

Tukaram Gatha

तुकाराम गाथा

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

Volume 4: Gatha 1501-2000 - 498 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 1501

Longing and Separation

Longing, why give me eyes to see this

मराठी मूळ

तुझी बैसलेती निर्गुणाचे खोळे । आह्मां कां हे डोळे कान दिले ॥१॥
 नाइकवे तुझी अपकीर्त देवा । अद्वेरली सेवा न देखवे ॥२॥
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 तुका ह्मणे दुःखी असं हें कळों घा । पुढिलिया धंद्या मन नेघे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*You sit wrapped in your formless state.
 Then why did you give us eyes and ears?*

*I cannot bear to hear your glory being dishonored, O God,
 nor can I watch your service being spurned.*

*You kept plenty of room within your own belly,
 yet gave us only a meager portion of devotion.*

*Says Tuka, at least let it be known that I am in pain.
 My mind will not engage with the worldly business that lies ahead.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

You sit wrapped in your formless state. Then why did you give us these eyes and ears? I cannot bear to hear your glory dishonored, O God, nor can I watch your service being spurned. You kept plenty of room inside your own belly, yet gave us only a small portion of devotion. Tuka says: at least let it be known that I am in pain. My mind will not turn to the worldly business that lies ahead.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses a complaint that is really a plea. If God can sit serene and untouched in his formless state, why did he give his devotees eyes and ears that must now witness his glory dishonored and his service spurned? The pain is unbearable precisely because Tukaram loves God; he charges that God held back, keeping vast room within himself while handing the devotee only a meager portion of devotion, not enough to bear what he sees. He asks at least to be heard, to have his pain acknowledged, and he warns that his mind has no appetite left for the ordinary worldly tasks ahead. It is the cry of someone who wants more of God, not less, and blames the smallness of his given love for his distress.

GATHA 1502

True Worship

True worship, pretense wins no God

मराठी मूळ

सोंगें छंदें कांहीं । देव जोडे ऐसें नाही ॥१॥
 सारा अवघें गाबाळ । डोळ्या आडील पडळ ॥२॥
 शुद्ध भावाविण । जो जो केला तो तो सीण ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याणे कळे । परि होताती अंधळे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God cannot be attained through pretense or indulgence.

*Discard all that is worthless;
 remove the veil from before your eyes.*

Without genuine devotion, every effort is mere labor.

*Says Tuka, people understand this,
 yet they choose to remain blind.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

God is not won by costume and show. Throw away all the worthless trash; lift the film that covers your eyes. Without pure feeling, whatever you do is only labor. Tuka says: people understand this, yet they become blind.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram cuts straight to the heart of worship: God is not reached by playacting, by displays and indulgent shows of piety. He tells the listener to throw out all that worthless trash and remove the film, the cataract, that keeps the eyes from seeing truly. Without shuddha bhava, pure and sincere feeling, every ritual and effort is just wasted toil. The sting is in the last line: people do understand this, and yet they choose to stay blind, keeping the comfortable show going. The poem turns the listener back on himself, to ask where his own worship is pretense and where it is real.

GATHA 1503

The Necessity of Experience

Equal vision, fearless of the world

मराठी मूळ

अवघीं भूतें साम्या आलीं । देखिलीं म्यां कें होतीं ॥१॥
 विश्वास तो खरा मग । पांडुरंगकृपेचा ॥२॥
 माझी कोणी न धरो शंका । हो कां लोकां निद्वपद्ध ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याणे जें जें भेटे । तें तें वाटे मी ऐसें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*All beings have come to a state of equality before my eyes.
When did I ever see them otherwise?*

That is true faith, born of Panduranga's grace.

*Let no one doubt me, no matter what the world says,
whether in blame or praise.*

*Says Tuka, whatever I encounter,
I feel it as myself.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

All beings have come level before my eyes. When did I ever see them otherwise? This is true faith, born of Panduranga's grace. Let no one doubt me, whatever the world says, whether it blames or praises. Tuka says: whatever I meet, I feel it as myself.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is reporting a settled change in how he sees. Every creature now appears the same to him, with none above and none below, and he cannot recall a time it was different. He names the source plainly: this even vision is the gift of Panduranga's grace, and that is what true faith looks like. He then waves away all judgment of it, blame and praise alike, because the sight does not depend on the world's verdict. The closing line states the heart of it: whatever he encounters, he feels it as his own self.

GATHA 1504

The Nature of God

Trust the giver, wait for the hour

मराठी मूळ

सत्यसंकल्पाचा दाता नारायण । सर्व करी पूर्ण मनोरथ ॥१॥
येथें अळंकार शोभती सकळ । भावबळें फळ इच्छेचेंतें ॥२॥
अंतरीचें बीज जाणे कळवळा । व्यापक सकळां ब्रह्मांडाचा ॥२॥
तुका ह्मणे नाहीं चालत तांतडी । प्राप्तकाळघडी आल्याविण ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Narayana is the giver whose sankalpa is ever true.
He fulfills every longing of the mind.*

*Here all ornaments of devotion shine,
for by the strength of pure intent, the fruits of longing are made real.*

*With tender care he knows the seed within;
he pervades the entire cosmos.*

*Says Tuka, haste will not do.
One must wait until the destined hour arrives.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Narayana is the giver whose will always comes true. He fills every longing of the mind. Here every ornament of devotion shines, for by the strength of pure feeling the fruit of longing is made real. He knows with tender care the seed hidden inside; he fills the whole cosmos. Tuka says: haste does not work. You must wait until the destined hour arrives.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is teaching how God answers, and on whose clock. Narayana's resolve is never empty, so he completes whatever the heart truly longs for, and the wealth of devotion is what makes that longing bear fruit. God reads the seed buried in you, the inner feeling no one else sees, and he reaches into every corner of creation. Then comes the hard counsel: you cannot rush this. The fruit ripens only when its appointed hour comes, so devotion has to hold its trust and wait.

GATHA 1505

The Saints

Praise of the saints, compassion their capital

मराठी मूळ

काय वाणूं आतां न पुरे हे वाणी । मस्तक चरणीं ठेवीतसें ॥१॥
 थोरींव सांडिली आपुली परिसं । नेणे सिवों कैसं लोखंडासी ॥२॥
 जगाच्या कल्याणा संतांच्या विभूति । देह कष्टविती उपकारें ॥३॥
 भूतांची दया हे भांडवल संतां । आपुली ममता नाहीं देहीं ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे सुख पराविया सुखें । अमृत हें मुखें जरवतसे ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*What more can I describe? My words fall short.
 I simply place my head at their feet.*

*Like the philosopher's stone, the saints have abandoned all their greatness;
 they do not mind how they touch iron and transform it.*

*For the welfare of the world, the saints have taken form,
 tormenting their own bodies in selfless service.*

*Compassion for all beings is the saints' only capital;
 they carry no attachment to their own bodies.*

*Says Tuka, their happiness lies in the happiness of others,
 and this nectar is administered from their mouths.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

What more can I say now? My words run out. I lay my head at their feet. Like the touchstone, the saints have thrown away their own greatness; they do not even notice how they touch iron and turn it to gold. For the good of the world the saints take form, wearing out their bodies in service. Compassion for all beings is the saints' only capital; they hold no attachment to their own bodies. Tuka says: their joy is in the joy of others, and this nectar pours from their mouths.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing what a true saint actually is, and finds words too small for it, so he simply bows. He likens the saint to the philosopher's stone, which turns iron to gold without keeping any greatness for itself; the saint transforms others and takes no credit. Such beings take birth for the welfare of the world and spend their own bodies in service. Their entire wealth is compassion for every creature, with no clinging to themselves. The poem lands on this: the saint's own happiness lives inside the happiness of others, and that is the nectar their words give out.

GATHA 1506

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, death disarmed

मराठी मूळ

जन्मा आलों त्याचें । आजि फळ जालें साचें ॥१॥
 तुम्ही सांभाळलों संतीं । भय निवारली खंती ॥२॥
 कृत्याकृत्य जालों । इच्छा केली ते पावलों ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे काळ । आतां करूं न शके बळ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Today the true fruit of having been born has been realized.

O saints, you have sheltered me and removed all fear and sorrow.

My purpose has been fulfilled;

I have attained the very thing I desired.

Says Tuka, now Death can no longer wield its power over me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Today the true fruit of being born has come. O saints, you have sheltered me, and my fear and grief are gone. I am made whole; I have reached the very thing I wanted. Tuka says: now Death can use no force on me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming a day of arrival. He says the whole point of taking birth has finally borne fruit, and he credits the saints, whose shelter has lifted his fear and sorrow away. He feels complete, his deepest wish fulfilled. The closing claim is the boldest part: with this attained, Death has lost all its power over him, because what he has reached cannot be touched by it.

GATHA 1507

The Saints

Gratitude, grace beyond reckoning

मराठी मूळ

काय पुण्यराशी । गेल्या भेटूनि आकाशीं ॥१॥
 तुम्ही जालेति कृपाळ । माझा केला जी सांभाळ ॥२॥
 काय वोळलें संचित । ऐसें नेणें अगणित ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नेणें । काय केलें नारायणें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*What stores of merit must have pierced through the very skies?**O saints, you have become merciful and have cared for me.**What accumulated karma could have ripened to bring this about?**I cannot measure it; it is beyond reckoning.**Says Tuka, I do not know what Narayana has done.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

What heaps of merit must have torn through the very skies? O saints, you turned merciful and took care of me. What stored-up karma ripened to do this? I cannot count it. Tuka says: I do not know what Narayana has done.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is overwhelmed by a grace he cannot explain. He wonders what vast store of merit could have reached so high as to win this, since the saints have turned merciful and taken him into their care. He gropes for a cause in his past deeds and finds none he can measure. The poem ends in honest bafflement: he simply does not know what Narayana has worked on his behalf, and he stops trying to account for it.

GATHA 1508

Autobiography

Autobiography, the Name his only wealth

मराठी मूळ

असें येथींचिया दिनें । भाग्यहीन सकळां ॥१॥
 भांडवल एवढें गांठी । नाम कंठीं धरियेलें ॥२॥
 आणिक तें दुजें कांहीं । मज नाहीं यावरी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे केली कोणें । एवढा नेणें लौकिक ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

By the standards of this world, I am unfortunate and poor among all.

My only capital is the Name held at my throat.

Beyond this, I have nothing else.

Says Tuka, who has arranged even this small measure of worldly repute for me? I do not know.

IN PLAIN WORDS

By the standards of this place, I am the unluckiest of all. My one fortune is this: I hold the Name at my throat. Beyond this I have nothing more. Tuka says: who has arranged even this much repute for me? I do not know.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is taking honest stock of himself. By every worldly measure he counts as poor and unfortunate, with no advantage to show. His sole capital is the Name kept always on his lips, and he owns nothing besides it. He does not even claim the little standing he has in the world; he wonders aloud who arranged it. The point is that whatever worth he has comes from the Name and from a hand he cannot name, not from himself.

GATHA 1509

The Power of the Name

The Name, the easy ship across

मराठी मूळ

गायें नाचें वायें टाळी । साधन कळी उत्तम हें ॥१॥
 काय जाणों तरले किती । नाव ऐती या बैसा ॥२॥
 सायासाचें नाहीं काम । घेतां नाम विठोबाचें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने निर्वाणीचें । शस्त्र साचें हें एक ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Singing, dancing, clapping the hands:
 this is the best spiritual practice for this present age.*

*Who knows how many have been saved by it?
 Board this very ship and cross over.*

*No strenuous labor is required
 when you take the name of Vithoba.*

Says Tuka, this alone is the one true weapon for the final reckoning.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Sing, dance, clap your hands: this is the best practice for this age. Who knows how many have crossed over by it? Board this very ship and cross. No hard labor is needed when you take Vithoba's name. Tuka says: this alone is the one true weapon for the final hour.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is offering the simplest path and pressing it on the listener. In this present age, he says, the highest spiritual practice is also the most open: to sing and dance and clap the divine name. Countless people have already crossed the ocean of the world this way, so he tells you to step aboard the same ship at once. Taking Vithoba's name asks no strenuous effort, no elaborate discipline. And in the last extremity, the hour of death, this Name is the one real weapon that holds.

GATHA 1510

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the form lodged in the heart

मराठी मूळ

सर्वकाळ माझे चित्तीं । हे चि खंती राहिली ॥१॥
 बैसलें तें रूप डोळां । वेळोवेळां आठवे ॥२॥
 वेव्हाराची सरली मात । अखंडित अनुसंधान ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने वेध जाला । अंगा आला श्रीरंग ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

At all times, this one longing remains lodged in my chitta.

The form I have seen stays before my eyes, and I recall it again and again.

All worldly transactions have been concluded; an unbroken awareness persists.

Says Tuka, the inner attraction has taken hold, and Shri Ranga has come to dwell within my body.

IN PLAIN WORDS

At all times only this one longing stays in my mind. The form I have seen rests before my eyes; again and again I remember it. The talk of worldly dealings is finished; the awareness never breaks. Tuka says: the inner pull has taken hold, and Shri Ranga has come into my body.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing a mind wholly occupied by God. A single longing now stays in him at every moment, and the divine form he once beheld remains fixed before his eyes, returning to memory again and again. Ordinary worldly business has fallen silent for him, leaving an unbroken inner attention. He names the result: a deep attraction has gripped him, and Shri Ranga, the Lord, has come to dwell within his very body.

GATHA 1511

True Worship

True worship, practice what you preach

मराठी मूळ

जैसैं दावी तैसा राहे । तरि कां देव दुरी आहे ॥१॥
 दुःख पावायाचें मूळ । रहनी ठाव नाहीं ताळ ॥२॥
 माळामुद्रांवरी। कैचा सोंगें जोडे हरि ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देखें । ऐसे परीचीं बहुतेकें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*If one lives as one preaches, then God is not far away at all.**The root of suffering is that outward conduct and inner truth do not match.**How can God be won through mere rosary beads and sectarian marks?**Says Tuka, look around: such are the majority.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

If you live as you teach, then God is not far off at all. The root of suffering is this: your conduct and your inner truth do not match. How can Hari be won by mere rosary beads and sect marks? Tuka says: look around, most people are like this.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is pointing at the gap between show and substance in religion. He says God comes near the moment your living matches your teaching, and that the real root of suffering is the split between outward conduct and inner truth. Beads, sectarian marks, and the costume of piety win nothing from Hari by themselves. He turns the satire on a pattern, not on a person: when he says most people are like this, he is naming the common temptation to wear devotion rather than live it, an invitation to check oneself.

GATHA 1512

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, every hour auspicious

मराठी मूळ

अवघा तो शकुन । हृदयीं देवाचे चरण ॥१॥
 येथें नसतां वियोग । लाभा उणें काय मग ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे हरिच्या दासां । शुभकाळ अवघ्या दिशा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*The greatest of all good omens is to hold God's feet within the heart.**When there is no separation from Him, what gain could possibly be lacking?*

Says Tuka, for the servants of Hari, every moment is auspicious, and all directions are blessed.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The greatest of all good omens is to hold God's feet in the heart. When there is no separation from Him, what gain could be missing? Tuka says: for the servants of Hari, every moment is auspicious, and all directions are blessed.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is overturning the whole business of lucky days and favorable signs. The one true good omen, he says, is to carry God's feet within the heart. Once there is no separation from God, nothing worth gaining can be lacking, so no further sign is needed. For those who serve Hari, the conclusion follows on its own: every moment is the right moment and every direction is blessed, because the auspiciousness is in the union, not in the calendar.

GATHA 1513

The Necessity of Experience

Experience, the untainted crystal

मराठी मूळ

ब्रह्मरूपाचीं कर्मे ब्रह्मरूप । विरहित संकल्प होती जाती ॥१॥
ठेविलिया दिसे रंगाऐसी शिळा । उपाधि निराळा स्फटिक मणि ॥२॥
नानाभाषामतें आळविती बाळा । प्रबोध तो मूळा जननीठायीं ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे माझें नमन जाणतियां । लागतसें पायां वेळोवेळां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*The actions of one established in Brahman are themselves Brahman,
arising and passing without sankalpa.*

*Just as a crystal appears to take on the color placed near it,
though it is itself without taint, so it is.*

*Children are called by many names in many tongues,
but the true awakening lies in the mother alone.*

*Says Tuka, I bow before the wise.
Again and again I fall at their feet.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

The actions of one settled in Brahman are themselves Brahman, rising and passing with no self-will behind them. A crystal seems to take on the color set beside it, yet the jewel itself stays untouched. Children are called by many names in many tongues, but the true waking is in the mother alone. Tuka says: I bow to the wise. Again and again I fall at their feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing the one who is established in Brahman. Such a person's deeds are Brahman itself; they arise and fall away without any private willing driving them. He gives two images: like a clear crystal that seems to glow with whatever color is held near it while staying colorless in itself, the sage acts amid the world yet is

untainted by it; and like a child known by many names in many languages while the real recognition rests in the mother, the many forms point back to one ground. Recognizing this, Tukaram bows again and again at the feet of those who truly know.

GATHA 1514

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, truth that cannot spoil

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं सुगंधाची लागती लावणी । लावावी ते मनीं शुद्ध होतां ॥१॥
 वाऱ्या हातीं माप चाले सज्जनाचें । कीतिन मुख त्याचें नारायण ॥२॥
 प्रभा आणि रवि काय असे आन । उदयीं तंव जन सकळ साक्षी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे बरा सत्याचा सायास । नवनीता नाश नाही पुन्हा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Fragrance does not need to be applied;
 it arises naturally when the mind becomes pure.*

*The measure of a good person is in their hands;
 glory and the name of Narayana are upon their lips.*

*Are the sun and its radiance separate things?
 At dawn, all people bear witness to this.*

*Says Tuka, the labor of truth is worthwhile,
 for butter, once churned, can never be destroyed again.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Fragrance does not need to be applied; it rises on its own when the mind becomes pure. The measure is in the good person's own hands; glory and Narayana's name are on their lips. Are the sun and its light two separate things? At dawn everyone is witness. Tuka says: the labor of truth is worth it, for butter, once churned, can never be unmade again.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is teaching that real goodness shows itself without effort or display. A pure mind gives off virtue the way a flower gives off scent, with nothing applied from outside; the good person carries their own measure, with God's name and glory on their lips. He uses the sun and its light, which are never two things, to say that an inner state and its outward shining are inseparable, and everyone sees it as plainly as daybreak. The closing image makes it permanent: the effort spent on truth is never wasted, because truth, like butter once churned from milk, can never be dissolved back and lost.

GATHA 1515

The Saints

Social criticism, the proud devotee

मराठी मूळ

तीर्थाटणें एकें तपें हुंवरती । नाथिले धरिती अभिमान ॥१॥
 तैसे विष्णुदास नव्हती साबडे । एकाचिया पडे पायां एक ॥२॥
 अक्षरें आणिती अंगासी जाणीव । इच्छा ते गौरव पूज्य व्हावें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने विधिनिषधाचे डोहीं । पडिले त्यां नाहीं देव कधीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Some grow proud through pilgrimages and austerities,
 claiming hollow honor for themselves.*

*The servants of Vishnu are not like that;
 they are simple, and each one bows at the other's feet.*

*Book-learning brings a sense of self-importance
 and the desire to be revered and worshipped.*

*Says Tuka, those who have fallen into the wells of scriptural do's and don'ts
 will never find God.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Some grow proud from their pilgrimages and their one austerity. They take a hollow pride and hold to it. The servants of Vishnu are not like that. They are simple, and each one bows at the other's feet. Book-learning brings a sense of self-importance to the body. It breeds the wish to be honored, to be revered and worshipped. Tuka says: those who have fallen into the deep wells of scriptural do's and don'ts never find God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram contrasts two kinds of religious life and names what spoils one of them. The proud man uses pilgrimage, austerity, and learning to swell himself, to claim honor and demand worship; the true servant of Vishnu is simple and bows at the next devotee's feet. The point is the direction of the self: religion can be turned into a ladder for the ego, and then it lifts you away from God instead of toward him. He calls scriptural rules a deep well: a man can drown in his own correctness about do's and don'ts and never reach the Lord they were meant to point at. The test is not how much you have done, but whether it has made you small enough to bow.

GATHA 1516

Faith and Trust

Faith, God carries the burden

मराठी मूळ

पटे डाळूं आह्मी विष्णुदास जगीं । लागों नेदूं अंगीं पापपुण्य ॥१॥
 निर्भर अंतरीं सदा सर्वकाळ । घेतला सकळ भार देवें ॥२॥
 बिळवंत जेणें रचिलें सकळ । आह्मां त्याचें बळ अंकितांसी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी देखत चि नाहीं । देवाविण कांहीं दुसरें तें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*We are the servants of Vishnu in this world, boldly unfurling our banners.
 We will not let merit or sin touch us.*

*Within us there is freedom from worry at all times,
 for God has taken the entire burden upon himself.*

*The Mighty One who fashioned all of creation is our strength,
 for we belong to him.*

*Says Tuka, we see nothing at all besides God;
 there is nothing else for us.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

We are the servants of Vishnu in this world, flying our banners boldly. We will not let merit or sin touch our bodies. Within us there is freedom from worry, always, at every hour, for God has taken the whole burden on himself. The Mighty One who made all of creation is our strength, for we are his and we belong to him. Tuka says: we see nothing at all except God. For us there is nothing else.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the confidence of total surrender, and Tukaram states its ground plainly. Having handed his whole life over to God, he says even merit and sin no longer cling to him, because he is no longer the one carrying the account; God carries the entire burden. The freedom from worry is not bravado but a consequence: if the Maker of everything is your strength and you are his, there is nothing left for you to defend. The last line names the root of it. He sees nothing besides God, so there is no second thing to fear or to manage.

GATHA 1517

*The Power of the Name**The Name, scorn for the scorner*

मराठी मूळ

कथेचा उलंघ तो अधमां अधम । नावडे ज्या नाम ओळखा तो ॥१॥
 कासया जीऊन जाला भूमी भार । अनउपकार माते कुंसी ॥२॥
 निद्रेचा आदर जागरणीं वीट । त्याचे पोटीं कीट कुपथ्याचें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे दोन्ही बुडविलीं कुळें । ज्याचें तोंड काळें कथेमाजी ॥३॥
 सांडोनी दों अक्षरां । काय करूं हा पसारा ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*He who transgresses the sacred story is the lowest of the low.
 Know him as wretched who does not love the Name.*

*Why live only to be a burden on the earth,
 ungrateful to the mother's womb?*

*He who loves sleep and hates the vigil of devotion
 carries the worm of wrong living within his belly.*

*Says Tuka, he who darkens his face during the sacred recitation
 has drowned both his lineages.*

*Leaving aside these two syllables of the Name,
 what use is this entire show?*

IN PLAIN WORDS

He who skips over the sacred story is the lowest of the low. Know him as wretched, the one who does not love the Name. Why live at all, just to be a weight on the earth, ungrateful to the womb that bore you? He who loves sleep and hates the night-vigil of devotion carries the worm of wrong living in his belly. Tuka says: he who darkens his face during the sacred recitation has drowned both his lineages. Leaving aside these two syllables of the Name, what use is all this show?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is hard on the man who turns away from the sacred story and the Name, and he means the turning-away, not the man. He measures a life by one thing: does it love the Name, or does it only consume the earth and waste the gift of birth? The sleeper who cannot bear the night-vigil is described as sick from the inside, fed by wrong habits, and the one who sulks through the recitation is said to ruin both the families he stands between. The closing question turns it back on us. Strip away the elaborate show of religion, and what is left that is actually worth anything except the two syllables of God's Name.

GATHA 1518

*The Power of the Name**The Name, the childlike tongue*

मराठी मूळ

विधिनिषेधाचा भारा । तेणें दातारा नातुडेसी ॥१॥
 ह्यणोनि बोलडा उत्तरीं । वाचें जपें निरंतरिं ।
 नाम तुझें हरी । भवसागरीं तारुं तें ॥२॥
 सर्वमय ऐसें वेदांचें वचन । श्रुति गर्जती पुराणें ।
 नाहीं आणीक ध्यान । रे साधन मज चाड ॥३॥
 शेवटीं ब्रह्मार्पण । या चि मंत्राचें कारण ।
 काना मात्र वांयांविण । तुका ह्यणे बिंदुलीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The burden of rules and prohibitions makes you unreachable, O Giver.

*Therefore with stammering, childlike speech,
 my tongue repeats your Name ceaselessly,
 O Hari, that raft upon the ocean of existence.*

*All is pervaded by you: thus thunder the Shrutis, thus proclaim the Puranas.
 I have no other meditation, no other practice, no other desire.*

*At the end of every ritual comes the offering to Brahman.
 That mantra is the reason for everything.
 Says Tuka, without even a vowel mark or a dot, the Name alone suffices.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

The burden of rules and prohibitions makes you unreachable, O Giver. So with stammering, childlike speech my tongue repeats your Name without stopping. Your Name, O Hari, is the raft on the ocean of this existence. All is filled with you: so thunder the Shrutis, so proclaim the Puranas. I have no other meditation, no other practice, no other longing. At the end of every ritual comes the offering to Brahman; that mantra is the reason for all of it. Tuka says: without even a vowel mark or a dot, the Name alone is enough.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets the tangle of ritual rules against the simplicity of the Name and chooses the Name. He admits the heavy code of do's and don'ts can make God feel out of reach, so he drops it for a child's stammering repetition of Hari's Name, which he calls the raft across the ocean of birth and death. He grounds this in scripture itself: the Shrutis and Puranas say God pervades everything, so no further practice is needed. His final claim is the boldest. Every ritual ends by offering its fruit to Brahman anyway, so the Name, spoken plainly without even correct pronunciation, already carries the whole point and suffices on its own.

GATHA 1519

*The Power of the Name**The Name, the soldier of Vitthal*

मराठी मूळ

हरिनामाचें करुनि तारुं । भवसिंधुपार उतरलों ॥1॥
 फावलें फावलें आतां । पायीं संतां विनटलों ॥२॥
 हरिनामाचा शस्त्र घोडा । संसार गाढा छेदिला ॥3॥
 हरिनामाचीं धनुष्यकांडें । विन्मुख तोंडें किळकाळ ॥4॥
 येणें चि बळें सरते आह्मी । हरिचे नामें लोकीं तिहीं ॥5॥
 तुका ह्मणे जालों साचे । श्रीविठ्ठलाचे डिंगर ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Making a raft of Hari's Name, I have crossed the ocean of existence.**I have found it, I have found it!**I have surrendered at the feet of the saints.*

*With the Name of Hari as my sword and steed,
 I have cut through the dense jungle of worldly life.*

*The Name of Hari is my bow and arrow;
 shrieking death turns its face away in defeat.*

*By this strength alone we prevail in all three worlds:
 the Name of Hari.*

Says Tuka, we have truly become the soldiers of Shri Vitthala.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I made a raft of Hari's Name and crossed to the far shore of this ocean of existence. I have found it, I have found it. I have surrendered at the feet of the saints. Hari's Name is my sword and my warhorse; with it I have cut through the dense thicket of worldly life. Hari's Name is my bow and arrows; cruel death turns its face away and flees. By this strength alone we prevail in all three worlds: by the Name of Hari. Tuka says: we have truly become the soldiers of Shri Vitthala.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram celebrates the Name as the one weapon that wins every battle a soul has to fight. He turns it into raft, sword, horse, bow, and arrows, an entire armory, and with it he crosses the ocean of existence, cuts through the jungle of worldly life, and routs death itself. The cry I have found it marks the joy of a man who has stopped searching, having surrendered at the saints' feet. The closing line names what he has become: not a master who owns the Name, but a soldier in Vitthal's service, his strength borrowed entirely from his Lord's Name.

GATHA 1520

Autobiography

Autobiography, words given as rain

मराठी मूळ

नव्हे हें गुरुत्व मेघवृष्टि वाणी । ऐकावी कानीं संतजनीं ॥1॥
 देहपिंड दान दिला एकसरें । मिळचें तें खरें टांकसाळ ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे झरा लागला नवनीत । सेविलिया हित पोट धाय ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*This is not the ego of a teacher;
 my words fall like rain, to be heard by the saints.*

*I have offered this body as a gift, all at once.
 What is original and genuine is the mint itself.*

*Says Tuka, a stream of fresh butter has begun to flow.
 If you partake of it, the belly is full and satisfied.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

This is not the pride of a teacher; my words fall like a rain-cloud, for the saints to hear. I have given this body away as a gift, all at once. What is original and true is the mint itself. Tuka says: a stream of fresh butter has begun to flow. Whoever takes it is helped, and the belly is filled and content.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers the suspicion that he is setting himself up as a guru. He says his words are not his own self-importance but rain poured out for the saints, and he has already handed his whole body over as a gift, so there is no self left to be proud. The image of the mint says the truth he speaks is genuine coin struck at the source, not his invention. The flowing butter is his promise to the listener: this teaching is nourishment freely given, and whoever partakes of it is satisfied.

