोनी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे पांडुरंगा । जालों सांगा सन्मुख ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In Your home of kaivalya, O Hari, there are heaps of abundance.

Why then should there be shortage for me? I am not even the owner of my own share.

You are a father complete in every virtue.

Says Tuka, O Panduranga, I have come before You. Speak to me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In your house, Hari, the treasure of kaivalya lies in heaps. Why then should there be any shortage for me? I am not even the owner of my own share. You are a father complete in every virtue. Tuka says: O Panduranga, I have come and stood before you. Speak to me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram approaches God as a son before a wealthy father. The wealth here is kaivalya, final liberation, and he sees it piled high in God's house. The complaint is filial: with such abundance in the family, why is the child left wanting, denied even the portion that is rightly his? He leans on the relationship, naming God a father perfect in every good quality, so that withholding would be unworthy of him. Then he simply presents himself, standing face to face, and asks for the one thing a waiting child wants: a word, a response.

GATHA 0923

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, look in the mirror of the self

मराठी मूळ

आपलाल्या तुझी रूपासी समजा । कासया वरजा आरसिया ॥१॥
 हें तों नव्हे देहबुद्धीचें कारण । होइल नारायणें दान केलें ॥२॥
 बब्रूचिया बाणें वर्मासि स्पर्शविं । हें तों नाहीं ठावें मोकलित्या ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे बहु मुखें या वचना । सत्याविण जाणा चाल नाहीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Know your own true form. Why do you fault the mirror?

This is not a matter of body-consciousness; it is a gift that Narayana has bestowed.

An arrow must strike the vital spot, but the one who merely releases it does not know this.

Says Tuka, many mouths speak many words, but know that without truth, nothing avails.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Know your own true form. Why do you blame the mirror? This is not the doing of body-thinking; it is a gift that Narayana has given. An arrow has to strike the vital spot, but the one who only lets it fly does not know this. Tuka says: many mouths speak many words. Without truth, none of it gets anywhere.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells the seeker to stop faulting the mirror for the face it shows: see your own real nature instead of blaming what reflects it back. He warns that this seeing cannot be manufactured by the ego's effort; it comes as God's gift. The arrow image sharpens the point: it is not enough to loose words into the air, the shaft must land on the vital spot, and the careless archer never learns where that is. So the closing line cuts at empty talk: many tongues say many fine things, but without truth behind them nothing reaches its mark.

GATHA 0924

Faith and Trust

Faith, the diamond does not become glass

मराठी मूळ

न मनावी चिंता तुझी संतजनीं । हिरा स्पटिकमणी केंवि होय ॥१॥
 पडिला प्रसंग स्तळा त्या सारखा । देखिला पारखा भाव कांहीं ॥२॥
 बहुतांसी भय एकाचिया दंडें । बहुत या तोंडें वचनासी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं वैखरी बा सर । करायाचे चार वेडे वेडे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*O saints, do not entertain worry. Can a diamond ever become a mere crystal?**Whatever situation arises, one responds accordingly; I have seen some trace of this detachment.**Many fear the punishment meant for one offender, and many mouths speak these words.**Says Tuka, vaikhari holds no power here. Those who only enact the outer forms are fools, fools indeed.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Saints, do not let worry into your minds. Can a diamond ever become mere glass? Whatever situation comes, one meets it as it asks; I have seen some of that detachment. Many take fright at the punishment meant for one offender, and many mouths repeat the same words. Tuka says: mere speech has no power here. Those who only act out the outer forms are fools, fools indeed.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram steadies his fellow seekers against fear: a true thing keeps its nature, and a diamond can never sink into being common glass. The settled soul simply meets each circumstance as it comes, with the calm of detachment. He notes how fear spreads by contagion, a crowd trembling at a threat aimed at one, all repeating the same anxious words. Against that he sets the test of reality: outward show and recited phrases carry no weight. To go through the motions of devotion without inward truth is folly, and he says it twice.

GATHA 0925

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, handing over the whole burden

मराठी मूळ

यथाविधि पूजा करी । सामोग्री तोंवरि हे नाहीं ॥१॥
 आतां माझा सर्व भार । तूं दातार चालविसी ॥२॥
 मंगळ तें तुझी जाणां । नारायणा काय तें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे समपिनला । तुज विठ्ठला देहभाव ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I would worship You with proper rites, but I lack the materials for it.

Now You, the Bountiful One, carry my entire burden and conduct it forward.

You know what is auspicious, O Narayana.

Says Tuka, I have surrendered to You, O Vitthal, this very sense of being the body.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I would worship you with the proper rites, but I do not have the materials for them. Now you, the giver, carry my whole burden and lead it forward. You know what is auspicious, Narayana; you know what that is. Tuka says: I have given it over to you, Vitthal, this very sense of being the body.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram cannot perform formal worship; he lacks the ritual articles for it. Rather than fail, he turns the lack into surrender, handing his entire load to God and asking God to carry it forward in his place. He no longer tries to decide what is right or auspicious; he leaves that judgment to Narayana, who knows. The final offering is the deepest one: not flowers or rites but the body-sense itself, the conviction of being this body, laid at Vitthal's feet. When even that is given away, nothing of his own is left to manage.

GATHA 0926

The Necessity of Experience

The found secret, the only vessel

मराठी मूळ

भवसिंधूचें हें तारुं । मज विचारुं पाहातां ॥१॥
चितीं तुझे धरिण पाय । सुख काय तें तेथें ॥२॥
माझ्या खुणा मनापाशीं । तें या रसीं बुडालें ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे वर्म आलें । हातां भलें हें माझ्या ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When I consider it, this is the vessel to cross the ocean of existence.

I shall hold Your feet in my chitta; all happiness resides there.

My inner marks are with the mind, and that mind is drowned in this bliss.

Says Tuka, the secret has come into my hands. This is my good fortune.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When I look into it, this is the boat that carries me across the ocean of birth and death. I will hold Your feet in my mind. What other happiness is there than that? My inner marks are kept in my mind, and that mind has drowned in this sweetness. Tuka says: the secret has come into my hands. This is my good fortune.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram has found one thing and named it as everything. The world is an ocean you cannot cross on your own, and he says Vitthal's feet are the boat. So he keeps his mind fixed on those feet, and asks what happiness could possibly lie anywhere else. The deepest signs of his own self, the marks he kept inside, have dissolved into the sweetness of this attention. He calls it a secret because it cannot be argued out; it can only be received, and he says it has fallen into his hands.

GATHA 0927

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the senses made pure by the Name

मराठी मूळ

पाहातां श्रीमुख सुखावलें सुख । डोळ्यांची भूक न वजे माझी ॥१॥
 जिह्वे गोडी तीन अक्षरांचा रस । अमृत जयास फिकें पुढें ॥२॥
 श्रवणीची वाट चोखाळली शुद्ध । गेले भेदाभेद वारोनियां ॥३॥
 महामळें मन होतें जें गांदलें । शुद्ध चोखाळलें स्पटिक जैसें ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझ्या जीवाचें जीवन । विठ्ठल निधान सांपडलें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Gazing upon Your blessed face, my joy overflows, yet the hunger of my eyes is never satisfied.

On my tongue is the sweetness of those three syllables, before which even nectar tastes bland.

The path of my ears has been purified; all distinctions of difference are swept away.

My mind, which was soiled by great impurities, has become clear as crystal.

Says Tuka, the treasure that is Vitthal, the very life of my jiva, has been found.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When I gaze on His blessed face, joy fills me with joy, and the hunger of my eyes will not go. On my tongue is the taste of three syllables; before it, even nectar is flat. The path of my ears has been swept clean and pure, and difference and no-difference are driven away. My mind, which was caked with great filth, has become clear like crystal. Tuka says: the very life of my life, the treasure that is Vitthal, has been found.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes what happens when the senses are turned wholly toward God. The face of Vitthal feeds his eyes, yet the eyes only grow hungrier, because this joy does not satiate and dull, it deepens. The Name on his tongue makes nectar itself taste flat, and the ears, scoured clean, no longer split the world into difference and sameness. The mind that was thick with impurity has gone clear as crystal. He names the cause plainly: Vitthal, the life of his life, has been found, and that finding is what purifies every sense at once.

GATHA 0928

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the embrace that ends duality

मराठी मूळ

हा चि परमानंद आळंगीन बाहीं । क्षेम देतां ठायीं द्वैत तुटे ॥1॥
 बोलायासि मात मन निवे हरषें चित्त । दुणी वाढे प्रीत प्रेमसुख ॥ध्रु॥
 जनांत भूषण वैकुंठीं सरता । फावलें स्वहिता सर्वभावे ॥2॥
 तुटला वेव्हार माया लोकाचार । समूळ संसार पारुषला ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे हा विठ्ठल चि व्हावा । आणिकी या जीवा चाड नाही ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*This is the supreme bliss: I shall embrace Him in my arms. When we clasp each other, all duality is destroyed.**When I speak with Him, my mind is soothed, my chitta rejoices in delight, and the joy of love doubles.**He is the ornament among people and the accepted one in Vaikuntha. One's own welfare is fully attained through Him in every way.**All worldly dealings, all illusion and social custom, are cut away at the root. Samsara itself has withered and dried up.**Says Tuka, let there be only Vitthal. This jiva desires nothing else.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

This itself is the highest bliss: I will hold Him in my arms. When we embrace, on the spot, all duality breaks. When I speak with Him my mind grows calm, my heart leaps with joy, and the love, the sweetness of love, doubles. He is the ornament among people and the honored one in Vaikuntha; through Him my own good is gained in every way. All dealings, all illusion and social custom, are cut. Worldly life has withered from the root. Tuka says: let there only be Vitthal. This soul wants nothing else.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pushes love past worship into union, and names the price and the prize together. The embrace is not a figure of speech to him; in it, the gap between worshipper and worshipped breaks open, and duality ends. Speaking with Vitthal calms his mind and doubles his love, and he sees that the one who is honored both among people and in heaven is the whole of his own good. The cost is everything else: business, illusion, social custom, the entire round of worldly life, all cut away at the root. His final word leaves no room to bargain: only Vitthal, and nothing besides.

GATHA 0929

Prayers

Prayer, God as the nursing mother

मराठी मूळ

आमुची कृपाळू तूं होसी माउली । विठ्ठले साउली शरणागता ॥1॥
 प्रेमपान्हा स्तनीं सदा सर्वकाळ । दृष्ट हे निर्मळ अमृताची ॥ध्रु॥
 भूक तान दुःख वाटों नेदीं सीण । अंतरीचा गुण जाणोनियां ॥2॥
 आशा तृष्णा माया चिंता दवडीं दुरी । ठाव आह्मां करीं खेळावया ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे लावीं संताचा सांगात । जेथें न पवे हात किळकाळाचा ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You are our compassionate mother, O Vitthal, sheltering those who seek refuge.

The milk of love flows ever from Your breast. Your gaze is pure and nectarous.

You do not let hunger, thirst, sorrow, or weariness touch us, knowing well our inner nature.

Drive far away desire, craving, illusion, and worry. Make a place for us to play freely.

Says Tuka, keep me in the company of saints, where the hand of the shrieking one cannot reach.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You are our merciful mother, O Vitthal, the shade for those who come for refuge. The milk of love is in Your breast, always, at every hour; Your gaze is pure and full of nectar. You do not let hunger, thirst, sorrow, or weariness touch us, because You know the nature within us. Drive far away desire, craving, illusion, and worry. Make a place for us to play freely. Tuka says: keep me in the company of the saints, where the hand of the shrieking one cannot reach.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays to God as a mother, not a master, and asks to be cared for like a child at the breast. Vitthal is the shade for whoever takes refuge, the milk of love always flowing, the gaze that is pure nectar; a mother knows her child's inner state and shields it from hunger and pain. So he asks that desire, craving, illusion, and worry be carried far off, and that a safe space be cleared where he can simply play. The last line names the place of safety: the company of the saints, which he calls the one ground that death, the shrieking one, cannot reach into.

GATHA 0930

The Saints

The saints, the true inheritance

मराठी मूळ

जेथें जावें तेथें कपाळ सरिसें । लाभ तो विशेणें संतसंगें ॥१॥
 पूर्व पुण्यें जरि होतीं सानुकूळ । अंतरायमूळ नुपजे तेथें ॥२॥
 भाग्य तरी नव्हे धन पुत्र दारा । निकट वास बरा संतांपायीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे हे चि करावी मिरासी । बळी संतांपाशीं द्यावा जीव ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Wherever one goes, one's fate follows along. True gain comes only through the company of saints.**If past merits were favorable, no obstacles would arise at the root of the path.**Real fortune is not wealth, children, or a spouse. Dwelling near the feet of saints is the true good.**Says Tuka, this alone is the true inheritance: to offer one's very jiva at the saints' feet.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Wherever you go, your fate goes with you. The real gain is found above all in the company of saints. If past merits are favorable, no obstacle springs up at the root of the path. True fortune is not wealth, not sons, not a wife. To dwell close, at the feet of the saints, is the real good. Tuka says: make this alone your inheritance: to lay down your very life at the saints' feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures fortune against the only thing he counts as gain. Wherever you travel, your own karma travels with you, so changing your circumstances changes nothing; the one real gain is the company of saints. He bluntly denies the usual prizes: wealth, sons, a spouse are not fortune at all. What is fortune is to live near the feet of the holy, where past merit clears the obstacles from the path. He calls this the one inheritance worth claiming, and sets its full price: to offer your very life there.

GATHA 0931

Renunciation

Renunciation, one firm resolve

मराठी मूळ

आतां कांहीं सोस न करीं आणीक । धरीन तें एक हें चि दृढ ॥१॥
 जेणें भवसिंधु उतरिजे पार । तुटे हा दुस्तर गर्भवास ॥२॥
 जोडीन ते आतां देवाचे चरण । अविनाश धन परमार्थ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे बरा जोडला हा देह । मनुष्यपणें इहलोका आलों ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now I shall strive for nothing else. I hold firm to this one resolve alone.

That resolve by which one crosses to the far shore of the ocean of existence, and this terrible womb-dwelling, so hard to escape, is cut away.

I shall now earn the feet of God: the imperishable wealth, the supreme purpose.

Says Tuka, this human body is well obtained. I have come to this world in human form.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now I will crave nothing else. I hold to this one thing, and hold it firm. The resolve by which the ocean of birth and death is crossed, and this hard, terrible dwelling in the womb is cut off. Now I will earn the feet of God: the wealth that never perishes, the highest purpose. Tuka says: this body has been well gained. I have come into this world in human form.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram narrows his whole life down to a single resolve and names why it is worth everything. He renounces all other longing and fixes on one thing alone, because that one thing carries a person across the ocean of birth and death and ends the painful cycle of being born again and again. The feet of God, he says, are the only wealth that does not perish and the only true aim. The poem closes by naming the rare chance: a human birth, which he calls well gained precisely because it makes this resolve possible.