GATHA 1521

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the hidden witness

मराठी मूळ

घटीं अलिप्त असे रवि । अग्नि काष्ठामाजी जेवी । तैसा नारायण जीवीं । जीवसाक्षीवर्तनें ॥1॥
 भोग ज्याचे तया अंगीं । भिन्न प्रारब्ध जर्गी । विचित्र ये रंगीं । रंगें रंगला गोसावी ॥ध्रु॥
 देह संकल्पासारिखें । एक एकांसी पारिखें । सुख आणि दुःखें । अंगी कर्में त्रिविध ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे कोडें । न कळे तयासी सांकडें । त्याचिया निवाडें । उगवे केलें विंदान ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*As the sun remains untouched by the water in a pot,
as fire dwells hidden within wood,
so does Narayana dwell within the jiva,
moving as the witness of the jiva.*

*Each one's experience belongs to their own body;
destinies are varied in this world.
The Lord is colored by color within this spectacle,
dressed as the Gosavi.*

*The body follows the pattern of one's own sankalpa;
each is a stranger to the other.
Pleasure and suffering come from one's own threefold karma.*

*Says Tuka, this puzzle cannot be grasped by anyone.
Only by his own judgment is the intricate design revealed.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

As the sun stays untouched by the water in a pot, as fire lies hidden inside wood, so Narayana dwells within the living being, moving there as the witness of the being. Each one's experience belongs to his own body; in this world the destinies are different. The Lord is colored by the colors of this spectacle, dressed up as the Gosavi. The body follows the shape of one's own will; each is a stranger to the other. Pleasure and pain come from one's own threefold karma. Tuka says: this puzzle cannot be solved by anyone. Only by his own decision is the intricate design undone.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes how God lives inside every creature without being caught by what the creature goes through. Like the sun reflected in pot-water or fire latent in wood, Narayana dwells in the living being as a witness, present but untouched. Yet that same Lord seems to take on every role, wearing the costumes of the world's drama, while each body reaps the pleasure and pain of its own karma and stays a stranger to the rest. He admits the riddle of how the one untouched witness becomes all these separate, suffering selves cannot be cracked by human cleverness. Only God, who set up the design, can unravel it.

GATHA 1522

Longing and Separation

Longing, the gift of tears

मराठी मूळ

सद्गदित कंठ दाटो । येणें फुटो हृदय ॥१॥
चिंतनाचा एक लाहो । तुमच्या अहो विडला ॥२॥
नेत्रीं जळ वाहो सदां । आनंदाचे रोमांच ॥३॥
तुका ह्याने कृपादान । इच्छी मन हे जोडी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Let my throat choke with feeling;
let my heart burst open with this.*

O Vitthala, let the one gain of contemplating you be mine.

*Let tears flow ceaselessly from my eyes;
let goosebumps of joy cover my body.*

Says Tuka, my mind longs for this gift of grace, this joining.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let my throat choke with feeling; let my heart break open with it. O Vitthala, let the one thing I gain be the thinking of you. Let tears flow from my eyes always; let the thrill of joy rise on my skin. Tuka says: my mind longs for this, the gift of your grace, this joining.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a prayer not for relief but for deeper feeling. Tukaram asks for a choking throat, a breaking heart, ceaseless tears, and the bodily thrill of joy, the very signs that the thought of Vitthal has overwhelmed him. He calls remembering God the one gain worth having, the single profit he wants from his life. The final line names what he is really asking for: this flood of feeling is not something he can produce, it is a gift of grace, and what he longs for through it is union with the Lord.

GATHA 1523

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, God filling the sight

मराठी मूळ

जेथें देखें तेथें उभा । अवघ्या गगनाचा गाभा ॥१॥
डोळां बैसलें बैसलें । ध्यान राहोनि संचलें ॥२॥
सरसावलें मन । केले सोज्जळ लोचन ॥३॥
तुका ह्याने सवें । आतां असिजेत देवें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Wherever I look, there He stands,
the very essence of all the sky.*

*Seated, seated within my eyes;
the vision has remained and pervaded all.*

*The mind has been drawn forward,
and the eyes have been made bright and clear.*

Says Tuka, now let there be abiding with God always.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Wherever I look, there he stands, the very core of the whole sky. He has settled in my eyes, settled there; the vision has stayed and spread through everything. My mind has been drawn forward; my eyes have been made clear and bright. Tuka says: now let me always abide together with God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a vision that has taken over his seeing. Wherever he turns, Vitthal is standing there, the essence filling all of space, until the form has lodged in his eyes and spread out to cover everything he looks at. This is not strain but ease: his mind is drawn toward God and his sight has been cleansed and brightened by what it beholds. The closing line is the only thing left to want. Having once seen God everywhere, he asks simply to go on abiding with him without break.

GATHA 1524

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the self dissolved

मराठी मूळ

तान्हे तान्ह प्याली । भूक भुकेने खादली ॥१॥
 जेथें तें च नाहीं जालें । झाडा घेतला विठ्ठलें ॥२॥
 वास वासनेसी नाहीं । मन पांगुळलें पायीं ॥३॥
 शेष उरला तुका । जीवा जीवीं जाला चुका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Thirst has drunk up thirst itself.**Hunger has been consumed by hunger.*

*Where even the sense of 'there' has been dissolved,
 Vitthala has swept it all clean.*

*No trace of desire remains;
 the mind has become lame at his feet.*

*Says Tuka, what remains is the remainder.
 The jiva has slipped away from the jiva's grasp.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Thirst has drunk up thirst itself. Hunger has eaten hunger. Where even the sense of a 'there' is gone, Vitthala has swept the whole place clean. No scent of desire is left; the mind has gone lame at his feet. Tuka says: what is left is only the remainder. The living being has slipped out of the living being's own grasp.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is pointing at a state where the seeking self has consumed itself and vanished. Thirst drinking thirst and hunger eating hunger mean the very craving that drove him has turned on itself and disappeared; Vitthal has swept the inner space so clean that even the sense of a separate place is gone. The mind, having reached the Lord's feet, can go no further and stops, lame, with no desire left to chase. What remains is only a remainder, and the jiva has lost its grip on itself: the small self that used to manage everything is simply no longer holding on.

GATHA 1525

Renunciation

Renunciation, naked and provided for

मराठी मूळ

पाणिपात्र दिगांबरा । हस्त करा सारिखे ॥१॥
 आवश्यक देव मनीं । चिंतनींच सादर ॥२॥
 भिक्षा कामधेनुऐशी । अवकाशीं शयन ॥३॥
 पांघरोनि तुका दिशा ॥ केला वास अलक्षीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*With cupped hands as my vessel, naked as the sky,
 my hands made alike.*

God alone in my mind, and I am absorbed in contemplation.

Begging is my Kamadhenu, and the open sky is my bed.

*Says Tuka, wrapping the directions around me as a shawl,
 I have made my home in the invisible.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

My cupped hands are my begging-bowl; I am naked as the sky, my hands made enough on their own. God alone is in my mind, and I am absorbed, intent, in nothing but contemplation. Begging is my wish-granting cow; the open sky is where I sleep. Tuka says: wrapping the directions around me as a shawl, I have made my home in the unseen.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram paints the life of the radical renunciant who owns nothing and lacks nothing. He has no bowl but his own cupped hands, no clothes but the sky, no shelter but the open air, and yet he is provided for: begging itself is his Kamadhenu, the cow that grants every wish. The poverty is total and the contentment is total, because the one thing he holds is God, fixed in his mind. The closing image makes the surrender complete. With the four directions as his only shawl, he has settled his home in the invisible, in God beyond all form.

GATHA 1526

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the taste of Brahman

मराठी मूळ

विषयीं विसर पडिला निःशेष । अंगीं ब्रह्मरस ठसावला ॥१॥
 लाभाचिया सोसें पुढें चाली मना । धनाचा कृपणा लोभ जैसा ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे गंगासागरसंगमीं । अवघ्या जाल्या ऊमिन एकमय ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Forgetfulness of sense-objects has become complete. The essence of Brahman has settled deep within my being.

Driven by the eagerness of gain, the mind presses forward, like a miser's craving for wealth. Says Tuka, at the meeting of the Ganga and the sea, all the waves have become one.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Forgetting of the sense-objects has become complete. The essence of Brahman has set firm within my body. Driven by the hunger for this gain, my mind presses on ahead, the way a miser craves more wealth. Tuka says: at the meeting of the Ganga and the sea, all the waves have become one.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes being so filled with God that the outer world drops away. He has forgotten the objects of the senses entirely, and the taste of Brahman has set hard inside him like something cast and fixed. Strikingly, he keeps the language of greed: his mind still rushes forward hungry for more of this, the way a miser can never have enough money, except here the craving is for God. The final image seals it. As the river loses itself where it joins the sea and the separate waves become one water, his separateness has merged into the one reality.

GATHA 1527

The Power of the Name

The Name, sins burned to ash

मराठी मूळ

कृष्णरामनाम मांडीं पां वोळी । तेणें होइल होळी पापा धुनी ॥१॥
 ऐसा मना छंद लावीं रे अभ्यास । जया नाहीं नास ब्रह्मरसा ॥२॥
 जोडी तरी ऐसी करावी न सरे । पुढें आस नुरे मागुताली ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसें धरा कांहीं मनीं । यातायाती खाणीं चुकतील ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Set up rows of Krishna and Rama's Name.

By it, a Holi-fire will be made of sin's burning.

*Let the mind take up this rhythm with passion,
 for the essence of Brahman is never destroyed.*

*If you must acquire something, let it be that which never runs out,
 so that no future craving remains.*

*Says Tuka, hold this firmly in your mind,
 and the matrix of births through different species will be escaped.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Set up rows of the names of Krishna and Rama. From that, a Holi-fire will rise, and it will burn your sins to ash. Set your mind to this practice; love it. The essence of Brahman is never destroyed. If you must gather something, gather what never runs out, so that no craving is left for later. Tuka says: hold this much in your mind, and you will escape the rounds of birth through womb after womb.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells you what to invest in and what the return is. He says to line up the names of Krishna and Rama on the tongue, like fuel laid in rows, and let them catch into a bonfire that burns sin away as Holi burns the old. He asks you to make this repetition a settled habit of the mind, because the taste of Brahman it gives is the one thing that cannot be destroyed. Everything else you could acquire runs out and leaves you craving more; the Name does not. Hold to it, he promises, and the wheel of rebirth through species after species comes to an end.

GATHA 1528

The Saints

The saints, the shard holds butter

मराठी मूळ

परमार्थी तो न ह्यणावा आपुला । सलगी धाकुला हेळं नये ॥१॥
थोडा चि स्फुलिंग बहुत दावाग्नी । वाढतां इंधनीं वाढविला ॥२॥
पितियांनं तैसा वंदावा कुमर । जयाचें अंतर देवें वसे ॥३॥
तुका ह्यणे शिरीं वाहावें खापर । माजी असे सार नवनीत ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A person devoted to the Supreme Goal, however young or seemingly insignificant, should never be treated lightly on account of familiarity.

A tiny spark can become a great forest fire when fed with kindling.

Even a father should bow before the child within whom God dwells.

*Says Tuka, carry the earthen shard upon your head,
for inside it lies the pure butter.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do not call a lover of God your own and treat him lightly. Do not slight one who is young or seems small just because you are close to him. A small spark becomes a great forest fire when it is fed with fuel. Even a father should bow to the child in whom God dwells. Tuka says: carry the broken clay pot on your head, for inside it is pure butter.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram warns against measuring a devotee of God by his outward size or station. Familiarity tempts us to treat a young or humble person carelessly, but he says that is a mistake: a tiny spark, given fuel, becomes a forest fire, and the God-filled person can grow the same way. He pushes the point to its sharpest edge: even a father should bow before his own child if God lives within that child, because the relation of devotion outranks the relation of birth. The closing image makes it plain. The plain clay shard looks like nothing, yet the pure butter is inside it; honor what it holds, not how it looks.

GATHA 1529

The Necessity of Experience

Realization, the world is God

मराठी मूळ

ज्याचा ऐसा अनुभव । विश्व देव सत्यत्वे ॥१॥
 देव तया जवळी असे । पाप नासे दुरुषणे ॥२॥
 कामक्रोधा नाही चाली । भूतीं जाली समता ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे भेदाभेद । गेले वाद खंडोनि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*He whose experience is this, that the world is truly God:
 God dwells near to that one, and sins are destroyed by his very sight.*

*Lust and anger lose their footing,
 and equality toward all beings is established.*

*Says Tuka, all debates of difference and non-difference
 have been cut through and gone.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

The one whose experience is this, that the whole world is truly God: God lives near to him, and sins fall away at the sight of him. Lust and anger lose their hold in him. He sees all beings as equal. Tuka says: for him the quarrels of difference and non-difference are cut through and gone.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the person in whom realization has actually landed, not as theory but as lived experience: he sees the entire world as nothing other than God. Such a person carries God so close that even seeing him destroys the onlooker's sins. In him the two great drivers, lust and anger, have lost their footing, and every being looks equal to his eye. And the long philosophical war over whether the soul is different from God or one with it simply ends for him; he has cut through it, not by winning the debate but by passing beyond the need for it.

GATHA 1530

The Power of the Name

The Name, service from where you sit

मराठी मूळ

सेवा ते आवडी उच्चारारें नाम । भेदाभेदकाम निवारुनि ॥१॥
 न लगे हालावें चालावें बाहेरी । अवघें चि घरीं बैसलिया ॥२॥
 देवाचीं च नामें देवाचिये शिरीं । सर्व अळंकारीं समर्पावीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आहे भावें चि संतोषी । वसे नामापाशीं आपुलिया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*The truest service is to utter the Name with love,
setting aside all concern of duality and non-duality.*

*There is no need to stir or go anywhere outside;
everything is right here, simply sitting at home.*

Offer all the names of God, like ornaments, upon God's own head.

*Says Tuka, God is content with devotion alone
and dwells near his own Name.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

The truest service is to say the Name with love, putting aside all worry about difference and non-difference. You need not stir or go anywhere outside. Everything is right here, simply sitting at home. Offer all of God's names back upon God's own head, like ornaments. Tuka says: God is satisfied with devotion alone, and he dwells right beside his own Name.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strips worship down to its core: the real service is to utter God's Name lovingly, dropping the head-debates about oneness and difference that go nowhere. He insists this needs no journey and no outward effort; the whole work is done sitting at home. The names of God are themselves ornaments, and you give them back by laying them on God's own head, returning to him what is already his. The reassurance at the end is the key: God asks for devotion and nothing more, and he is never far off, because he lives right next to his own Name on your tongue.

GATHA 1531

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the quarreling learned

मराठी मूळ

ज्ञानियांचे घरीं चोजवितां देव । तेथें अहंभाव पाठी लागे ॥1॥
 ह्यणोनियां ऐसे सांडिले उपाय । धरियेले पाय दृढ तुझे ॥ध्रु॥
 वेदपारायण पंडित वाचक । न मिळती एक एकांमधीं ॥2॥
 पाहों गेलों भाव कैसी आत्मनिष्ठा । तेथें देखें चेष्टा विपरीत ॥3॥
 आपुलिया नाहीं निवाले जे अंगें । योगी करती रागें गुरगुरु ॥4॥
 तुका ह्यणे मज कोणांचा पांगिला । नको बा विठ्ठला करूं आतां ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*In the homes of the learned, when God is sought,
the sense of I-ness follows right behind.*

*Therefore I have abandoned all such methods
and held firmly to your feet.*

Scholars and reciters of the Vedas cannot agree among themselves.

*I went to observe their steadfast abidance in the Self
and found nothing but perverse behavior there.*

*Those whose own bodies have not found coolness,
those so-called yogis, growl at others in anger.*

*Says Tuka, I have no business with any of them.
Do not make me go to them, dear Vitthala.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

In the homes of the learned, when you go looking for God, the sense of I follows right behind. So I have let go of all those methods and held tight to your feet. The scholars and reciters of the Vedas cannot agree with one another. I went to see how steady they were in the Self, and I found only twisted behavior there. Those whose own selves have found no peace, those so-called yogis, growl at others in anger. Tuka says: I owe nothing to any of them. Do not make me go to them now, dear Vitthala.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram explains why he turned away from the houses of the learned and clung instead to God's feet. He noticed that wherever God is pursued through scholarship, ego comes trailing right behind, so the search feeds the very thing it should dissolve. He looked closely and found the experts contradicting each other and behaving in ways that betrayed their words; men whose own hearts had found no cooling were snapping at everyone else. The criticism is aimed at the pattern, the way knowledge curdles into pride and quarrel, not at any single person. His prayer is simple and self-protecting: keep me away from that, Vitthal; let me depend on you alone.

GATHA 1532

Longing and Separation

Longing, watching the road to Pandhari

मराठी मूळ

पंढरीची वाट पाहें निरंतर । निडळावरी कर ठेवूनियां ॥१॥
जातियां निरोप पाठवीं माहेरा । कां मज सासुरा सांडियेलें ॥२॥
पैल कोण दिसे गरुडाचे वारिकें । विठ्ठलासारिकें चतुर्भुज ॥३॥
तुका ह्याने धीर नाहीं माझ्या जीवा । भेटसी केधवां पांडुरंगा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*I gaze constantly toward the road to Pandhari,
my hand shading my brow.*

*Send word with those going to my natal home:
why have I been abandoned in this in-laws' house?*

*Who is that figure I see in the distance,
mounted on Garuda, four-armed, like Vitthala himself?*

*Says Tuka, my jiva has no more patience.
When, O Panduranga, will you come to meet me?*

IN PLAIN WORDS

I watch the road to Pandhari without stopping, my hand held over my brow. Send word with those who are going to my mother's home: why have I been left here in this in-laws' house? Who is that I see far off, riding on Garuda, four-armed, looking like Vitthala himself? Tuka says: my soul has no patience left. When, O Panduranga, will you come and meet me?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram writes as a bride stranded in her in-laws' house, gazing down the road to Pandhari for any sign of home. The image carries the soul's exile: this world is the harsh in-laws' house, and Pandhari, where Vitthal stands, is the mother's home it aches to return to. He begs travelers to carry a message back, asking why he has been abandoned, and his eyes strain at a far-off four-armed figure on Garuda, hoping it is the Lord come at last. The poem ends in raw impatience: the soul cannot wait any longer, and the only question that matters is when God will finally come.

GATHA 1533

The Power of the Name

The Name, the boat across existence

मराठी मूळ

ऐसी जोडी करा राम कंठीं धरा । जेणें चुके फेरा गर्भवास ॥१॥
 नासिवंत आटी िप्रयापुत्रधन । बीज ज्याचा सीण तें चि फळ ॥२॥
 नाव धड करा सहजरा नामांची । जे भवसिंधूची थडी पावे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे काळा हाणा तोंडावरी । भाता भरा हरिरामबाणीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Make this one investment: keep Rama upon your tongue.
 By it, the cycle of birth in the womb will cease.*

*The craving for spouse, children, and wealth is perishable;
 the seed whose nature is toil yields only toil as its fruit.*

*Build a sound boat of the effortless names,
 a boat that will reach the far shore of the ocean of existence.*

*Says Tuka, strike Death across the face.
 Fill your quiver with arrows bearing the names of Hari and Rama.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Make this one gain: keep Rama on your throat. By it the round of birth in the womb is broken. The craving for wife, children, and wealth all perishes; the seed that is toil bears only toil as its fruit. Build a sound boat out of the effortless names, a boat that reaches the far shore of the ocean of existence. Tuka says: strike Death across the face. Fill your quiver with arrows of the names of Hari and Rama.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram urges one acquisition worth making: keeping Rama on the tongue, which breaks the endless return to the womb. He sets it against the things people actually chase, spouse, children, money, and says these all perish; a seed of toil can only grow into more toil. The Name, by contrast, is a well-built boat of effortless syllables that carries you across the ocean of worldly existence to the far shore. He ends with a fighter's image: do not cower before death; strike it in the face, and load your quiver with the names of Hari and Rama as your arrows.

GATHA 1534

Longing and Separation

Longing, the child crying for the breast

मराठी मूळ

पाहें मजकडे भरोनियां दृष्टी । बहुत हिंपुष्टी जालों माते ॥१॥
 करावेंसे वाटे जीवा स्तनपान । नव्हे हें वचन श्रुंघारिक ॥२॥
 सत्यासाठीं माझी शब्दविवंचना । जोडिल्या वचनाचें तें नव्हे ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझी कळवळ्याची कींव । भागलासे जीव कर्तव्यानें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Look at me with your full gaze, O Mother,
 for I have grown very weak and forlorn.
 My jiva longs to nurse at your breast.*

*This is not romantic speech. It is a cry of truth.
 My words are not artfully constructed but wrung from sincerity alone.*

*Says Tuka, this cry is born of anguish and deep compassion for my own condition.
 My jiva is exhausted by the demands of duty.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Look at me, Mother, with your full gaze. I have grown weak and worn out. My soul wants to nurse at your breast. This is not pretty, romantic talk. It is the truth I must say. My weighing of these words is for the sake of truth; they are not strung together for effect. Tuka says: this is the cry of my own pity for myself. My soul is worn down by duty.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram cries to God as a child to its mother, asking for one full look and for the milk of the breast, which here means the infant's helpless dependence on divine love. He is careful to set the tone: this is not the ornamental, romantic talk of a poet showing off, but words wrung from real distress. He says he weighs his words for truth's sake, not to make them sound beautiful. The closing is an honest confession of his state: worn out by the demands of duty, he feels pity for his own condition, and out of that exhaustion the cry rises on its own.

GATHA 1535

Longing and Separation

Longing, the fawn calling its doe

मराठी मूळ

तुज ह्यणतील कृपेचा सागर । तरि कां केला धीर पांडुरंगा ॥१॥
 आझुनि कां नये तुज माझी दया । काय देवराया पाहातोसि ॥२॥
 आळवितों जैसैं पाडस कुरंगिणी । पीडिलिया वनीं तानभूक ॥३॥
 प्रेमरसपान्हा पार्जीं माझे आई । धांवें वो विठाई वोरसोनि ॥४॥
 तुका ह्यणे माझें कोण हरी दुःख । तुजविण एक पांडुरंगा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*They call you an ocean of mercy.
 Then why have you delayed so long, O Panduranga?*

*Does my suffering still not move you to compassion?
 What are you watching for, O King of Gods?*

*I call out like a fawn crying for its doe,
 tormented by hunger and thirst in the forest.*

*O Mother Vithabai, pour forth the flowing milk of love.
 Come running, overflowing with tenderness.*

*Says Tuka, who else will take away my sorrow
 but you alone, O Panduranga?*

IN PLAIN WORDS

They call you an ocean of mercy. Then why have you waited so long, Panduranga? Even now my suffering does not move you to pity? What are you watching for, King of Gods? I call out like a fawn crying for its doe, worn down by hunger and thirst in the forest. Pour the milk of love's sweetness for me, my Mother; come running, Vithabai, overflowing with tenderness. Tuka says: who else can take away my sorrow but you alone, Panduranga?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses God on his own reputation: if everyone calls you an ocean of mercy, then your delay makes no sense, so why keep waiting? He asks, almost in complaint, what God is watching for while his servant suffers. Then the image shifts to a lost fawn crying for its doe in a forest, faint with hunger and thirst, and God becomes the mother whose milk is the sweetness of love. He begs Vithabai to come running, brimming over with tenderness. The closing reason is the whole point of the appeal: there is no one else who can lift this sorrow, so the delay leaves him with nowhere else to turn.

GATHA 1536

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, bread on the spike

मराठी मूळ

भक्ति तों कठिण शुळावरील पोळी । निवडे तो बळी विरळा शूर ॥१॥
 जेथें पाहें तेथें देखीचा पर्वत । पायाविण भिंत तांतडीची ॥२॥
 कामावलें तरि पाका ओज घडे । रुचि आणि जोडे श्लाघ्यता हे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने मना पाहिजे अंकुश । नित्य नवा दिस जागृतीचा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Devotion is as difficult as bread impaled upon a spike.
 Only the rare and valiant hero can claim it.*

*Wherever I look, I see a mountain of obstacles,
 a wall built without foundation, raised in haste.*

*When one perseveres, the dish cooks to its full essence,
 and both flavor and glory are gained.*

*Says Tuka, the mind needs a goad.
 Each day must bring fresh vigilance.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Devotion is hard, like bread set on a spike. Only the rare, brave one can take hold of it. Wherever I look I see a mountain of obstacles, a wall raised in a hurry with no foundation. But when you keep at it, the dish cooks through to its full taste, and you gain both flavor and honor. Tuka says: the mind needs a goad. Every day must bring fresh wakefulness.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is honest about how hard the path of devotion is. He compares it to snatching bread off a spike: it cannot be grabbed carelessly, and only the rare, courageous person manages it. The road looks like a mountain of obstacles, or a wall thrown up in haste with nothing under it, ready to fall. Yet he holds out the reward of persistence with a cooking image: stay at it and the dish finally cooks through, yielding both real flavor and real honor. The practical instruction at the end is that the restless mind must be kept under a goad, and the vigilance cannot be borrowed from yesterday; each day demands it new.

GATHA 1537

Prayers

Prayer, why does the Lord sleep

मराठी मूळ

पापी ह्मणों तरि आठवितों पाय । दोष बळी काय तयाहूनि ॥१॥
 ऐशा विचाराचे घालूनि कोंडणी । काय चक्रपाणी निजलेती ॥२॥
 एकवेळ जेणें पुत्राच्या उद्देशें ॥ घेतल्याचें कैसें नेलें दुःख ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे अहो वैकुंठनायका । चिंता कां सेवका तुमचिया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*If I call myself one steeped in wrong, still I remember your feet.
 Is any fault more powerful than that remembrance?*

*Having penned in such thoughts, O Chakrapani,
 why do you lie sleeping?*

*You once lifted the sorrow of one who called your name
 with his son's purpose in mind.*

*Says Tuka, O Lord of Vaikuntha,
 why should your own servant carry any worry?*

IN PLAIN WORDS

If I call myself a sinner, still I remember your feet. Is any fault stronger than that remembrance? I have penned in these very thoughts, Chakrapani, so why do you lie sleeping? Once you lifted away the sorrow of one who called your name with only his son in mind. Tuka says: O Lord of Vaikuntha, why should your own servant carry any worry?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram argues his case to a God who seems unresponsive. He admits he may be a sinner, but counters that he still remembers God's feet, and asks whether any sin can outweigh that remembrance. Having boxed God in with this reasoning, he prods him: then why do you lie there asleep, Chakrapani? He recalls the saving of Ajamila, who called the name only because it was his son's name yet was rescued anyway, to show that God responds even to an accidental call. The conclusion turns the logic into reassurance and gentle reproach at once: if you are the Lord of Vaikuntha, your own servant has no business carrying worry.

GATHA 1538

The Power of the Name

The Name, the road to Vaikuntha thrown open

मराठी मूळ

उगविल्या गुंती । ऐशा मागें नेणों किती ॥१॥
 ख्यात केली अजामेलें । होतें निघालें दिवाळें ॥२॥
 मोकलिला प्रायिश्चर्ती । कोणी न धरिती हातीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मुक्त वाट । वैकुंठीची घडघडाट ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How many such knots have been untied before this, I do not know.

*Ajamela made the case famous:
 even his complete ruin was reversed.*

Released from all need for penance, none could hold him back.

*Says Tuka, the road to Vaikuntha was thrown wide open
 with a thunderous rumble.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

How many such knots have been untied before this, I do not know. Ajamela made the case famous: even his utter ruin was turned around. He was freed from all need for penance, and no one could hold him back. Tuka says: the road to Vaikuntha was thrown wide open, with a thunderous roar.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram points to the power of the Name by counting up the lives it has already untangled, too many to know. He names the famous case of Ajamila, a man whose life had collapsed into complete ruin, and yet was reversed when he uttered the divine name at the end. The Name freed him so completely that no penance was required and nothing could drag him back. The closing image is triumphant: the gate to Vaikuntha did not just open quietly, it swung wide with a thunderous roar, as if to announce that the worst sinner had been let through.

GATHA 1539

The Power of the Name

The Name, the easy way

मराठी मूळ

सरळीं हीं नामें उच्चारवीं सदा । हरि बा गोविंदा रामकृष्णा ॥१॥
 पुण्य पर्वकाळ तीर्थो ही सकळ । कथा सिंधुजळ न्हाऊं येती ॥२॥
 अवघे चि लाभ बैसलिया घरा । येती भाव धरा एके ठायीं ॥३॥
 सेव्या मॅढरा गाई सेवा घेती ह्यैसी । कामधेनु तैसी नव्हे एक ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे सुखें पाविजे अनंता । हें वर्म जाणतां सुलभ चि ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Utter these simple names always:
Hari, Govinda, Rama, Krishna.*

*All merit, all holy seasons, all pilgrimages
come to bathe in the ocean-waters of katha.*

*Sitting at home, every gain will come to you.
Hold your bhava firmly in one place.*

*Sheep, cows, and buffalo may give their service,
but not one of them is like the wish-fulfilling Kamadhenu.*

*Says Tuka, Ananta is easily reached
by those who know this vital point.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Utter these simple names always: Hari, Govinda, Rama, Krishna. All merit, all holy seasons, all pilgrimages come to bathe in the ocean of katha. Sit at home, and every gain comes to you. Hold your bhava firmly in one place. Sheep and cows and buffalo give their service too, but not one of them is the wish-fulfilling Kamadhenu. Tuka says: Ananta is reached with ease by those who know this one vital point.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram names the whole spiritual economy and then collapses it into a single act. Merit, sacred calendars, and far pilgrimages are not chased; they come and bathe in the ocean of Hari's story, so the seeker can stay home and still receive everything, provided the heart is held steady in one place. The contrast of common animals with the Kamadhenu makes the point about quality: many practices yield some service, but only the Name yields whatever you wish. The vital point he wants understood is that God is not won by exertion across the world but by these plain names spoken always.