GATHA 0932

The Power of the Name

The Name, wealth for the final hour

मराठी मूळ

जतन करीन जीवें । शुद्धभावे करूनी ॥१॥
 विठ्ठल विठ्ठल हें धन । जीवन अंतकाळींचें । ध्रु.॥
 वदनळ हें संचित सारुं । बरवा करुं उदिम हा ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे हृदयपेटी । ये संपुटीं सांटवूं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I shall guard it with my very jiva, with pure devotion.

The name Vitthal, Vitthal is my wealth, my sustenance at the final hour.

I shall invest this accumulated store and carry on this blessed trade.

Says Tuka, I shall store it in the casket of my heart.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I will guard it with my very life, keeping it with a pure heart. The name Vitthal, Vitthal is my wealth, my sustenance at the hour of death. I will spend down this stored merit and carry on this good trade. Tuka says: I will store it away in the casket of my heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram treats the Name as treasure, and the whole poem speaks in the language of trade. He vows to guard the name Vitthal with his life and a clean heart, because it is the one wealth that will sustain him at the moment of death, when nothing else holds. He will invest his accumulated merit into this single trade, the repeating of the Name, as the only commerce worth doing. The closing image is a locked casket: the heart, where this wealth is stored safe until it is needed.

GATHA 0933

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the great Lord made easy

मराठी मूळ

एवढा प्रभु भावें । तेणें संपुष्टी राहावें ॥१॥
 होय भक्तीं केला तैसा । पुरवी धरावी ते इच्छा ॥२॥
 एवढा जगदानी। मागे तुळसीदळ पाणी ॥३॥
 आला नांवा रूपा । तुका ह्याने जाला सोपा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

So great a Lord, yet He is content through devotion alone.

He becomes whatever His devotee makes Him; He fulfills the wish that is held.

So mighty a giver to the world, yet He asks only for a tulsi leaf and water.

Says Tuka, He has taken name and form and become easy to reach.

IN PLAIN WORDS

So great a Lord, yet through devotion He will stay shut up small. He becomes whatever His devotee makes Him; He fulfills the wish that is held for Him. So vast a giver to the world, yet He asks for only a tulsi leaf and water. Tuka says: He has come into name and form, and so He has become easy.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram marvels at how the infinite makes itself small for love. The Lord who holds the whole world will let Himself be held in a tiny space, content with devotion alone, and will take whatever shape His devotee gives Him. The one who gives everything to the world asks in return only a leaf of tulsi and a little water, the offerings of the poor. The point lands in the last line: by taking on a name and a form, the unreachable God has made Himself easy to reach, which is the whole mercy of it.

GATHA 0934

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the union that ends sin and merit

मराठी मूळ

भाग्यें ऐसी जाली जोडी । आतां घडी विसंभेना ॥१॥
 विटेवरी समचरण । संतीं खुण सांगितली ॥२॥
 अवघें आतां काम सारुं । हा चि करुं कैवाड ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे खंडूं खेपा । पुढें पापापुण्याच्या ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*By good fortune such a union has been made. Now I cannot be parted from it for even a moment.**The saints have revealed the sign: those even feet upon the brick.**I shall set aside all other work now; I shall take up this one cause alone.**Says Tuka, I shall sever the future rounds of sin and merit.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

By good fortune such a union has come to me. Now I cannot bear to be parted from it even for a moment.
 The even feet upon the brick: the saints have shown me the sign. Now I will set aside every other task. This is the one work I will do. Tuka says: I will cut off the coming rounds of sin and merit.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks as one who has been joined to God and now cannot stand to be away from Him for an instant. He credits the saints with showing him the sign, the two level feet of Vitthal standing on the brick at Pandhari, as the place to fix his gaze. Having found it, he lays down all other work and takes up this alone as his single occupation. The closing claim is the radical one: he will sever even the future cycle of sin and merit, because both are bonds that keep the soul turning, and union with God ends the turning altogether.

GATHA 0935

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the mind made wholly one

मराठी मूळ

पतिव्रते जैसा भ्रतार प्रमाण । आह्मां नारायण तैशापरी ॥१॥
 सर्वभावें लोभ्या आवडे हें धन । आह्मां नारायण तैशापरी ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे एकविध जालें मन । विठ्ठला वांचून नेणे दुर्जे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*As a faithful wife holds her husband as her authority, so is Narayana to us.**As one consumed by greed loves wealth with his whole being, so is Narayana to us.*

Says Tuka, my mind has become wholly one. It knows nothing other than Vitthal.

IN PLAIN WORDS

As a faithful wife holds her husband as her whole measure, so Narayana is to us. As a greedy man, with his whole heart, loves wealth, so Narayana is to us. Tuka says: my mind has become one. It knows nothing other than Vitthal.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reaches for two everyday loves to say how total his devotion is. The faithful wife treats her husband as her one standard for everything; the miser loves his money with every fiber of his being. He takes both of those single-minded attachments and says: that is exactly what Narayana is to us, the one measure, the one love. The poem ends by naming the result without ornament: his mind has become one undivided thing, and it can no longer recognize anything except Vitthal.

GATHA 0936

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the Name on every faculty

मराठी मूळ

विठ्ठल गीतीं गावा विठ्ठल चितीं ध्यावा । विठ्ठल उभा पाहावा विठेवरी ॥१॥
 अनाथाचा बंधु विठ्ठल कृपासिंधु । तोडी भवबंधु यमपाश ॥२॥
 तो चि शरणागतां हा विठ्ठल मुक्तिदाता । विठ्ठल या संतांसमागमें ॥३॥
 विठ्ठल गुणनिधि विठ्ठल सर्व सिद्ध । लागली समाधि विठ्ठलनामें ॥४॥
 विठ्ठलाचें नाम घेतां जालें सुख । गोडावलें मुख तुका ह्मणे ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Sing Vitthal in your songs, meditate on Vitthal in your chitta, behold Vitthal standing upon the brick.
Vitthal is the friend of the helpless, the ocean of mercy. He severs the bonds of samsara and the noose of Yama.
He alone is the giver of liberation to those who surrender. Vitthal is found in the company of saints.
Vitthal is the treasure of virtues, the source of all attainments. Through Vitthal's name, samadhi is attained.
Says Tuka, by taking Vitthal's name, my mouth has grown sweet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Sing Vitthal in your songs, hold Vitthal in your mind, look on Vitthal standing upon the brick. Vitthal is the brother of the helpless, the ocean of mercy; He cuts the bonds of worldly life and the noose of Yama. He alone gives liberation to those who surrender; Vitthal is found in the company of the saints. Vitthal is the treasure of all virtues, the source of every attainment; through Vitthal's name, deep stillness comes. Tuka says: when I take Vitthal's name, joy comes, and my mouth has turned sweet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets one name to every act of the body and mind: sing it, meditate on it, gaze on Vitthal upon the brick. He stacks up what that name does, naming the stakes each time: Vitthal is brother to the helpless, an ocean of mercy who cuts the bonds of worldly life and even the noose of death, and gives liberation to anyone who surrenders. He locates where the living God is found, in the company of the saints, and what the Name brings, the deep stillness of samadhi. The closing line is plain and bodily: the very taste of saying the Name has turned his mouth sweet.

GATHA 0937

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, catching God with the saints

मराठी मूळ

विठो सांपडावया हातीं । ठावी जाली एक गती । न धरीं भय चितीं । बळ किती तयाचें ॥१॥
 लागे आपण चि हातीं । किंव भाकावी काकुलती । करी मग चितीं । असेल तें तयाचें ॥२॥
 एकलिया भावबळें । कै सांपडे तो काळें । वैष्णवांच्या मेळें । उभा ठाके हाकेसी ॥३॥
 बांधा माझिया जीवासी । तुका ह्मणे प्रेमपाशीं । न सोडीं तयासी । सर्वस्वासी उदार ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

To catch hold of Vitthal, I have learned one sure way. I hold no fear in my chitta; how much strength does He hold?

He comes into your hands on His own; why not beg with pitiful entreaty? Then He does whatever is in His chitta.

By the force of solitary devotion alone, how will He ever be caught? But in the company of the Vaishnavas, He stands ready at their call.

Says Tuka, bind my jiva with the rope of love. I will not let go of Him, for He is generous with all that He has.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To catch Vitthal in my hands, I have learned one sure way. Hold no fear in your mind: how much strength does He really have? He comes into your hands of His own accord; so why not beg Him with pitiful pleading? Then He does whatever is in His heart. By the force of lonely devotion alone, when will He ever be caught? But in the gathering of the Vaishnavas, He stands ready at a single call. Tuka says: bind my soul with the rope of love. I will not let Him go, for He gives away all that He has.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram shares a strategy for laying hold of God, and the surprise is how gentle it is. He says to drop fear, because against love God has no real strength to resist; He comes into your hands on His own. So the way is not force but pitiful pleading, surrendering and letting God then do as He pleases. The key turn is in the third verse: devotion practiced alone, in isolation, rarely catches Him, but in the company of the Vaishnavas He stands ready at a single call. So Tuka asks to be bound with the rope of love and vows never to release the God who, once caught, gives away everything He has.

GATHA 0938

The Saints

Praise of the saints, all heaven waits on them

मराठी मूळ

वाट वैकुंठीं पाहाती । भक्त कें पां येथें येती । तयां जन्ममरणखंती । नाहीं चित्तीं परलोक ॥1॥
 धन्यधन्य हरिचे दास । तयां सुलभ गर्भवास । ब्रह्मादिक करिती आस । तीर्थावास भेटीची ॥धु.॥
 कथाश्रवण व्हावयास । यमधर्मा थोर आस । पाहे रात्रदिवस । वाट कर जोडोनियां ॥2॥
 रिद्धिसिद्धी न पाचारितां । त्या धुंडिती हरिभक्तां । मोक्ष सायोज्यता । वाट पाहे भक्तांची ॥3॥
 असती जेथें उभे ठेले । सदा प्रेमसुखें धाले । आणीक ही उद्धरिले । महादोषी चांडाळ ॥4॥
 सकळ करिती त्यांची आस । सर्वभावे ते उदास । धन्यभाग्य त्यांस । तुका ह्मणे दुरुषणें ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In Vaikuntha they watch the road, waiting for when the devotees will come. Those devotees carry no grief of birth and death, no grief over the afterlife in their chitta.

Blessed, blessed are the servants of Hari. Even the womb is easy for them. Brahma and the other gods long for the pilgrimage of meeting them.

Yama Dharma greatly desires to hear the sacred stories, watching day and night with folded hands.

Riches and powers come unsummoned, seeking out the devotees of Hari. Liberation itself waits at the path of the devotees.

Wherever they stand, they are forever filled with the joy of love, and they uplift even the greatly faulted and the most despised.

All beings long for them, yet they themselves remain wholly detached. Says Tuka, blessed is the fortune of those who receive their darshan.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In Vaikuntha they watch the road, waiting for the day the devotees come. Those devotees carry no grief of birth and death. There is no anxiety about the afterlife in their hearts. Blessed, blessed are the servants of Hari. Even the womb is easy for them. Brahma and the gods long to make the pilgrimage of meeting them. Yama, lord of dharma, longs to hear the sacred stories; he watches day and night with folded hands. Riches and powers come unsummoned, seeking out the devotees of Hari. Liberation itself waits at the path of these devotees. Wherever they stand, they are forever full of the joy of love. They lift up even the greatly faulted and the most despised. All beings long for them, yet they themselves stay wholly detached. Tuka says: blessed is the fortune of those who receive their darshan.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reverses the usual picture of heaven waiting at the end of the road, and puts Hari's devotees at the center instead. Vaikuntha, Brahma, and even Yama, the very judge of the dead, all stand in longing for these servants of Hari, who are free of the fear of birth, death, and the afterlife. The powers and the liberation that ordinary seekers strain after come on their own and wait at the devotee's feet. The mark of such a person is twofold: they are full of love's joy yet wholly detached, and they raise up even the lowest, the most despised. The stakes Tukaram names are simple: nearness to such a devotee, their darshan, is the highest fortune, higher than any heaven.

GATHA 0939

Worldly Metaphors

Warning against the counterfeit, gold over copper

मराठी मूळ

सोने दावी वरी तांबें तयापोटीं । खरियाचे साटीं विकुं पाहे ॥१॥
 पारखी तो जाणे तयाचे जीवींचें । निवडी दोहींचें वेगळालें ॥२॥
 क्षीरा नीरा कैसें होय एकपण । स्वादीं तो चि भिन्न भिन्न काढी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे थीता नागवला चि खोटा । अपमान मोटा पावईल ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One shows gold on the surface but hides copper within, hoping to sell it for the price of the real thing.

But the expert assayer knows the inner truth of his jiva and separates the two apart.

Just as milk and water may seem one, the one who discerns the taste separates them out.

Says Tuka, the one who stands firm in falsehood is already exposed. Great dishonor shall befall him.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One shows gold on the surface but hides copper inside, hoping to sell it for the price of the real thing. But the assayer knows the inner truth of his soul and separates the two apart. Milk and water may look like one thing; the one who tastes them separates them out. Tuka says: the one who stands firm in falsehood is already exposed. Great dishonor will come to him.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is warning against the pretense of holiness, the copper hidden under a coat of gold. The point is the assayer: there is one who tests, and the surface plating fools no one who knows how to look within. As a taster separates milk from water, the truth of a person's inner life is told apart from the show they put on. The warning is not contempt for the pretender but a hard fact about the pretense: false coin passes only until it meets the test, and then comes shame. Read against oneself, it asks where one is plating over copper and calling it gold.

GATHA 0940

Worldly Metaphors

Self-ruin, the man who breaks his own raft

मराठी मूळ

फोडुनि सांगडी बांधली माजासी । पैल थडी कैसे पावे सहजीं ॥१॥
 आपला घात आपण चि करी । आणिकां सांगतां नाइके तरी ॥२॥
 भुकेभेणें विष देऊ पाहे आतां । आपल्या चि घाता करुं पाहे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे एक चालतील पुढें । तयांसी वांकडें जातां ठके ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*One breaks apart a raft and ties the planks around his waist. How will he ever reach the far shore this way?
He brings ruin upon himself. Even when others warn him, he does not listen.
Out of fear of hunger he now reaches for poison, seeking to bring about his own destruction.
Says Tuka, those who walk a straight path move forward. Those who go crooked stumble and are stopped.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

One breaks apart a raft and ties the planks around his waist. How will he ever reach the far shore that way? He brings ruin on himself. Even when others warn him, he will not listen. Out of fear of hunger he now reaches for poison, working his own destruction. Tuka says: those who walk a straight path move forward. Those who go crooked stumble and are stopped.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram paints a man who destroys the very thing meant to carry him across, then straps the wreckage to his body and wonders why he cannot cross. The far shore is liberation; the raft is the means given for crossing, and the man dismantles it with his own hands. He pictures the same folly again: someone so afraid of going hungry that he swallows poison, choosing certain death over a passing want. The thread is willful self-ruin that refuses every warning. The closing line names the stakes plainly: the straight path moves forward, the crooked one stumbles and is stopped, so the choice of path is the whole matter.

GATHA 0941

Autobiography

The teacher's compassion, I cannot watch them drown

मराठी मूळ

उपकारासाठीं बोलों हे उपाय । येणेंविण काय आह्मां चाड ॥१॥
बुडतां हे जन न देखवे डोळां । येतो कळवळा ह्मणउनि ॥२॥
तुका ह्मणे माझे देखतिल डोळे । भोग देते वेळे येईल कळों ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*It is for the sake of helping others that I speak these remedies. Beyond this, I have no other concern.
I cannot bear to watch people drowning before my eyes. Compassion rises within me.
Says Tuka, my eyes see clearly. When the time of bhoga comes, the truth of these words will become known.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

It is for the sake of helping others that I speak these remedies. Beyond this, I have no other concern. I cannot bear to watch people drowning before my eyes. Compassion rises in me. Tuka says: my eyes see clearly. When the time of reaping comes, the truth of these words will be known.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram explains why he speaks at all: not for his own gain, but to help others, because he cannot stand by while people drown in the world. The remedies he offers are pressed out of compassion, not from any wish to be heard. He claims his sight is clear, that he sees what others do not. The stakes are deferred to the time of bhoga, the reckoning when each soul reaps what it has sown: only then, he says, will the truth of his warnings be proved. It is the stance of one who speaks unwelcome words now so they may be vindicated later.

GATHA 0942

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation to wake, drop your cleverness

मराठी मूळ

आठवे देव तो करावा उपाव । येर तजीं वाव खटपटा ॥१॥
 होई बा जागा होई वा जागा । वाउगा कां गा सिणसील ॥२॥
 जाणिवेच्या भारें भवाचिये डोहीं । बुडसी तों कांहीं निघेसि ना ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा पावसील भावें । जाणतां तें ठावें कांहीं नव्हे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If you remember God, seek that remedy. Abandon all other struggles; they are empty and useless.

Wake up, please wake up! Why do you tire yourself in vain?

Under the weight of your own cleverness, you sink in the deep pool of samsara and never rise again.

Says Tuka, you will reach God through bhava. Knowing, on its own, takes you nowhere.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If you remember God, take up that remedy. Drop all the other struggles; they are empty and useless. Wake up, please wake up. Why do you wear yourself out for nothing? Under the weight of your own cleverness you sink in the deep pool of samsara and never rise. Tuka says: you will reach God through bhava. Knowing, by itself, takes you nowhere.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram calls a sleeper to wake before he drowns. The only remedy worth taking up is the remembrance of God; every other scheme and exertion is wasted effort. He names the precise thing that pulls a person under: not ignorance but cleverness, the weight of one's own learning, which sinks the soul in the deep pool of samsara. The closing line draws the sharp line he means: bhava, loving devotion, reaches God, while knowledge on its own carries one nowhere. The stake is plain and urgent, drowning or rising, and the choice is between trusting the mind and trusting the heart's love.

GATHA 0943

Renunciation

Renunciation, refusing to deal in wealth and praise

मराठी मूळ

माझ्या मुखावाटा नयो हें वचन । व्हावें संतान द्रव्य कोणां ॥1॥
 फुकाचा विभाग पतनदुःखासी । दोहींमुळें त्यासी तें चि साधे ॥ध्रु॥
 नाइकावी निंदा स्तुति माझ्या कानें । सादर या मनें होऊनियां ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे देव असाध्य यामुळें । आशामोहजाळें गुंतलिया ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let these words never leave my mouth: that any person receive offspring or wealth.

Such gratuitous dispensing only leads to the grief of downfall; both lead to the same result.

Let neither slander nor praise reach my ears, nor be received with an attentive mind.

Says Tuka, God becomes unattainable because of this: one is caught in the net of desire and delusion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let these words never leave my mouth: that any person should gain offspring or wealth. Such free dispensing leads only to the grief of downfall; both ends meet in the same ruin. Let neither slander nor praise reach my ears, nor be taken in with an eager mind. Tuka says: God becomes unreachable because of this, when one is caught in the net of desire and delusion.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram refuses the role of a wonder-worker who hands out children and riches, and prays such words never pass his lips. He sees that granting these gifts only feeds the very desires that lead to a fall; giver and receiver alike are dragged down. He extends the refusal to his own ears: he wants neither blame nor flattery to enter and stir his mind. The reason he gives is the stake itself: God becomes unattainable to anyone caught in the net of craving and delusion, and gifts, fame, and the appetite for praise are the strands of that net. The poem is a deliberate shutting of doors that the world thinks of as rewards.

GATHA 0944

The Necessity of Experience

Inner experience, the heart is its own witness

मराठी मूळ

चित्त ग्वाही तेथें लौकिकाचें काई । स्वहित तें ठायीं आपणापें ॥1॥
 मनासी विचार तो चि साच भाव । व्यापक हा देव अंतर्बाहीं ॥ध्रु॥
 शुद्ध भावा न लगे सुचावा परिहार । उमटे साचार आणिके ठायीं ॥2॥
 भोगित्यासी काज अंतरीचें गोड । बाहिरल्या चाड नाहीं रंगें ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे भाव शुद्ध हें कारण । भाट नारायण होईल त्यांचा ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When chitta itself is the witness, what use is public opinion? True self-interest lies within oneself.

Whatever arises as true reflection in the mind is itself true bhava, for God pervades all things, within and without.

Pure bhava needs no external justification; its truth shines forth of its own accord.

The one whose whole concern is the inner sweetness cares nothing for outward colors.

Says Tuka, pure bhava is the very cause. Narayana Himself will become the bard of such a soul.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When the heart itself is the witness, what use is the opinion of the world? True good lies within oneself. Whatever rises as true reflection in the mind is itself true bhava, for this God fills all things, within and without. Pure bhava needs no outside defense; its truth shows of its own accord. The one whose whole care is the inner sweetness has no need of outward show. Tuka says: pure bhava is the cause of everything. Narayana Himself will become the bard of such a soul.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram locates the test of devotion inside, not in public opinion. When the heart is its own witness, the verdict of the crowd no longer matters, and one's real good is found within. Because God pervades everything, inside and out, whatever truly rises in the mind is itself genuine bhava and needs no external justification; it shines on its own. The person fixed on inner sweetness stops caring how things look from outside. The claim is bold and meant to land: where bhava is pure, Narayana Himself becomes that soul's praise-singer, so the only thing worth securing is the purity of the heart, not the approval of others.

GATHA 0945

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, these are not my words

मराठी मूळ

नव्हती माझे बोल । अवघें करितो विठ्ठल ॥१॥
कांहीं न धरावी खंती । हित होइल धरा चित्तीं ॥२॥
खोटी ते अहंता । वाट टाकिली सांगतां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

These are not my own words. Vitthal does everything.

Hold no sorrow; keep this in your chitta: your good will come.

False is that ego-pride. In the very telling, the path to abandon it has been shown.

Says Tuka, He alone knows what is His. I am merely His measure-holder.

IN PLAIN WORDS

These are not my own words. Vitthal does everything. Hold no sorrow; keep this in your heart: your good will come. False is that ego-pride. In the very telling, the way to drop it has been shown. Tuka says: He alone knows what is His. I am only His measure-holder.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram empties himself of authorship: the words are not his, Vitthal does it all. From this he draws a comfort for the listener, telling them to let go of grief because their good is assured. The obstacle he names is the false sense of I, the ego-pride, and he says the cure is already given in the act of speaking these words, which themselves point the way out. He ends by making himself small: God alone knows what belongs to Him, and Tukaram is merely the one who holds the measure, the vessel through which the grain is poured. The whole abhanga hands the doing back to God.

GATHA 0946

Renunciation

Discipline, walling off desire

मराठी मूळ

वासनेच्या मुखीं अदळूनि भीतें । निर्वाहापुरतें कारण तें ॥1॥
 या नांवें अंतरा आला नारायण । चित्तसमाधान खुण त्याची ॥ध्रु॥
 सर्वकाळ हा चि करणें विचार । विवेकीं सादर आत्मत्वाचे ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे जों जों भजनासी वळे । अंग तों तों कळे सन्निधता ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Erect a wall before the mouth of desire; allow only what is needed for sustaining life.

This is the sign that Narayana has entered within: the settling of chitta is His mark.

At all times, with discernment, be attentive to the nature of the Self.

Says Tuka, the more one turns toward devotion, the more one feels God's nearness.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Build a wall before the mouth of desire; allow only what is needed to sustain life. This is the sign that Narayana has come within: the settling of the heart is His mark. At all times make this your reflection; with discernment, stay attentive to the nature of the Self. Tuka says: the more one turns toward devotion, the more one feels God's nearness.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram gives a plain discipline: dam the mouth of desire, and let through only what bare living requires. He then tells how to know it is working: when the heart grows quiet, that settled stillness is itself the sign that Narayana has entered within. The work is constant, a steady, discerning attention to the Self rather than a single act. The closing line states the reward as a direct ratio: the more one turns toward devotion, the nearer God is felt to be. So restraint is not bleak self-denial here but the clearing in which God's presence becomes tangible.

GATHA 0947

*The Necessity of Experience**Inner experience, renunciation by renunciation*

मराठी मूळ

चिंतनें अचिंत राहिलों निश्चळ । तें चि किती काळ वाढवावें ॥१॥
 अबोल्याचा काळ आतां ऐशावरी । वचनाची उरी उरली नाही ॥२॥
 करुं आला तों तों केला लवलाहो । उरों च संदेहे दिला नाही ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मोह परते चि ना मागें । ह्मणउनि त्यागें त्याग जाला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Through contemplation I abided in the state of no-thought, still and motionless. How long should one go on prolonging even that?

The time of silence has come upon me now. Not even a residue of speech remains.

Whatever came to be done was done swiftly, leaving no room for doubt.

Says Tuka, attachment would simply not retreat. And so through renunciation itself, renunciation was accomplished.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Through contemplation I came to rest in no-thought, still and unmoving. How long should one keep prolonging even that? The time of silence has come upon me now. Not even a trace of speech is left. Whatever there was to do was done at once, leaving no room for doubt. Tuka says: attachment simply would not retreat. And so by renunciation itself, renunciation was accomplished.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the far end of the inner journey, where even contemplation has done its work and left him in motionless stillness, and he wonders how long one should keep dwelling there. Silence has now overtaken him, so complete that no residue of speech remains. Everything that needed doing was finished swiftly, with no doubt left to linger. The final paradox is the heart of it: attachment would not let go on its own, so the very act of renouncing had itself to be renounced, until renunciation completed itself. He is naming a state past method, where the means dissolve into the end.

GATHA 0948

The Necessity of Experience

Inner experience, the formless and the form

मराठी मूळ

निर्गुणाचे घ्यावें गुणासी दर्शन । एकाएकीं भिन्न भेद घडे ॥१॥
 तुह्मां आह्मां आतां न पडे यावरी । आहों तें चि बरी जेथें तेथें ॥२॥
 आपणापासुनी नसावें अंतर । वेचिलें उत्तर ह्मणउनि ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे अंगा आली कठिन्यता । आमच्या अनंता तुह्मां ऐसी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The nirguna must take darshan of the saguna. Suddenly, separateness and difference arise.

Between You and me, no such thing falls now. We are as we are, wherever we are.

There should be no distance from one's own self. The answer has been spent, and so it is.

Says Tuka, firmness has come upon this body. Our Ananta, such is Your nature.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The formless must take darshan of the form. All at once, separateness and difference arise. Now nothing of that kind falls between You and me. We are as we are, wherever we are. There should be no distance from one's own self. The answer has been spent, and so it stands. Tuka says: a firmness has come upon this body. Our Ananta, such is Your own nature.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks from the meeting point of the nirguna and the saguna, the formless God and God with form. The moment the formless looks upon a form, separateness and difference spring up, the very gap between worshipper and worshipped. But he says that gap has now closed between him and God: they simply are as they are, with no distance left, since there can be no separation from one's own self. He reports a firmness, a settledness, that has come over his whole being. The closing turn gives the reason: this unshakable nature is God's own, Ananta's, and Tukaram has come to share in it, so the steadiness in him is really the steadiness of God.

GATHA 0949

The Necessity of Experience

Inner experience, made of You, nothing lacking

मराठी मूळ

तुज च पासाव जालोंसों निर्माण । असावें तें भिन्न कासयानें ॥१॥
 पाहावा जी ठायीं करुनि विचार । नुन्य कोठें फार असे चि ना ॥२॥
 ठेविलिये ठायीं आज्ञोचें पाळण । करुनि जतन राहिलोंसें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणें आतां बोलतसें स्पष्ट । जालों क्रियानष्ट तुह्माऐसा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

From You alone I have come into being. Why should what is, be separate from You?

Look, having deliberated here: there is nowhere any excess or lack at all.

In the place where I was kept, nurturing it, preserving it carefully, I have remained.

Says Tuka, now I speak plainly. I have become kriyaanashta, like You.

IN PLAIN WORDS

From You alone I came into being. Why should what is be separate from You? Look, after thinking it over here: there is nowhere any excess or any lack at all. In the place where I was set, I have stayed, tending it, guarding it with care. Tuka says: now I speak plainly. I have become free of all doing, just like You.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram traces his whole being back to a single source: he arose from God alone, so he asks why anything that exists should stand apart from God at all. He invites a calm inspection and reports the finding, that nowhere is there any surplus or any want; all is full and complete as it is. He has simply stayed where he was placed, keeping watch over it. The plain confession at the end carries the weight: he has become kriyaanashta, emptied of all sense of being the doer, and in this he says he has become like God. The claim is bold and not to be softened: identity with the divine through the loss of doership.