GATHA 1540

The Power of the Name

The Name purifies, God follows the devotee

मराठी मूळ

पवित्र तो देह वाणी पुण्यवंत । जो वदे अच्युत सर्व काळ ॥१॥
तयाच्या चिंतनें तरतील दोषी । जळतील रासी पातकाच्या ॥२॥
देव इच्छी रज चरणींची माती । धांवत चालती मार्गे मार्गे ॥३॥
काय त्यां उरलें वेगळें आणीक । वैकुंठनायक जयां कंठीं ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Sacred is the body, and blessed is the tongue
that utters Achyuta's name at all times.*

*By his contemplation, even the guilty and faulty ones are carried across,
and heaps of sin are burned to ash.*

*God himself desires the dust of such a devotee's feet
and follows eagerly behind.*

What else remains for those who carry the Lord of Vaikuntha at their throats?

*Says Tuka, the meeting of God and devotee is itself the Triveni,
the confluence where the stream of the Name flows.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Sacred is the body, and blessed is the tongue that utters Achyuta's name at all times. By thinking of him, even the guilty are carried across, and heaps of sin are burned to ash. God himself longs for the dust of such a devotee's feet, and runs eagerly behind him. What else is left to gain for those who carry the Lord of Vaikuntha at their throats? Tuka says: the meeting of God and devotee is itself the Triveni, where the stream of the Name flows.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram declares that the Name does not merely cleanse the devotee; it reverses the usual order between God and the worshipper. The body and tongue that hold Achyuta's name are themselves sacred, and even the guilty are ferried over while their stores of sin burn away. Then comes the bold turn: God himself craves the dust of the devotee's feet and chases after him. For one who carries the Lord at the throat there is nothing further to seek, because the simple meeting of God and devotee is already the holiest confluence, a Triveni made of the Name.

GATHA 1541

The Saints

Saints, the surest boat across

मराठी मूळ

पाप ताप दैन्य जाय उठाउठीं । जालिया भेटी हरिदासांची ॥1॥
ऐसें बळ नाहीं आणिकांचे अंगीं । तपें तिथीं जगीं दानें व्रतें ॥२॥
चरणींचे रज वंदी शूळपाणी । नाचती कीर्तनीं त्यांचे माथां ॥3॥
भव तरावया उत्तम हे नाव । भिजों नेंदी पाव हात कांहीं ॥4॥
तुका ह्मणे मन जालें समाधान । देखिले चरण वैष्णवांचे ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Sin, suffering, and poverty vanish instantly
when one meets the devotees of Hari.*

No other power in the world, whether austerity, pilgrimage, charity, or vows, can match this.

*Even Shiva bows to the dust of their feet
and dances upon their heads during kirtan.*

*For crossing the ocean of existence, this is the finest boat;
it does not let even your hands or feet get wet.*

*Says Tuka, my mind has found its peace
in beholding the feet of the Vaishnavas.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Sin, suffering, and poverty go in an instant when one meets the devotees of Hari. No other power in the world, not austerity, not pilgrimage, not charity, not vows, has such strength. Even Shiva bows to the dust of their feet and dances on their heads in kirtan. To cross the ocean of birth, this is the finest boat; it does not let even your hands or feet get wet. Tuka says: my mind has found its peace in beholding the feet of the Vaishnavas.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram ranks the company of saints above every other religious effort. Meeting Hari's devotees clears sin, suffering, and poverty at once, and he insists no austerity, pilgrimage, charity, or vow can match that power. He raises them higher still by saying Shiva himself reveres the dust of their feet and joins their kirtan. The boat image lands the claim: other paths are crossings where you still get soaked, but the saints carry you over the ocean of rebirth without your hands or feet even touching the water, which is why his own mind rests simply in the sight of them.

GATHA 1542

The Power of the Name

Kirtan, fortune on the tongue

मराठी मूळ

येणें बोधें आह्मी असों सर्वकाळ । करुनि निर्मळ हरिकथा ॥१॥
 आह्मी भूमीवरी एक दइवांचे । निधान हें वाचे सांपडलें ॥२॥
 तरतील कुळें दोन्ही उभयतां । गातां आइकतां सुखरूप ॥३॥
 न चळे हा मंत्र न ह्यणों यातीकुळ । न लगे काळ वेळ विचारावी ॥४॥
 तुका ह्यणे माझा विठ्ठल विसांवा । सांटवीन हांवा हृदयांत ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*With this understanding, let us abide at all times,
 keeping ourselves pure through Hari's kirtan.*

*We are among the fortunate upon this earth;
 this treasure has been found upon our tongues.*

*Both lineages are carried across, both the singer and the listener,
 for both are of the nature of bliss.*

*This mantra never fails. It does not ask for caste or lineage,
 nor need one consider the proper time or season.*

*Says Tuka, my Vitthala is my rest.
 I will store this eagerness within my heart.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

With this understanding, let us abide at all times, keeping ourselves pure through Hari's kirtan. We are among the fortunate on this earth; this treasure has been found upon our tongues. Both lineages are carried across, the singer and the listener alike, for both are made of bliss. This mantra never fails; it does not ask for caste or lineage, and it needs no fixing of the right time or season. Tuka says: my Vitthal is my rest. I will store this longing in my heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram counts the kirtan-singer among the truly fortunate, because the treasure he has found sits on his own tongue and asks nothing of fortune outside him. He widens the gift to include the listener as well: both lineages, singer and hearer, are ferried across, since both partake of bliss. The radical edge is in the third stanza, where he names what the Name does not require: it asks no caste, no lineage, no auspicious hour, so the door stands open to everyone the conventional rites would exclude. For himself, Vitthal is simply rest, a longing he chooses to keep stored in the heart.

GATHA 1543

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the fruit of many lives

मराठी मूळ

बहुतां जन्मींचें संचित । सबळ होय जरि बहुत । तरि चि होय हरिभक्त । कृपावंत मानसीं ॥1॥
 असे भूतदया मानसीं । अवघा देखे हृषीकेशी । जीवें न विसंबे तयासी । मागें मागें हिंडतसे ॥2॥
 तुका ह्याणे निविनकार । शरणागतां वज्रपंजर । जे जे अनुसरले नर । तयां जन्म चुकलें ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Only when the merit of many births accumulates in great abundance
 does one become a devotee of Hari,
 with a mind that is gracious and compassionate.*

*Such a one holds compassion for all beings in the mind
 and sees Hrishiksha everywhere.*

*With their very jiva they do not forget him
 and follow behind him wherever they go.*

*Says Tuka, the Lord is unchanging,
 a fortress of diamond for those who surrender.
 Whoever has followed him has been freed from rebirth.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Only when the merit of many births gathers in great abundance does one become a devotee of Hari, with a mind that is gracious and kind. Such a one holds compassion for all beings in the mind, and sees Hrishiksha everywhere. With his very life he does not forget him, and follows behind him wherever he goes. Tuka says: the Lord is unchanging, a fortress of diamond for those who surrender. Whoever has followed him has escaped rebirth.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram frames true devotion as rare and hard-won, the harvest of merit stored across many lifetimes, so that becoming Hari's devotee is not a casual choice but a culmination. The marks of such a soul are inward and ethical: a mind softened to compassion for every creature, and an eye that sees Hrishiksha in all things. Devotion here is constant attention, never forgetting God and walking always behind him. The closing image gives the reward and the security together: the unchanging Lord becomes a diamond fortress for whoever surrenders, and that surrender is what ends the round of rebirth.

GATHA 1544

Worldly Metaphors

The Name, a ship of free treasure

मराठी मूळ

तारुं लागलें बंदरीं । चंद्रभागेचिये तिरीं ॥१॥
 लुटा लुटा संतजन । अमुप हें रासी धन ॥२॥
 जाला हरिनामाचा तारा । सीड लागलें फरारा ॥३॥
 तुका जवळी हमाल । भार चालवी विठ्ठल ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*The ship has docked at the harbor
 on the bank of the Chandrabhaga.*

*Loot it, O saints, loot it!
 This treasure is immeasurable wealth.*

*The star of Hari's Name has risen,
 and the sail is set and billowing.*

*Says Tuka, I am the porter standing by.
 It is Vitthala who carries the load.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

The ship has docked at the harbor, on the bank of the Chandrabhaga. Loot it, O saints, loot it! This treasure is measureless wealth. The star of Hari's Name has risen, and the sail is set and billowing. Tuka says: I am the porter standing by. It is Vitthal who carries the load.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the riverbank at Pandhri into a docked treasure-ship and calls the saints to plunder it freely, because the wealth of the Name is without limit and there is no reason to hoard or ration it. The risen star and the full sail say the conditions are perfect; the moment to take is now. In the last line he refuses any credit for himself: he is only the porter standing by the cargo, while Vitthal is the one who actually carries the weight. The point is that grace, not the devotee's strength, does the real lifting.

GATHA 1545

Longing and Separation

Longing, the child crying for milk

मराठी मूळ

आळवीन स्वरे । कैशा मधुरा उत्तरे ॥१॥
 ये वो ये वो पांडुरंगे । प्रेमपान्हा मज दे गे ॥२॥
 पसरुनि चोंची । वचन हें करुणेची ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे बळी । आह्मी लडिवाळें आळीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I will call out in sweet tones, with tender and beautiful words.

Come, O Panduranga, come! Give me the flowing milk of your love.

With open beak, these are words of mercy.

Says Tuka, we are your children, insistent in our playful pleading.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I will call out in sweet tones, with tender, beautiful words. Come, O Panduranga, come! Give me the flowing milk of your love. With open mouth, these are words of mercy. Tuka says: we are your children, insistent in our playful pleading.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks as a hungry child crying for its mother, asking Panduranga to come and let down the milk of love. The sweet calling and tender words are not flattery; they are the only language the helpless infant has. The open mouth waiting to be fed makes the relationship plain: the devotee can only ask, the giving rests entirely with God. By calling himself a child stubborn in playful pleading, he claims the child's right to demand, for a true child does not earn the milk, it simply belongs to it.

GATHA 1546

Longing and Separation

Longing, eyes hungry for the form

मराठी मूळ

सकिळकांचें समाधान । नव्हे देखिल्यावांचून ॥१॥
 रूप दाखवीं रे आतां । सहजरभुजांच्या मंडिता ॥२॥
 शंखचक्रपद्मगदा । गरुडासहित ये गोविंदा ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे कान्हा । भूक लागली नयनां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The satisfaction of all will not come without beholding your form.

Show me your form now, adorned with four arms.

*Come with conch, discus, lotus, and mace, O Govinda,
and bring Garuda along with you.*

Says Tuka, O Krishna, my eyes are hungry for your sight.

IN PLAIN WORDS

No one is content without beholding you. Show me your form now, you who are adorned with four arms. Come with conch, discus, lotus, and mace, O Govinda, and bring Garuda with you. Tuka says: O Krishna, my eyes are hungry for your sight.

WHAT IT MEANS

Here the craving is for darshan, the actual seeing of God, without which Tukaram says no one's heart can settle. He asks not for a vague presence but for the full, recognizable form: four arms bearing conch, discus, lotus, and mace, and Garuda alongside, the very figure of Govinda enthroned in devotion. The longing is located in the senses; he says his eyes themselves are hungry. The prayer insists that for the devotee, intellectual knowledge of God is not enough, and only the seen form will feed the ache.

GATHA 1547

Devotion to Vitthal

Adoration, the names of the Lord

मराठी मूळ

पतितपावना । दिनानाथा नारायणा ॥१॥
तुझे रूप माझे मनीं । राहो नाम जपो वाणी ॥२॥
ब्रह्मांडनायका । भक्तजनाच्या पाळका ॥३॥
जीवांचिया जीवा । तुका ह्मणे देवदेवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O Purifier of the Fallen, O Lord of the lowly, O Narayana.

Let your form remain in my mind.

Let my tongue forever chant your Name.

O Lord of the universe, O protector of your devotees.

Says Tuka, O Jiva of all jivas, O God of gods.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O Purifier of the Fallen, O Lord of the lowly, O Narayana. Let your form stay in my mind. Let my tongue chant your Name forever. O Lord of the universe, O protector of your devotees. O Jiva of all jivas, Tuka says, O God of gods.

WHAT IT MEANS

This abhanga is almost entirely a litany of God's names, and the naming is itself the prayer. Tukaram piles up titles that describe what God does for the helpless: purifier of the fallen, lord of the lowly, protector of devotees. Between them sits the single request, that the form stay fixed in the mind and the Name never leave the tongue. By calling him the Jiva of all jivas and God of gods, Tukaram places this protector of the small at the very source of all life, so the one who stoops to the lowly is also the highest of all.

GATHA 1548

The Power of the Name

The Name, the one task of the mind

मराठी मूळ

करीं हें चि काम । मना जपें राम राम ॥१॥
 लागो हा चि छंद । मना गोविंद गोविंद ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे मना । मज भीक द्यावी दीना ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O mind, do this one task: chant Rama, Rama.

Let this one passion take hold: Govinda, Govinda.

Says Tuka, O mind, give this alms to me, a lowly one.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O mind, do this one task: chant Rama, Rama. Let this one passion take hold: Govinda, Govinda. Tuka says: O mind, give this alms to me, a lowly one.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks straight to his own mind and gives it a single assignment, narrowing all of spiritual life down to repeating the Name. He wants the restless mind, which fastens onto many passions, to fasten on just one: Govinda. The last line is striking because he begs from his own mind as a poor man begs alms, treating the simple act of remembrance as a charity he cannot command but must plead for. It admits how hard it is to hold the mind to even one thing, and how much the devotee depends on grace to do it.

GATHA 1549

The Nature of God

Nature of God, he runs to save his own

मराठी मूळ

आपुलिया लाजा । धांवे भक्तांचिया काजा ॥१॥
 नाम धरिलें दिनानाथ । सत्य करावया व्रत ॥२॥
 आघात निवारी । छाया पीतांबरें करी ॥३॥
 उभा कर कटीं । तुका ह्मणे याजसाटीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*For the sake of his own honor,
he runs to serve the needs of his devotees.*

*He bears the name Dinanath, Lord of the humble,
to fulfill that vow.*

*He wards off every blow
and makes shade for his own with his pitambara.*

*Says Tuka, he stands with hands upon his waist
for precisely this reason.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

For the sake of his own honor, he runs to serve the needs of his devotees. He took the name Dinanath, Lord of the humble, and he keeps that vow as true. He wards off every blow and makes shade for his own with his pitambara. Tuka says: he stands with his hands upon his waist for exactly this reason.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reads Vitthal's saving acts as binding obligations God has placed on himself. Because he accepted the title Dinanath, Lord of the humble, his own honor is at stake, and so he runs to his devotees' aid to keep that vow true. The protection is concrete: he blocks the blows aimed at them and shelters them under his yellow garment. Even the familiar pose of Vitthal standing with hands on his hips, Tukaram says, is held for this single purpose, the readiness to defend his own.

GATHA 1550

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the proof on the battlefield

मराठी मूळ

साधावया भक्तिकाज । नाहीं लाज हा धरीत ॥१॥
ऐसियासी शरण जावें । शक्ती जीवें न वंची ॥२॥
भीष्मपण केला खरा । धनुर्धरा रक्षीलें ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे साक्ष हातीं । तो म्यां चित्तीं धरियेला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

To fulfill the devotee's cause, he sets aside all shame.

Such is the one to whom we should surrender, for he holds nothing back from us.

He proved his vow when he protected Arjuna on the battlefield.

Says Tuka, the proof is in his hands, and I have fixed him firmly in my chitta.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To accomplish the devotee's cause, he sets aside all shame. Such is the one to whom we should surrender, for he holds nothing back from us with his life. He made his vow come true and protected the bearer of the bow. Tuka says: the proof is in his hands, and I have held him firmly in my heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram points to God's willingness to lose face for his devotees as the very reason to trust him. The God who will set aside shame to do a devotee's work is one who withholds nothing, and that is the safe place to surrender. He cites the warrior Arjuna, the bearer of the bow, whom the Lord shielded on the battlefield, as evidence that the promise is kept and not merely spoken. Because the proof is already in God's hands, Tukaram needs no further argument; he simply fixes this Lord firmly in his heart.

GATHA 1551

Prayers

Prayer, the cow and her calf

मराठी मूळ

धेनु चरे वनांतरीं । चित्त बाळकापें घरीं ॥१॥
 तैसें करीं वो माझे आई । ठाव देऊनि राखें पायीं ॥२॥
 न काढितां तळमळी । जिवनाबाहेर मासोळी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने कुडी । जीवाप्राणांची आवडी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*A cow grazes in the distant forest,
 yet her mind remains with her calf at home.*

*In the same way, O my Mother,
 keep me sheltered at your feet.*

*A fish pulled from water thrashes in torment
 even before it is lifted out.*

*Says Tuka, such is this body's longing;
 the jiva clings to the breath within it.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

The cow grazes far off in the forest. All the while her mind is at home with her calf. Do that for me, O my Mother. Give me a place at your feet and keep me there. A fish out of water thrashes in pain; it suffers even before it is lifted out. Tuka says: such is this poor body's longing; the jiva clings to the breath inside it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is asking for one thing: that wherever he goes, his attention stay fixed on God. He gives two homely pictures to name the kind of attachment he means. The cow can wander far to graze, yet her heart never leaves the calf at home, so he asks the Mother to hold him at her feet that way. The fish shows the other side: torn from its element, it thrashes in agony, because the creature cannot live apart from what keeps it alive. He is saying that the soul clings to God the way breath clings to a living body, and prays that the bond never be broken.

GATHA 1552

The Saints

The saints, God defends his own

मराठी मूळ

हरिजनाची कोणां न घडावी निंदा । साहात गोविंदा नाहीं त्याचें ॥1॥
 रूपा येऊनियां धरी अवतार । भक्तां अभयंकर खळां कष्ट ॥ध्रु॥
 दुर्वास हा छळों आला आंबळषी । सुदर्शन त्यासी जिळत फिरे ॥2॥
 द्रौपदीच्या क्षोभें कौरवांची शांति । होऊनि श्रीपति साहे केलें ॥3॥
 न साहे चि बब्रु पांडवां पारिखा । धुडाविला सखा बिळभद्र ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे अंगीं राखिली दुगपधि । अश्वत्थामा वधी पांडवपुत्रां ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Let no one slander the devotees of Hari,
 for Govinda does not tolerate it.*

*He takes form and incarnates
 to grant fearlessness to his devotees and to bring ruin upon the wicked.*

*Durvasa came to torment Ambarisha,
 but the Sudarshana disc chased him relentlessly.*

*When Draupadi was humiliated,
 Shripati himself came forth and brought the Kauravas to grief.*

*He could not bear even a small slight shown against the Pandavas,
 and cast aside his friend Balarama for his partiality.*

*Says Tuka, he bore the stain upon his own body
 when Ashwatthama slew the sons of the Pandavas.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let no one slander the people of Hari, for Govinda will not bear it. He takes form and comes down to earth, fearlessness to his devotees, ruin to the wicked. Durvasa came to torment Ambarisha, and the Sudarshana disc chased him without rest. When Draupadi was shamed, Shripati himself stepped in and brought the Kauravas to grief. He could not endure even a small unfairness against the Pandavas, and turned away his own friend Balarama for taking the wrong side. Tuka says: he took the stain on his own body when Ashwatthama killed the sons of the Pandavas.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram warns against scorning those who love God, because God himself stands behind them. He gathers familiar stories to make one point: the Lord takes form again and again to shield his devotees and to break the proud. The sage Durvasa learns this when the flaming disc hunts him across the worlds for tormenting the devotee Ambarisha; Draupadi learns it when Krishna answers her humiliation by ruining the house that shamed her. He even sets aside his own brother's favor when it falls on the wrong side, and he bears the grief of the slaughtered Pandava children as if it were a wound on his own body. The caution lands on us: to despise a devotee is to take a side God will not let stand.

GATHA 1553

The Power of the Name

The Name, caste dissolved in Brahman

मराठी मूळ

ज्यासी आवडी हरिनामांची । तो चि एक बहु शुचि ॥1॥
 जपतो हरिनामें बीज । तो चि वर्णामाजी द्विज ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे वर्णा धर्म । अवघें आहे सम ब्रह्म ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Whoever loves the name of Hari
 is truly the most pure among all.*

*The one who chants Hari's name as a sacred seed
 is the true twice-born among all classes.*

*Says Tuka, the dharma of all castes is one,
 for all is equal Brahman.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whoever loves the names of Hari is truly the most pure of all. The one who chants Hari's name as the sacred seed is the real twice-born among the castes. Tuka says: the dharma of all castes is one, for everything is the same Brahman.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram takes the markers of ritual purity and rank and hands them to love alone. The one who is truly pure is not the one born high, but the one whose heart loves the Name; the true Brahmin, the real twice-born, is whoever holds Hari's name as the seed-syllable of his life. Then he names the ground under the claim: there is finally one dharma for all castes, because all of it, every person and rank, is the one equal Brahman. The line quietly abolishes the hierarchy it borrows its language from, putting devotion where birth used to stand.

GATHA 1554

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, dyed through in Vitthal

मराठी मूळ

विठ्ठल हा चितीं । गोड लागे गातां गीतीं ॥1॥
 आह्मां विठ्ठल जीवन । टाळ चिपिळ्या धन ॥धु.॥
 विठ्ठल हे वाणी। अमृत हे संजिवनी ॥2॥
 रंगला या रंगें । तुका विठ्ठल सर्वांगें ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Vitthal dwells sweetly in the chitta
and tastes delightful when sung in song.*

*Vitthal is our very life;
cymbals and clappers are our only wealth.*

*The word Vitthal on the tongue is nectar,
a life-restoring elixir.*

*Says Tuka, I am dyed through and through
in this color of Vitthal, in every limb.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Vitthal is in my mind. He tastes sweet when I sing him in song. For us Vitthal is life itself; the cymbals and clappers are our only wealth. The word Vitthal on the tongue is nectar, a herb that brings the dead back to life. Tuka says: I am dyed in this color, Vitthal in every limb.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a song about being saturated by the Name until nothing else is left. Vitthal lives in Tukaram's mind and turns sweet the moment it becomes song, so the singing itself is the joy. He sets the devotee's economy against the world's: cymbals and hand-clappers are the only wealth he counts, and Vitthal is not a help to life but life itself. The closing image is a dyer's: he has been dipped in this single color so completely that it has soaked into every limb, leaving no part of him his own.

GATHA 1555

The Power of the Name

The Name, the simple mantra

मराठी मूळ

विठ्ठल विठ्ठल मंत्र सोपा । करी पापा निर्मूळ ॥१॥
भाग्यवंता छंद मनीं । कोडें कानीं ऐकती ॥२॥
विठ्ठल हें दैवत भोळें । चाड काळें न धरावी ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे भलते याती । विठ्ठल चितीं ते शुद्ध ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The mantra of Vitthal is simple and uproots all sin completely.

*The fortunate carry this passion in their mind;
the blessed long to hear it with their ears.*

*Vitthal is a generous, guileless deity;
one should never hold back out of doubt.*

*Says Tuka, whoever holds Vitthal in their chitta,
regardless of caste, becomes pure.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Vitthal, Vitthal, the mantra is simple, and it pulls sin up by the roots. The fortunate carry this delight in their mind; the blessed long to hear it in their ears. Vitthal is a guileless, open-hearted god; never hold back from him out of doubt. Tuka says: whatever caste you are, hold Vitthal in your heart and you are pure.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is making the path small enough that anyone can walk it. The mantra is only the name twice over, nothing learned or elaborate, yet it tears out sin at the root, so the whole power lies in the saying. He calls those who delight in it the fortunate ones, and urges that no one shrink back in doubt, because Vitthal is open and simple-hearted, not a god to be feared. The last line cuts the knot of birth: purity comes from holding Vitthal in the heart, and caste has no say in it.

GATHA 1556

The Nature of God

Nature of God, no patience with deniers

मराठी मूळ

ह्मणे विठ्ठल ब्रह्म नव्हे । त्याचे बोल नाइकावे ॥१॥
मग तो हो का कोणी एक । आदि करोनि ब्रह्मादिक ॥२॥
नाहीं विठ्ठल जया ठावा । तो ही डोळं न पाहावा ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे नाहीं । त्याची भीड मज कांहीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Do not listen to one who says Vitthal is not Brahman.

Let such a person be anyone at all, even Brahma or the other gods.

*One who does not know the place of Vitthal
should not even be looked upon.*

Says Tuka, I have no obligation whatsoever to such a person.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whoever says Vitthal is not Brahman, do not listen to his words. Let him be anyone at all, even Brahma, even the high gods. The one who does not know what Vitthal is, do not even set eyes on him. Tuka says: I owe such a person no deference at all.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is Tukaram drawing a hard line around his faith. To deny that Vitthal is the supreme reality is, for him, the one error he will not hear out, no matter how exalted the speaker, even one of the gods. He goes further: a person who has no knowledge of Vitthal is not even worth looking at. The sharpness is aimed at the denial, not at any soul's worth; he is refusing the social pressure to be polite about what he holds to be the whole of the truth, and declaring that no rank earns his deference where Vitthal is dismissed.

GATHA 1557

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, death at your waist

मराठी मूळ

एक पाहातसां एकांचीं दहनें । सावध त्या गुणें कां रे नव्हा ॥१॥
 मारा हाक देवा भय अटाहासें । जंव काळाऐसें जालें नाहीं ॥२॥
 मरणांची तंव गांठोडी पदरीं । जिणें तो चि वरि माप भरी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे धींग वाहाती मारग । अंगा आलें मग हालों नेदी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*You watch the cremations of one person after another;
 why do you not wake up?*

*Cry out to God with urgency and fear,
 before Kala overtakes you as well.*

*The bundle of death already hangs at your waist;
 whoever lives simply fills the measure until it is full.*

*Says Tuka, the heedless walk a wide road,
 but when Death seizes the body, it permits no movement at all.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

You watch them burn one body after another. Why does that not wake you? Cry out to God in fear, with all your force, before Kala comes for you too. The bundle of death already hangs at your waist; to go on living is only to fill the measure higher. Tuka says: the heedless stride down a broad road, but once Death lays hold of the body, it lets you move no more.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses the cremation ground to break our sleep. We see corpse after corpse burned and somehow stay convinced it does not concern us, so he asks why the sight does not wake us and tells us to call on God now, in urgency, before death arrives. He carries death close: it is a bundle already tied at our own waist, and every day of living only fills the measuring vessel nearer the brim. The wide, easy road of the heedless ends the same way for everyone; when Death finally grips the body it allows no further movement, so the time to cry out is while the body still answers.

GATHA 1558

The Saints

The saints, where devotees are scorned

मराठी मूळ

संतांसी तों नाहीं सन्मानाची चाड । परि पडे द्वाड अद्धेरितो ॥१॥
 ह्मणऊनि तया न वजावें ठाया । होतसे घात या दुर्बळाचा ॥२॥
 भावहीना आड येतसे आशंका । उचितासी चुका घालावया ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे जया संकोच दर्शनें । तया ठाया जाणें अनुचित ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Saints do not crave honor or respect,
 yet the wicked who shun them come to grief.*

*Therefore one should not visit a place where devotees are scorned,
 for it brings ruin to the vulnerable.*

*For one devoid of bhava, suspicion arises
 and causes one to stray from what is proper.*

*Says Tuka, one should not go to a place
 where even the sight of a saint causes discomfort.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Saints do not crave honor or respect. But the scoundrel who turns them away comes to ruin. So do not go to a place where the devotees are slighted; it brings harm to the weak. In one who has no faith, suspicion creeps in and makes him stray from what is right. Tuka says: a place where even the sight of a saint causes discomfort is no place to go.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is giving practical counsel about the company we keep. The saint loses nothing by being dishonored, since he never wanted honor in the first place; the loss falls on the one who scorns him. From this he draws a rule for the unsteady: stay away from gatherings where devotees are slighted, because the weak in faith are the ones harmed there. In such a place, doubt seeps into a person without firm devotion and quietly pulls him off the right path. So the warning is for our own protection: where the very sight of a holy person is unwelcome, our faith is in danger, and we should not go.