GATHA 0950

Longing and Separation

Wounded love, the open nerve

मराठी मूळ

प्रीतिभंग माझा केला पांडुरंगा । भक्तिरस सांगा कां जी तुझीं ॥१॥
 ह्मणऊनि कांहीं न ठेवीं चि उरी । आलों वर्मावरी एकाएकीं ॥२॥
 न देखों चि कांहीं परती माघारी । उरली ते उरी नाहीं मुळीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आला अंतरासी खंड । तरि माझें तोंड खविळलें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You have broken my love, O Panduranga. Why did You reveal the bhakti-rasa, sir?

Therefore I keep nothing in reserve. I have come to the vital point suddenly.

I see nothing going back at all. Whatever remainder remained is not there at the root.

Says Tuka, a rupture has come to the inner being. And so my face has grown bitter.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You have broken my love, Panduranga. Why did you ever show me the sweetness of bhakti, tell me that? So now I keep nothing back in reserve. All at once I have come to the raw and vital spot. I see nothing of me turning back; whatever was left in me is not there at the root anymore. Tuka says: a rupture has come to my inmost being, and so my mouth has turned bitter.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is accusing God of cruelty for a strange reason: God let him taste devotion in the first place. Once the sweetness of bhakti was shown, the longing it woke could not be unfelt, and now its breaking cuts to the nerve. He says he has held nothing in reserve and has nowhere to retreat; the very root of him has been emptied out. The bitterness in his mouth is not turning away from God but the wound of a love that has been opened and not yet answered.

GATHA 0951

Longing and Separation

Doubt in devotion, the restless mind

मराठी मूळ

लटिका ऐसा ह्मणतां देव । संदेहसा वाटतसे ॥१॥
 ऐसें आलें अनुभवा । मज ही सेवा करिता ॥२॥
 शून्याकारी बहु मोळा । भेंडोळा हे पवाडे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ताळी नाही । एके ठायीं चपळत्वे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When one calls God false like this, it feels like something resembling doubt.

Such has come to experience, even to me, while doing seva.

In the form of the void, very loose: these praises are a bundled skein.

Says Tuka, there is no taal. In one place, with quickness.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When a man calls God false, it feels like something close to doubt. This is what has come to my own experience, even while I am doing my service. In the shape of emptiness there is a great loose tangle; these praises are a bundled skein. Tuka says: there is no steady beat. In one single place the mind keeps darting about.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is honest about a doubt that rises in the middle of his own devotion. Even while serving, the thought comes that God seems unreal, and he admits this feels uncomfortably like real doubt. He sees his own praises as a tangled skein wound around an emptiness, and he cannot hold a steady rhythm: the mind keeps darting even when fixed in one place. The poem names the unsettled inner state that devotion does not automatically cure, and refuses to pretend the restlessness is not there.

GATHA 0952

Longing and Separation

Bold complaint, matching God's indifference

मराठी मूळ

जैशासाठी तैसैं हावें । हें बरवें कळलेंसे ॥१॥
 उदास तूं नारायणा । मी ही ह्मणा तुझी च ॥२॥
 ठका महाठक जोडा । जो धडफुडा लागासी ॥३॥
 एकांगी च भांडे तुका । नाहीं धोका जीवित्वें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*For whatever purpose, one must become accordingly. This good thing has become known.**You are udasina, O Narayana. I too, I say, am You Yourself.**Cheat, great cheat, a pair. The direct one is the one who gets it.**Says Tuka, I argue alone, on one side. There is no danger to the jiva.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

You must become whatever the situation asks of you; I have learned this well. You stay indifferent, Narayana, so I say I too am only You yourself. Cheat and great cheat, we make a pair; the one who comes at it straight is the one who gets caught. Tuka says: I will quarrel alone, one against you, and there is no risk to my life.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers God's coldness by mirroring it back. If God can stay detached and aloof, then Tukaram will claim he is no different from God himself, and meet indifference with indifference. He casts the two of them as a matched pair of tricksters, where the one who approaches honestly is the one who gets fooled. The defiance is the point: he will press his case alone, unafraid, because in his own life there is nothing left to lose.

GATHA 0953

Longing and Separation

Severance, love that meets only in thought

मराठी मूळ

बहुतां रीती काकुलती । आलों चित्तीं न धरा च ॥१॥
 आतां काशासाठीं देवा । मिथ्या हेवा वाढवूं ॥२॥
 तुझां आझां जाली तुटी । आतां भेटी चिंतनें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे लाजिरवाणें । आधर जिणें इच्छेचें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have come pleading in many ways; still You do not hold me in Your chitta.

Why then, O God, should I nourish this vain longing any further?

Between You and me the bond has broken. Now our meeting will be only in thought.

Says Tuka, it is a matter of shame: a life that leans upon desire.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have come pleading in many ways, and still you do not hold me in your heart. Then why, God, should I go on feeding this empty longing? The bond between you and me has snapped. Now our meeting will happen only in thought. Tuka says: it is a shameful thing, a life that leans on its own desire.

WHAT IT MEANS

After pleading again and again without response, Tukaram decides to stop. He chooses to break off the visible bond rather than keep nourishing a longing that God seems not to return. The meeting will now happen only inwardly, in thought, since outwardly there is nothing. The closing line turns the blade on himself: a life propped up by its own wanting is something to be ashamed of, so the renunciation is also a confession about the neediness of his own desire.

GATHA 0954

Longing and Separation

Betrayed prayer, calling God back

मराठी मूळ

आश्चर्य तें एक जालें । मना आलें माझिया ॥१॥
मढापाशीं करुणा केली । तैसी गेली वृथा हे ॥२॥
न यावा तो कैसा राग । खोटें मग देखोनि ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे कैचा बोला । शोध विठ्ठला माझिया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One strange thing has come to my mind.

I showed compassion to a dead thing, and that compassion went entirely to waste.

How can one not feel anger upon seeing such falseness?

Says Tuka, where are Your words now? Come, search for me, O my Vitthal.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One strange thing has come into my mind. I poured out my compassion before a dead thing, and it went entirely to waste. How can a man not feel anger when he sees such falseness? Tuka says: where have your words gone now? Come, search me out, my Vitthal.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the shock of pouring his heart out and getting nothing back, as if he had spent his tenderness on something lifeless. The anger he names is the anger of feeling deceived after trusting. Yet the bitterness does not end in rejection: he turns and demands that God keep his word. The last line reverses the whole complaint into a summons, telling Vitthal to come and seek him out, which is itself an act of refusing to let the bond go.

GATHA 0955

The Moral Ideal

Integrity in service, no flattery for hire

मराठी मूळ

मागायाची नाही इच्छा । जो मी ऐसा संकोचो ॥१॥
 लटिकियाची न करुं स्तुति । इच्छा चित्तीं धरुनि ॥२॥
 हिशोबें तें आलें घ्यावें । हें तों ठावें सकळांसी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे स्वामिसेवा । येथें देवा काशाची ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*I have no desire to beg. I hold myself back in this way.**I will not offer false praise while holding desire in my chitta.**What comes by honest reckoning, that one should accept. Everyone knows this much.**Says Tuka, this is the Lord's own service. What room is there for reward here, O God?*

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have no wish to beg; this is how I hold myself back. I will not offer false praise while hiding a want in my heart. What comes by honest reckoning, that one should take; everyone knows this much. Tuka says: this is the Lord's own service, so what room is there here for any reward, God?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets a code for how he will serve God: no begging and no flattery offered to get something in return. He will accept only what comes through honest dealing, the way anyone settles a fair account. The closing turn raises the whole thing higher: serving the Lord is not a transaction at all, so the question of payment does not even belong here. The poem holds devotion clean of the bargaining instinct, and quietly examines the self that would otherwise praise in order to be paid.

GATHA 0956

Longing and Separation

Silence over ritual, only the true meeting counts

मराठी मूळ

पाठवणें पडणें पायां । उद्धार वांयां काशाचा ॥१॥
 घडलें तें भेटीसवें । दिसेल बरवें सकळां ॥२॥
 न घडतां दृष्टादृष्टी । काय गोष्टी कोरड्या ॥३॥
 अबोल्यानं असे तुका । अंतर ऐका साक्षीतें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Sending messages and falling at feet: what liberation comes of it? All of it is wasted.

What truly happens, happens in the meeting itself. Only that will look right to everyone.

Without seeing each other face to face, all talk is dry and hollow.

Says Tuka, I remain in silence. Hear the witness within.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Sending messages, falling at the feet: what rescue ever comes of it? All of it is wasted. What truly happens, happens in the meeting itself; only that will look right to everyone. Without seeing each other face to face, all the talk is dry and hollow. Tuka says: I stay in my silence. Hear the witness within.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram dismisses the outward motions of devotion, the messages sent and the prostrations made, as getting no one anywhere on their own. What matters is the real meeting, the direct seeing of God face to face; without that, every word is dry. So he chooses silence over more empty talk and gestures. He appeals instead to the inner witness, the one who sees the heart directly, since that is the only audience before whom his case is honestly settled.

GATHA 0957

Devotion to Vitthal

Refuge found, the fearless place

मराठी मूळ

अभयाचें स्थळ । तें हें एक अचळ ॥१॥
तरि धरिला विश्वास । ठेलों होउनियां दास ॥२॥
पुरली आवडी । पायीं लागलीसे गोडी ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे कंठीं नाम । अंगीं भरलें सप्रेम ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This is the one immovable place of fearlessness.

Therefore I placed my trust here and became a servant.

My longing is fulfilled; sweetness has taken hold at Your feet.

Says Tuka, Your name is on my throat, and love has filled my every limb.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This is the one unshakable place of fearlessness. So I placed my trust here and became a servant. My longing is fulfilled; a sweetness has taken hold at your feet. Tuka says: your name is in my throat, and love has filled my every limb.

WHAT IT MEANS

After so much complaint and ache, this poem rests. Tukaram has found a place that does not move and does not threaten, and on that ground he commits himself as a servant. The restless longing of the other poems is here answered: a sweetness settles at God's feet and the wanting is stilled. The Name on his throat and the love filling his body are the signs that the search has arrived, that refuge has been taken and held.

GATHA 0958

Longing and Separation

Demand for the real, no more half-measures

मराठी मूळ

संदेह निरसे तरि रुचिकर । फिक्क्यासी आदर चवी नाही ॥१॥
 आतां नको मज खोटानें फटवूं । कोठें येऊं जाऊं वेळोवेळीं ॥२॥
 गेला तरि काय जीवाचें सांकडें । वांचउनि पुढें काय काज ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कसीं निवडा जी बरें । केलीं तैसीं पोरें आळीपायीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If doubt is dispelled, then there is relish in it. For what is bland, there is no savour, no esteem.

Now do not dupe me with falsehood. Where am I to keep coming and going, again and again?

If the jiva departs, what of it? Having survived thus far, what work remains ahead?

Says Tuka, please judge rightly, O Lord. These children You have made fall at Your feet in supplication.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If the doubt is cleared away, then there is real taste in it; what stays bland holds no relish and no honor. Now do not cheat me with falseness. Where am I to keep coming and going, again and again? If this life departs, what of it? Having survived this far, what is left to do? Tuka says: judge it rightly, Lord. These children you have made are falling at your feet, pleading.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram refuses to settle for a tepid, half-felt devotion; only the doubt cleared away gives the thing real savor. He presses God to stop putting him off with empty promises, tired of the endless coming and going with no resolution. He even waves away the loss of life itself, asking what more there is to wait for. The closing turns it into a plea for fairness: he and the others are God's own children, fallen at the feet, and he asks the Lord to judge their case honestly.

GATHA 0959

Confession and Sin

Confession, habit against true experience

मराठी मूळ

वदे वाणी परि दुर्लभ अनुभव । चालीचा चि वाहो बहुतेक ॥१॥
 आह्मी ऐसें कैसें राहावें निश्चळ । पाठिलाग काळ जितितसे ॥२॥
 वाढवितां पोट दंभाचे पसारे । येतील माघारे मुदला तोटे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे बरें जागवितां मना । तुमच्या नारायणा अभयें करें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*The tongue speaks, yet genuine experience is rare. The flow of habit carries most people along.
How are we to remain steady and still? Time pursues from behind and keeps defeating us.
In feeding the belly with the spread of hypocrisy, the principal itself will come back as loss.
Says Tuka, it is good to keep the mind awake. By Your fearless grace, O Narayana, let us act.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

The tongue speaks, but real experience is rare; for most people it is only the drift of habit carrying them along. How are we to stay steady and still? Time hunts us from behind and keeps defeating us. Feed the belly with the spread of hypocrisy, and even the principal comes back as loss. Tuka says: it is good to keep the mind awake. By your fearless grace, Narayana, let us act.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram draws the line between talk and real experience, admitting that most lives, including the danger in his own, run on mere habit rather than truth. He names two threats: time, which keeps wearing the soul down, and hypocrisy, the show of piety used to feed the belly, which ends up costing more than it earns. The cure he points to is wakefulness, keeping the mind alert rather than drifting. The closing leans on God's fearless grace, since the strength to act rightly is asked for, not assumed.

GATHA 0960

Longing and Separation

Complaint as theology, God's restless game

मराठी मूळ

उगें चि हें मन राहातें निश्चळ । तरि कां तळमळ साट होती ॥१॥
काय तुमचीं नेणों कवतुक विंदानें । सवौत्तमपणें खेळतसां ॥२॥
नानाछंदें आह्मां नाचवावें जीवां । वाढवाव्या हांवा भलत्यापुढें ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे तुझी आपुली प्रतिष्ठा । वाढवावया चेष्टा करीतसां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*If this mind were to remain still and unmoving, why would torment and restlessness arise as exchange?
Who knows what playful devices are Yours? You play with supreme excellence.
You make us jivas dance in various compulsions, inflating desires before all manner of things.
Says Tuka, You are busy with the sport of enlarging Your own prestige and glory.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

If this mind would simply stay still and unmoving, why would all this torment and churning arise instead? Who knows what playful tricks are yours? You play, and you play supremely well. With one device after another you make us living souls dance, swelling our cravings in front of every kind of thing. Tuka says: you are busy with this sport, enlarging your own prestige and glory.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram throws the blame for human restlessness back onto God, half in accusation and half in awe. If the mind could just be still, there would be no torment; since it cannot, he reasons that the unrest must be God's own doing. He pictures God as a master player who makes the living souls dance through their cravings, dangling desire before them at every turn. The sharp last line says God does all this to magnify his own glory, naming the suspicion that the whole restless world is the Lord's game while keeping it inside the relationship of devotee and Lord.

GATHA 0961

The Necessity of Experience

Turning the tables, the path of selfhood

मराठी मूळ

आह्मी बळकट जालों फिराउनी । तुमच्या वचनीं तुह्यां गोऊं ॥1॥
 जालें तेव्हां जालें मागील तें मागें । आतां वर्मलागें ठावीं जालीं ॥ध्रु॥
 तोडावया अवघ्या चेष्टांचा संबंध । शुद्धापाशीं शुद्ध बुद्ध व्हावें ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मां आत्मत्वाची सोय । आपण चि होय तैसा चि तूं ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*We have grown strong again, having turned back. In Your own words, we shall now ensnare You.**What happened then, happened; let the past be past. Now the vital point has become known to us.**To sever the connection with all strivings, one must become purely awakened beside the Pure.**Says Tuka, for us there is the path of atmatva. You Yourself are just exactly that.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

We have grown strong again, having turned back. With your own words we will now bind you. What happened then is done; let the past stay in the past. Now the vital point has become known to us. To cut the link with all our strivings, one must become pure and awake beside the Pure. Tuka says: for us there is the way of the Self. You yourself are exactly that.

WHAT IT MEANS

After the wounds and complaints, Tukaram comes back stronger and turns the relationship around: he will hold God to God's own promises. He lets the painful past go and points to what he has now grasped, the vital secret. The way forward is to sever the tie with all anxious effort and stand clean and awake beside the Pure. The closing names the heart of it, the path of atmatva, selfhood, where the devotee realizes that God is not other but is exactly what he himself is.

GATHA 0962

Prayers

Impatient prayer, why the delay

मराठी मूळ

तुम्ही साच नुपेक्षाल हा भरवसा । मज जाणतसां अधीरसें ॥१॥
 कासया घातला लांबणी उद्धार । ठेवा करकर वारुनियां ॥२॥
 सुटों नये ऐसें कळले निरुते । कां घ्यावे मागुतें आळवुनि ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुम्ही सभाग्य जी देवा । माझा तुम्हां केवा काय आला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*I trust that You, being true, will not neglect me. You know me as one who is impatient.**Why has my liberation been deferred so long? Set aside this friction and resentment.**It has become clearly known that there is no escape. Then why must I keep being called back again?**Says Tuka, You are fortunate, O God. What urgency of mine has come to You?*

IN PLAIN WORDS

I trust You. You are true; You will not pass me by. You know how impatient I am. Why has my deliverance been put off so long? Set this friction aside; stop the endless quarreling. I see it clearly now: there is no escape. So why must I keep being called back again? Tuka says: You are fortunate, O God. What loss is it to You to take charge of me?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses Vitthal on a promise he believes is owed and overdue. He starts from trust, then turns it into a complaint: if God is faithful, why is liberation deferred and why all this back and forth? He says he already knows there is no other way out, so being thrown back into the world makes no sense to him. The closing line is pointed almost to the edge of cheek: God risks nothing by saving him, so the delay is God's to answer for. It is the prayer of a soul that loves enough to argue.

GATHA 0963

Longing and Separation

Holding God to his title

मराठी मूळ

तुम्हां होईल देवा पडिला विसर । आम्हीं तें उत्तर यत्न केलें ॥१॥
 पतितपावन ब्रीदें मिरविसी । याचा काय देसी झाडा सांग ॥२॥
 आहाच मी नव्हे अर्थाचें भुकेलें । भलत्या एका बोलें वारेन त्या ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देह देईन सांडणें । सहित अभिमानें ओवाळुनि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Perhaps You have forgotten, O God. We have tried our best with every word.

You parade the title Purifier of the Fallen. Now give an account of it.

I am not hungry for wealth. I will ward off that hunger with whatever word comes.

Says Tuka, I shall offer up this body, and with it all pride, waving it as an offering.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Maybe You have forgotten me, O God. We have tried everything we can say. You wear the title Purifier of the Fallen. Now give an account of it. I am not hungry for wealth. Any small word from You would end that hunger. Tuka says: I will give up this body. I will wave it away as an offering, and all my pride with it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram takes God's own reputation and holds it up as a debt. The title "Purifier of the Fallen" is a claim about who God is; Tukaram demands that God live up to it now, on him. He insists he wants nothing material, only a word, a sign of being received. The last line shows the price he will pay: he offers his body and, harder still, his pride, surrendering the very self that has been bargaining. The poem turns God's name into a promise that cannot be left unkept.

GATHA 0964

Prayers

Clinging, refusing to let go

मराठी मूळ

जडलों अंगाअंगीं । मग ठेवीं प्रसंगीं । कांहीं उरीजोगी । लोकीं आहे पुरती ॥१॥
 ठेवीं निवारुनि आधीं । अवकाश तो चि बुद्धी । सांपडली संधी । मग बळ कोणासी ॥२॥
 गळा बांधेन पायीं । हालों नेदीं ठायिचा ठायीं । निवाड तो तई । अवकळा केलिया ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ठावे । तुह्मी असा जी बरवे । बोभाटाची सवे । मुळींहुनी विठोबा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have clung to You, body against body. Now keep me close at hand. There is enough still to manage in this world.

First remove the obstacles. Clear a space, and that space itself is buddhi. Once the opportunity is seized, who has the strength to resist?

I shall bind myself to Your feet. I will not let You stir from that spot. The reckoning comes after one has been humbled.

Says Tuka, I know You well, O Vithoba. Loud crying out is in Your very nature, from the root.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have clung to You, body against body. Now keep me close. There is still enough left to manage in this world. First clear away the obstacles. Make me some room, and that room itself is wisdom. Once I have seized the chance, who has the strength to push me off? I will bind myself to Your feet. I will not let You stir from that spot. The reckoning comes after one has been brought low. Tuka says: I know You well, O Vithoba. Crying out loud has been Your nature from the very start.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a grip he has no intention of loosening. He has pressed himself against God and now refuses to be set down until the work of his life is done. He asks God to clear his obstacles, then quietly redefines the cleared space as wisdom itself. Having caught hold of God's feet, he says he will pin God in place and not let him move. The final line is knowing and warm: he tells Vithoba that loud crying out has always been part of God's own way, so God can hardly fault him for crying out in turn.

GATHA 0965

Prayers

Asking only for what is mine

मराठी मूळ

आह्मी शक्तिहीनें । कैसें कराल तें नेणें । लिगाडाच्या गुणें । खोळंबला राहिलों ॥१॥
 माझें मज देई देवा । असे ठेविला तो ठेवा । नाहीं करीत हेवा । कांहीं अधीक आगळा ॥२॥
 नाहीं गळां पडलों झोंड । तुमचें तें चि माझें तोंड । चौघां चार खंड । लांबणी हे अनुचित ॥३॥
 नाहीं येत बळा । आतां तुझासी दगोपाळा । तुका ह्मणे गळा । उगवा पायां लागतों ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*We are without strength. We do not know what You will do. Entangled in worldly bonds, I have remained stuck.
 O God, give me what is mine. Let the treasure You have kept remain. I do not covet anything extra or greater.
 I have not become a burden hanging at Your neck. What is Your mouth is my mouth, in all four directions. This long delay is improper.
 I have no more strength, O Gopala. Says Tuka, resolve this. I fall at Your feet.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

We have no strength. We do not know what You will do. Tangled in worldly bonds, I have stayed stuck. Give me what is mine, O God. Keep the treasure You have stored away; I do not covet anything extra, anything greater. I have not hung from Your neck like a dead weight. Your mouth and mine are one, in all four directions. This long delay is not right. I have no strength left now, O Gopala. Tuka says: untangle this. I fall at Your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes a careful, almost legal plea: he asks not for riches but only for what is rightfully his. He admits he is weak and snared in the world, unable to free himself. He insists he has not been a burden or a beggar at God's neck; his voice and God's are one, so the delay in answering shames them both. The closing surrender is plain: his

strength is gone, and he drops at Gopala's feet asking only that the knot be loosed. It is the prayer of someone claiming a birthright, not a favor.

GATHA 0966

Confession and Sin

Confession, kept far by want of devotion

मराठी मूळ

काय कृपेविण घालावें सांकडें । निंश्चिती निवाडें कोण्या एका ॥१॥
 आहों तैसीं पुढें असों दीनपणें । वेचूनि वचनें करुणेचीं ॥२॥
 धरुं भय आतां काय वाहों चिंता । काय करुं आतां आप्तपण ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Without Your grace, what pressure can I bring? Let there be a final verdict, one way or another.

Let me remain as I am, in all my lowliness, expending words of compassion.

Should I carry fear now? Should I bear worry? What use now is claiming kinship?

Says Tuka, we are jivas devoid of devotion. That is why God stays far, far away.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Without Your grace, what pressure can I bring? Let there be a final verdict, one way or the other. Let me stay as I am, in all my lowliness, spending words of pleading. Should I hold fear now? Should I carry worry? What use is it now to claim kinship with You? Tuka says: we are souls empty of devotion. That is why God stays far, far away.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks for a final answer and then sits down to wait in his own poverty. He sees that he has no leverage over God except grace itself, so he keeps spending the only thing he has, words of longing. He sets down fear, worry, and even the easy claim of being God's relative, since none of these can move God. The last line turns the gaze back on himself: God seems far away not because God is cold but because the soul is empty of real devotion. The honesty is the point, not the despair.

GATHA 0967

Longing and Separation

Longing, the servant left forgotten

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं उल्लंघिले कोणाचे वचन । मज कां नारायण दुरी जाला ॥१॥
 अशंकितें मनं करीं आळवण । नाहीं समाधान निश्चितीचें ॥२॥
 दासांचा विसर हें तों अनुचित । असे सर्व नीत पायांपाशीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुह्मां लाज येत नाहीं । आह्मां चिंताडोहीं बुडवितां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have not transgressed anyone's word. Why then has Narayana become distant from me?

With an undoubting mind I keep calling out, yet the certainty of His reassurance does not come.

To forget one's servant is not fitting. All right conduct and justice reside at Your feet.

Says Tuka, are You not ashamed to drown us in this deep pool of worry?

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have not broken anyone's word. Why then has Narayana grown distant from me? With an unwavering mind I keep calling out, yet the peace of being reassured never comes. To forget Your servant is not fitting. All right conduct and justice rest at Your feet. Tuka says: are You not ashamed to drown us in this deep pool of worry?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram protests an absence he has done nothing to earn. He has kept faith and broken no promise, so God's distance feels like injustice rather than punishment. He keeps calling without doubt, but the answering calm never arrives. He reminds Narayana that forgetting one's own servant goes against the very justice that lives at God's feet. The last line is bold to the edge of accusation: he asks whether God feels no shame at leaving his devotees to drown in worry. The boldness is itself a form of trust.

GATHA 0968

Longing and Separation

Longing, weaker than a mother's love

मराठी मूळ

जीव जायवरी सांडी करी माता । हे तों आश्चर्यता बाळकाची ॥१॥
 दुर्बळ कीं नाहीं आइकत कार्नी । काय नारायणीं न्यून जालें ॥२॥
 क्षणक्षणा माझा ने घावा सांभाळ । अभाग्याचा काळ ऐसा आला ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं वचनासी रुचि । फल कटवें चि तें तें होय ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A mother endures to the point of giving up her very life for the sake of her child. Such is the wonder of an infant's power.

Is He weak then, that He does not hear with His own ears? What deficiency has arisen in Narayana?

Moment by moment, You must keep watch over me. The time of the ill-fated one has come to this.

Says Tuka, my own words have lost all relish. Whatever fruit comes now is bitter and astringent.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A mother will give up her own life for her child. Such is the power of an infant. Is He weak, then, that He cannot hear with His own ears? What lack has come over Narayana? Watch over me from one moment to the next. The unlucky one's hour has come to this. Tuka says: my words have lost all their relish. Whatever fruit comes now tastes bitter and sharp.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures God against an ordinary mother and finds God strangely lacking. A mother will die for her infant; the helpless child commands that much love. So why does Narayana, who is not weak, seem not to hear? He begs for moment by moment care, naming himself the unlucky one whose time has turned hard. The closing image is bleak: even his own words have gone flat, and everything tastes bitter. He is not denying God's power; he is pleading that it be turned toward him as a mother's is toward her child.

GATHA 0969

Longing and Separation

Longing, calling out and getting silence

मराठी मूळ

ह्मणउनी दास नव्हे ऐसा जालों । अनुभवें बोलों स्वामीपुढें ॥१॥
कां नाही वचन प्रतिउत्तराचें । मी च माझ्या वेचें अट्टाहासें ॥२॥
कासयाने गोडी उपजावा विश्वास । प्रीती कांहीं रस वाचुनियां ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे अगा चतुरा शिरोमणी । विचारावें मनीं केशीराजा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Therefore I have become like one who is no longer truly a servant. I speak before my Lord from my own experience.

Why is there no word, no reply? I alone exhaust myself in loud, brazen outcry.

Without some sweetness, without the very rasa of love, how can faith or affection take root?

Says Tuka, O crown jewel of the wise, O Keshiraja, reflect upon this in Your mind.

IN PLAIN WORDS

And so I have become like one who is no longer truly a servant. I speak before my Lord out of what I have lived. Why is there no word, no reply? I wear myself out alone in this loud, stubborn crying. Without some sweetness, without the very taste of love, how can faith take root, how can affection grow? Tuka says: O crown jewel of the wise, O Keshiraja, turn this over in Your mind.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks as a servant who feels he has stopped being one, since service without an answer hardly counts as service. He has cried out long and hard with no reply, and he names the cost: he is exhausting himself alone. Then he makes a quiet argument about how love works. Faith and affection cannot grow without some sweetness, some taste of being loved in return. He ends by appealing to God's intelligence, asking the "crown jewel of the wise" to simply consider the matter. He is asking God to be reasonable about love.

GATHA 0970

Confession and Sin

Confession, refusing a hollow vocation

मराठी मूळ

काय आतां आह्मीं पोट चि भरावें । जग चाळ्वावें भक्त ह्युण ॥१॥
 ऐसा तरि एक सांगा जी विचार । बहु होतों फार कासावीस ॥२॥
 काय कवित्वाची घालूनियां रुढी । करूं जोडाजोडी अक्षरांची ॥३॥
 तुका ह्यणे काय गुंपोनि दुकाना । राहों नारायणा करुनी घात ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Should I now merely fill my belly and go on deceiving the world, calling myself a devotee?

If so, then tell me this clearly, sir, for I am deeply, sorely distressed.

Should I make a show of poetic craft, merely stitching letters together?