GATHA 1559

Worldly Life

Worldly life, no sweetness in the husks

मराठी मूळ

संसारसंगें परमार्थ जोडे । ऐसैं काय घडे जाणतेनो ॥१॥
 हेंडग्याच्या आळां अवघीं चिपाडें । काय तेथें गोडें निवडावीं ॥२॥
 ठेकणाचे बाजे सुखाची कल्पना । मूर्खत्व वचना येऊं पाहे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने मद्य सांडवी लंगोटी । सांगितला सेटीं विचार त्या ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Can one attain the highest good while remaining entangled in worldly life?
 O wise ones, tell me how.*

*It is like sorting through the husks left by a crushing cart;
 what sweetness can be found among those dry remnants?*

*To dream of comfort on a cot infested with bedbugs
 is foolishness trying to pass for wisdom.*

*Says Tuka, liquor strips a man even of his loincloth;
 let this be the counsel given to the drunkard.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Can you win the highest good while still tangled in worldly life? O you who think you know, tell me how that happens. It is like the dry husks left in a crushing mill; what sweetness will you pick out from there? To dream of comfort on a cot crawling with bedbugs is foolishness trying to pass for sense. Tuka says: drink strips a man even of his loincloth; give the drunkard that for counsel.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is challenging the comfortable idea that one can chase the world and the highest good at once. He puts the question to the worldly-wise as a dare: show me how liberation is gathered while a man stays bound in his entanglements. Then he answers with hard images. Looking for the supreme good inside worldly life is like sifting the dried-out husks in a sugar mill for sweetness, or imagining rest on a bedbug-ridden cot; the search mistakes itself for wisdom. The drunkard who loses even his loincloth is his last figure: worldliness keeps promising satisfaction while it strips you, and the only honest counsel is to see what it is doing and let it go.

GATHA 1560

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, breeding will tell

मराठी मूळ

जातीचें तें चढे प्रेम । पक्षी स्मरे राम राम ॥१॥
 ते काय गुण लागती येरां । कागा पिंजरा शोभेना ॥२॥
 शिकविलें तें सुजात सोसी । मग तयासी मोल चढे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे वेषधारी ॥ हिजडण नारी नव्हती ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Innate love rises according to one's nature;
 a bird remembers Ram, Ram on its own.*

*Such qualities do not attach to lesser creatures;
 a crow in a cage does not become beautiful.*

*A well-born creature endures training gladly,
 and its value only rises.*

Says Tuka, a eunuch wearing woman's dress does not become a woman.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Love rises true when it is in the breed; the bird remembers Ram, Ram on its own. Such qualities never settle on the lesser kind; a crow in a cage does not turn beautiful. The well-born creature takes its training gladly, and then its worth climbs. Tuka says: a man dressed up as a woman does not become a woman.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is saying that genuine devotion shows its native quality, and pretense cannot fake it. The fine parrot says Ram, Ram from its own nature, while a crow stays a crow even shut in the same cage and dressed up in the same setting. The point is about inwardness against costume: only the one with the real disposition takes the discipline gladly and grows in true worth. The final image of a man in woman's dress drives it home bluntly: outward show fools no one for long, and borrowed appearances do not change what a thing actually is. The examination is meant to fall on ourselves, on whether our devotion is native or merely worn.

GATHA 1561

Worldly Metaphors

Social criticism, the puddle frog

मराठी मूळ

वसनें थिल्लरीं । बेडुक सागरा धिक्कारी ॥१॥
 नाहीं देखिला ना ठावा । तोंड पिटी करी हांवा ॥२॥
 फुगातें काउळें । ह्मणे मी राजहंसा आगळें ॥३॥
 गजाहूनि खर । ह्मणे चांगला मी फार ॥४॥
 मुलाम्याचें नाणें । तुका ह्मणे नव्हे सोनें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A frog living in a puddle dares to mock the ocean.

*Having neither seen it nor known its whereabouts,
 it slaps its mouth and boasts.*

A puffed-up crow declares itself superior to the royal swan.

A donkey says it is far finer than an elephant.

Says Tuka, a coin of base metal can never become gold.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A frog that lives in a puddle dares to scorn the ocean. It has never seen it, does not know where it lies, yet it slaps its mouth and brags. A puffed-up crow says it outshines the royal swan. A donkey says it is far finer than the elephant. Tuka says: a gilded coin is not gold.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is mocking the loud confidence of the small and ignorant. The frog in its puddle ridicules the ocean it has never seen, which is exactly how a narrow mind judges what is vast: from inside its own little pool, with noise instead of knowledge. The crow against the swan and the donkey against the elephant pile on the same conceit, each lesser thing declaring itself the greater. The closing line is the test that strips all of it: a coin merely plated with shine is not gold underneath. The satire points at the pattern of empty self-praise, and quietly asks us whether our own claims are gold or only gilt.

GATHA 1562

The Nature of God

Nature of God, bound by 'mine'

मराठी मूळ

मुक्त होता परी बळें जाला बद्ध । घेउनियां छंद माझें माझें ॥१॥
 पाप पुण्य अंगीं घेतलें जडून । वर्म नेणे कोण करिता तो ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे वांयां गेलें वांयां विण । जैसा मृगशीण मृगजळीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Free it was, yet by the force of clinging to "mine, mine" it became bound.

*Sin and merit clung fast to the body;
the person does not know the vital secret of who the real doer is.*

*Says Tuka, what goes to waste is lost entirely,
like a deer worn out by a mirage.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

It was free. Then by its own force it became bound, taking up the chant of mine, mine. Sin and merit clung to it and stuck fast. It does not know the secret of who the real doer is. Tuka says: it was wasted, lost for nothing, like a deer worn out chasing a mirage.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes how a soul that was already free traps itself. Nothing from outside binds it; it binds itself by clutching at mine, mine, taking ownership of what was never its own. Once that grasping starts, sin and merit fasten onto it like a weight that will not come off, and it goes on suffering them because it has forgotten the one thing that frees: that it is not truly the doer at all. The deer chasing a mirage is the whole life in one picture, exhausting itself in pursuit of water that was never there, and Tukaram calls such a life wasted, lost for nothing.

GATHA 1563

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the saints are my family

मराठी मूळ

पंढरीये माझें माहेर साजणी । ओविये कांडणीं गाऊं गीत ॥1॥
 राही रखुमाई सत्यभामा माता । पांडुरंग पिता माहियेर ॥२॥
 उद्धव अक्रूर व्यास आंब्रळषि । भाई नारदासी गौरवीन ॥३॥
 गरुड बंधु लडिवाळ पुंडलीक । यांचें कवतुक वाटे मज ॥४॥
 मज बहु गोत संत आणि महंत । नित्य आठवीत ओवियेसी ॥५॥
 निवृत्त ज्ञानदेव सोपान चांगया । जिवलगा माझिया नामदेवा ॥६॥
 नागोजन मित्रा नरहरि सोनारा । रोहिदास कबिरा सोईरया ॥७॥
 परसो भागवता सुरदास सांवता । गाईन नेणतां सकळांसी ॥८॥
 चोखामेळा संत जिवाचे सोइरे । न पडे विसर यांचा घडी ॥९॥
 जीवींच्या जीवना एका जनादनना । पाटका कान्हया मिराबाई ॥१०॥
 आणीक हे संत महानुभाव मुनि । सकळां चरणीं जीव माझा ॥११॥
 आनंदें ओविया गाईन मी त्यांसी । जाती पंढरीसी वारकरी ॥१२॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझा बिळया बापमाय । हरुषें नांदों सये घराचारी ॥१३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Pandhari is my natal home, O friend.
I sing its songs while grinding grain.*

*Rakhumai, Rukmini, and Satyabhama are my mothers;
Panduranga is the father of my natal home.*

*Uddhava, Akrura, Vyasa, and Ambarisha are my kin;
I honor brother Narada with love.*

*Garuda is my brother and dear Pundalik is the darling of them all.
I have a vast family of saints and great souls
whom I remember always in my songs.*

*Nivriddhi, Dnyanadeva, Sopan, and Changdev are mine;
Namadeva is my dearest companion.*

*Nagoji, Mitra, Narhari the goldsmith,
Rohidas, Kabir, and Soyirabai are all my own.*

*Parso Bhagavat, Surdas, and Sawata I sing of,
even the ones I do not know by name.*

*Chokhamela the saint is dear to my very life;
not a moment passes without remembering them.*

*Eknath Janardana is the life of my life,
and so are Patkar, Kanhaya, and Mirabai.*

*And all the other saints and great sages,
my life rests at their feet.*

In joy I sing these verses for the pilgrims going to Pandhari.

*Says Tuka, Vitthal is my mother and father;
in happiness, O friend, let us dwell in this household of devotion.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Pandhari is my mother's house, dear friend. I sing its songs while I grind the grain. Rakhumai, Rukmini, and Satyabhama are my mothers; Panduranga is the father of that house. Uddhava, Akrura, Vyasa, and Ambarisha are my kin; I honor brother Narada with love. Garuda is my brother, and dear Pundalik is the darling of them all. I have a vast family of saints and great souls, and I remember them always in my songs. Nivriddhi, Dnyanadeva, Sopan, and Changdev are mine; Namadeva is my dearest companion. Nagoji, Mitra, Narhari the goldsmith, Rohidas, Kabir, and Soyirabai are all my own. I sing of Parso Bhagavat, Surdas, and Sawata, and of the ones I do not even know by name. Chokhamela the saint is dear to my very life; not a moment passes without my remembering them. Eknath Janardana is the life of my life, and so are Patkar, Kanhaya, and Mirabai. And all the other saints and great sages: my life rests at their feet. In joy I sing these verses for the pilgrims walking to Pandhari. Tuka says: Vitthal is my mother and father; in happiness, dear friend, let us live in this household of devotion.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reimagines his whole lineage around God and the saints. Pandhari is not a shrine he visits but his mahar, the mother's house a married woman longs to return to, and he sings of it the way village women sang while grinding grain. He then names his real family: not blood kin, but the gods of Pandhari as his parents and a

long roll of saints across regions and castes, from Dnyanadeva and Namadeva to Kabir, Rohidas, Chokhamela, and Mirabai, as his brothers and companions. The point of the long list is that devotion makes one family of people the world kept apart, and even the saints he cannot name belong to it. He ends by claiming Vitthal himself as mother and father, so that this household of devotion is the only home he wants to live in.

GATHA 1564

Worldly Life

The belly, hunger that follows everywhere

मराठी मूळ

पोट लागलें पाठीशीं । हिंडवितें देशोदेशीं ॥1॥
 पोटाभेणें जिकडे जावें । तिकडे पोट येतें सवें ॥ध्रु॥
 जप तप अनुष्ठान । पोटासाठीं जाले दीन ॥2॥
 पोटें सांडियेली चवी । नीचापुढें तें नाचवी ॥3॥
 पोट काशियानें भरे । तुका ह्मणे झुरझुरं मरे ॥4॥
 आरत्या ॥ 13 ॥

जगदेश जगदेश तुज ह्मणती । परि या जनामाजी असशील युक्ति ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*The belly clings to the back with hunger,
 driving one to wander from land to land.*

*Wherever one goes out of fear of the belly,
 the belly comes right along.*

*Prayer, penance, and ritual observance
 all become servants of the belly.*

*The belly has cast aside all dignity;
 it makes a person dance before the lowly.*

*Says Tuka, what can ever truly fill this belly?
 It simply wastes away, trembling unto death.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

The belly clings to my back with hunger and drives me wandering from land to land. Wherever I run out of fear of the belly, the belly comes right along with me. Prayer, penance, and ritual all become its servants. The belly has thrown away every dignity; it makes a person dance before the lowly. Tuka says: what can ever truly fill this belly? It only wastes away, trembling toward death.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks plainly at how hunger bends a life. The belly is pictured as so empty it sticks to the spine, and it owns the man: he flees it, but it travels with him wherever he goes. He names the sharp shame in this, that even prayer, penance, and ritual get pressed into the belly's service, and that hunger will make a proud person dance

and grovel before people he despises. The closing question is the bitter point: nothing ever truly fills the belly, it just keeps wasting and trembling toward death. He is not mocking the hungry; he is exposing how bodily need can quietly become the master that hollows out dignity and even devotion.

GATHA 1565

Devotion to Vitthal

Arati, the lord beyond sin and merit

मराठी मूळ

पुण्यपापविरहित सकळां अधिपति । दृष्टा परि नळणी अलिप्त गति ॥१॥
जय देव जय देव जय पंढरिनाथा । श्रीपंढरिनाथा । नुरे पाप विठ्ठल ह्मणतां सर्वथा ॥२॥
आगम निगम तुज नेणती कोणी । परि तूं भाव भक्ति जवळी च दोन्ही ।
नेणतां विधियुक्त राते पूजेनी । न माये ब्रह्मांडीं संपुष्टशयनीं ॥३॥
असुरां काळ भासे विक्राळ पुढें । पसरी मुखएक चावितो धुडें ।
भक्ता शरणागता चाले तो पुढें । दावी वाट जाऊ नेदी वांकडें ॥४॥
एकाएकीं बहु विस्तरला सुखें । खेळे त्याची लीळा तो चि कवतुकें ।
तेथें नरनारी कवण बाळकें । काय पापपुण्य कवण सुखदुःखें ॥५॥
सकळा वर्मा तूं चि जाणशी एक । बद्ध मोक्ष प्राप्त आणि सुखदुःख ।
जाणों ह्मणतां तुज टकलीं बहुतेकें । तुका ह्मणे शरण आलों मज राखें ॥६॥
दैत्यभारें पीडिली पृथुवी बाळा । ह्मणोनि तूज येणें जालें गोपाळा ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Beyond sin and virtue, lord of all, the witness whose movement is untouched like the lotus. Victory to you, Lord of Pandhari.

All sin perishes when one utters the name of Vitthal. The scriptures cannot fathom you, yet you stand close to both devotion and love.

You cannot be contained in all the worlds, yet you rest upon the serpent's coils. To demons you appear as terrifying Death, jaws open wide.

But to devoted seekers you walk ahead, showing the way, never letting them stray. Alone, you have expanded into infinite bliss, playing your own game for your own delight.

There, what is man or woman or child? What is sin or merit, pleasure or pain? You alone know the innermost secret of all. Many have stumbled trying to know you.

Says Tuka, I have come to your refuge; protect me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Beyond sin and merit, lord of all, you are the witness whose course stays untouched, like the lotus in water. Victory to you, victory, victory, Lord of Pandhari; say Vitthal and no sin is left at all. The scriptures, both agama and nigama, do not know you, yet you stand close beside both faith and love. To the one who does not even know the rules but worships with feeling, you come; the whole universe cannot hold you, yet you rest there. To demons you loom ahead as terrible Death, jaws open, devouring. To the devotee who has surrendered you walk in front, showing the way, never letting them stray. Alone you spread yourself out into endless bliss; the play is yours, and you sport in it for your own delight. There, who is man, who is woman, who is child? What is sin, what is merit, what is pleasure or pain? You alone know the secret of all of it: bondage and release, and joy and sorrow. Many who said "I know you" were left baffled. Tuka says: I have come to your shelter; keep me safe.

WHAT IT MEANS

This arati praises Vitthal as the one who stands outside the whole ledger of good and bad. He is the witness, unstained as a lotus is unwetted, so merely saying his name burns up sin. Tukaram sets up a contrast that runs through the poem: scriptures and clever knowers cannot reach God, yet he draws near to plain faith and love, and even the worshipper who knows no ritual. The same God is two-faced by where you stand: terrible Death to the demon, a guide walking ahead to the one who surrenders. Behind both is one play, God expanding into all things for his own delight, where the categories of man, woman, sin, merit, and pain dissolve. Tukaram's response is not to claim knowledge, since the knowers were baffled, but to take refuge and ask to be kept.

GATHA 1566

Devotion to Vitthal

Arati, the formless who takes every form

मराठी मूळ

भक्तिप्रतिपाळक उत्सव सोहळा । मंगळें तुज गाती आबळ बाळा ॥1॥
जय देव जय देव जय गरुडध्वजा । श्रीगरुडध्वजा। आरती ओवाळूं तुज भक्तीकाजा ॥ध्रु॥
गुण रूप नाम नाहीं जयासी। चिंतितां तैसा चि होसी तयांसी ।
मत्स्य कूर्म वराह नरसिंह जालासी। असुरां काळ मुणि ठाके ध्यानासी ॥2॥
सहजर रूपें नाम सांवळा ना गोरा । श्रुति नेती ह्मणती तुज विश्वंभरा।
जीवनां जीवन तूं चि होसी दातारा । न कळे पार ब्रह्मादिकां सुरवरां ॥3॥
संतां महंतां घरीं ह्मणवी ह्मणियारा । शंखचक्रगदाआयुधांचा भारा ।
सुदर्शन घरटी फिरे अवश्वरा । सकुमार ना स्थूळ होसी गोजिरा ॥4॥
भावेविण तुझें न घडे पूजन । सकळ ही गंगा जाल्या तुजपासून ।
उत्पित्त प्रलय तू चि करिसी पाळण । धरुनि राहिला तुका निश्चयीं चरण ॥5॥
काय तुझा महिमा वणूप मी किती । नामें मात्रे भवपाश तुटती ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Protector of devotees, festival of joy, even little children sing your auspicious praises. Victory to you, bearer of the Garuda banner; we wave the lamp before you for the sake of devotion.

Without name or form, you become whatever your devotees desire: fish, tortoise, boar, and Narasimha you became. Death to demons, yet the object of the sages' meditation.

Your true color is neither dark nor fair; the Vedas say 'not this, not this,' O sustainer of the universe. You are the life of all life, the giver, whose limits even Brahma and the gods cannot fathom.

In the homes of saints you gladly call yourself their servant, though you carry the weight of conch, disc, mace, and all weapons. The Sudarshana whirls ceaselessly; you are neither delicate nor large, but perfectly lovely.

Without true feeling your worship cannot be accomplished. All the holy rivers have sprung from you.

Creation, dissolution, and preservation you alone perform. Says Tuka, I hold fast to your feet with absolute certainty.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Protector of the devoted, festival of joy, even small children sing your blessings. Victory to you, victory, victory, bearer of the Garuda banner; we wave the lamp before you for devotion's sake. You have no quality, form, or name of your own; yet as your devotees hold you in mind, so you become for them. You became the fish, the tortoise, the boar, Narasimha; you are Death to demons, and the goal the sages seek in meditation. Your true form has no name and is neither dark nor fair; the Vedas say "not this, not this" and call you sustainer of the world. You alone are the life of all that lives, the giver; even Brahma and the gods cannot find your far edge. In the homes of saints and great souls you let yourself be called their servant, though you bear the conch, disc, and mace, a whole weight of weapons. The Sudarshana wheels around you without ceasing; you are neither slight nor huge, but lovely. Without true feeling, your worship cannot be done; all the holy rivers have flowed out from you. Creation, dissolution, and the keeping of all things, you alone do it. Tuka says: I have caught hold of your feet and stay there, fixed and certain.

WHAT IT MEANS

The arati holds two truths about God together: he is formless and nameless in himself, yet he takes whatever form his devotee imagines. Tukaram lists the avatars, fish through Narasimha, as proof that the One without quality becomes terrible to demons and sweet to meditating sages alike. The Vedas can only point by negation, "not this, not this," and even Brahma cannot find God's limit; he is the life inside all life. The tender turn is that this same boundless one will be called the servant in a saint's house, though he carries every cosmic weapon. The condition the poem presses is bhav, true inner feeling: without it worship does not land, however correct the ritual. Tukaram ends not with argument but with grip, holding the feet with settled certainty.

GATHA 1567

Devotion to Vitthal

Arati, beholding the feet that uplift

मराठी मूळ

पाहातां पाउले हे विष्णुमूर्ती । कोटिकुळां सहित जे उद्धरती ॥1॥
 जय देव जय देव जय पंढरिराया । श्रीपंढरिराया। करुनियां कुरवंडी । सांडीन काया ॥ध्रु॥
 मंगळआरतीचा थोर महिमा । आणीक द्यावया नाहीं उपमा ।
 श्रीमुखासहित देखे जो कर्मा । पासुन सुटे जैसा रवि नासी तमा ॥2॥
 धन्य व्रतकाळ हे एकादशी । जागरण उपवास घडे जयांसी ।
 विष्णूचें पूजन एकाभावेसी। नित्यमुक्त पूज्य तिहीं लोकांसी ॥3॥
 न वजे वांयां काळ जे तुज ध्याती । असे तुझा वास तयांच्या चित्तीं ।
 धालें सुखें सदा प्रेमें डुल्लती । तीर्थो मिळन वास तयांचा वाहाती ॥4॥
 देव भक्त तूं चि जालासी दोन्ही । वाढावया सुख भक्ति हे जनीं ।
 जड जीवां उद्धार होय लागोनि । शरण तुका वंदी पाउलें दोन्ही ॥5॥
 कंसरायें गर्भ वधियेले सात । ह्यणोनि गोकुळासी आले अनंत ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Beholding these feet of the supreme Vishnu, millions of families are uplifted. Victory to you, king of Pandhari.

I would offer my very body as a sacrifice. Great is the glory of the Mangal-Arati; no comparison can be found for it.

Whoever beholds the divine face is freed from all karma, just as the sun destroys darkness. Blessed is the vow-day of Ekadashi; fortunate are those who keep vigil and fast.

Worship Vishnu with single-minded devotion and become worthy of honor in all three worlds. Those who meditate on you never waste a moment; you dwell in their chitta.

Filled with bliss, they sway in love, and holy places long for their presence. You yourself have become both God and devotee, to increase the joy of devotion in this world.

For the deliverance of the dull and bound jivas, Tuka bows at both your feet in surrender.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Looking at these feet of the supreme Vishnu, millions of families are lifted up. Victory to you, victory, victory, king of Pandhari; I will make my offering and lay down this body. Great is the glory of the Mangal-Arati; nothing else can stand as its equal. Whoever sees the holy face is freed from his deeds, as the sun destroys the dark. Blessed is the vow-day of Ekadashi; fortunate are those who keep the vigil and the fast. Worship Vishnu with single feeling and you become worthy of honor in all three worlds. Those who meditate on you waste not a moment; you dwell in their hearts. Filled and happy, they always sway in love; and the holy places long to carry their presence. You yourself became both the God and the devotee, to grow the joy of devotion among people. For the rescue of the dull and bound jivas, Tuka bows in surrender at both your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

This arati centers on the darshan of Vitthal's feet and face as the act that saves. To see the feet uplifts not just the seer but generations of his family; to see the face wipes out karma as the sun wipes out night. Tukaram raises the worth of the Mangal-Arati and of the Ekadashi vow, vigil, and fast, but he ties their fruit to single-minded feeling, not to mere observance. The devotees he describes are not waiting for a future reward; God already lives in their hearts and they sway, filled, in present love. The striking claim is that God became both deity and devotee, taking the devotee's part himself so that devotion would spread and grow among ordinary people. Tukaram places himself among the dull and bound jivas who need exactly this rescue, and surrenders at the feet.

GATHA 1568

Devotion to Vitthal

Arati, the vast one who became small

मराठी मूळ

ध्यावया अवतार जालें हें चि निमित्त । असुर संहारुनि तारावे भक्त ॥1॥
जय देव जय देव जय विश्वरूपा । श्रीविश्वरूपा । ओवाळीन तुज देहदीपें बापा ॥ध्रु॥
स्थूलरूप होऊनि धरितसे सानें । जैसा भाव तैसा तयांकारणें ।
दैत्यांसी भासला सिहीं गजान । काळासी महाकाळ यशोदेसी तान्हें ॥2॥
अनंत वर्णी कोणा न कळे चि पार । सगुण कीं निर्गुण हा ही निर्धार ।
पांगलीं साई अठरा करितां वेव्हार । तो विळतसे गौळ्यांचें खिल्लार ॥3॥
तेहतिस कोटि तिहीं देवांसी श्रेष्ठ । पाउलें पाताळीं नेणती स्वर्ग मुगुट ।
गिळलीं चौदा भूवनें तरि न भरे चि पोट । तो खाउन धाला गोपाळाचें उच्छिष्ट ॥4॥
महिमा वणूप तरि पांगलिया श्रुति । सिणला शेष चिरल्या जिह्वा करितां स्तुती ।
भावेविण कांहीं न चले चि युक्ति । राखें शरण तुकयाबंधु करी विनंती ॥5॥
परमानंदा परमपुरुषोत्तमरामा । अच्युता अनंता हरि मेघश्यामा ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The very purpose of incarnation was this: to destroy demons and to save the devoted. Victory to you, O cosmic form; I wave the lamp of this body before you, Father.

Taking on a vast form, you then become small; you appear to each according to their faith. To demons you seemed a terrifying lion; to Death you were the great destroyer; to Yashoda, a tiny infant.

No one can know your infinite measure; whether you are with form or formless remains beyond certainty. The Vedas spread themselves across eighteen branches but cannot capture you, while you tend the cattle of the cowherd folk.

Greatest among the thirty-three crore gods, your feet touch the netherworld while your crown escapes even heaven's gaze. You swallowed fourteen worlds yet your belly was not full, but you were satisfied eating the leftovers of a cowherd boy.

Says Tukayabandhu, the Vedas grew weary and Shesha's thousand tongues tired in your praise. Without devotion, no cleverness prevails; protect this one who has come to your shelter.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The whole reason for the incarnation was just this: to destroy the demons and save the devoted. Victory to you, victory, victory, cosmic form; I wave the lamp of this body before you, Father. You take on a vast form, then you hold yourself small; as a person's feeling is, so you become for him. To the demons you looked like a fearsome lion; to Death you were the great destroyer; to Yashoda you were a tiny infant. None can know your endless measure; whether you have form or none stays beyond deciding. The Vedas spread out into eighteen branches and still cannot capture you, while you graze the cowherds' cattle. Greatest among the thirty-three crore gods, your feet reach the netherworld while your crown is past even heaven's seeing. You swallowed the fourteen worlds and still your belly was not full, yet you were satisfied eating a cowherd boy's leftovers. Tukayabandhu says: the Vedas grew weary and Shesha's thousand tongues tired in praising you; without feeling, no cleverness works. Keep me, I have come to your shelter, this is my prayer.

WHAT IT MEANS

The arati turns on the paradox of the immeasurable God who makes himself small. His incarnations have one purpose, to end the demons and save the faithful, and he meets each being in their own key: a lion to demons, the destroyer to Death, an infant to Yashoda. Tukaram piles up the contrast: the Vedas in their eighteen branches cannot net him, yet he is content grazing cattle; he can swallow the fourteen worlds unfilled, yet is satisfied by a cowherd boy's scraps. The point is that greatness and lowliness are both his by choice, and so is whether he wears form at all. Against all this, the poem insists that no cleverness reaches him, only bhav, true feeling. Writing as Tukayabandhu, he ends with the same plea as a surrendered devotee: simply keep me.

GATHA 1569

Devotion to Vitthal

Arati, a cascade of the Names

मराठी मूळ

अविनाशा अलक्षा परता परब्रह्मा । अकळकळा कमळापती न कळे महिमा ॥1॥
जय देव जय देव जया जी श्रीपती । मंगळशुभदायका करीन आरती ॥ध्रु॥
गोविंदा गोपाळा गोकुळरक्षणा । गिरिधरकर भवसागरतारक दधिमथना ।
मधुसूदन मुनिजीवन धरणीश्रमहरणा । दीनवत्सळ सकळां मूळ जय जयनिधाना ॥2॥
विश्वंभरा सर्वेश्वर जगदाधारा । चक्रधर करुणाकर पावन गजेंद्रा ।
सुखसागर गुणआगर मुगुटमणी शूरा । कल्याणकैवल्यमूर्तिन मनोहरा ॥3॥
गरुडासना शेषशयना नरहरी । नारायणा ध्याना सुरहरवरगौरी ।
नंदा नंदनवंदन त्रिभुवनांभीतरी । अनंतनामीं ठसा अवतारांवरी ॥4॥
सगुणनिर्गुणसाक्ष श्रीमंत संतां । भगवाना भगवंता कालकृदांता ।
उत्पत्तिपाळणपासुन संहारणसत्ता । शरण तुकयाबंधु तारीं रिति बहुतां ॥5॥
पंढरि पुण्यभूमी भीमा दिक्षणावाहिनी । तीर्थ हें चंद्रभागा महा पातकां धुनी ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Imperishable, invisible, beyond the highest Brahman; O lord of Kamala, your glory is unfathomable. Victory to you, Shripati; I offer this auspicious arati.

Govinda, Gopala, guardian of Gokul, lifter of the mountain, deliverer across the ocean of birth, churner of the cosmic ocean. Slayer of Madhu, life of the sages, remover of the earth's burden, friend of the lowly, root of all, hail to you, treasury of victory.

Sustainer of the universe, lord of all, foundation of the world, bearer of the disc, merciful one who saved the elephant king. Ocean of bliss, storehouse of virtue, crest-jewel of heroes, embodiment of liberation and beauty.

Seated on Garuda, resting on Shesha, O Narahari and Narayana. Nanda's son, adored one, within all three worlds, your infinite names bear the stamp of every incarnation.