Says Tuka, should I stay enmeshed in this shop, O Narayana, and bring only ruin upon myself?

IN PLAIN WORDS

Should I just fill my belly now and go on fooling the world by calling myself a devotee? If that is all, then tell me plainly, sir; I am deeply, sorely distressed. Should I make a show of poetry, just stitching letters together? Tuka says: should I stay tangled in this shop, O Narayana, and bring nothing but ruin on myself?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram interrogates his own calling and rejects every counterfeit version of it. He refuses to be a devotee in name only, someone who lives off the role while deceiving people. He refuses to treat his poems as mere craft, clever arrangements of words with no living God behind them. The image of a "shop" names the danger sharply: turning devotion into a trade that profits him and ruins his soul. He puts the question to Narayana directly, asking for clarity rather than letting himself drift into a comfortable fraud. The poem is a vow against spiritual self-deception.

GATHA 0971

Prayers

Prayer, show me the secret

मराठी मूळ

वर्म तरि आह्मां दावा । काय देवा जाणें मी ॥१॥
 बहुतां रंगीं हीन जालों । तरि आलों शरण ॥२॥
 घाल जरि तुह्मी धीर । होईल िस्थर मन ठायीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे सत्ताबळें । लडिवाळें राखावीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Show me the secret, O God. What do I know of it?**I have become lowly across so many colours of life, and so I have come to Your refuge.**If You would grant me steadiness, my mind would settle in its own place.**Says Tuka, by the force of Your sovereign authority, protect these beloved, pampered children of Yours.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Show me the secret, O God. What do I know of it? I have grown lowly across so many turns of life, so I have come to Your refuge. If You grant me steadiness, my mind will settle in its own place. Tuka says: by the force of Your sovereign power, protect these pampered children of Yours.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram admits he does not know the hidden key to the path and asks God to show it to him. Worn down through many phases of life, he comes not as an expert but as a refugee. His one request is steadiness, because a settled mind would come to rest on its own. The closing line leans on God's authority and tenderness at once. He calls the devotees God's spoiled, beloved children and asks God to use sovereign power simply to keep them safe. Humility and trust carry the whole prayer.

GATHA 0972

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the love of speaking to God

मराठी मूळ

सांगों काय नेणा देवा । बोलाची त्या आवडी ॥१॥
 वांयां मज चुकुर करा । विश्वंभरा विनोदें ॥२॥
 आवडीच्या करा ऐसें । अंतर्वासें जाणतसां ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे समाधानें । होइन मनं मोकळा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You know everything, O God, yet this love of words keeps arising.

In Your playfulness, O Vishvambhara, You slip away from me for no reason.

Do as Your affection dictates. You who dwell within already know.

Says Tuka, through contentment, my mind shall become open and free.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What can I tell You, O God, that You do not know? Still this love of words keeps rising in me. In Your playfulness You slip away from me for no reason, O Vishvambhara. Do as Your affection moves You. You who dwell within already know my heart. Tuka says: through contentment, my mind will become open and free.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram knows God needs no information from him, yet he cannot stop speaking, because love wants to talk to the beloved. He reads God's apparent absences as play, not rejection, the teasing of one who is sure of being loved. He hands the matter over to God's affection and notes that God, dwelling within, already knows everything he could say. The resolution is inward: contentment, not a louder demand, is what will leave his mind open and free. The poem turns longing into a settled, playful trust.

GATHA 0973

Prayers

Devotion, only Your love sets me dancing

मराठी मूळ

निर्धारचें अवघें गोड । वाटे कोड कौतुक ॥१॥
 बैसलिया भाव पांयीं । बरा तई नाचेन ॥२॥
 स्वामी कळे सावधान। तरि मन उल्हासे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आश्वासावें । प्रेम द्यावें विठ्ठले ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Everything of firm resolve is sweet. It feels like delight and wonder.

When bhava has settled at Your feet, only then will I dance properly.

When it becomes known that the Lord is attentive, the mind exults.

Says Tuka, give me reassurance; give me Your love, O Vitthal.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When the resolve is firm, everything is sweet. It feels like delight and wonder. When my devotion has settled at Your feet, only then will I dance as I should. When I know the Lord is watching with care, my mind leaps up. Tuka says: reassure me; give me Your love, O Vitthal.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes how everything tastes sweet once the heart is set with firm resolve. But he is honest that the resolve depends on God. His devotion has to settle at God's feet before he can truly dance, and his mind only lifts when he knows the Lord is attentive to him. So the poem ends as a request, not a boast. He asks Vitthal for

reassurance and for love, since the joy he longs to feel can only come once that love is given. Delight here is a gift waiting on God's response.

GATHA 0974

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the cut bond

मराठी मूळ

जाली तडातोडी । अवघीं पडिलों उघडीं ॥१॥
 नव्हों कोणांची च कांहीं । तुझे भरलिया वाहीं ॥२॥
 पारुशला संवसार । मोडली बैसण्याची थार ॥३॥
 आतां ह्मणे तुका । देवा अंतरें राखों नका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The cutting has happened. I have fallen exposed before all.

I belong to no one now; I am carried in Your current.

This worldly life has withered away; my seat within it is broken.

Says Tuka, O God, do not keep me at a distance now.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The cutting has happened. I have fallen open before everyone. I belong to no one now. I am carried in Your current. This worldly life has withered. My seat in it is broken. Tuka says: God, do not keep me at a distance now.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks from the moment the old ties have already snapped. Whatever held him to ordinary life has been cut, and he stands exposed, claimed by no person and no station. He does not grieve this; he reads it as God carrying him away in a current he cannot resist. His one fear is that, having been emptied of every other belonging, he might still be left without God, so he asks only not to be kept at a distance.

GATHA 0975

Prayers

Prayer, the only support

मराठी मूळ

आधार तो व्हावा । ऐसी आस करीं देवा ॥१॥
 तुह्यांपाशीं काय उणें । काय वेचे समाधानें ॥२॥
 सेवेच्या अभिळासें । मन बहु जालें पिसें ॥३॥
 अरे भक्तापराधीना । तुका ह्मणे नारायणा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

May You become my support, O God. Such is the longing I hold.

What is lacking with You? What does it cost You to grant peace?

In the longing for Your service, the mind has gone quite mad.

Says Tuka, O Narayana, You who are bound by the offenses of Your devotees.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Be my support, O God. This is the longing I hold. What is lacking with You? What does it cost You to grant peace? In longing for Your service, my mind has gone quite mad. Tuka says: O Narayana, You are bound by Your devotees' faults.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks God to be the one thing he leans on, and then presses the request with a kind of holy logic. God lacks nothing, so granting peace costs Him nothing; why withhold it? He admits his mind has gone mad with wanting to serve. The closing line is the boldest move: he reminds Narayana that God has bound Himself to His devotees, so their failings are now His responsibility to bear, not grounds to turn away.

GATHA 0976

Longing and Separation

Longing, holding God to His own descent

मराठी मूळ

तुमचा तुझीं केला गोवा । आतां चुकवितां देवा ॥१॥

कैसें सरे चाळवणें । केलें काशाला शाहाणें ॥२॥

कासया रूपा । नांवा आलेति गा बापा ॥३॥

तुका ह्मणे आतां । न सरे हवाले घालितां ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You have entangled Yourself in Your own doing. Now You are trying to escape, O God.

How long will this game of teasing go on? Why did You make us wise at all?

Why did You take on form? Why did You come into name, O Father?

Says Tuka, now it will not do to hand this off to another.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You tangled Yourself in Your own doing. Now You are trying to slip away, O God. How long will this teasing go on? Why did You make us wise at all? Why did You take on form? Why did You come into name, O Father? Tuka says: now it will not do to hand me off to someone else.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the tables and holds God accountable for getting involved in the first place. God chose to take form, to take a name, to draw His devotees close and make them long for Him; that entanglement was His own act. So the present distance feels like teasing, an attempt to slip free of a bond God created. Tukaram refuses any substitute: having been awakened by God Himself, he will not be passed off to another and accept anything less than God in person.

GATHA 0977

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, single-pointed and waiting

मराठी मूळ

माझी भक्ती भोळी । एकविध भावबळी ॥१॥
मी कां पडेन निराळा । ऐसा सांडूनि सोहळा ॥२॥
आतां अनारिसा । येथं न व्हावें सहसा ॥३॥
तुका हाणजे जोडुनि पाय । पुढें उगा उभा राहें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My bhakti is simple and innocent, single-pointed, strong in bhava alone.

Why should I fall apart and be left out, having abandoned such a celebration?

Let there be no difference here now, not even once.

Says Tuka, joining my feet in supplication, I stand quietly before You.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My bhakti is simple and innocent, single-pointed, strong only in bhava. Why should I fall apart and be left out, having let go of such a celebration? Let there be no distance here now, not even once. Tuka says: joining my hands at Your feet, I stand quietly before You.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes his devotion plainly: it is not clever or many-sided, only single-hearted, leaning entirely on feeling for God. Having given up everything else for this one joy, he cannot bear to be the one left outside it. So he asks that no gap open between him and God, not even for an instant. He ends in the posture of total dependence, hands joined at God's feet, standing silent and waiting.

GATHA 0978

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, intimacy without fear

मराठी मूळ

आहे तरिं सत्ता । ऐशा करितों वारता ॥१॥
 अंगसंगाचीं उत्तरें । सलगीसेवेनें लेंकरें ॥२॥
 तरी निकटवासें । असों अशंकेच्या नासें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने रुची । येथें भिन्नता कैची ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I speak with the authority born of closeness. Such are the tidings I declare.

These are the words of bodily intimacy, like children through familiar service.

We dwell in such nearness that there is no room for timidity.

Says Tuka, where there is such relish, how can there be any separateness?

IN PLAIN WORDS

If there is the right, I speak with such boldness. These are the words of bodily closeness, a child's freedom in familiar service. Living so near, let there be no timidity. Tuka says: where there is such relish, how can there be any separateness?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram explains the freedom behind his bold address to God. He speaks the way a small child speaks to its parents, with no formality, because long and intimate service has earned that nearness. Such closeness leaves no room for hesitation or fear. And where there is this much shared sweetness between devotee and God, the idea of two separate beings simply dissolves; intimacy itself has erased the distance.

GATHA 0979

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, the shape of a devout day

मराठी मूळ

काळ सारावा चिंतनें । एकांतवासीं गंगास्नानें । देवाचें पूजन । प्रदक्षणा तुळसीच्या ॥१॥
 युक्त आहार वेहार । नेम इंद्रियांचा सार । नसावी वासर । निद्रा बहु भाषण ॥२॥
 परमार्थ महाधन । जोडी देवाचे चरण । व्हावया जतन । हे उपाय लाभाचे ॥३॥
 देह समपिनजे देवा । भार कांहीं च न घ्यावा । होईल आघवा । तुका ह्याने आनंद ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Spend your days in contemplation, bathing in the Ganga of solitude, worshipping God, circumambulating the tulsi.

*Eat moderately, conduct yourself with discipline, govern your senses. Avoid excess sleep and too much talk.
The great wealth of spiritual life is won by earning God's feet. These are the means to gain that profit.
Surrender the body to God; carry no burden at all. Says Tuka, then all will become joy.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Spend your days in contemplation, bathe in the Ganga of solitude, worship God, circle the tulsi. Eat in measure, live with discipline, hold the senses in check. Do not sleep too much or talk too much. The great wealth is won by earning God's feet. These are the means to that gain. Surrender the body to God; carry no burden at all. Tuka says: then everything becomes joy.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays out a plain rule of life for one who wants God. The day is filled with contemplation, solitude treated as a holy bathing-place, simple worship around the tulsi, moderate food, restraint of the senses, and the avoidance of idle sleep and chatter. He frames all of it as the practical means to one end: earning God's feet, the only real wealth. The final step is the largest: hand the whole body over to God and stop carrying any burden yourself, and then the whole of life turns to joy.

GATHA 0980

The Saints

Saints, soft as wax and hard as diamond

मराठी मूळ

मऊ मेनाहूनि आह्मी विष्णुदास । कठिण वज्रास भेदूं ऐसे ॥1॥
मेले जित असों निजोनियां जागे । जो जो जो जें मागे तें तें देऊं ॥ध्रु॥
भले तरि देऊं गांडीची लंगोटी । नाठणाळा चि गांठीं देऊं माथां ॥2॥
मायबापाहूनि बहू मायावंत । करुं घातपात शत्रूहूनि ॥3॥
अमृत तें काय गोड आह्मांपुढें । विष तें बापुडें कडू किती ॥4॥
तुका ह्मणे आह्मी अवघे चि गोड । ज्याचें पुरे कोड त्याचेपरि ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We Vishnu-servants are softer than wax, yet such that we can pierce the hardest diamond.

Dead yet alive, asleep yet awake: whatever anyone asks of us, that we give.

To the worthy we give the loincloth off our arse; to the obstinate we deal a knot on the head.

More loving than mother and father, yet more capable of striking down than an enemy.

What is nectar's sweetness before us? How bitter, after all, is poor wretched poison?

Says Tuka, we are altogether sweet, in the manner of one whose longing is fully met.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We servants of Vishnu are softer than wax, yet able to pierce the hardest diamond. Dead yet alive, asleep yet awake: whatever anyone asks of us, that we give. To the deserving we give the loincloth off our body; to the stubborn we deal a knock on the head. More loving than mother and father, yet more able to strike down than an enemy. What is nectar's sweetness before us? How bitter, after all, is poor wretched poison? Tuka says: we are wholly sweet, taking the form each one's longing calls for.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the strange double nature of God's servants. They are tender past softness toward the humble, and at the same time strong enough to break what is hardest; they are beyond the usual states of living and dead, sleep and waking. To the deserving they will give everything, down to the cloth on their body, but to the obstinate they answer with a blow that wakes them up. They outdo a mother in love and an enemy in striking power, beyond both nectar and poison, because they simply become whatever shape each seeker's longing requires.

GATHA 0981

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the inconstant base man

मराठी मूळ

गाढवाचें तानें । पालटलें क्षणक्षणें ॥१॥
 तैसे अधमाचे गुण । एकविध नाहीं मन ॥२॥
 उपजतां बरें दिसे । रूप वाढतां तें नासे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने भुंकते वेळे । वेळ अवेळ न कळे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The braying of a donkey shifts and changes moment to moment.

Such are the qualities of the base: the mind is never of one kind.

At birth it appears good; as the form grows, that goodness is destroyed.

Says Tuka, when it barks, it knows not the right time from the wrong.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A donkey's braying shifts and changes moment to moment. So are the traits of the base man: his mind is never of one kind. At birth he looks fine; as he grows up, that goodness is ruined. Tuka says: when he barks, he does not know right time from wrong.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures the base character by its inconstancy. Like a donkey's braying that lurches from one pitch to another, such a person's mind never holds a single shape; you cannot trust it from one moment to the next. The promise that showed at birth gets spoiled as the person grows. And like a dog that barks heedless of the hour, this kind of person speaks and lashes out with no sense of fitness or timing. The point is to recognize this driftiness, in others and in oneself, not to despise a man.

GATHA 0982

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, true purity is inward

मराठी मूळ

विटाळ तो परद्रव्य परनारी । येथुनि जो दुरी तो सोंवळा ॥1॥
 गद्यें पद्यें कांहीं न धरावी उपाधी । स्वाधीन चि बिद्ध करुनी ठेवा ॥धु.॥
 विचाराचें कांहीं करावें स्वहित । पापपुण्यांचीत भांडवल ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे न लगे जावें वनांतरा । विश्व विश्वंभरा सारिखें चि ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Pollution is another's wealth and another's wife: one who keeps distant from these is truly pure.
 In prose or verse, take on no entanglement; keep your buddhi sovereign, under your own sway.
 Through discernment, attend to your own good: the capital of sin and merit is what matters here.
 Says Tuka, no need to go to the forest. The world and Vishvambhara are one and the same.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Defilement is another's wealth and another's wife. Whoever stays far from these is truly pure. In prose or verse, take on no entanglement; keep your own mind free, under your own command. Through discernment, attend to your real good. The account that matters is the ledger of sin and merit. Tuka says: no need to go off to the forest. The world and Vishvambhara are one and the same.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram redefines purity away from outward ritual cleanness and toward conduct. The only real defilement is coveting what is not yours, money or another's wife; keep clear of that and you are clean. Do not get tangled in clever talk or argument; keep your own mind sovereign and use discernment to weigh what actually helps you, since the true ledger is one of right and wrong deeds. And there is no need to flee to the forest to find God, because the world itself is none other than Vishvambhara, the one who fills and sustains all.

GATHA 0983

The Saints

Saints, the rare wish-granting one

मराठी मूळ

कल्पतरु रुया नव्हती बाभुळा । पुरविती फळा इच्छितिया ॥1॥
 उदंड त्या गाई ह्यैसी आणि शेळ्या । परि त्या निराळ्या कामधेनु ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे देव दाखवील दृष्टी । तया सवें भेटी थोर पुण्य ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Wish-fulfilling trees are not thorny acacia. They give fruit to all who desire it.

*There are many cows, buffaloes, and goats in abundance, yet the wish-fulfilling cow is distinct from them all.
Says Tuka, God will reveal Himself to the sight; the encounter with Him is great merit.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Wish-granting trees are not thorny acacia. They give their fruit to all who long for it. There are plenty of cows and buffaloes and goats, yet the wish-granting cow stands apart from them all. Tuka says: God will show Himself to the sight. To meet Him is great merit.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is marking how rare the true giver is. Most trees are thorn-scrub that yield nothing; the wish-granting tree, by contrast, gives fruit to every longing heart. Herds of ordinary cattle are everywhere, but the wish-granting cow, Kamadhenu, is of another order entirely. So too the saint, or God Himself, stands apart from the common run. And the promise lands plainly: God will reveal Himself to the one who seeks, and that meeting is the greatest merit a life can hold.

GATHA 0984

Worldly Metaphors

Hypocrisy, the show of false devotion

मराठी मूळ

जळो प्रेमा तैसा रंग । जाय भुलोनि पतंग ॥1॥
सासूसाठीं रडे सून । भाव अंतरींचा भिन्न ॥ध्रु॥
मैंद मुखींचा कोंवळा । भाव अंतरीं निराळा ॥2॥
जैसी वृंदावनकांती । उत्तम धरुं ये हातीं ॥3॥
बक ध्यान धरी । सोंग करुनि मासे मारी ॥4॥
तुका ह्वाणे सर्प डोले । तैसा कथेमाजी खुले ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Cursed be the love that is mere show, like the moth that goes, deluded.

A daughter-in-law weeps for her mother-in-law, but the feeling within is different.

The monkey is soft-mouthed on the surface, but its nature within is something else.

Like the beauty of the Vrindavan shrine, excellent to take up in hand.

The crane holds the pose of meditation, performing its act, hunting for fish.

Says Tuka, the serpent sways to music; in the same way, a hypocrite blooms within the katha.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Cursed be love that is only show, like the moth that flies into the flame, deluded. A daughter-in-law weeps for her mother-in-law, but the feeling inside is something else. The monkey is soft-mouthed on the surface, but its nature within is otherwise. Like the painted beauty of a Vrindavan shrine, fine to hold in the hand. The crane holds the pose of meditation, putting on an act while it hunts for fish. Tuka says: the snake sways to the music; in just that way a fraud blooms in the holy katha.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strips the mask off counterfeit devotion. He stacks up images of inner and outer not matching: the fake mourner, the soft-mouthed monkey, the pretty shrine you only hold for show, the crane standing still as if meditating while it stalks fish, the snake swaying as if charmed by the music. Each one performs holiness while something else moves inside. The target is the hypocrite who comes alive in the sacred gathering, the katha, as a stage for display. The warning is to examine whether one's own devotion is felt within or merely performed.

GATHA 0985

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, conduct over costume

मराठी मूळ

वेशा नाहीं बोल अवगुण दूषीले । ऐशा बोला भले झणें क्षोभा ॥१॥
 कोण नेणे अन्न जीवाचें जीवन । विषमेळवण विष होय ॥२॥
 सोनें शुद्ध नेणे कोण हा विचार । डाकें हीनवर केलें त्यासी ॥३॥
 याती शुद्ध परि अधम लक्षण । वायां गेलें तेणें सोंगें ही तें ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे शूर तो चि पावे मान । आणीक मंडण भार वाही ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

These words do not fault the garment; they fault the character within. Do not be offended by such plain speech.

Everyone knows that food is the life of the jiva, but when poison is mixed in, it becomes deadly.

Everyone knows gold is pure; alloying it with base metal debases it.

The birth may be pure but the conduct is low; even that pretence is wasted.

Says Tuka, only the truly brave one earns respect. Others merely carry the burden of adornment.

IN PLAIN WORDS

These words do not blame the robe. They blame the bad character within. Do not take offense at such plain speech. Everyone knows food is the life of the body; but mix poison in, and it turns deadly. Everyone knows gold is pure; alloy it with base metal, and it is debased. The birth may be pure, but the conduct low, and even that disguise is wasted. Tuka says: only the truly brave one earns honor. The rest just carry the weight of their ornaments.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes clear he is not attacking the outward sign, the holy garb or the high birth, but the rotten character it can hide. Just as nourishing food becomes poison once poison is stirred in, and pure gold loses its worth once alloyed, a pure pedigree is wasted when the conduct beneath it is low; the costume cannot redeem it. Real honor is earned by the genuinely brave and true person, not by the trappings. Everyone else is merely lugging around decoration that proves nothing. The plain speech is offered as correction, not insult, and asks each listener to check the inside, not the dress.

GATHA 0986

The Necessity of Experience

Realization, the self made small and vast

मराठी मूळ

अणुरणीयां थोकडा । तुका आकाशाएवढा ॥१॥
 गिळुनि सांडिलें किळवर । भव भ्रमाचा आकार ॥२॥
 सांडिली त्रिपुटी । दीप उजळला घटीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां । उरलों उपकारापुरता ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Tuka is smaller than the smallest atom, yet as vast as the sky.

Having swallowed it, I have cast away the whole form of worldly illusion and fear.

The triputi has been cast away; the lamp blazes in the vessel.

Says Tuka, now I remain only for the benefit of others.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tuka is smaller than the smallest atom, and as wide as the sky. I have swallowed it and thrown it away: the whole shape of worldly delusion and fear. The triputi is gone. The lamp is burning inside the vessel. Tuka says: now I am left only to be of use to others.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is reporting what is left of him after realization. He has lost the fixed size of a separate self: he is now both finer than an atom and as boundless as the sky, because he no longer ends where his body ends. The form of the world, with its delusion and its fear, has been swallowed and cast off, and the triputi, the split between knower, knowing, and known, is gone, so the lamp burns clear inside him. With nothing left to gain for himself, the one thing that remains is usefulness to others.

GATHA 0987

The Saints

The saints' darshan, a festival day

मराठी मूळ

धन्य आजि दिन । जालें संताचें दर्शन ॥१॥
 जाली पापातापा तुटी । दैन्य गेलें उठाउठीं ॥२॥
 जालें समाधान । पार्यीं विसांवले मन ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आले घरा । तो चि दिवाळीदसरा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Blessed is this day, for I have had the darshan of the saints.**All suffering of sin and affliction is cut away; all wretchedness vanished at once.**The mind has come to rest at their feet; this is my peace.**Says Tuka, the day the saints come to one's home is itself Diwali and Dussehra.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Blessed is this day. I have had the darshan of the saints. The pain of sin and affliction is cut off. My wretchedness left me at once. I am at peace. My mind has come to rest at their feet. Tuka says: the day the saints come to your home is itself Diwali and Dussehra.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming what the sight of holy people does to a person. Their darshan, simply seeing them, cuts off the burning of sin and lifts off the misery he was carrying, and it happens all at once, not by slow effort. His restless mind finally settles, laid down at their feet. He ends by saying their visit outshines the great festivals: where the saints come, that ordinary day is already Diwali and Dussehra.

GATHA 0988

Prayers

Surrender, the servant's only wealth

मराठी मूळ

हें चि माझे धन । तुमचे वंदावे चरण ॥१॥
 येणें भाग्यें असों जीत । एवढें समर्पूनी चित्त ॥२॥
 सांभिळलें देवा । मज अनाथा जी जीवा ॥३॥
 जोडूनियां कर । तुका विनवितो किंकर ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*This alone is my wealth: to bow at Your feet.**By this good fortune may I live, having offered my entire chitta.*

You have watched over this helpless jiva, O God.

Says Tuka, with folded hands, this servant makes his supplication.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This alone is my wealth: to bow at Your feet. By this good fortune may I stay alive, having given You my whole mind. You have watched over me, O God, a helpless creature. Tuka says: with folded hands, this servant makes his plea.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strips his life down to one possession and one request. He owns nothing he counts as wealth except the act of bowing at God's feet, and he asks only to go on living for the sake of that, having already handed over his entire mind. He calls himself helpless, an orphan creature, and credits God alone with having kept him safe. The poem ends as a servant's petition, made with folded hands, claiming no merit of his own.

GATHA 0989

Appeals and Exhortations

Self-correction, harden the mind

मराठी मूळ

फजितखोरा मना किती तुज सांगों । नको कोणा लागों मागें मागें ॥1॥
 स्नेहवादे दुःख जडलेसे अंगीं । निष्ठ हें जगीं प्रेमसुख ॥ ध्रु.॥
 निंदास्तुती कोणी करो दयामया । न धरीं चाड या सुखदुःखें ॥2॥
 योगिराज कां रे न राहाती बैसोनी । एकिये आसनीं या चि गुणें ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे मना पाहें विचारून । होई रे कठिण वज्राऐसें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O disgraced and shameless mind, how many times must I tell you? Do not follow after anyone.

Through attachment, suffering has clung to the body. Faithless is the pleasure of worldly love in this world.

Let anyone praise or blame; O compassionate Lord, do not hold any longing for pleasure or pain.

Why do the great yogis not remain seated on one seat? It is precisely for this quality that they do.

Says Tuka, O mind, think it over. Become hard as a thunderbolt.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Shameless, disgraced mind, how many times must I tell you? Do not go running after anyone. Through fondness, suffering has stuck to the body. The pleasure of worldly love has no faith in it. Let anyone praise or blame. O compassionate one, do not long for pleasure or for pain. Why do the great yogis stay seated, unmoving, on one seat? It is exactly for this. Tuka says: mind, think it over. Become hard as a thunderbolt.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is scolding his own mind for chasing after people and attachments. He points out the trap: it is fondness itself that has glued suffering to the body, and the comforts of worldly love cannot be trusted to last. The cure is to stop reacting to either praise or blame and to stop craving pleasure or fearing pain, which is exactly why the great yogis can sit unmoved on one seat. He tells the mind to weigh this and grow as hard and unbreakable as a thunderbolt, not from coldness but from steadiness.

GATHA 0990

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, choosing servanthood over release

मराठी मूळ

जळो माझी ऐसी बुद्धी । मज घाली तुजमधीं । आवडे हे विधि । निषेधीं चि चांगली ॥1॥
 तूं स्वामी मी सेवक । उंच पद निंच एक । ऐसें करावें कौतुक । नको करूं खंडणा ॥ध्रु॥
 जळ न खाती जळा । वृक्ष आपुलिया फळा । भोक्ता निराळा । तेणें गोडी निवडिली ॥2॥
 हिरा शोभला कोंदणें । अळंकारीं मिरवे सोनें । एक असतां तेणें । काय दुजें जाणावें ॥3॥
 उष्णें छाये सुख वाटे । बाळें माते पान्हा फुटे । एका एक भेटे । कोण सुख ते काळीं ॥4॥
 तुका ह्याणे हित । हें चि मानी माझें चित्त । नव्हे आतां मुक्त । ऐसा जाला भरवसा ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let such a buddhi of mine be burned, for it casts me into You. I love this way: even prohibition itself becomes beautiful.

You are the Master and I the servant; one exalted and one lowly. Maintain this beautiful play and do not break it.

Water does not consume water; a tree does not eat its own fruit. The enjoyer is separate, and by that separation, sweetness is tasted.

A diamond is adorned by its setting; gold is displayed through ornament. Yet being one, what second thing is there to know?

In heat one delights in shade; at the sight of her babe, a mother's milk flows. When one meets the other, what joy is in that hour!

Says Tuka, my chitta considers this its truest good. Now mukti shall not come: so firm is this conviction.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let this thinking of mine be burned, the thinking that throws me into You. I love this way: even the no, the prohibition, is good to me. You are the master, I am the servant. One high, one low. Keep this play going. Do not break it. Water does not eat water. A tree does not eat its own fruit. The enjoyer stays apart, and by that the sweetness is tasted. A diamond shines in its setting. Gold is shown off in the ornament. But if there is only one, what second thing is there to know? In the heat, shade feels sweet. When the baby comes, the mother's milk lets down. One meets the other: what a joy in that moment. Tuka says: my mind holds this as its real good. Now mukti will not come to me. So sure am I of this.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is refusing oneness in favor of relationship. He wants God to keep the difference of master and servant, high and low, because only when two stand apart can love be tasted, the way water cannot drink water and a tree cannot eat its own fruit. His images all need two, the diamond and its setting, the heat and the shade, the baby and the mother whose milk flows at the sight of it: the sweetness lives in the meeting, not in the collapse. So he openly says he no longer wants mukti, liberation into the One, because that would dissolve the very relationship that is his joy. The radical claim is that he prefers being God's servant forever over being absorbed into God.