Witness of both the formed and the formless, O blessed one among saints, slayer of time and lord of creation, preservation, and destruction. Says Tukayabandhu, save us all in your many ways.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Imperishable, unseeable, beyond even the highest Brahman; lord of Kamala, your greatness cannot be measured. Victory to you, victory, victory, Shripati; giver of all that is auspicious and good, I will perform the arati. Govinda, Gopala, guardian of Gokul; lifter of the mountain, ferry across the ocean of birth, churner of the cosmic sea. Slayer of Madhu, life of the sages, remover of the earth's burden, tender to the lowly, the root of all; victory, victory, treasury of victory. Sustainer of the world, lord of all, ground of everything; bearer of the disc, fountain of mercy, rescuer of Gajendra. Ocean of bliss, mine of virtue, crest-jewel of heroes; form of welfare and liberation, ravisher of the heart. Seated on Garuda, lying on Shesha, Narahari, Narayana, held in meditation. Son of Nanda, adored within all three worlds, your endless names bear the stamp of every incarnation. Witness of both the formed and the formless, wealth of the saints; Bhagavan, lord of time, slayer of death. From creation and keeping to the power of dissolution, all is yours. Tukayabandhu says: I have come to your shelter; save us all, in your many ways.

WHAT IT MEANS

This arati is built almost entirely out of the divine names, poured one after another, because the names are themselves the worship. Each title carries a deed or a quality: Govinda the cowherd, the lifter of Govardhan, the churner of the ocean, the rescuer of the elephant king Gajendra, the bearer of the disc. Tukaram lets the heaping itself say what argument cannot, that this one being holds creation, preservation, and dissolution, and stands as witness to both form and formlessness. He calls God the wealth of the saints and the friend of the lowly, keeping the tenderness alongside the cosmic scale. The endless names are said to bear the stamp of every avatar, so that to chant them is to touch each descent. Signing as Tukayabandhu, he closes by taking shelter and asking that all be saved, in whatever way God chooses.

GATHA 1570

Devotion to Vitthal

Arati, Vaikuntha come down to earth

मराठी मूळ

उतरलें वैकुंठमहासुख मेदिनी ॥१॥
जय देवा पांडुरंगा जय अनाथनाथा । आरती ओंवाळीन तुझां लक्ष्मीकांता ॥१॥
नित्य नवा सोहळा हो महावाद्यां गजर । सन्मुख गरुड पारीं उभा जोडुनि कर ।
मंडितचतुर्भुजा कटीं मिरवती कर ॥२॥
हरिनाम कीर्तन हो आनंद महाद्वारीं । नाचती प्रेमसुखें नर तेथिंच्या नारी ।
जीवन्मुक्त लोक नित्य पाहाती हरी ॥३॥
आषाढी कातिनकी हो गरुडटक्यां भार । गर्जती नाम घोष महावैष्णववीर ।
पापासी रीग नाहीं असुर कांपती सुर ॥४॥
हें सुख पुंडलिकें कसें आणिलें बापें । निर्गुण साकारले आह्मांलागिं हें सोपें ।
ह्मणोनि चरण धरोनि तुका राहिला सुखें ॥५॥
अवतार गोकुळीं हो जन तारावयासी । लावण्यरूपडें हे तेजपुंजाळरासी ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The supreme bliss of Vaikuntha has descended upon this earth. Victory to Panduranga, lord of the destitute; we wave the lamp before you, O beloved of Lakshmi.

A festival of great splendor resounds with music every day; Garuda stands before you with hands joined in reverence. You stand with four arms adorned, hands resting on your waist.

Kirtan and the name of Hari fill the great doorway with joy; men and women dance there in the ecstasy of love. The jivan-muktas behold Hari constantly.

At the Ashadhi and Kartiki gatherings, legions of pilgrims stream in bearing Garuda's banner. Great Vaishnava warriors roar with the name; sin finds no entry, and demons tremble.

This bliss was brought by father Pundalik. The formless took form, made easy for us to reach.

Says Tuka, therefore I hold his feet and rest in happiness.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The great bliss of Vaikuntha has come down onto this earth. Victory to you, Panduranga, lord of the orphaned; I wave the lamp before you, beloved of Lakshmi. Every day a fresh festival, loud with great music; before you stands Garuda on the platform, his hands joined. Adorned with four arms, your hands resting at your waist. The name of Hari and kirtan fill the great gate with joy; men and women dance there in the happiness of love. The freed-while-living see Hari without ceasing. At Ashadhi and Kartiki the crowds come in throngs with Garuda's banner; the great Vaishnava warriors roar out the name. Sin finds no way in, and the demons tremble. How did father Pundalik bring this bliss here? The formless took shape, made simple for our sake. Tuka says: so I hold his feet and rest in happiness.

WHAT IT MEANS

The arati announces that the highest heaven, Vaikuntha, has descended and become visible at Pandhari. Tukaram fills the scene with what the pilgrim actually sees and hears: daily festival, loud music, Garuda standing with folded hands, the four-armed image, and the great gate ringing with kirtan where men and women dance in love. He names the two great pilgrimages, Ashadhi and Kartiki, when the warbands of Vaishnavas roar the Name so that sin cannot enter and demons shake. The hinge of the poem is gratitude to Pundalik, the devotee whose love is said to have drawn this bliss down and made the formless take an approachable form. The whole point is accessibility: what the scriptures cannot reach is here, simple and close, for ordinary people. Tukaram's response is to hold the feet and rest.

GATHA 1571

Devotion to Vitthal

Arati, Krishna born to deliver

मराठी मूळ

उगवतां कोटि बिंबें रवि लोपले शशी । उत्साव सुरवरां मही थोर मानसीं ॥1॥
जय देवा कृष्णनाथा जय रखुमाईकांता । आरती ओंवाळीन तुह्मां देवकीसुता । जय देवा कृष्णनाथा ॥ध्रु॥
वसुदेवदेवकीची बंद फोडुनी शाळ । होउनि विश्वजनिता तया पोटिंचा बाळ ।
दैत्य हे त्रासियेले समूळ कंसासी काळ । राजया उग्रसेना केला मथुरापाळ ॥2॥
राखतां गोधनें हो इंद्र कोपला वरि । मेघ जो कडाडिला शिळा वर्षतां धारीं ।
राखिलें गोकुळ हें नखीं धरिला गिरी । निर्भय लोकपाळ अवतरले हरी ॥3॥
कौतुक पाहावया माव ब्रह्म्यानें केली । वत्सें चोरोनियां सत्यलोकासि नेलीं ।
गोपाळ गाईवत्सें दोहीं ठायीं राखीलीं । सुखाचा प्रेमसिंधु अनाथांची माउली ॥4॥
तारिलें भक्तजना दैत्य निदानळूनि । पांडवां साहकारी आडल्यां निर्वाणी ।
गुण मी काय वणूप मति केवढी वाणी । विनवितो दास तुका ठाव देई चरणीं ॥5॥
सुंदर अंगकांती मुखें भाळ सुरेख । बाणली उटी अंगीं टिळा साजिरी रेख ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When a million suns rise at once, sun and moon are eclipsed; great is the celebration among the gods and in the minds of all. Victory to you, Krishna, beloved of Rakhumai; we wave the lamp before you, son of Devaki.

You broke the chains binding Vasudeva and Devaki, becoming the child of their womb though you are the creator of the universe. You terrorized the demons and became the very death of Kamsa.

You restored King Ugrasena as the ruler of Mathura. When Indra raged and sent down a storm of hailstones upon Gokul, you lifted the mountain on your fingertip and sheltered everyone.

Brahma played a trick to test you, stealing the calves and hiding them in his heavenly realm, yet you multiplied the calves and cowherd boys in both places. You are the ocean of loving bliss, the mother of the orphaned.

You delivered your devotees and destroyed the demons; you stood by the Pandavas in their darkest hour. How can I describe your virtues with this small mind and tongue? Says Tuka, your servant begs for a place at your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When a million suns rose at once, the sun and moon were eclipsed; great was the joy among the gods and in every heart. Victory to you, Krishna, beloved of Rakhumai; I wave the lamp before you, son of Devaki, victory to you, Krishna. You broke open the prison binding Vasudeva and Devaki, becoming the child of their womb, though you are the maker of the world. You terrified the demons and became the very death of Kamsa; you set King Ugrasena back on the throne of Mathura. While you guarded the cattle, Indra raged above; the clouds cracked and poured down stones in torrents. You sheltered Gokul, holding the mountain up on your nail; fearless, lord of the worlds, you, Hari, had come down. To watch the fun, Brahma worked a trick and stole the calves away to his own heaven; you kept the calves and the cowherd boys in both places at once. Ocean of loving bliss, mother of the orphaned. You saved the devoted and rooted out the demons; you stood by the Pandavas when they were trapped at the end. What can I say of your virtues, with this small wit, this small tongue? Tuka your servant prays: give me a place at your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

This arati retells Krishna's life as one long work of deliverance. His birth eclipses sun and moon and breaks open the prison of Vasudeva and Devaki: the maker of the world enters the world as their child to become the death of the tyrant Kamsa and restore the rightful king Ugrasena. Tukaram dwells on the protective miracles, lifting Govardhan to shield Gokul from Indra's hailstorm, and undoing Brahma's theft by being calves and cowherds in two places at once. The thread tying these together is that God comes down precisely for those who cannot save themselves: he is the mother of the orphaned, the one who stood by the Pandavas at their last extremity. Faced with such a record, Tukaram confesses his small mind and tongue cannot praise it. So he ends not with description but with a servant's single request, a place at the feet.

GATHA 1572

Devotion to Vitthal

Arati, the beauty beyond all likeness

मराठी मूळ

मस्तकीं मुगुट कानीं कुंडलां तेज फांके। आरक्त दंत हिरे कैसे शोभले निके ॥1॥
जय देवा चतुर्भुजा जया लावण्यतेजा । आरती ओवाळीन भवतारिया हा वोजा । जय. ॥ध्रु.॥
उदार जुंझार हा जया वाणिती श्रुति । परतल्या नेति ह्यणती तयां न कळे गति ।
भाट हा चतुर्मुखें अनुवाद करिती । पांगलीं साही अठरा रूप न गति ॥2॥
एकोनि रूप ऐसें तुजलागीं धुंडिती। बोडके नग्न एक निराहार ईत ।
भरुनि माजी लोकां तिहीं नांदसि एक। कामिनी मनमोहना रूप नाम अनेक ।
नासति नाममात्रें भवपातकें शोक । पाउलें वंदिताती सिद्ध आणि साधक ॥4॥
उपमा द्यावयासी दुजें काय हें तुज । तत्त्वासि तत्त्वसार मूळ जालासी बीज ।
खेळसि बाळलीळा अवतार सहज । विनवितो दास तुका कर जोडोनि तुज ॥5॥
सकुमार मुखकमळ निजसारनिर्मळ । सावळी सुनीळ तनु भ्रमरांग कुरळ ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A crown upon your head, earrings blazing with light, beautiful teeth set with gems shining perfectly. Victory to you, four-armed one, radiant with beauty; we wave the lamp before you, O deliverer from worldly bondage.

Generous warrior, the Vedas attempt your praise; even when they say 'not this, not this,' they cannot grasp your nature. Four-faced Brahma sings your glory ceaselessly.

The six and eighteen branches of knowledge lose themselves and cannot contain your form. Hearing of such beauty, seekers search for you; some go naked, some fast, some stand in silent penance.

Yet you pervade all beings, dwelling in all three worlds as one. Enchanter of minds, you bear infinite names and forms.

By your name alone, all sins and sorrows of existence are destroyed. The perfected and the seekers bow at your feet.

Says Tuka, your servant, with hands folded: to what shall I compare you, O seed and essence of all truth, who plays the game of incarnation so effortlessly?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

On your head a crown, in your ears earrings flashing light; your beautiful teeth set like gems, shining perfectly. Victory to you, four-armed one, radiant with beauty; I wave the lamp before you, ferry across the world's flood, victory. Generous warrior, the Vedas try to speak you; turned back, they say "not this" and cannot grasp your way. Four-faced Brahma keeps repeating your praise; the six and the eighteen branches of learning lose themselves and cannot reach your form. Hearing of such beauty, they search for you: some go bald and naked, some take no food, some stand in penance. Yet filling all, you live as one inside all three worlds. Enchanter of the mind, you bear many forms and many names. By the name alone, the sins and sorrows of existence are destroyed; the perfected and the seekers bow at your feet. To what shall I liken you, since there is no second thing? Essence of essences, you became the root and the seed. You play the child's games, you take birth as easily as play. Tuka your servant prays with folded hands.

WHAT IT MEANS

The arati begins with the visible beauty of the image, crown, earrings, gem-like teeth, and lets that beauty open onto the unsayable. The Vedas try and are turned back at "not this"; Brahma and all the branches of learning lose themselves trying to reach his form. Tukaram notes the austerities people undertake on hearing of this beauty, going naked, fasting, standing in penance, and quietly contrasts them with the simple power of the Name, which by itself destroys the sins and sorrows of existence. He holds together the enchanter of infinite names and forms with the One who pervades all three worlds as a single presence. The praise reaches its limit at the claim that there is no second thing to compare him to: he is the very root and seed of truth, who still plays a child's games and takes birth as lightly as play. So Tukaram, calling himself servant, can only fold his hands.

GATHA 1573

Devotion to Vitthal

Arati, the adorned child of Nanda

मराठी मूळ

झळकति दिव्य तेजें दंत माज पातळ । मिरवलिं मयोरपत्रें मुगुट कुंडलें माळ ॥1॥

जय देवा जगदीश्वरा । धन्य रखुमाईवरा । आरती करीन काया । ओंविळन सुंदरा । जय. ॥ध्रु.॥

गोजिरें ठाणमाण भुजा मंडित चारी । शोभति शंखचक्रगदापद्म मोहरी ।

हृदयीं ब्रह्मपद बाणलें शृंगारीं । गर्जति चरणीं वांकी कंठ कोकिळास्वरीं ॥2॥

घवघवित उटी अंगीं बावन चंदनांची । लल्हाट कस्तुरिचा कास पितांबरीची ।

कटिसूत्र वरि साजिरें प्रभा वर मोतियांची । संगीत सकळ मुद्रा पाउलें कुंकुमाचीं ॥3॥

सौभाग्यसुख सागर गुणलावण्यखाणी । लाघवी दीनवत्सळ विश्व लाविलें ध्यानीं ।

आश्चर्य देव करिती ऋषि राहिले मुनि । धन्य ते प्रसवली ऐसिया नंदपत्नी ॥4॥

वणितां ध्यान महिमा श्रुति राहिल्या नेति । रविकोटि चंद्र तारा प्रकाशा न तुळती ।

उदार सुर गंभीर पूर्ण आनंदमूतिन । तुकयाबंधु ह्यणे स्तवूं मी काय किती ॥5॥

महा जी महादेवा महाकाळमदनना । मांडियेलें उग्रतप महादीप्त दारुणा ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Your divine teeth gleam with radiant light between delicate lips; peacock feathers, crown, earrings, and garlands adorn you. Victory to you, lord of the world, blessed husband of Rakhumai; I offer my body as a lamp and wave it before your beautiful form.

Your graceful stance and four adorned arms bear conch, disc, mace, and lotus in splendor. The mark of Brahman shines upon your decorated chest.

Anklets chime at your feet and your throat sings with the sweetness of a cuckoo. Fragrant sandal paste of fifty-two kinds graces your body; a tilak of musk adorns your forehead, a yellow silk cloth wraps your waist.

A jeweled waist-chain gleams with the luster of pearls. Every ornament is complete; your feet bear the mark of kumkum.

You are the ocean of auspicious joy, a mine of grace and beauty, playful and tender to the lowly, drawing the whole world into meditation. The gods are astonished and the sages stand still in wonder.

Blessed is Nanda's wife who gave birth to such a one. Says Tukayabandhu, the Vedas halt at 'not this'; a million suns and moons and stars cannot match your radiance. Generous, deep, and perfect, you are the complete form of bliss; how much more can I praise you?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Your divine teeth gleam with light between delicate lips; peacock feathers, crown, earrings, and garland shine upon you. Victory to you, lord of the world, blessed husband of Rakhumai; I make my body the arati and wave it before you, lovely one, victory. A graceful stance, four adorned arms bearing conch, disc, mace, and lotus in beauty; the seat of Brahman shines on your decorated chest. Anklets ring at your feet; your throat sings sweet as a cuckoo. Glistening sandal paste of fifty-two kinds covers your body; a musk tilak on your forehead, a yellow silk cloth at your waist. A lovely waist-chain above it, bright with the luster of pearls; every ornament complete, your feet marked with kumkum. Ocean of fortune and joy, mine of virtue and beauty; playful and tender to the lowly, you have drawn the whole world into meditation. The gods stand astonished, the sages stand still in wonder; blessed is Nanda's wife, who gave birth to such a one. Trying to speak your glory, the Vedas stop at "not this"; a million suns, moons, and stars cannot match your light. Generous, deep, the full form of bliss; Tukayabandhu says: how much can I praise you, and how far?

WHAT IT MEANS

This arati lingers, ornament by ornament, on the adorned form of God as Nanda's child: the peacock feathers and crown, the four arms with their emblems, the sandal paste, musk tilak, yellow silk, and kumkum-marked feet. The loving detail is the worship; Tukaram is doing with words what the lamp does with light. But each thread of beauty points beyond itself: the same lovely body is the ocean of fortune, the mine of virtue, the one whose radiance a million suns cannot match. He marks the wonder this stirs, gods astonished and sages stilled, and blesses Yashoda, Nanda's wife, for bearing such a one. The poem keeps the tenderness, calling him playful and gentle to the lowly even at cosmic scale. Signing as Tukayabandhu, he ends by admitting that praise has no measure that can hold this.

GATHA 1574

Devotion to Vitthal

Arati, Shiva of the cremation ground

मराठी मूळ

परिधान व्याघ्रांबर चिदाभस्मलेपना । स्मशान क्रीडास्थळ तुझा जी त्रिनयना ॥1॥
जय देवा हरेश्वरा जय पार्वतीवरा। आरती ओंवाळून कैवल्यदातारा । जय. ॥ध्रु.॥
रुद्र हें नाम तुझां उग्र संहारासी । शंकर शिव भोळा उदार सर्वस्वीं ।
उदक बेलपत्र टाळी वाहिल्या देसी । आपुलें पद दासां ठाव देई कैलासीं ॥2॥
त्रैलोक्यव्यापका हो जन आणि विजन । विराटस्वरूप हें तुझें साजिरें ध्यान ।
करितो वेद स्तुती कीर्ती मुखें आपण । जाणतां नेणवे हो तुमचें महिमान ॥3॥
बोलतां नाम महिमा असे आश्चर्य जगीं । उपदेश केल्यानंतरें पापें पळती वेगीं ।
हरहर वाणी गर्जे प्रेम संचरे अंगीं । राहिलि दृष्टी चरणीं रंग मीनला रंगीं ॥4॥
पुजून लिंग उभा तुका जोडोनी हात। करिती विज्ञापना परिसावी हे मात ।
अखंड राहूं द्यावें माझें चरणीं चित्त । घातले साष्टांग मागे मस्तकीं हात ॥5॥
अवतारनामभेद गणा आदि अगाद । जयासि पार नाहीं पुढें खुंटला वाद ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Clad in a tiger skin, smeared with the ash of pure consciousness, the cremation ground is your playground, O three-eyed one. Victory to you, Hareshwara, husband of Parvati; we wave the lamp before you, giver of liberation.

Rudra is your name for fierce destruction, yet Shankara and Shiva you are called, generous and guileless with all you possess. Offer but water and a bilva leaf and you grant your own abode; you give your servants a place in Kailasa.

O pervader of the three worlds, present in the peopled and the desolate, your cosmic form is a beautiful vision for meditation. The Vedas sing your praise, yet even they cannot fathom your greatness.

Wondrous is the power of your name in this world; after initiation, sins flee in haste. When the tongue cries 'Hara, Hara,' love surges through the body, the gaze settles at your feet, and one merges into that color entirely.

Says Tuka, standing before the Linga with hands joined: let my mind remain unbroken at your feet. I lay myself down in full prostration and ask only for your hand upon my head.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Clothed in a tiger skin, smeared with the ash of pure awareness, the cremation ground is your playground, three-eyed one. Victory to you, Hareshwara, victory, husband of Parvati; we wave the lamp before you, giver of liberation, victory. Rudra is your name for fierce destruction, yet you are called Shankara and Shiva, the simple one, open-handed with all you have. Offer only water and a bilva leaf with a clap, and you give your own state; you grant your servants a place in Kailasa. Pervading the three worlds, present in the crowd and in the wilderness; your vast cosmic form is a beautiful thing to meditate on. The Vedas themselves sing your praise, yet knowing, they still do not know your greatness. The glory of speaking your name is a wonder in the world; once initiated, sins flee in a hurry. When the tongue roars "Hara, Hara," love floods the body, the gaze stays at your feet, and color merges into color. Tuka stands before the Linga with hands joined, worshipping, and makes his plea: hear this word. Let my mind stay unbroken at your feet. I have laid myself out flat in full prostration, my hand on my head, asking yours.

WHAT IT MEANS

This arati praises Shiva by holding his two faces together: the fierce Rudra of destruction, ash-smeared, tiger-clad, at home in the cremation ground, and the open-handed Shankara who is famously easy to please. Tukaram makes the contrast the heart of the poem: this terrible god gives his very own state for nothing more than water, a bilva leaf, and a clap of devotion, and seats his servants in Kailasa. He is at once the cosmic form pervading crowd and wilderness, beyond what even the Vedas can fathom, and the name that, once received, sends sins fleeing. The decisive turn is felt rather than reasoned: when the tongue roars "Hara, Hara," love floods the body and the seer dissolves into what he beholds, color merging into color. Tukaram closes in plain bodily surrender, prostrate before the Linga, asking only that his mind stay fixed at the feet and that Shiva's hand rest on his bowed head.

GATHA 1575

Devotion to Vitthal

Arati to Ganapati, the dancing god

मराठी मूळ

एक चि दंत शोभे मुख विक्राळ दोंद । ब्रह्मांडामाजि दावी अनंत हे छंद ॥1॥
 जय जया गणपती ओंवाळत आरती । साजिंया सरळ भुजा फरशकमळ शोभती ॥ध्रु॥
 हे मही ठेंगणी हो तुज नृत्यनायका । भोंवरि फेर देतां असुर मदिले एकां ।
 घातले तोडरीं हो भक्तजनपाळका । सहस्र नाम तुज भुक्तिमुक्तिदायका ॥2॥
 सुंदर शोभला हो रूपें लोपलीं तेजें । उपमा काय देऊं असे आणिक दुजें ।
 रविशशितारागणें जयामाजी सहजें । उदरी सामावलीं जया ब्रह्मांडबीजें ॥3॥
 वणिनता शेष लीळा तया भागलीं मुखें । पांगुळले वेद चारी कैसे राहिले सुखें ।
 अवतार जन्मला हो लिंगनाभी या मुखें । अमूर्त मूर्तिनमंत होय भक्तीच्या सुखें ॥4॥
 विश्व हें रूप तुझें हस्त पाद मुखडें । ऐसा चि भाव देई तया नाचतां पुढें ।
 धूप दीप पंचारति ओंवाळन निवाडें । राखें या शरणागता तुका खेळतां लाडें ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*One tusk gleams upon a vast and mighty face; within that belly the infinite play of all creation is revealed.
 Victory to Ganapati; we wave the arati before him, his graceful arms adorned with axe and lotus.*

This earth feels small beneath your dancing, O lord of the dance. In a single whirl you intoxicate the demons.

*Your anklets ring out, O protector of the devoted; your thousand names bestow both worldly joy and liberation.
 Beautiful in form, your radiance swallows all other light; what comparison can be offered when nothing else
 matches? Sun, moon, and stars reside within you naturally; the seeds of all creation are held in your belly.*

*Shesha grew weary trying to describe your play, and the four Vedas fell silent in contentment. You were born
 from the Linga's navel; formless, you take form for the delight of the devoted.*

*Says Tuka, the universe is your body with its hands and feet and face. Grant us this vision as we dance before
 you.*

We wave the lamp of five flames and guard this one who has come to your shelter, playing at your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One tusk gleams on the great, fierce face. Within that belly the whole of creation plays without end. Victory, victory to Ganapati; we wave the arati before him. His straight arms are lovely, holding the axe and the lotus. The earth feels small under you, lord of the dance. In a single whirl you make the demons reel. Your anklets ring, protector of your devotees; your thousand names give worldly joy and freedom. You are beautiful in form, and your light swallows every other light. What likeness can I offer; there is no second thing to compare. Sun, moon, and stars rest in you of their own accord; the seeds of all the worlds are held in your belly. Shesha grew tired trying to tell your play; the four Vedas fell silent in their content. You were born from the navel of the Linga; you are without form, yet you take form for the joy of those who love you. This whole world is your body, with its hands and feet and face. Give me that very seeing as I dance before you. I wave the incense, the lamp, the five flames, clearly and well. Tuka says: keep this one who has come to your shelter, while he plays at your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is an arati, a song sung while waving lamps before the deity, here addressed to Ganapati. Tukaram first praises the visible form: the single tusk, the great belly, the axe and lotus in the hands, the anklets and divine ornaments. Then he keeps widening the frame until the form contains everything: sun, moon, and stars rest inside the god, and the seeds of all the worlds are held in his belly, so that the whole universe is his body. The point of the praise is the request at the end: Tukaram asks for the seeing that lets him recognize the formless one inside this form. He closes by placing himself in the god's shelter, asking to be kept safe as a child kept safe while it plays.

GATHA 1576

Devotion to Vitthal

Arati to Vitthal, the beautiful form

मराठी मूळ

कनकाच्या परियेळीं उजळूनि आरती । रत्नदीपशोभा कैशा पाजळल्या ज्योती ॥1॥
 ओंवाळूं गे माये सबाहए साजिरा । राहिरखुमाईसत्यभामेच्या वरा । ध्रु॥
 मंडितचतुर्भुज दिव्य कानीं कुंडलें । श्रीमुखाची शोभा पाहातां तेज फांकलें ॥2॥
 वैजयंती माळ गळां शोभे श्रीमंत । शंखचक्रगदापद्म आयुधें शोभत ॥3॥
 सांवळा सकुमार जैसा कदनळीगाभा । चरणीचीं नेपुऱें वांकी गर्जती नभा ॥4॥
 ओंवाळतां मन हें उभें ठाकलें ठायीं । समदृष्ट समाधि तुकया लागली पार्यीं ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Upon a golden tray the arati is lit; the jeweled lamps blaze with splendid flame. Let us wave it, O mother, before our handsome lord, husband of Rakhumai, Rukmini, and Satyabhama.

His four adorned arms and divine earrings shine; the beauty of his face spreads radiance all around. The Vijayanti garland graces his chest, resplendent with conch, disc, mace, and lotus.

Dark and tender as the heart of a plantain, his anklets and ornaments resound to the sky. Says Tuka, waving this arati, the mind stands still, fixed in place. An even gaze and perfect absorption have settled at his feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

On a golden tray the arati is lit; the jeweled lamps blaze with bright flame. Let us wave it, O mother, before our beautiful lord, the husband of Rahi, Rakhumai, and Satyabhama. His four adorned arms shine, and divine rings hang in his ears; looking at the beauty of his blessed face, light spreads out. The Vijayanti garland graces his neck, rich and lovely; the conch, the disc, the mace, and the lotus shine in his hands. He is dark and tender, like the heart of a plantain; the anklets and bangles on his feet sound to the sky. As I wave the lamp, my mind stops and stands still in its place. Tuka says: an even gaze and deep absorption have settled at his feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is an arati sung before Vitthal, the form of Vishnu worshipped at Pandharpur. Tukaram leads the eye slowly over the figure: the four arms, the earrings, the Vijayanti garland, the conch, disc, mace, and lotus, the dark and tender body, the ringing anklets. The devotional point is that looking is not idle; it gathers the mind. The act of waving the lamp brings the wandering mind to a standstill, and the whole song lands in its last line, where steady, even seeing turns into deep absorption settled at the god's feet. Worship of the form here becomes a doorway into stillness.

GATHA 1577

Devotion to Vitthal

Arati to Pandharinath, the dawn-lamp of devotion

मराठी मूळ

भक्तीचिया पोटीं बोध कांकडा ज्योती । पंचप्राण जीवें भावें ओंवाळूं आरती ॥१॥
 ओंवाळू आरती माझ्या पंढरीनाथा । दोन्ही कर जोडोनि चरणीं ठेवीन माथा ॥२॥
 काय महिमा वणूपा आतां सांगणें तें किती । कोटि ब्रह्महत्या मुख पाहतां जाती ॥३॥
 राही रखुमाई दोही दों बाही । मयूर पिच्छचामरें ढाळति ठायीं ठायीं ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे दीप घेऊनि उन्मनति शोभा । विटेवरी उभा दिसे लावण्यगाभा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In the womb of devotion, wisdom is the dawn-lamp; with the five vital breaths and wholehearted love, I wave this arati. I wave the arati before my Lord of Pandhari, joining both hands and placing my head at his feet.

What glory shall I describe, and how much can I tell? A million sins of the worst kind vanish at the sight of his face. Rakhumai and Rukmini stand on either side, fanning him with peacock-feather whisks everywhere.

Says Tuka, taking up the lamp, the mind soars beyond itself in radiance. There he stands upon the brick, a treasury of beauty.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In the womb of devotion, wisdom is the dawn-lamp; with my five breaths, with life and love, I wave this arati. I wave the arati before my Lord of Pandhari. I join both my hands and lay my head at his feet. What glory shall I tell, and how much can I say? A million of the worst sins go away at the sight of his face. Rahi and Rakhumai stand on either side of him, fanning him with peacock-feather whisks, here and there. Tuka says: as I take up the lamp, the mind soars beyond itself in beauty. There he stands upon the brick, a treasury of loveliness.