GATHA 0991

The Saints

Longing for the devotees of Hari

मराठी मूळ

मनीं वसे त्याचें आवडे उत्तर । वाटे समाचार घ्यावा ऐसें ॥१॥
जातीचें तें झुरे येर येरासाठीं । वियोगें ही तुटी नेघे कधीं ॥२॥
भेटीची अपेक्षा वरता आदर । पुसे नव्हे धीर मागुतालें ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे माझ्या जीवाचें जीवन । सोडरे हरिजन प्राणसखे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The words of one who dwells in the mind are always dear. One longs to know their news.

Those who are kindred by nature pine for each other ceaselessly; even separation cannot sever their bond.

The longing for meeting, the reverence growing ever greater: one asks again and again, unable to be patient.

Says Tuka, the devotees of Hari are the very life of my life, companions of my very prana.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The words of the one who lives in my mind are dear to me. I feel I must hear news of them. Those who are kin by their nature pine for each other without stop. Even being apart can never cut the bond. The wish to meet, the growing respect: I ask after them again and again, and cannot wait. Tuka says: the devotees of Hari are the life of my life, my kin, the friends of my very breath.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing how he loves God's devotees, with the ache of someone separated from family. Their words stay dear and he keeps wanting word of how they are, because those who share the same inner nature pine for each other and distance cannot break the tie. The longing to meet only deepens his respect, so he asks after them over and over, unable to be patient. He ends by calling the devotees of Hari the life of his life and the friends of his very breath: this is kinship of the spirit, not of blood.

GATHA 0992

Faith and Trust

Faith, hold Pandhari in the mind

मराठी मूळ

नव्हे आराणूक परि मनीं वाहे । होईल त्या साहे पांडुरंग ॥१॥
 पंढरीसि जावें उदेग मानसीं । धरिल्या पावसी संदेह नाहीं ॥२॥
 नसो बळ देह असो पराधीन । परि हें चिंतन टाकें नको ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देह पडो या चिंतनें । पुढें लागे येणें याजसाठीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*It may not bring rest, yet if one holds it in the mind, Panduranga sustains.**Keep the resolve to go to Pandhari alive in the mind. If you hold fast, you will reach Him; there is no doubt.**Even if the body lacks strength and is in another's power, do not abandon this contemplation.**Says Tuka, let the body fall in this very contemplation. It is for this purpose alone that what comes next follows.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

It may bring no rest, but I carry it in my mind. Panduranga will support the one who does. Keep the longing to go to Pandhari alive in your mind. Hold it, and you reach Him. There is no doubt. Let the body have no strength. Let it be in another's power. Even so, do not give up this remembering. Tuka says: let the body fall while remembering this. What comes after follows for exactly this reason.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is teaching a faith that does not depend on circumstances. Even when the wish to reach Pandhari brings no ease and the journey looks impossible, he says simply holding it in the mind is enough, for Panduranga himself sustains the one who holds it. The body may be weak or trapped under someone else's control, but the inner remembering must not be dropped. The final stake is death itself: let the body fall while still remembering, because it is for the sake of this remembering that whatever comes next will come.

GATHA 0993

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, distrust of one's own greatness

मराठी मूळ

कोठें देवा आलें अंगा थोरपण । बरें होतें दीन होतों तरीं ॥१॥
 साधन ते सेवा संतांची उत्तम । आवडीनें नाम गाईन तें ॥२॥
 न पुसतें कोणी कोठें ही असतां । समाधान चित्ताचिया सुखें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे जन अद्देरितें मज । तरी केशीराज सांभिळता ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Where has this greatness come upon me, O God? It would have been better had I remained lowly.

The best practice is the service of saints. With love I shall sing the Name.

Even if no one asks after me, wherever I may be, I have the contentment of chitta's own ease.

Says Tuka, even if the world rejects me, Keshiraja is my protector.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Where did this greatness come over me, O God? It would have been better if I had stayed lowly. The best practice is to serve the saints. With love I will sing the Name. Even if no one asks after me, wherever I am, I have the contentment of a quiet mind. Tuka says: even if the world casts me off, Keshiraja keeps watch over me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is uneasy at being held in high regard, and treats it as a danger rather than a reward. He says he was better off when he was lowly, because importance pulls a person away from God. So he sets his course by the humblest things: serving the saints and singing the Name with love, asking nothing from anyone's notice. His security does not depend on the world's approval at all; even if everyone rejects him, Keshiraja, Krishna, is the one who looks after him, and that is enough for a settled mind.

GATHA 0994

Confession and Sin

Confession, the preacher's own flaws

मराठी मूळ

चतुर मी जालों आपुल्या भोंवता । भावेंविण रिता कुंफज अंगीं ॥1॥
 आतां पुढें वांयां जावें हें तें काई । कामक्रोधें ठायीं वास केला ॥ध्रु॥
 गुणदोष आले जगाचे अंतरा । भूताच्या मत्सरावरी बुद्धि ॥2॥
 तुका हमणे करुं उपदेश लोकां । नाहीं जालों एका परता दोषा ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have become clever only around my own self, yet empty within, without bhava.

Now, what is this, going forward uselessly? Lust and anger have made their home within.

The faults and virtues of the world have entered within me, and my buddhi is fixed on envy of other beings.

Says Tuka, I preach to the world, yet I myself have not transcended a single flaw.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have grown clever around myself, but empty inside, with no real feeling. Now what is this, going on uselessly ahead? Lust and anger have made their home in me. The faults and virtues of the world have entered my heart, and my mind sits on envy of other beings. Tuka says: I preach to people, yet I myself have not gotten past a single flaw.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is confessing the gap between his teaching and his own state. He admits he is clever on the surface but hollow within, without true devotional feeling, while lust and anger have settled in and made themselves at home. His attention has soured into judging the world's faults and virtues and into envy of other creatures. The sting falls on himself: he stands up to instruct others while he has not risen above even one of his own faults, and the poem turns the spotlight on that self-deception rather than on anyone he teaches.

GATHA 0995

The Saints

The compassionate saints, blessed in the world

मराठी मूळ

धन्य ते संसारीं । दयावंत जे अंतरीं ॥१॥
 येथें उपकारासाठीं । आले घर ज्यां वैकुंठीं ॥२॥
 लटिकें वचन । नाहीं देहीं उदासीन ॥३॥
 मधुरा वाणी ओटीं । तुका हाणे वाव पोटीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Blessed, truly blessed are those in this world who carry compassion within.

They have come here from Vaikuntha solely for the sake of helping others.

Their words are never false, and they are indifferent to the body.

Says Tuka, sweet speech held close. Says Tuka, expansiveness in the belly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Blessed in this world are those who carry compassion within. They have come here from Vaikuntha only to help others. Their words are never false. They are not bound to the body. Tuka says: sweet speech on the tongue, and openness within.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praising the truly compassionate as the blessed ones of this world. He treats them as having descended from Vaikuntha, God's own realm, for one purpose only: to do good for others. Their mark is integrity, never a false word, and a freedom that comes from not being tied to their own bodily comfort. He closes with the simple test of such a person: the speech on the lips is sweet, and inside there is a wide, generous openness, with no gap between the two.

GATHA 0996

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the stick that teaches

मराठी मूळ

कुटल्याविण नव्हे मांडा । अळसें धोंडा पडतसे ॥1॥
 राग नको धरूं मनीं । गांडमणी सांगतो ॥ध्रु॥
 तरटापुढें बरें नाचे। सुतकाचें मुसळ ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे काठी सार । करी फार शाहाणें ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Without kneading, no sweet manda can be made. With laziness, one falls like a stone.

Do not hold anger in your mind. I am telling you this crudely, straight out.

Before the rough rope, even the pestle of grief dances well.

Says Tuka, the stick is the essential thing. It makes even the foolish wise.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Without kneading, no sweet manda is made. With laziness you fall like a stone. Do not hold anger in your mind. I am telling you this bluntly. Before the rough rope, even the pestle dances well. Tuka says: the stick is the main thing. It makes even the foolish wise.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is making a plain, almost rough case for discipline. Just as dough must be kneaded before a sweet can be made, a person who stays lazy goes nowhere and drops like a dead stone. He warns against taking offense and admits he is speaking crudely on purpose. His blunt images, the rope and the pestle made to move, lead to the point: it is firm correction, the stick, that does the real work and can bring even a fool to sense. The poem defends hard treatment as kindness aimed at the lazy pattern, not contempt for the person.

GATHA 0997

Worldly Life

Worldly life, knowing yet falling

मराठी मूळ

कळों येतें तरि कां नव्हे । पडती गोवें भ्रमाचे ॥1॥
 जाणतां चि होतो घात । परिसा मत देवा हें ॥ध्रु॥
 आंविसासाठीं फासा मान । पाडी धनइच्छा ते ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे होणार खोटें । कर्म मोटें बिळवंत ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If you can see the truth, why do you fall into the snares of delusion?

Even with full knowledge, ruin comes. Hear this view of mine, O God.

For the sake of a morsel of bait, one puts one's neck in a noose. The desire for wealth causes the downfall.

Says Tuka, what is to come is false and crooked. Karma is great and powerful.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If the truth can be seen, then why does it not get through? Still you fall into the snares of delusion. Even when you know, ruin comes. Hear this view of mine, O God. For a morsel of bait, you put your neck in the noose. The hunger for wealth pulls you down. Tuka says: what is coming is false and crooked. Karma is great and strong.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is puzzling over why people destroy themselves even when they can see the truth. Knowing better, they still walk into delusion's traps, and he lays this riddle before God himself. His image is the fish: for one bite of bait it hands its neck to the noose, and in the same way the craving for wealth drags a person down to ruin. He ends by naming the force behind it: karma, the momentum of past action, is huge and powerful, so the destiny bearing down feels false and crooked, and mere knowing is not enough to break its grip.

GATHA 0998

The Moral Ideal

Praise of the good soul, true wealth

मराठी मूळ

मोकळें मन रसाळ वाणी । या चि गुणीं संपन्न ॥१॥

लक्ष्मी ते ऐशा नावें । भाग्यें ज्यावें तरि त्यांनीं ॥२॥

नमन नम्रता अंगीं । नेघे रंगीं पालट ॥२॥

तुका ह्मणे त्याच्या नांवें । घेतां व्हावें संतोषी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

An open mind and a tongue full of rasa: one is rich in these very qualities alone.

Let those who are fortunate live by such wealth, bearing the name of Lakshmi herself.

Humility and gentleness dwell in the body; they never change their color.

Says Tuka, at the very mention of such a person's name, one should feel contentment.

IN PLAIN WORDS

An open mind and a tongue full of sweetness: be rich in these qualities alone. Let this be called wealth. Let the fortunate live by it. Humility and gentleness live in the body, and they never change their color. Tuka says: at the very mention of such a person's name, you should feel glad.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is renaming what counts as wealth. He sets aside money and standing and points instead to an open heart, a kind tongue, humility, and gentleness, and he calls these the real riches, the true Lakshmi to live by. The mark of these qualities is that they do not change their color: they are not a performance you can switch off, but

something steady in the person. He ends by saying that such a soul is so good that even hearing their name should make you happy.

GATHA 0999

Prayers

Final plea, shade of grace

मराठी मूळ

शेवटची विनवणी । संतजनीं परिसावी ॥१॥
 विसर तो न पडावा । माझा देवा तुझांसी ॥२॥
 पुढें फार बोलों काई । अवघें पायीं विदित ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे पडिलों पायां । करा छाया कृपेची ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O saints, please hear this final plea.

May You never forget me, O God.

What more shall I say? Everything is already known at Your feet.

Says Tuka, I have fallen at Your feet. Spread the shade of Your grace over me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O saints, please hear this last request. My God, may You never forget me. What more shall I say? Everything is already known at Your feet. Tuka says: I have fallen at Your feet; spread the shade of Your grace over me.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is Tukaram laying down a last, stripped request and asking the saints to witness it. His whole prayer narrows to one thing: that God should never forget him. He says there is nothing more to add, because at God's feet everything about him is already known; explaining himself would be pointless. So he simply falls at the feet and asks for the cool shade of grace to be spread over him, the posture of someone who has nothing left to offer but surrender.

GATHA 1000

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the poet as instrument

मराठी मूळ

करितों कवित्व ह्यणाल हें कोणी । नव्हे माझी वाणी पदरींची ॥1॥
 माझिये युक्तीचा नव्हे हा प्रकार । मज विश्वंभर बोलवितो ॥ध्रु॥
 काय मी पामर जाणे अर्थभेद । वदवी गोविंद तें चि वदें ॥2॥
 निमित्त मापासी बैसविलों आहें । मी तों कांहीं नव्हे स्वामिसत्ता ॥3॥
 तुका ह्यणे आहें पाईक चि खरा । वागवितों मुद्रा नामाची हे ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*If anyone says I compose poetry, these words are not my own; they do not come from my own store.
 This manner of things does not arise from my own skill. Vishvambhara Himself makes me speak.
 What do I, a wretch, know of the layers of meaning? What Govinda inspires, that alone I utter.
 I am placed here as an instrument at the scales. I am nothing; the power belongs to the Lord alone.
 Says Tuka, I am truly a foot-soldier, nothing more, carrying the seal of His Name.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

If anyone says I compose poetry, know that these words are not mine; they do not come from my own store. This is not the work of my skill. Vishvambhara Himself makes me speak. What does a wretch like me know of the layers of meaning? What Govinda makes me say, that alone I say. I am only set here as the scale's pointer; I am nothing, the power is the Lord's. Tuka says: I am truly only a foot-soldier, carrying the seal of His Name.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is refusing the credit for his own poems. He insists the words are not his property and do not come from his talent; it is Vishvambhara, the all-sustainer, who speaks through him. He pleads ignorance of the deep meanings the verses carry, saying he only utters what Govinda inspires. The images make the point sharp: he is the needle on the weighing scale, moved by the load, not the owner of the power; he is a foot-soldier who merely carries the seal of the Name. The poem hands all authorship back to God.