WHAT IT MEANS

Another arati, this one to the Lord of Pandhari, but it reads the ritual inwardly. The lamp Tukaram waves is not only the clay one in the hand: devotion is the womb, wisdom is the flame, and the five vital breaths are the offering, so the whole person is what is being lifted before the god. He claims that the mere sight of that face cancels even the gravest sins, the strongest way the tradition has of saying that contact with God outweighs any weight of guilt. As he raises the lamp, the mind passes beyond its ordinary state into the unmani condition, a thought-free height. The song ends fixed on the familiar image: God standing on the brick at Pandharpur, a treasury of beauty.

GATHA 1578

The Saints

The blessing of the saints' sight

मराठी मूळ

धन्य दिवस आजि दुरुषण संतांचें । नांदे तया घरीं दैवत पंढरीचें ॥१॥
 धन्य पुण्य रूप कैसा जालें संसार । देव आणि भक्त दुजा नाहीं विचार ॥२॥
 धन्य पूर्व पुण्य वोडवले निरुते । संतांचें दर्शन जालें भाग्यें बहुते ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने धन्य आह्मां जोडली जोडी । संतांचे चरण आतां जीवें न सोडीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Blessed is this day, for we have beheld the saints. The deity of Pandhari dwells in their home.

Blessed is the merit that has shaped this life; God and devotee are here, and no other consideration remains.

Blessed is the ancient virtue that has surely ripened; by great good fortune we have gained the sight of saints.

Says Tuka, blessed are we, for we have found this treasure. I will never let go of the saints' feet as long as I live.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Blessed is this day, for I have seen the saints. The deity of Pandhari dwells in their home. Blessed is the merit that shaped this life; here are God and devotee, and nothing else to think about. Blessed is the old virtue that has surely ripened; by great good fortune I have gained the sight of the saints. Tuka says: blessed are we, for we have found this treasure. I will not let go of the saints' feet as long as I live.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is celebrating darshan, the sight of holy company, as itself the highest good fortune. The claim he keeps repeating is that the god of Pandharpur lives in the saints' own house; to be near them is already to be near God, with no distance left between deity and devotee. He reads his own luck backward, treating this meeting as merit

and virtue from past lives finally come ripe. The poem ends with a vow, not a feeling: having found this treasure, he will hold the saints' feet for as long as he is alive. The point is that companionship with the realized is treated as the surest path, more reliable than effort he could mount on his own.

GATHA 1579

Ecstasy and Joy

Joy, Govinda everywhere

मराठी मूळ

गाऊं वाणूं तुज विठो तुझा करुं अनुवाद । जिकडे पाहें तिकडे सर्वमय गोविंद ॥१॥
 आनंद रे विठोबा जाला माझे मनीं । देखिले लोचनीं विटेसहित पाउले ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मां प्रेमा उणें तें काई । पंढरीचा राणा सांटविला हृदयीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*I will sing of you, Vitthal, and speak of your glory. Wherever I look, everything is pervaded by Govinda.
 Joy, O Vithoba, has risen in my mind. My eyes have seen your feet standing upon the brick.
 Says Tuka, what could we possibly lack in love? The king of Pandhari is treasured within our hearts.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

I will sing of you, Vitho, and speak your praise. Wherever I look, Govinda fills everything. Joy, O Vithoba, has risen in my mind. My eyes have seen the feet upon the brick. Tuka says: what could we lack in love? The king of Pandhari is stored away in my heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a short cry of fulfilled longing. Tukaram says that wherever he turns his eyes, the same Govinda is filling everything, so seeing has stopped being divided into many objects. That all-pervading vision and the plain, particular sight of the feet on the brick at Pandharpur are not two different things here; both are the same joy risen in the mind. The closing question, what could we lack in love, is a way of saying the want is over: the king of Pandhari is now stored inside the heart, carried wherever he goes.

GATHA 1580

Prayers

Prayer, place me with the saints

मराठी मूळ

मागणें तें एक तुजप्रति आहे । देशी तरि पाहें पांडुरंगा ॥१॥
 या संतांसी निरवीं हें मज देई । आणिक दुजें काहीं न मगें तुज ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां उदार होई । मज ठेवीं पायीं संतांचिया ॥३॥
 स्वामींनीं काया ब्रह्म केली ते अभंग ॥ २४ ॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have one request to make of you, Panduranga; grant it if you will. Place me in the care of these saints; I ask nothing else of you.

Says Tuka, be generous now and keep me at the feet of the saints.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have one thing to ask of you, Panduranga; grant it if you will. Put me in the care of these saints; I ask nothing else of you. Tuka says: be generous now, and keep me at the feet of the saints.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram brings God a single petition and makes a point of asking for nothing else. What he wants is not deliverance, wealth, or even a vision, but to be handed over into the keeping of the saints. He is asking God to entrust him to holy company, treating that company as the safest place a soul can be kept. The whole prayer turns on humility: rather than ask for a direct gift, he asks to be set at the feet of others who already belong to God.

GATHA 1581

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, vanishing into God

मराठी मूळ

शोधितां चि नये । ह्मणोनि वोळगतों पाये ॥१॥
 आतां दिसों नये जना । ऐसें करा नारायणा ॥२॥
 परतोनि मन । गेलें ठायीं चि मुरोन ॥३॥
 विसरला तुका । बोलों चालों जाला मुका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Searching yields nothing, and so I cling to your feet. O Narayana, make it so that I am no longer visible to the world.

The mind turned back and merged into its own source. Says Tuka, he has forgotten how to speak or move and has become mute.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Searching gives nothing, and so I hold on to your feet. Now let me no longer be seen by people; make it so, Narayana. The mind turned back and merged into its own place. Tuka says: he has forgotten how to speak or walk, and has become mute.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram has given up the search and simply taken hold of God's feet, having found that looking and reasoning yield nothing. His prayer is strange: he asks Narayana to make him no longer visible to people, a request to disappear as a separate self. The reason follows in the next line, where the mind turns back and dissolves into its own source instead of running outward. By the end he speaks of himself in the third person, as one who has forgotten how to talk or move and gone mute, the silence of a self that has stopped acting as a self apart from God.

GATHA 1582

The Necessity of Experience

The world as rope and snake

मराठी मूळ

रज्जुसर्पाकार । भासयेले जगडंबर ॥१॥
 ह्यणोनि आठवती पाय । घेतों आलाय बलाय ॥२॥
 द्रुश द्रुमाकार लाणी । केलों सर्व सासी धणी ॥३॥
 तुकीं तुकला तुका । विश्वीं भरोनि उरला लोकां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Just as a rope is mistaken for a serpent, so this whole elaborate world is a superimposition. Therefore I remember your feet and take refuge in you completely.

Like a tree seen in a dream, you made me master of the whole appearance. Says Tuka, Tuka is dissolved in Tuka; what fills the universe and still remains is that alone.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Just as a rope looks like a snake, this whole spread of the world is laid over the truth. So I remember your feet and take refuge in you completely. Like a tree seen in a dream, you made me the master of the whole appearance. Tuka says: Tuka is dissolved in Tuka; what fills the world and still remains is that alone.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reaches for the old Vedanta image of the rope mistaken for a snake: the snake was never there, only a misreading of the rope, and in the same way the elaborate world is an appearance laid over what truly is. He compares it again to a tree seen in a dream, real only while the dream lasts. Rather than make this an abstract lesson, he turns it into refuge: since the world is appearance, he holds the one thing that is not, the feet of God. The last line collapses the distance entirely. Tuka has dissolved into Tuka, and what fills the universe and yet remains over it is recognized as that same one reality.

GATHA 1583

The Necessity of Experience

Experience, apart from every claim

मराठी मूळ

ह्यणवितों दास । परि मी असें उदास ॥१॥
 हा चि निश्चय माझा । परि मी निश्चयाहुनि दुजा ॥२॥
 सरतें कर्तुत्व माझ्यानें । परि मी त्याही हून भिन्न ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I call myself a servant, yet I am truly detached. This is my firm conviction, yet I stand apart even from that conviction.

All capacity for action belongs to me, yet I am distinct from even that.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I call myself a servant, yet I am truly free of it. This is my firm conviction, yet I am other than the conviction. All doing of action is mine, yet I am separate even from that.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a terse statement of standing apart from each role the self takes on. Tukaram names three layers and steps back from all of them: he calls himself a servant of God, yet says he is detached even from that role; he holds a firm conviction, yet says he is other than the conviction itself; he grants that all action runs through him, yet says he is distinct even from his own doing. The pattern is the witness recognizing that it is not the servant, not the belief, not the deed. Each line is a refusal to be finally caught by any identity, even the devotional and spiritual ones.

GATHA 1584

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, kirtan outstrips the knowers

मराठी मूळ

तुका तुकासी तुकला । तुका तुकाहुनि निराळा ॥1॥
घोंटवीन लाळ ब्रह्मज्ञान्या हातीं । मुक्तां आत्मिस्थती सांडवीन ॥1॥
ब्रह्मभूत होते काया च कीर्तनीं । भाग्य तरी ऋणी देवा ऐसा ॥ध्रु॥
तीर्थ भ्रमकासी आणीन आळस । कडु स्वर्गवास करिन भोग ॥2॥
सांडवीन तपोनिधा अभिमान । यज्ञ आणि दान लाजवीन ॥3॥
भक्तिभाग्यप्रेमा साधीन पुरुषार्थ । ब्रह्मींचा जो अर्थ निजठेवा ॥4॥
धन्य ह्यणवीन येहे लोकीं लोकां । भाग्य आह्मीं तुका देखियेला ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Tuka has merged into Tuka, yet Tuka remains apart from Tuka. I will make the knowers of Brahman swallow their own drool in astonishment.

I will make the liberated abandon their settled state. The body itself became Brahman through kirtan; if fortune allows, I will put even God in my debt.

I will shame the wandering pilgrim into giving up his restlessness. I will make the pleasures of heaven taste bitter.

I will strip the pride from those rich in austerity. I will humble the performer of sacrifice and charity.

Through devotion, fortune, and love I will win the highest goal, the treasure hidden within Brahman itself. Says Tuka, the world will call them blessed who had the fortune of seeing this.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tuka has merged into Tuka, yet Tuka is apart from Tuka. I will make the knowers of Brahman drool in the hand of wonder. I will make the liberated drop their settled state. The body itself became Brahman through kirtan; if fortune holds, I will put even God in my debt. I will bring the wandering pilgrim to lay down his restlessness. I will make the dwelling in heaven taste bitter. I will make those rich in penance let go of their pride. I will shame the doer of sacrifice and the giver of gifts. Through devotion, fortune, and love I will win the highest aim, the treasure hidden within Brahman itself. Tuka says: I will make the world call them blessed; it is our fortune that we have seen this.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes a bold set of boasts on behalf of kirtan, devotional singing, claiming it surpasses every other spiritual path. The knowers of Brahman, the liberated, the pilgrims, the dwellers in heaven, the masters of austerity, the performers of sacrifice and charity: each represents a recognized route to the goal, and he says love and song will outdo them all, even leaving the dry knowers astonished and the proud ascetics stripped of pride. The line about putting God in his debt is the same audacity turned upward; through kirtan the body itself becomes Brahman. The claim worth examining is not contempt for those other seekers but the wager itself, that simple devotion reaches the hidden treasure within Brahman that effort and pride keep missing. He ends by saying the fortune is in having seen this for himself.

GATHA 1585

*Ecstasy and Joy**Kirtan washes the world clean*

मराठी मूळ

संसाराचे अंगीं अवघीं च वेसनं । आह्मी या कीर्तनें शुद्ध जालों ॥१॥
 आतां हें सोंवळें जालें त्रिभुवन । विषम धोऊन सांडियेलें ॥२॥
 ब्रह्मपुरीं वास करणें अखंड । न देखिजे तोंड विटाळाचें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मां एकांताचा वास । ब्रह्मीं ब्रह्मरस सेवूं सदा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The worldly life carries every affliction, but through kirtan we have become pure. Now all three worlds have become sanctified; the poison of duality has been washed away completely.

We dwell continuously in the city of Brahman and never see the face of impurity. Says Tuka, we live in solitude, drinking the nectar of Brahman in Brahman forever.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Worldly life carries every affliction, but through kirtan we have become pure. Now all three worlds have become clean; the poison of duality has been washed off and thrown away. We live without break in the city of Brahman, and never see the face of impurity. Tuka says: ours is a dwelling in solitude; in Brahman we drink the nectar of Brahman forever.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram contrasts ordinary worldly life, which he says is full of every affliction, with the life cleansed by kirtan. The impurity he names is not ritual dirt but duality itself, the split into clean and unclean, self and other, which he calls a poison now washed away. Once that splitting is gone, all three worlds look sanctified and there is no impure face left anywhere to see. He describes the result as living unbroken in the city of Brahman, in a solitude that is fullness rather than loneliness. The closing image is of drinking the nectar of Brahman while already in Brahman, the seeker, the drink, and the place having become one.

GATHA 1586

Prayers

Prayer through the saints to God

मराठी मूळ

तुह्मी सनकादिक संत । ह्यणवितां कृपावंत ॥१॥
 एवढा करा उपकार । देवा सांगा नमस्कार ॥२॥
 भाकूनि करुणा । विनवा वैकुंठीचा राणा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्यणे मज आठवा । मुळ लवकरी पाठवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You are the saints like Sanaka and the others, and you call yourselves compassionate. Then do me this one favor: carry my salutations to God.

Plead with tender mercy before the king of Vaikuntha. Says Tuka, remember me and send word to come for me soon.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You are saints like Sanaka and the others, and you call yourselves full of mercy. Then do me this one kindness: carry my salutation to God. Plead with tender pity before the king of Vaikuntha. Tuka says: remember me, and send word for me to come soon.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram does not address God directly here; he addresses the saints and asks them to be his go-betweens. He gently holds them to their own name, since they are called compassionate, let them prove it by carrying his greeting to God and pleading his case before the king of Vaikuntha. The request behind the request is a longing to be taken home: send word for me to come soon. The poem rests on the conviction that the saints have the ear of God and that mercy obliges them to use it on behalf of one who asks.

GATHA 1587

Autobiography

Death as homecoming, the summons arrives

मराठी मूळ

आपुल्या माहेरा जाईन मी आतां । निरोप या संतां हातीं आला ॥१॥
 सुख दुःख माझें ऐकिलें कानीं । कळवळा मनीं करुणेचा ॥२॥
 करुनी सिद्ध मूळ साउलें भातुकें । येती दिसें एके न्यावयासी ॥३॥
 त्या चि पंथें माझें लागलेंसे चित्त । वाट पाहें नित्य माहेराची ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां येतील न्यावया । अंगें आपुलिया मायबाप ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I shall now go to my true home; the message has arrived through the hands of the saints. They heard my joys and sorrows, and compassion stirred in their minds.

They have prepared provisions and gifts for the journey; in a matter of days they will come to take me. My chitta is fixed upon that very path; I wait daily for news from my true home.

Says Tuka, now my mother and father themselves will come to carry me away.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I will go now to my true home. The message has come, brought by the hands of the saints. They heard of my joys and my sorrows; compassion stirred in their hearts. They have made everything ready, the provisions and the parting gifts. In a day or two they will come to take me. My mind is already set on that road. Every day I watch for word from home. Tuka says: now my own mother and father will come, in their own bodies, to carry me away.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is speaking of his death as a journey to his true home with God, and he is calm, even glad. The saints have carried the summons to him, having heard his whole life of joy and sorrow, and out of compassion they prepare him for the road. He no longer waits for the things of this world; he waits daily for the message that calls him back. He names God as mother and father coming in person to carry him, so that dying is not a loss but a child being fetched home.

GATHA 1588

Autobiography

Death as homecoming, reading the signs

मराठी मूळ

चिन्हें उमटताती अंगीं । शकुना जोगीं उत्तम ॥१॥
 आठवला बापमाय । येइल काय मूळ नेणों ॥२॥
 उत्कंठित जालें मन । ते चि खुण तेथींचि ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे काम वारीं । आळस घरीं करमेना ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Auspicious signs are appearing on my body, omens of the highest kind. I am remembering my mother and father; I wonder if a message has come to fetch me.

The mind has become full of longing; that itself is the sign that it points toward that place. Says Tuka, all work is done; I can no longer pass the time idly at home.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Signs are showing on my body, omens of the best kind. I keep remembering my mother and father. Has the message come to fetch me? I do not know. My mind has filled with longing, and that longing itself is the sign of where I belong. Tuka says: all my work is finished. I cannot sit idle at home any longer.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reads the nearness of death as a body marked with good omens, and he answers it with longing rather than fear. He keeps remembering God as mother and father, watching for the call to come home. He treats his own ache to leave as the surest sign that he belongs on the other side, with the Lord. His earthly work is done, and he can no longer pass the time in this house; the readiness is the whole point.

GATHA 1589

Longing and Separation

Longing, watching the road

मराठी मूळ

आरोनियां पाहे वाट । कटकट सोसेना ॥१॥
 आलियांस पुसें मात । तेथें चित्त लागलें ॥२॥
 दळीं कांडीं लोकांऐसें । परि मी नसें ते ठायीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे येथें पिसें । तेथें तैसें असेल ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I climb up and gaze at the road; I can bear the anguish of waiting no longer. I ask every passerby for news; my chitta is fixed on that destination.

I grind and pound grain like everyone else, yet I am not truly here. Says Tuka, I may look mad in this place, but the same must be true of my longing there.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I climb up and watch the road. I can no longer bear the strain of waiting. I ask everyone who comes by for news; my mind is fixed on that place. I grind and pound the grain like everyone else, yet I am not really here. Tuka says: I must look mad in this place. But there it must be the same; my longing belongs there.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a soul stretched between two worlds while it waits for God. Outwardly he does the ordinary labor of the household, grinding and pounding grain like anyone else, but his attention has already left for the destination he watches the road for. He questions every passerby for news, unable to stand the waiting. He admits he looks mad here, and accepts it: the madness is only that his whole heart has gone ahead to where it belongs.

GATHA 1590

The Necessity of Experience

Union, one life in two places

मराठी मूळ

येथीलिया अनुभवे । कळों जीवे हें येतसे ॥१॥
 दोहीं ठायीं एक जीव । माझी कीव त्या अंगीं ॥२॥
 भूक भुके चि खाउनि धाय । नाहीं हाय अन्नाची ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे सुख जालें । अंतर धालें त्यागुणें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

From the experience of this world, the jiva comes to understand. In both places there is one life; the tenderness I feel is the same tenderness felt on that side.

Hunger eats itself and finds satisfaction; there is no despair over food. Says Tuka, joy has come, and the within is fully content because of that union.

IN PLAIN WORDS

From the experience here, the soul comes to understand. In both places there is one life. The tenderness I feel here is felt there too. Hunger feeds on hunger and is filled; there is no crying out for food. Tuka says: joy has come. Within, I am fully content, because of that union.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says that living through this world teaches the soul a truth: there is not one life here and another there, but one single life in both. The tenderness he feels is answered by the same tenderness on God's side; the longing is mutual. He uses a strange, sharp image of hunger that feeds on hunger and is satisfied, so that the craving itself becomes the food and no anxious cry for more remains. The result is a settled joy within, born of the union of the soul with God.

GATHA 1591

Autobiography

Vision of arrival, Hari comes

मराठी मूळ

पैल आले हरि । शंख चक्र शोभे करीं ॥1॥
 गरुड येतो फडत्कारें । ना भी ना भी ह्मणे त्वरे ॥ध्रु॥
 मुगुटकुंडलांच्या दीप्त । तेजें लोपला गभिस्त ॥2॥
 मेघश्यामवर्ण हरि । मूतिन डोळस साजिरी ॥3॥
 चुतर्भुज वैजयंती । गळां माळ हे रुळती ॥4॥
 पीतांबर झळके कैसा । उजळल्या दाही दिशा ॥5॥
 तुका जालासे संतुष्ट । घरा आलें वैकुंठपीठ ॥6॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Look, Hari approaches. The conch and disc shine in his hands.

Garuda comes with a great rush of wings, calling out, 'Fear not, fear not,' in haste. The blazing light of his crown and earrings eclipses the sun.

Dark as a raincloud is Hari, his form beautiful and pleasing. Four-armed, the Vijayanti garland swings upon his chest.

His yellow silk gleams so bright that all ten directions are lit. Says Tuka, he is utterly fulfilled; the throne of Vaikuntha has come home.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Look, Hari is coming. The conch and the disc shine in his hands. Garuda comes rushing on beating wings, calling out in haste, fear not, fear not. The blaze of his crown and earrings puts out the sun. Dark as a raincloud is Hari, his form beautiful, his eyes lovely. Four arms, and the Vijayanti garland swinging on his chest. His yellow silk gleams so bright that all ten directions are lit. Tuka says: he is utterly fulfilled; the throne of Vaikuntha has come home.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the moment of God coming for him as a great arrival, seen as a living vision. Hari rides in on Garuda, conch and disc in hand, his crown and earrings outshining the sun, his cloud-dark body in yellow silk lighting all directions. The repeated cry, fear not, fear not, names the one thing the dying soul most needs to hear. By saying that Vaikuntha, the Lord's own heaven, has come home to him, Tukaram reverses the usual picture: he does not climb to God; God brings heaven down to his door.

GATHA 1592

Autobiography

Vision of arrival, sins flee at his approach

मराठी मूळ

शंखचक्रगदापद्म । पैल आला पुरुषोत्तम ॥१॥
 ना भी ना भी भक्तराया । वेगीं पावलों सखया ॥२॥
 दुरुनि येतां दिसे दृष्टी । धाकें दोष पळती सृष्टी ॥३॥
 तुका देखोनि एकला । वैकुंठीहूनि हरि आला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

With conch, disc, mace, and lotus, the Supreme Person has arrived. 'Fear not, fear not, O king of devotees; I have come swiftly, my friend.' Even from afar he is visible to the eye; at his approach, all faults and sins flee from creation.

Says Tuka, seeing him alone, Hari himself has come from Vaikuntha.

IN PLAIN WORDS

With conch, disc, mace, and lotus, the Supreme Person has come. Fear not, fear not, beloved of God; I have come quickly, my friend. Even from far off he can be seen, and at the sight all sins flee from creation in terror. Tuka says: seeing me alone, Hari himself has come down from Vaikuntha.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures the four-armed Lord arriving to carry him home, speaking the tender reassurance, fear not, my friend. The whole abhanga turns on a single contrast: where God draws near, sin cannot stay, and the faults of the world scatter at the mere sight of him. The closing line names the wonder plainly: it was for Tuka, this one small soul, that Hari left Vaikuntha and came in person. The greatness of the descent measures how dear the soul is to God.

GATHA 1593

Autobiography

The procession, the King of Pandhari arrives

मराठी मूळ

पैल दिसतील भार । दिंडी पताका अपार ॥१॥
 आला पंढरीचा राणा । दिसतील त्याच्या खुणा ।
 सुख वाटे मना । डोळे बाहणा स्फुरती ॥२॥
 उठिले गजर नामाचे । दळभार वैष्णवांचे ॥३॥
 तुका करी रिता ठाव । त्यांसी बैसावया वाव ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Look, the processions appear in the distance: palanquins and banners beyond number. The king of Pandhari has come; his signs are visible.

Joy fills the mind, and the eyes and arms thrill with delight. The roar of the divine name rises; the armies of Vaishnavas advance.

Says Tuka, I clear a space for them all to sit.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Look, in the distance the crowds appear, palanquins and banners beyond counting. The King of Pandhari has come; you can see the signs of him. The mind fills with joy; the eyes and the arms thrill and tremble. The roar of the Name has risen; the armies of the Vaishnavas are advancing. Tuka says: I clear an empty place for them all to sit.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram greets the coming of God not as a lonely event but as a great festival procession, the King of Pandhari approaching with palanquins, banners, and the roar of the divine Name. His whole body responds, eyes and arms trembling with joy at the first sight. The advancing armies are the Vaishnavas, the company of devotees who come with the Lord. His one act is humble and practical: he clears an open space so that all of them have room to sit, making himself host to the host of God.

GATHA 1594

Autobiography

The meeting, going out to embrace Vitthal

मराठी मूळ

चला जाऊं रे सामोरे । पुढें भेटों विठ्ठल धुरे ॥१॥
 तुका आनंदला मनीं । कैसा जातो लोटांगणीं ।
 फेडावया धणी । प्रेमसुखाची आजि ॥२॥
 पुढें आले कृपावंत । मायबाप साधुसंत ॥३॥
 आळंगिला बाहीं । ठेविला विठोबाचे पायीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Come, let us go forward to greet him. Let us meet Vitthal at the head of the procession.

Says Tuka, my mind is overcome with bliss; see how he goes rolling on the ground in prostration, to satisfy at last the craving for this joy of love. The compassionate saints, our mother and father, have come ahead.

They have embraced him in their arms and placed him at Vithoba's feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Come, let us go out to meet him. Let us meet Vitthal at the head of the procession. Tuka says: my mind is overcome with bliss; see how he goes, rolling on the ground in prostration, to satisfy at last the craving for this joy of love. The compassionate ones came ahead, the saints who are my mother and father. They took me in their arms and set me down at Vithoba's feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the moment of meeting that the earlier abhangas were waiting for. Tukaram runs out to greet Vitthal at the front of the procession and falls rolling to the ground in prostration, his long craving for the joy of love finally being fed. The saints, whom he calls his mother and father, go ahead of him and act as the bridge: they gather him up and place him at Vithoba's feet. The point is that the soul does not reach God alone; the saints carry it the last step into his presence.

GATHA 1595

Devotion to Vitthal

Welcoming God, the poor man's hospitality

मराठी मूळ

पाहुणे घरासी । आजि आले हृषीकेशी ॥१॥
 काय करुं उपचार । कोंप मोडकी जर्जर ।
 कण्या दरदर । पाण्यामाजी रांधिल्या ॥२॥
 घरीं मोडकिया बाजा । वरि वाकळांच्या शेजा ॥३॥
 मुखशिद्ध तुळसी दळ । तुका ह्मणे मी दुर्बळ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Today the guest Hrishiksha has come to our house. What hospitality can I offer? The house is broken down and crumbling; the grain is coarse and cooked simply in water.

The cots at home are broken, covered with rough blankets for bedding. Says Tuka, I am poor; a tulsi leaf from my mouth is all I can offer to cleanse it.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A guest has come to my house. Today Hrishiksha has come. What welcome can I offer? My hut is broken down and crumbling. The grain is coarse, just boiled in water. The cots inside are broken, with rough blankets thrown over for bedding. To freshen his mouth, only a tulsi leaf. Tuka says: I am poor.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram receives God as a guest in his house and is honest about how little he has to offer. The hut is falling apart, the food is coarse grain boiled in water, the beds are broken and covered with rags, and the only mouth-freshener is a single tulsi leaf. He does not dress up his poverty or apologize it away; he simply lays it bare before the Lord. The unspoken claim is that love offers what it has, and that the tulsi leaf given by a poor devotee is welcome to God, who has come anyway.

GATHA 1596

The Saints

The saints' grace, made whole

मराठी मूळ

संतीं केला अंगीकार । त्यासी अभिमान थोर ॥१॥
 कांहीं ठेविलें चरणीं । घेतीं तें चि पुरवूनि ।
 तुका पायवणी । घेऊनियां निराळा ॥२॥
 नसतां कांहीं संचित । भेटी जाली अवचित ॥३॥
 देव मिळोनियां भक्त । तुका केलासे सनाथ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The saints have accepted me, and great is their grace in doing so. Whatever was placed at their feet, they took and fulfilled in abundance.

Says Tuka, I received the washing water of their feet and was set free. Though I had no store of merit, this meeting came to me unannounced.

God and his devotees together have made Tuka whole.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The saints have accepted me, and great is the grace in that. Whatever I laid at their feet, they took it and gave it back many times over. Tuka says: I took the washing water of their feet and was set apart, set free. I had no store of merit, yet this meeting came to me out of nowhere. God and his devotees together have made Tuka whole.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram credits everything to the saints who took him in. Whatever little he placed at their feet, they returned to him in abundance, and the water that washed their feet was enough to set him free. He insists he had earned none of this; the meeting came unbidden, by grace and not by merit. The closing line joins God and his devotees as one giving power: between them they made a homeless man, Tuka, into someone who has a Lord and belongs.

GATHA 1597

Autobiography

The summons, be ready

मराठी मूळ

अवघियांच्या आलों मुलें । एका वेळे न्यावया ॥१॥
 सिद्ध व्हावें सिद्ध व्हावें । आधीं ठावें करितों ॥२॥
 जोंवरि ते घटिका दुरी । आहे उरी तो काळ ॥३॥
 मंगळाचे वेळे उभे । असों शोभे सावध ॥४॥
 अवघियांचा योग घडे । तरी जोडे श्लाघ्यता ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे पाहें वाट । बहु आट करुनि ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We have come for the sake of all, to carry them away at once. Be ready, be ready; I tell you in advance.

As long as the appointed hour is still distant, that much time remains. At the auspicious moment, stand alert and radiant.

If all come together, the glory is complete. Says Tuka, I have been waiting with great longing.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We have come for the sake of all, to carry them away at once. Be ready, be ready; I am telling you in advance. As long as the appointed hour is still far off, that much time remains. At the auspicious moment, stand alert and bright. If all come together, the glory is complete. Tuka says: I have been watching the road with great longing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Here the call to come home is spoken in the voice of the one sent to fetch the souls, telling them plainly to make themselves ready before the appointed hour. The warning is gentle but firm: time is given now, while the hour is still distant, precisely so that none are caught unprepared. The poem hopes that all will be ready together, for then the homecoming is at its most glorious. Tukaram closes in his own voice, having watched the road in longing, so the abhanga holds both the summoner's command and the soul's answering readiness.

GATHA 1598

Autobiography

Farewell, the soul departs with the Lord

मराठी मूळ

सकळ ही माझी बोळवण करा । परतोनि घरा जावें तुझीं ॥1॥
 कर्मधर्म तुझां असावें कल्याण । घ्या माझें वचन आशीर्वाद ॥ध्रु॥
 वाढवूनि दिलों एकाचिये हातीं । सकळ निश्चिती जाली तेथें ॥2॥
 आतां मज जाणें प्राणेश्वरासवें । माझिया भावें अनुसरलों ॥3॥
 वाढवितां लोभ होईल उसीर । अवधीच स्थिर करा ठायीं ॥4॥
 धर्म अर्थ काम जाला एके ठायीं । मेळविला जिहीं हाता हात ॥5॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां जाली हे चि भेटी । उरल्या त्या गोष्टी बोलावया ॥6॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

All of you, bid me farewell now; return to your homes. May virtue and right conduct bring you well-being; accept my words as a blessing.

I have been entrusted into the hands of one; all matters are settled there. Now I must go with my beloved Lord; I have followed my own bhava.

If we linger in attachment, there will be delay; let everyone be steady in their place. Dharma, wealth, and desire have come together in one place, joined by those who brought hand to hand.

Says Tuka, this meeting has taken place; what remains is only words left to speak.

IN PLAIN WORDS

All of you, see me off now; turn back and go to your homes. May your duty and your right living bring you well-being; take my words as a blessing. I was raised and then handed into the keeping of One; there everything is settled. Now I must go with the Lord of my life; I have followed where my own heart led. If we linger in attachment, there will be delay; let everyone be steady in their place. Dharma, wealth, and desire have all come together in one place, joined by those who brought hand to hand. Tuka says: now this meeting has happened; what is left is only the words still to be spoken.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is Tukaram's leave-taking, spoken to those he leaves behind as he departs with God. He sends them home with a blessing, telling them to keep to their duty and right living, and not to hold him with grief, since attachment only delays what must happen. He explains that his life was always meant to be handed over to the One, and that following his own bhava, his heart's devotion, has brought him to this settled end. Naming dharma, wealth, and desire gathered into one place, he says the soul's whole journey has come to rest in God; the meeting is done, and only the last few words remain.

GATHA 1599

Autobiography

Farewell, weary of a false world

मराठी मूळ

बोलिलों तें आतां पाळावें वचन । ऐसें पुण्य कोण माझे गांठी ॥१॥
 जातों आतां आज्ञा घेऊनियां स्वामी । काळक्षेप आह्मी करूं कोठें ॥२॥
 न घडे यावरि न धरवे धीर । पीडतां राष्ट्र देखोनि जग ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुम्ही दिसे मोकलिलें । काय आतां आलें जीवित्वाचें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The words I have spoken must now be honored. What merit in my store could equal such grace? I take your leave now, O Lord; where else shall we spend our remaining time? I can endure no further, nor hold my patience, seeing the world oppressed by falsehood.

Says Tuka, you have set me free; what value remains now in this life?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The words I spoke, I must now keep. What merit do I have in my store to deserve such grace? I take my leave now, my Lord. Where else can I pass my time? It cannot go on. I cannot hold my patience, seeing the world crushed under falsehood. Tuka says: you seem to have set me free. What worth is left now in this life?

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a poem of departure, spoken to Vitthal at the end. Tukaram knows his words were a vow and now feels bound to honor them by leaving. He wonders aloud what good he ever did to earn this grace, then asks where else a life could be spent if not at the Lord's side. The reason he can stay no longer is the world itself: it is ground down by falsehood, and he can no longer bear to watch. To be set free, here, is not loss but release from a life whose value has drained away.

GATHA 1600

The Necessity of Experience

Nonduality, the self dissolved

मराठी मूळ

करावें तें काम । उगाच वाढवावा श्रम ॥१॥
 अवघें एकमय । राज्य बोलों चालों नये ॥२॥
 दुजयाची सत्ता । न चलेसी जाली आतां ॥३॥
 आतां नाहीं तुका । पुन्हा हारपला लोकां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Do the work that must be done; why increase labor needlessly? Everything has become one; in this kingdom, speech and movement no longer apply. The authority of duality no longer holds sway.

Says Tuka, Tuka is no more; he has vanished among the people.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do the work that must be done. Why pile up labor for nothing? Everything is one. In this kingdom there is no speaking and no moving. The rule of a second thing no longer holds. Tuka says: now there is no Tuka. He has vanished again into the people.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a state where the sense of a separate self has fallen away. Do only the work that is needed, he says, and stop adding useless effort, because all of it now appears as one. In that oneness there is no second thing to act on or speak to, so the busy machinery of doing and saying loses its ground. The line of his own name is the point: there is no longer a Tuka standing apart. He has disappeared back into the very oneness, the people, the all, he once thought he faced from outside.

GATHA 1601

Autobiography

The final hour, taken to Vaikuntha

मराठी मूळ

आह्मी जातों तुह्मी कृपा असों घावी । सकळा सांगावी विनंती माझी ॥1॥
वाडवेळ जाला उभा पांडुरंग । वैकुंठा श्रीरंग बोलावितो ॥2॥
अंतकाळीं विठो आह्मांसी पावला । कुडीसहित जाला गुप्त तुका ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I am going now; may your grace remain with all. Please convey my humble request to everyone.

It is the hour of departure; Panduranga stands waiting. Shrirang calls from Vaikuntha.

Says Tuka, at the final hour Vitthal came for us; Tuka, body and all, became invisible.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am going now. May your grace stay with all. Please carry my request to everyone. The time has come; Panduranga stands waiting. Shrirang is calling from Vaikuntha. Tuka says: at the last hour Vitthal came for us. Tuka, body and all, became hidden.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is Tukaram's leave-taking at the end of his life. He sends a parting blessing and asks that his request be carried to all his fellow devotees. The summons has come: Panduranga is standing ready, and Shrirang, the Lord, is calling him home to Vaikuntha. The poem makes the central claim plainly: at the final hour Vitthal himself came for him, and Tuka vanished with his body and all, leaving nothing behind to bury or mourn.

GATHA 1602

Autobiography

Wonder, the saint ascends

मराठी मूळ

तुका उतरला तुकीं । नवल जालें तिहीं लोकीं ॥1॥
 नित्य करितों कीर्तन । हें चि माझें अनुष्ठान ॥ध्रु॥
 तुका बैसला विमानीं । संत पाहाती लोचनीं ॥2॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Tuka dissolved into the essence of Tuka, and wonder spread through all three worlds. My daily practice is kirtan; that alone is my spiritual discipline.

Tuka was seated in the celestial chariot, and the saints beheld it with their own eyes.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tuka passed beyond into Tuka. A wonder spread through all three worlds. Every day I do kirtan. That alone is my discipline. Tuka was seated in the celestial chariot, and the saints saw it with their own eyes.

WHAT IT MEANS

The poem speaks of Tukaram's passing as a marvel witnessed across the three worlds. To pass beyond into himself is to be wholly absorbed, the man dissolved into what he truly is. He names the one practice that brought him here: daily kirtan, the singing of the Name, and nothing more elaborate. The closing image is the heart of it: the saints did not hear of his end secondhand but saw him seated in the celestial chariot with their own eyes, the singer carried up by the song he never stopped singing.

GATHA 1603

Ecstasy and Joy

Grace, lifted above all sorrow

मराठी मूळ

न देखिजे ऐसें केलें । या विठ्ठलें दुःखासी ॥1॥
 कृपेचिये सिंढासनीं । अधिष्ठानीं बैसविलें ॥ध्रु॥
 वाजता तो नलगे वारा क्षीरसागरा शयनीं ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणें अवघें ठायीं । मज पायीं राखिलें ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Vitthal has made it so that sorrow is nowhere to be seen. He has seated me upon the throne of his mercy.

One who rests upon the ocean of milk needs no fanning breeze. Says Tuka, he has kept me at his feet in every place.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Vitthal has made it so that sorrow can no longer be seen. He has seated me on the throne of his mercy, in the place of honor. One who lies on the ocean of milk needs no fanning breeze. Tuka says: in every place he has kept me at his feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes what grace has done to him: Vitthal has put sorrow so far out of sight that he can no longer even find it. He has been lifted and set on the throne of mercy, given the seat of honor he never earned. The image of resting on the ocean of milk, where the Lord himself reclines, says that one held this securely needs nothing added, no breeze, no comfort from outside. The whole rests on the last line: wherever he is, he is kept at the feet, and that keeping is the source of the joy.

GATHA 1604

Autobiography

Farewell from the holy place, going home

मराठी मूळ

वाराणसीपयपत असों सुखरूप । सांगावा निरोप संतांसी हा ॥१॥
 येथूनियां आह्मां जाणें निजधामा । सवें असे आह्मां गरुड हा ॥२॥
 कृपा असों द्यावी मज दीनावरी । जातोंसों माहेरी तुका ह्मणे ॥३॥ ॥२४॥
 शखे १५७१ एकाहत्तरीं विरोधनामसंवत्सरीं फालगुनवद्य

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

From the holy site of Varanasi, may all be well. Carry this farewell message to the saints.

From here I must proceed to my eternal home; Garuda accompanies me on the way. May your grace remain upon this humble one.

Says Tuka, I am going to my true home.

IN PLAIN WORDS

From the holy place, may all be well. Carry this farewell to the saints. From here I must go to my own home. Garuda is with me on the way. Let your grace stay upon me, a lowly one. Tuka says: I am going to my mother's house.

WHAT IT MEANS

Another departure poem, sending a last blessing and a farewell to be passed on to the saints. Tukaram says he is leaving for his true home, his nijadhama, the abode that was always his, and that Garuda, Vishnu's own mount, accompanies him on the journey. He asks only that grace remain on him, who is poor and small. The final image is tender: he calls the place he is going his mother's house, the maher, where a daughter returns to be held without conditions, so death here is not exile but homecoming.

GATHA 1605

Autobiography

The Name and the river save every caste

मराठी मूळ

द्वितीया सोमवासरीं प्रथमप्रहरीं तुकोबा गुप्त जाले ॥१॥
जाती पंढरीस । ह्मणे जाईन त्यांस ॥१॥
तया आहे संवसार । ऐसें बोले तो माहार ॥२॥
असो नसो भाव । जो हा देखे पंढरिराव ॥२॥
चंद्रभागे न्हाती । तुका ह्मणे भलते याती ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

On the second day of the dark half of Phalguna, in the first watch, on a Monday, in the Virodhi year of Shake 1571, Tukoba became invisible. Those who go to Pandhari, I say, go to them.

Even one with worldly ties speaks thus, says the lowliest among men. Whether devotion is present or not, whoever beholds the Lord of Pandhari is blessed.

Says Tuka, whoever bathes in the Chandrabhaga, of whatever caste, is purified.

IN PLAIN WORDS

On a Monday, in the first watch of the second day of dark Phalguna, Tukoba became hidden. Those who go to Pandhari, I say, go to be theirs. Even one bound in worldly life speaks this way, says the lowest among men. Devotion there or not, whoever sees the Lord of Pandhari is blessed. Tuka says: whoever bathes in the Chandrabhaga, of whatever caste, is made pure.

WHAT IT MEANS

The poem opens by marking the day Tukaram disappeared, then turns to Pandhari and who it is for. The radical claim is that the gate is open to all: even one still tangled in the world, even the man counted lowest, has a place there. Whether your devotion is great or small or absent, simply beholding the Lord of Pandhari blesses you. And bathing in the Chandrabhaga purifies anyone of any caste at all. Tukaram sets the worth not in birth or earned piety but in the Lord and the river themselves, who refuse no one.

GATHA 1606

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the one in every disguise

मराठी मूळ

धरियेलीं सोंगें । येणें अवघीं पांडुरंगें ॥1॥
 तें हें ब्रह्म विटेवरी । उभें चंद्रभागे तिरीं ॥ध्रु॥
 अंतर व्यापी बाहे । धांडोळतां कोठें नोहे ॥2॥
 योगयागतपें । ज्याकारणें दानजपें ॥3॥
 दिले नेदी जति । भोग सकळ ज्या होती ॥4॥
 अवघी लीळा पाहे । तुका ह्मणे दासां साहे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Panduranga has assumed all these disguises. That very Brahman stands upon the brick on the bank of the Chandrabhaga.

He pervades within and without; search as you may, there is nowhere he is not. It is for his sake that all yoga, sacrifice, penance, charity, and chanting exist.

Whether he gives or withholds, all experiences of the world belong to him. Says Tuka, he watches the whole play and sustains his servants through it all.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Panduranga has taken on all these forms. That same Brahman stands on the brick on the bank of the Chandrabhaga. He fills the inside and the outside; search where you will, there is no place he is not. For his sake exist all yoga, sacrifice, penance, charity, and chanting. Whether he gives or withholds, every experience belongs to him. Tuka says: he watches the whole play and stands by his servants.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram identifies the small image at Pandhari with the boundless Brahman. The countless forms of the world are all Panduranga's disguises, and that very absolute is what stands on the brick by the river. He pervades within and without, with no corner left empty, and all the great religious acts, yoga, sacrifice, penance, gifts, the Name, exist only for his sake. Every gift and every withholding, every pleasure and pain, is his alone. The point lands at the end: he is not a distant spectator but watches the whole play and stays beside his servants through it.

GATHA 1607

The Nature of God

Nature of God, Death falls at his feet

मराठी मूळ

ज्याचे गर्जतां पवाडे । किळकाळ पायां पडे ॥१॥
 तो हा पंढरीचा राणा । पुसा सा चौं अठरा जणां ॥४॥
 चिंतितां जयासी । भुक्तिमुक्ति कामारी दासी ॥२॥
 वैकुंठासी जावें । तुका ह्मणे ज्याच्या नांवें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When his glory is proclaimed, even Death himself falls at his feet. He is the king of Pandhari; ask the four and the eighteen, they will tell you.

Whoever contemplates him finds that worldly prosperity and liberation both serve as his handmaidens. Says Tuka, by his name alone one attains Vaikuntha.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When his deeds are sung aloud, even Death falls at his feet. He is the king of Pandhari. Ask the six and the four and the eighteen; they will tell you. For one who thinks on him, both worldly fortune and liberation become serving maids. Tuka says: by his name alone one goes to Vaikuntha.

WHAT IT MEANS

This poem praises the power held in the Lord of Pandhari's name and story. So great is his glory that when it is proclaimed, even Death himself bows down. Tukaram appeals to the whole body of scripture, the six systems, the four Vedas, the eighteen Puranas, as witnesses to his kingship. For anyone who simply holds him in mind, the two prizes people chase, prosperity in this world and liberation from it, turn into handmaids who wait on him unasked. The conclusion is the whole teaching: not by works but by his name alone one reaches Vaikuntha.

GATHA 1608

The Nature of God

Nature of God, beyond all words

मराठी मूळ

ज्याचे गर्जतां पवाडे । श्रुतिशास्त्रां मौन्य पडे ॥१॥
 सिणलें सहजर तोंडें । शेषाफणी ऐसें धेंडें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे मही । पत्र सिंधु न पुरे शाही ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When his glories are sung, even the Vedas and scriptures fall silent. Shesha with his thousand mouths grew weary trying to describe him.

Says Tuka, if the earth were the paper and the ocean the ink, they would not suffice.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When his greatness is sung, the Vedas and the scriptures fall silent. Shesha with his many mouths grew weary trying to tell of him. Tuka says: if the earth were the paper and the ocean the ink, they would still not be enough.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming the limit of all speech before God. The Vedas and scriptures, the highest words there are, go silent when his glory is to be told, because no statement reaches him. Even Shesha, the cosmic serpent with countless mouths, tired himself out and could not finish the description. The closing image seals it: take the whole earth as paper and the whole ocean as ink, and you would run out before the praise was done. The point is not despair but awe: he is greater than any account of him.

GATHA 1609

Faith and Trust

Faith, the protected one untouched

मराठी मूळ

देव राखे तया मारील कोण । न मोडे कांटा हिंडतां वन ॥१॥
 न जळे न बुडे नव्हे कांहीं । विष तें ही अमृत पाहीं ॥२॥
 न चुके वाट न पडे फंदीं । नव्हे कधीं कधीं यमबाधा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नारायण । येता गोळ्या वारी वाण ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Whom God protects, no one can harm. Not a thorn pricks such a one though they wander through the forest.

They do not burn, they do not drown, nothing befalls them; even poison becomes nectar for them. They never lose the path or fall into a trap; the torment of Death never touches them.

Says Tuka, when Narayana comes, he wards off every danger from the faithful.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The one God protects, who can kill? No thorn pricks him though he walks the forest. He does not burn, he does not drown, nothing harms him. Even poison turns to nectar for him. He does not lose the way or fall into a trap. The torment of Death never touches him. Tuka says: when Narayana comes, he wards off every danger from the faithful.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a poem of trust in divine protection. Tukaram piles up images of dangers that simply fail to land: blade, thorn, fire, water, poison, the lost path, the snare, even the agony of Yama. The one God guards passes through all of it unharmed; poison itself turns sweet. The claim is not that the faithful avoid the world's hazards but that they are held through them. The last line names the source plainly: it is Narayana who comes and turns aside every danger from those who keep faith, so the safety is his doing, not their own strength.

GATHA 1610

Longing and Separation

Longing, hold to your own name

मराठी मूळ

कोठे गुंतलासी द्वारकेच्या राया । वेळ कां सखया लावियेला ॥1॥
 दिनानाथ ब्रीद सांभाळीं आपुले । नको पाहों केलें पापपुण्य ॥ध्रु॥
 पतितपावन ब्रीदें चराचर । पातकी अपार उद्धरिले ॥2॥
 तुकयाबंधु ह्मणे द्रौपदीचा धांवा । केला तैसा मला पावें आतां ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Where have you become entangled, O King of Dwaraka? Why have you delayed, dear friend? Uphold your own promise as protector of the lowly; do not weigh my sins and merits. Your very title is 'Purifier of the Fallen'; by that name you have delivered countless wrongdoers throughout creation.

Says Tukayabandhu, just as you rushed to Draupadi's cry, come to me now.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Where have you gotten caught up, O King of Dwaraka? Why have you delayed, dear friend? Keep your own promise as protector of the lowly. Do not stop to weigh my sins and merits. Your very title is Purifier of the Fallen; by that name you have lifted up countless sinners across all creation. Says Tukayabandhu: as you ran to Draupadi's cry, come to me now.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a cry of longing addressed to Krishna, the King of Dwaraka. The speaker scolds him gently for taking so long and presses him to live up to his own titles rather than judge the petitioner. The argument is built on the Lord's reputation: he is called Purifier of the Fallen, and that name has already saved sinners beyond counting, so to refuse now would betray his own promise. The plea ends on the remembered rescue of Draupadi, when Krishna rushed to cover her in her moment of shame; the speaker asks for exactly that swiftness turned toward himself. The signature here is Tukayabandhu, Tuka's brother, in whose voice this verse is given.

GATHA 1611

Longing and Separation

Longing, the Lord who will not come

मराठी मूळ

कोठें गुंतलासी कोणांच्या धांवया । आली देवराया निद्रा तुज ॥1॥
 कोठें गुंतलासी भक्तिप्रेमसुखें । न सुटेती मुखें गोपिकांचीं ॥ध्रु॥
 काय पडिलें तुज कोणाचें संकट । दुरी पंथ वाट न चालवे ॥2॥
 काय माझे तुज गुण दोष दिसती । ह्मणोनि श्रीपती कोपलासी ॥3॥
 काय जालें सांग माझिया कपाळा । उरला जीव डोळां तुका ह्मणे ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Where are you caught up? Whose calls are you answering? Has sleep overtaken you, O Lord? Are you entangled in the love of your devotees, unable to free yourself from the gopis' embrace? Has someone else's crisis captured your attention? Is the road too long and difficult to walk? Do you see faults in me, and is that why you are angry, O Shripati? Says Tuka, tell me, what is written on my forehead? Only these eyes remain alive, waiting for you.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Where are you held? Whose cry are you running to? O Lord, has sleep taken you? Where are you held, lost in the sweetness of your devotees' love? You cannot pull your face from the gopis. Has someone else's trouble caught you? Is the road too long to walk? Do you see faults in me? Is that why you are angry, Shripati? Tell me, what is written on my forehead? Tuka says: only this much life is left, here in my eyes that wait.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is calling to a God who does not arrive, and he turns his own ache into a string of questions. He imagines every reason Vitthal might be delayed: sleep, the embrace of other lovers, someone else's crisis, a road too long, or anger at faults in Tukaram himself. Each guess is the longing trying to make sense of silence. The poem ends without an answer; the only thing left alive is the waiting eyes, and even they are nearly spent. He names the hardest part of devotion, that you can give everything and still be made to wait.

GATHA 1612

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the hollow preacher

मराठी मूळ

परस्त्रीतें ह्मणतां माता । चित्त लाजवितें चित्ता ॥१॥
 काय बोलोनियां तोंडें । मनामाजी कानकोंडें ॥२॥
 धर्मधारिष्टगोष्टी सांगे । उष्टा हाते नुडवी काग ॥३॥
 जें जें कर्म वसे अंगीं । तें तें आठवे प्रसंगीं ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One speaks of another man's wife as 'mother,' yet the chitta shames itself before the chitta. What is the use of mouthing such words when inwardly one cringes with embarrassment? He preaches virtue and righteousness, then with his leftover hand beckons the crow.

Whatever habit lives in the body, it rises to the surface at every occasion. Says Tuka, only the one who walks as he talks is truly priceless.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A man calls another's wife 'mother,' and inside, one mind shames the other. What use are such words from the mouth when the heart cringes in secret? He preaches duty and courage, then with his soiled hand beckons the crow. Whatever habit lives in the body rises up at every chance. Tuka says: only the one who walks as he talks is priceless.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is pointing at the gap between the pious word and the inward truth. A man may name his neighbor's wife 'mother,' but if his own mind is ashamed before itself, the word is empty; the same hand that gestures at virtue still reaches for what is unclean. His point is that conduct will not stay hidden: whatever is actually lodged in a person surfaces when the moment comes. The challenge lands on self-examination, not on a particular target. Only the one whose walk matches his talk is of any worth.

GATHA 1613

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, the cost of a lie

मराठी मूळ

असत्य वचन होतां सर्व जोडी । जरी लग्नघडी परउपकार ॥१॥
 जाईल पतना यासि संदेह नाही । साक्ष आहे कांहीं सांगतो ते ॥२॥
 वदविलें मुखें नारायणें धर्मा । अंगुष्ठ त्या कर्मासाठीं गेला ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याणे आतां सांभळा रे पुढें । अंतरिंचे कुडें देइल दुःख ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Even if a lie brings all kinds of gain, even if it serves another's good in the wedding-moment, it will lead to downfall; of this there is no doubt. Let me offer proof.

Narayana himself made Dharma speak an untruth, and for that deed Dharma lost his thumb. Says Tuka, listen further: the deceit hidden within will surely bring suffering.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Even if a lie brings every kind of gain, even if at the crucial moment it seems to help another, it leads to a fall. Of this there is no doubt. I will give you proof. Narayana himself made Dharma speak an untruth, and for that deed Dharma lost his thumb. Tuka says: take heed for what comes after. The crookedness hidden inside will give you pain.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is warning that a lie carries a hidden cost no benefit can cancel. Even when falsehood looks profitable, or seems to serve another's good at a pressing moment, it ends in downfall. He offers the widely known instance where Narayana caused even Dharma, righteousness itself, to speak an untruth, and Dharma paid by losing his thumb; if the very embodiment of right was not spared, no one is. The real injury, he says, is inward: the crookedness you carry hidden will eventually turn into your own suffering. The plea is to weigh the future, not the immediate gain.

GATHA 1614

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the man eaten by anger

मराठी मूळ

जळों त्याचें तोंड । ऐसी कां ते व्याली रांड ॥1॥
 सदा भोवयासी गांठी । क्रोध धडधडीत पोटी ॥ध्रु॥
 फोडिली गोंवरी। ऐसी दिसे तोंडावरी ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं । चित्ता समाधान कांहीं ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Cursed be that face; why did his mother bring forth such a one? His brows are always knotted in a frown; anger smolders ceaselessly in his belly. He looks as though he has broken out in a rash, his face covered with it.

Says Tuka, such a person's mind never knows even a moment of peace.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Cursed be that face. Why did his mother give birth to such a one? His brows are always knotted. Anger burns and crackles in his belly. He looks as if a rash has broken out all over his face. Tuka says: such a one's mind never finds any peace.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram draws the portrait of a person consumed by chronic anger. The knotted brows and the smoldering belly are not occasional moods; they are the man's settled state, and they show on his face like a rash he cannot hide. The harsh opening curse is aimed at the condition, the disfiguring grip of rage, not at calling for contempt of the person. The closing line names the real wound underneath the ugliness: a mind locked in anger never tastes a moment of rest. The poem is a mirror held up to what anger does to the one who carries it.

GATHA 1615

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the squandered human life

मराठी मूळ

तोंडें खाये फार । पादे बोचा करी मार ॥1॥
 एक ऐसे ते शाहाणे । आपुले अधीन तें नेणें ॥ध्रु॥
 कुले घालूनि उघडे। रागें पाहे लोकांकडे ॥2॥
 खेळे जुतकर्म । मग बोंबली जुलूम ॥3॥
 निजतां आला मोहो । वीतां ह्मणे मेला गोहो ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे त्यांनीं। मनुष्यपणा केली हानी ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He eats enormously, then kicks and punches in all directions. Such is the cleverness of some: they do not know what lies within their own power.

He locks himself in, then strips naked and glares at the world in rage. He plays gambling games and then cries out about injustice.

When he sleeps, desire overcomes him; when it passes, he wails as if someone has died. Says Tuka, such people have squandered the gift of being human.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He eats a great deal, then kicks and punches in every direction. Such is the wisdom of some: they do not know what is in their own power. He shuts himself in, strips bare, and glares at people in rage. He plays at gambling, then howls that he has been wronged. When he lies down, desire takes him; when it passes, he wails as if someone has died. Tuka says: such people have ruined the gift of being human.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lists the moves of a life run by appetite and impulse rather than self-command. The man gorges and then lashes out, lives in rage and shamelessness, gambles and then cries injustice, is ruled by desire and then by remorse, swinging from craving to wailing with no center of his own. The thread through every example is the line in the refrain: he does not know what lies within his own power. The criticism points at the pattern, the ungoverned self, and asks the listener to examine it. To live this way, Tukaram says, is to waste the rare chance that a human birth is.

GATHA 1616

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the single-pointed mind

मराठी मूळ

पतिव्रता नेणे आणिकांची स्तुती । सर्वभावे पति ध्यानीं मनीं ॥१॥
 तैसें माझे मन एकविध जालें । नावडे विठ्ठलेविण दुजें ॥२॥
 सूर्यविकासिनी नेघे चंद्रकळा । गाय ते कोकिळा वसंतेंसी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे बाळ मातेपुढें नाचे । बोल आणिकांचे नावडती ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A faithful wife knows no praise but her husband's; with her whole being she keeps him in her thoughts and meditation. Just so, my mind has become single-pointed; it finds nothing desirable apart from Vitthal.

The sun-lotus does not open to moonlight; the cuckoo sings only for the spring. Says Tuka, a child dances before its mother and does not care for the words of strangers.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A faithful wife knows no praise but her husband's; with her whole being she holds him in thought and meditation. So my mind has become one-pointed. It wants nothing apart from Vitthal. The sun-lotus does not open to the moon's light; the cuckoo sings only for the spring. Tuka says: a child dances before its mother and does not care for the words of strangers.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a mind that has narrowed to a single object of love. He reaches for natural and human likenesses: the devoted wife who has eyes for no one but her husband, the sun-lotus that opens to the sun and not the moon, the cuckoo that sings only in spring, the child that dances for its mother and ignores everyone else. Each image is something whose response is fixed and faithful by its very nature. In the same way his mind now finds nothing else desirable; only Vitthal draws it. Devotion here is not effortful restraint but a love so settled that no rival even appeals.

GATHA 1617

Social Criticism

Social criticism, learning without sight

मराठी मूळ

पंडित ह्यणतां थोर सुख । परि तो पाहातां अवघा मूर्ख ॥1॥
 काय करावें घोकिलें । वेदपठण वायां गेलें ॥ध्रु॥
 वेदीं सांगितलें तें न करी । सम ब्रह्म नेणे दुराचारी ॥2॥
 तुका देखे जीवीं शिव । हा तेथींचा अनुभव ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Being called a pandit gives one great satisfaction, yet look closely and you find him a complete fool. What good is all that memorized learning? His recitation of the Vedas has gone entirely to waste.

He does not practice what the Vedas teach; the wicked one does not see the equality of Brahman. Says Tuka, one who sees Shiva in every living being has true experience of that reality.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To be called a pandit brings great pleasure, but look closely and the man is a complete fool. What use is all that he has memorized? His recitation of the Vedas has gone to waste. He does not do what the Vedas say. The wrongdoer does not know that Brahman is the same in all. Tuka says: one who sees Shiva in every living being, that is true experience.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram separates the title 'pandit' from real knowing. A man may relish being called learned and may recite the Vedas perfectly, yet if he does not live by what they teach, the learning is wasted. The crucial thing the Vedas point to, he says, is the sameness of Brahman in everything, and the man of bad conduct precisely fails to see it. The poem moves the measure of wisdom from memory to vision and practice. Real knowledge is to see Shiva, the divine, in every living being; that seeing, not recitation, is what Tukaram calls genuine experience.

GATHA 1618

True Worship

True worship, the pandit who sees God in all

मराठी मूळ

पंडित तो चि एक भला । नित्य भजे जो विठ्ठला ॥१॥
 अवघें सम ब्रह्म पाहे । सर्वा भूतीं विठ्ठल आहे ॥२॥
 रिता नाही कोणी ठाव । सर्वा भूतीं वासुदेव ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तो चि दास । त्यां देखिल्या जाती दोष ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The only pandit truly worthy of praise is the one who worships Vitthal daily. He sees all as equal Brahman, recognizing Vitthal present in every creature.

No place is empty of the divine; Vasudeva dwells in all beings. Says Tuka, that one alone is a true servant of God; in whose sight all sins are dissolved.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The only pandit worth the name is the one who worships Vitthal every day. He sees everything as the same Brahman; Vitthal is present in every creature. No place is empty of him; Vasudeva dwells in all beings. Tuka says: that one alone is a true servant. To look on him, your sins fall away.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the answer to the false pandit of the previous poem: Tukaram redefines who deserves the title. The true learned one is not the reciter but the one who worships Vitthal daily and, through that worship, comes to see the same Brahman everywhere, Vitthal and Vasudeva present in every being and in every place. Knowledge here is inseparable from devotion and from a transformed way of seeing the world. Such a person, he says, is the only real servant of God. So sanctified is that seeing that merely beholding such a one undoes the sins of those who look.

GATHA 1619

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, do not flatter mortals

मराठी मूळ

ऐका पंडितजन । तुमचे वंदितों चरण ॥१॥
 नका करुं नरस्तुति । माझी परिसा हे विनंती ॥२॥
 अन्न आच्छादन । हें तों प्रारब्धा अधीन ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे वाणी । सुखें वेचा नारायणीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Listen, O learned ones, I bow at your feet. Do not engage in the praise of mere mortals; hear my humble request.

Food and clothing are governed by destiny. Says Tuka, spend your precious speech joyfully in the service of Narayana.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Listen, learned ones, I bow at your feet. Do not sing the praises of mere men. Hear this request of mine. Food and clothing rest in the hands of destiny. Tuka says: spend your speech gladly on Narayana.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram addresses the scholars with respect and then asks one thing of them: do not waste their gift of speech flattering powerful men. His reason is plain and freeing: food and clothing, the things people court patrons to secure, are already settled by destiny, so praising mortals buys nothing real. The voice and learning that could be poured out on patrons should instead be spent, gladly, on Narayana. He is redirecting the same energy of praise from a worthless object to a worthy one. The bow at the start keeps the correction humble, an appeal rather than an attack.

GATHA 1620

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the Name in everything

मराठी मूळ

विठ्ठल टाळ विठ्ठल दिंडी । विठ्ठल तोंडीं उच्चार ।।१।।

विठ्ठल अवघ्या भांडवला । विठ्ठल बोला विठ्ठल ।।२।।

विठ्ठल नाद विठ्ठल भेद । विठ्ठल छंद विठ्ठल ।।३।।

विठ्ठल सुखा विठ्ठल दुःखा । तुकया मुखा विठ्ठल ।।४।।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Vitthal is the cymbal, Vitthal is the procession, Vitthal is the word upon every tongue. Vitthal is the entire capital, Vitthal the speech, Vitthal everything.

Vitthal is the sound, Vitthal is the distinction, Vitthal is the passion, Vitthal is all. Vitthal in joy, Vitthal in sorrow; Says Tuka, Vitthal alone fills the mouth.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Vitthal is the cymbal, Vitthal is the procession. Say Vitthal with your mouth. Vitthal is the whole fortune. Speak Vitthal, Vitthal. Vitthal is the sound, Vitthal is the difference, Vitthal is the delight, Vitthal. Vitthal in joy, Vitthal in sorrow. Tuka says: Vitthal alone fills my mouth.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lets one name flood every category of his life until nothing is left outside it. The instruments and the kirtan procession, his whole wealth, sound itself, every distinction, every delight, his joy and his sorrow alike, all of it is named Vitthal. The relentless repetition is the point: the mind that holds the Name has no room for anything else, and the word becomes the only thing on his tongue. There is no argument here, only saturation. This is devotion as total absorption, where the Name has quietly replaced the world.

GATHA 1621

Longing and Separation

Longing, only the sight is asked

मराठी मूळ

काय तुझें वेचे मज भेटी देतां । वचन बोलतां एक दोन ॥१॥
 काय तुझें रूप घेतों मी चोरोनि । त्या भेणें लपोनि राहिलासी ॥२॥
 काय तुझें आह्वां करावें वैकुंठ । भेवों नको भेट आतां मज ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुझी नलगे दसोडी । परि आहे आवडी दर्शनाची ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What does it cost you to grant me an audience? What expense is there in speaking a word or two? Am I stealing your form, that you hide from me in fear? Must you give me Vaikuntha itself? Do not be afraid; simply meet me now. Says Tuka, I do not need your full estate; I only long for the sight of you.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What does it cost you to meet me? What expense in speaking a word or two? Am I stealing your form, that you hide from me in fear? Must you give me Vaikuntha itself? Do not be afraid. Just meet me now. Tuka says: I do not want your whole estate; I only love the sight of you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pleads for the one thing he wants and insists how small a thing it is. He presses the point with almost teasing questions: meeting him costs nothing, a word or two costs nothing, and he is not trying to steal God's form or extract Vaikuntha, heaven itself. So why hide as if there were something to fear or lose? He strips his desire down to its barest form. He is not after God's gifts or estate; he asks only for darshan, the sight of the Lord. The longing is purified to the point where the meeting alone is the whole prize.

GATHA 1622

The Saints

The saints, slandering them is hell

मराठी मूळ

संतनिंदा ज्याचे घरीं । नव्हे घर ते यमपुरी ॥१॥
 त्याच्या पापा नाहीं जोडा । संगें जना होय पीडा ॥२॥
 संतनिंदा आवडे ज्यासी । तो जिता चि नर्कवासी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तो नष्ट । जाणा गाढव तो स्पष्ट ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A house where saints are slandered is not a home but the city of Yama. There is no match for the sin of such a person; even bystanders suffer from association.

Whoever takes pleasure in slandering saints is already living in hell while still alive. Says Tuka, know plainly that such a wretch is nothing but a donkey.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A house where saints are slandered is not a home but the city of Yama. There is no match for that one's sin; even those nearby suffer from his company. Whoever loves to slander saints is living in hell while still alive. Tuka says: know plainly that such a wretch is just a donkey.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram puts the slander of saints among the gravest of acts and names its stakes without softening them. A household where the saints are abused has already become the city of death; the sin is beyond comparison, and its harm spreads even to those who merely keep such company. He is not describing a punishment in some other world only: the one who delights in slandering the holy is, he says, already in hell while alive, because that contempt is itself a hellish state of mind. The blunt closing insult is aimed at the pattern of scorn, urging the listener to recoil from that impulse in himself rather than simply to despise the man.

GATHA 1623

The Nature of God

God's will is final, surrender

मराठी मूळ

आलें देवाच्या मना । तेथें कोणाचें चालेना ॥१॥
हरिश्चंद्र ताराराणी । वाहे डोंबा घरीं पाणी ॥२॥
पांडवांचा साहाकारी । राज्यावरोनि केले दुरी ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे उगेचि राहा । होईल तें सहज पाहा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When God has made up his mind, no one can change it. Harishchandra, king of kings, was made to carry water in the house of a low-caste man.

The very one who aided the Pandavas later removed them from their kingdom. Says Tuka, remain quiet and let things unfold naturally; whatever is meant to happen will happen on its own.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When it comes into God's mind, no one's plan goes through. Harishchandra, a king of kings, carried water in a low man's house. The same one who helped the Pandavas later took them far from their kingdom. Tuka says: just stay quiet. Watch; what is to be will be, on its own.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming the limit of human control. He gives two famous turns of fortune: the truthful king Harishchandra reduced to fetching water in a low man's house, and the Pandavas, whom God himself aided, later stripped of their kingdom. The point is not that God is cruel but that the deciding will is his, not ours. So the counsel is to drop the straining and the scheming. Stay still and watch; what is meant to happen will happen by itself.

GATHA 1624

The Nature of God

The Name, God runs to kirtan

मराठी मूळ

निजल्यानें गातां उभा नारायण । बैसल्या कीर्तन करितां डोले ॥१॥
 उभा राहोनियां मुखीं नाम वदे । नाचे नाना छंदें गोविंद हा ॥२॥
 मारगीं चालतां मुखीं नाम वाणी । उभा चक्रपाणी मार्गे पुढें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे यासी कीर्तनाची गोडी । प्रेमे घाली उडी नामासाठीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When a sleeping devotee sings, Narayana stands up to listen. When a seated devotee does kirtan, Govinda sways along.

When one walks the road chanting his name, the bearer of the disc walks before and behind. Says Tuka, God has such a love for kirtan that he leaps with joy at the sound of his own name.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When a devotee sings lying down, Narayana stands up to hear. When one sings seated in kirtan, Govinda sways along. When one walks the road with the Name in the mouth, the bearer of the disc walks ahead and behind. Tuka says: he has such a taste for kirtan that he leaps for love at the sound of his own Name.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is saying that God is not the distant lord who must be coaxed; he is the one who comes running to his singers. He paints it in plain postures: the devotee lying down, seated, walking, and at each one God answers, standing to listen, swaying along, guarding the road in front and behind. The Name is the thread that pulls him close. The last line names the stakes: God himself loves kirtan, and leaps for the joy of hearing his own Name sung.

GATHA 1625

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the universe in one mouthful

मराठी मूळ

काम क्रोध आह्मी वाहिले विठ्ठलीं । आवडी धरिली पायांसवें ॥१॥
 आतां कोण पाहे मार्गे परतोनि । गेले हारपोनि देहभाव ॥२॥
 रिद्धिसिद्धी सुखें हाणितल्या लाता । तेथें या प्राकृता कोण मानी ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे आम्ही विठोबाचे दास । करुनि ठेलों ग्रास ब्रह्मांडाचा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have surrendered lust and anger to Vitthal and fixed my love upon his feet. Now who would look back? All sense of the body has vanished.

Spiritual powers and pleasures have been kicked aside; who then would care for these worldly things? Says Tuka, we are Vithoba's servants; we have swallowed the entire universe in one mouthful.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have laid lust and anger at Vitthal's feet, and fixed my love on those feet. Now who turns back to look? All sense of the body is gone. I have kicked away powers and perfections for joy; who then cares for these common things? Tuka says: we are Vithoba's servants; we have swallowed the whole universe in one mouthful.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing what total surrender does to a person. He hands over even lust and anger, the two strongest drives, to Vitthal's feet, and once his love is fixed there, the pull of the body simply dies. Then he refuses the rewards a yogi might prize: the spiritual powers and perfections are kicked aside as worthless next to the joy of the feet. The final claim is deliberately huge: the servant of God, having nothing of his own, has in that very emptiness taken in the whole universe at one swallow. To own nothing for oneself is to be larger than everything.

GATHA 1626

Devotion to Vitthal

Pandhari, pride melts

मराठी मूळ

उठाउठीं अभिमान । जाय ऐसें स्थळ कोण ॥१॥
 तें या पंढरीस घडे । खळां पाझर रोकडे ॥२॥
 अश्रूचिया धारा । कोठें रोमांच शरीरा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने काला । कोठें अभेद देखिला ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Where does pride vanish instantly the moment one arrives? That happens at Pandhari, where even the hardened break down visibly. Streams of tears flow, and the hair rises on the body.

Says Tuka, where else has such complete oneness been witnessed, even among the darkest of beings?

IN PLAIN WORDS

Where does pride leave a man the moment he arrives? Where is the place that does this? It happens at this Pandhari, where even hard hearts visibly break and weep. Streams of tears, hair standing up on the body. Tuka says: where else has such oneness, with no division left, ever been seen?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is asking what other place on earth can dissolve a man's pride the instant he sets foot there. His answer is Pandhari, the town of Vitthal. He points to the plain bodily signs: even the hardened weep openly, tears stream, the hair rises with feeling. These are not performances; they are pride giving way. The closing line names the wonder: nowhere else has he seen such complete oneness, where the divisions between souls simply fall away.

GATHA 1627

The Power of the Name

The Name, Vaikuntha on earth

मराठी मूळ

पंढरी पंढरी । ह्यणतां पापाची बोहोरी ॥१॥
 धन्य धन्य जर्गी ठाव । होतो नामाचा उत्साव ॥२॥
 रिद्धिसिद्धी लोटांगणीं । प्रेमसुखाचिया खाणी ॥३॥
 अधिक अक्षरानें एका । भूवैकुंठ ह्यणे तुका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Simply by saying 'Pandhari, Pandhari,' all sin is washed away. Blessed, blessed is this place in the world where the festival of the Name resounds.

Spiritual powers and perfections bow down here, for this is the mine of the joy of love. Says Tuka, by one syllable more it surpasses even heaven; this is Vaikuntha on earth.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Just saying 'Pandhari, Pandhari' sweeps sin away. Blessed, blessed is this place in the world, where the festival of the Name goes on. Powers and perfections lie face down here; this is the mine of love's joy. Tuka says: by one syllable more it passes even heaven. This is Vaikuntha on earth.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praising the very name of the place, Pandhari, saying that to utter it is already to be washed of sin. He calls the town blessed because the Name of God is kept up there like a constant festival. The spiritual powers that elsewhere are prized lie prostrate here, because what this place holds is greater: it is the mine where the joy of love is dug up. His final claim is bold. Pandhari does not merely equal Vaikuntha, the heaven of Vishnu; by a hair it surpasses it, for this is heaven made present on the earth.

GATHA 1628

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, lay your burden on God

मराठी मूळ

भार घालीं देवा । न लगे देश डोई घ्यावा ॥१॥
 देह प्रारब्धा अधीन । सोसें अधिक वाढे सीण ॥२॥
 व्यवसाय निमित्त । फळ देतसे संचित ॥३॥
 तुका ह्यणे फिरे । भोंवडीनें दम जिरे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Place your burden upon God; there is no need to carry the load on your own head. The body is subject to destiny; straining against it only increases suffering.

Effort is merely the occasion; it is accumulated karma that yields the fruit. Says Tuka, wandering in circles only exhausts your breath.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Lay your burden on God. You need not carry the load on your own head. The body is bound to its destiny; struggling against it only swells the pain. Effort is just the occasion; it is stored karma that gives the fruit. Tuka says: spinning in circles only burns up your breath.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is counseling release from the strain of self-reliance. He tells you to set your burden on God rather than balance it on your own head, because the body lives under its destiny and fighting that destiny only multiplies the suffering. He is not denying effort; he calls it the occasion, the outward act. But the fruit comes from accumulated karma, not from the straining itself. The closing image is sharp: to whirl about in anxious activity is to wear out your own breath for nothing.

GATHA 1629

Worldly Life

Worldly life, service and the inner dive

मराठी मूळ

भोग भोगावरी द्यावा । संचिताचा करुनी ठेवा ॥१॥
 शांती धरणें जिवासाठीं । दशा उत्तम गोमटी ॥२॥
 देह लेखावें असार । सत्य परउपकार ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे हे मिरासी । बुडी द्यावी ब्रह्मरसी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let one experience follow another, spending the store of past actions. Hold patience for the sake of the jiva; that is the highest and noblest condition.

Regard the body as perishable, and hold service to others as the only truth. Says Tuka, this is the true inheritance: to dive deep into the nectar of Brahman.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let one experience follow another; spend down the store of past deeds. Hold peace for the soul's sake; that is the best and finest state. Count the body as worthless; hold service to others as the only truth. Tuka says: this is the true inheritance, to dive deep into the nectar of Brahman.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is laying out how to live through a life that is already shaped by past karma. Let the experiences come and go, he says, and let them burn off the store of old deeds rather than fighting them. The finest condition is to keep inner peace for the soul's sake. He sets the body at near zero worth and puts service to others as the one real truth to hold to. Then he names what is truly yours to inherit: not property or status, but the plunge into the nectar of Brahman, the union beneath all the passing experiences.

GATHA 1630

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, warriors of Vitthal

मराठी मूळ

येथें बोलोनियां काय । व्हावा गुरु तरि जाय ॥1॥
 मज न साहे वांकडें । ये विठ्ठलकथेपुढें ॥ध्रु॥
 ऐकोनि मरसी कथा । जंव आहेसि तुं जीता ॥2॥
 हुमतीची चाड । तेणें न करावी बडबड ॥3॥
 पुसेल कोणी त्यास । जा रे करीं उपदेश ॥4॥
 आह्मी विठ्ठलाचे वीर । फोडूं किळकाळाचें शीर ॥5॥
 घेऊं पुढती जन्म । वाणूं कीर्त मुखें नाम ॥6॥
 तुका ह्मणे मुक्ती । नाहीं आस चि ये चित्ती ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why speak so much here? If you want to be a guru, then go and be one. I cannot tolerate anything crooked before this sacred story of Vitthal.

Listen to the discourse and die to yourself while you are still alive. If you care about your reputation, do not make a spectacle with empty babble.

If someone asks you, go and instruct them. We are warriors of Vitthal; we will crush the head of Death himself.

We will take birth again and again, singing his name and spreading his fame. Says Tuka, there is not even a trace of desire for liberation in my chitta.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why all this talk here? If you want to be a guru, then go off and be one. I cannot bear anything crooked before this story of Vitthal. Hear the discourse, and die to yourself while you are still alive. If you care for your good name, do not make a spectacle with empty babble. If someone asks you, go and instruct them. We are warriors of Vitthal; we will split the head of Death itself. We will take birth again and again, singing his fame, the Name in our mouths. Tuka says: in my heart there is not even a trace of longing for release.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is driving out posturing from the kirtan hall. He has no patience for anything crooked set before Vitthal's story, and tells the would-be teacher to take his ambition elsewhere. The real instruction is to die to the self while still alive, to listen so deeply that the ego goes; empty chatter only shames the one who wants a reputation. Then he sounds the war cry: the devotees are Vitthal's soldiers who will break the head of Death himself. The most radical claim is last, and he does not thin it. He does not even want liberation; he asks instead to be born again and again, only to keep singing the Name.

GATHA 1631

*The Necessity of Experience**Experience, the unstruck sound and the cooled heart*

मराठी मूळ

आनुहातीं गुंतला नेणे बाहए रंग । वित्त येतां मग बळ लागे ॥१॥
 मदें माते तया नाहीं देहभाव । आपुले आवेव आवरितां ॥२॥
 आणिकांची वाणी वेद तेणें मुखें । उपचारदुःखें नाठवती ॥३॥
 तें सुख बोलतां आश्चर्य या जना । विपरीत मना भासतसे ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे बाहए रंग तो विठ्ठल । अंतर निवालें ब्रह्मरसें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who is absorbed in the inner, unstruck sound does not notice the outer spectacle. When awareness returns, strength surges forth.

The one intoxicated with that ecstasy has no body-consciousness; they cannot contain their own rapture. The words from such a mouth are the Vedas themselves; bodily discomforts are entirely forgotten.

When such a one speaks of that bliss, it strikes the world as astonishing, even bewildering to the ordinary mind. Says Tuka, the outer spectacle is Vitthal himself, and the interior is cooled by the nectar of Brahman.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Lost in the inner unstruck sound, he does not see the outer show; when awareness returns, then strength comes. Drunk on that joy, he has no sense of the body; he cannot hold in his own rapture. The words from such a mouth are the Vedas themselves; the pains of the body are not remembered. When he speaks of that joy it strikes people as strange, and seems upside down to the ordinary mind. Tuka says: the outer show too is Vitthal, and within, the heart is cooled by the nectar of Brahman.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is reporting from inside a state of absorption. When the mind sinks into the anahata, the inner unstruck sound, the outer world drops away, and only when awareness comes back does the body have strength again. In that intoxication there is no body-sense, and the joy overflows past holding; whatever such a person says carries the weight of scripture, and bodily pain is forgotten. He warns that this looks bewildering, even backwards, to the ordinary mind, which has no measure for it. The closing resolves the split: the outer spectacle is also Vitthal, while inwardly the heart is cooled and stilled by the nectar of Brahman. Inside and outside are one God.

GATHA 1632

*The Necessity of Experience**Experience, dust at the saints' feet*

मराठी मूळ

ब्रह्मरसगोडी तयांसी फावली । वासना निमाली सकळ ज्यांची ॥१॥
 नाहीं त्या विटाळ अखंड सोंवळीं । उपाधीवेगळीं जाणिवेच्या ॥२॥
 मन हें निश्चळ जालें एके ठायीं । तयां उणें काई निजसुखा ॥३॥
 तीं चि पुण्यवंतें परउपकारी । प्रबोधी त्या नारीनरलोकां ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे त्यांचे पायीं पायपोस । होऊनियां वास करिन तेथें ॥ ४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The sweetness of the nectar of Brahman has been tasted by those whose every desire has been extinguished. They carry no impurity and remain perpetually pure, free from the stain of self-importance.

Their mind has become perfectly still in one place; what could be lacking in their self-bliss? Those blessed ones serve others selflessly, awakening both men and women in this world. Says Tuka, I will become the dust at their feet and dwell there always.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The sweetness of Brahman's nectar has come to those whose every craving has died. No impurity touches them; they stay always pure, free of the stain of self-importance. Their mind has gone still in one place; what could their own bliss lack? Those blessed ones serve others freely, waking up both women and men in this world. Tuka says: I will become the sandals at their feet and live there.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing the marks of one who has truly tasted God. The taste comes only where every craving has burned out, and such a person stays unstained, free even of the subtle pride of being holy. Their mind has come to rest in one place, so their own bliss lacks nothing. But he stresses that they do not keep it to themselves: the blessed serve others without motive and wake up everyone around them, women and men alike. The closing line is his own posture before them. He does not claim their rank; he asks only to become the very sandals at their feet and to dwell there, lower than the lowest.

GATHA 1633

*Surrender and Acceptance**Surrender, the mother knows the need*

मराठी मूळ

जैसें तैसें राहे देवाचें हें देणें । यत्न करितां तेणें काय नव्हे ॥१॥
 दासां कृपासिंधु नुपेक्षी सर्वथा । अंतरींची व्यथा कळे त्यासी ॥२॥
 मागों नेणे परी माय जाणे वर्म । बाळा नेदी श्रम पावों कांहीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मज अनुभव अंगें । वचन वाउगें मानेना हें ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Whatever God gives, let it remain as it is; no effort of your own can surpass it. The ocean of mercy never neglects his servants; he knows the suffering hidden within.

The child does not know how to ask, but the mother knows the need and never allows the child to suffer. Says Tuka, I speak from my own experience; these are not hollow words.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whatever God gives, let it stay as it is; your own effort can make nothing better. The ocean of mercy never neglects his servants; he knows the pain hidden inside. The child does not know how to ask, but the mother knows the secret and never lets the child come to harm. Tuka says: this is my own experience in the body; these are no hollow words.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is making the case for resting in God's giving rather than improving on it by force. Nothing your own effort produces can surpass what God provides, because he is an ocean of mercy who never abandons his servants and already knows the pain you carry inside. The image he trusts is the mother and infant: the baby cannot even name what it wants, yet the mother knows and sees that it never suffers want. He closes by staking his own credibility on it. This is not a saying he repeats; it is what he has lived in his own body, so the words are not empty.

GATHA 1634

Faith and Trust

Faith, no fear in the three worlds

मराठी मूळ

आह्मां हरिच्या दासां कांहीं । भय नाहीं त्रैलोकीं ॥१॥
 देव उभा मार्गे-पुढें । उगवी कोडें संकट ॥२॥
 जैसा केला तैसा होय। धांवे सोय धरोनि ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे असों सुखें । गाऊं मुखें विठोबा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We who are servants of Hari have no fear in all the three worlds. God stands before us and behind us, unraveling every difficulty.

However one calls upon him, so he becomes; he runs along the path the devotee has chosen. Says Tuka, let us live in ease and sing of Vithoba with our mouths.

IN PLAIN WORDS

For us who are Hari's servants, there is no fear in all the three worlds. God stands behind us and before us, and untangles every trouble. However you make him, so he becomes; he runs along the path you choose. Tuka says: let us live in ease and sing of Vithoba with our mouths.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming the freedom from fear that comes with belonging to God. The servant of Hari has nothing to dread across the three worlds, because God himself stands guard before and behind, loosening every knot of difficulty. He states a tender truth about devotion: God takes the shape the devotee gives him and comes running along whatever path the devotee has chosen, meeting each person as they reach for him. So the conclusion is simple ease. Live without anxiety, and keep the mouth busy singing Vithoba.

GATHA 1635

The Moral Ideal

Moral warning, the tightening noose

मराठी मूळ

परद्रव्यपरनारीचा अभिळास । तेथूनि हारास सर्वभाग्या ॥१॥
 घटिका दिवस मास वरुषें लागेतीन । बांधलें पतन गांठोडीस ॥२॥
 पुढें घात त्याचा रोकडा शकुन । पुढें करी गुण निश्चयेंसी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे एकां तडतांथवड । काळ लागे नाड परी खरा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Craving another's wealth or another's spouse is the beginning of ruin for all one's fortune. Hour by hour, day by day, month by month, year by year, the knot of downfall is being tied tighter.

The ill omen of future destruction is plain to see; these very qualities guarantee the outcome. Says Tuka, for some the reckoning takes a while, but Death's noose, though slow, is certain.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To crave another's wealth or another's spouse is the start of ruin. From there, all your good fortune is lost. Hour by hour, day by day, month by month, year by year, the knot of your downfall is tied tighter. The sign of the destruction ahead is plain to see. These very habits make the end certain. Tuka says: for some the reckoning takes a long time. Death's noose is slow, but it is real.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram names two cravings, for what is not yours to own and for who is not yours to touch, and traces where they lead. He is not predicting bad luck; he is describing how a habit accumulates. Each day the want is fed, the knot of one's own undoing is pulled a little tighter, until the outcome is no longer in question. The slowness is the deception: because Death's noose does not fall at once, a person mistakes delay for safety. Tukaram's point is to read the early signs in oneself, while there is still slack in the rope.

GATHA 1636

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, accept your lot

मराठी मूळ

समर्थाचें केलें । कोणां जाईल मोडिलें ॥1॥
 वांयां करावी ते उरे । खटपटें सोस पुरे ॥ध्रु॥
 ठेविला जो ठेवा । आपुलाला तैसा खावा ॥2॥
 ज्याचें त्याचें हातीं । भुके तयाची फजिती ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे कोटी । बाळे जाले शूळ पोटी ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What the Capable One has done, who can undo? Whatever is done in vain only adds to futile struggle. The treasure that has been stored, each one must consume according to their own lot.

What belongs to each is in each one's hands; the hungry bring disgrace only upon themselves. Says Tuka, millions of schemes have become thorns in the belly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What the Capable One has done, who can undo? Whatever you do against it is wasted; the struggle only wears you out. The portion that has been stored for you, that is the portion you eat. What belongs to each is in each one's own hands. The hungry one who reaches for more only brings disgrace on himself. Tuka says: millions of schemes have turned into thorns in the belly.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is teaching contentment by pointing at limits we did not set. He calls God the Capable One, the one whose arrangement no effort can reverse, so fighting your allotted portion is wasted strength. Each person eats from what is stored for them; grasping after another's share does not enlarge your own, it only shames you. The closing image is sharp: the countless plans hatched to get more do not feed you, they sit in the belly like thorns. The cure he points to is not laziness but the peace of taking what is given and stopping there.

GATHA 1637

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the inherited claim

मराठी मूळ

हे माझी मिराशी । ठाव तुझ्या पायांपाशीं ॥1॥
 याचा धरीन अभिमान । करीन आपुलें जतन ॥ध्रु॥
 देऊनियां जीव । बळी साधिला हा ठाव ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा । जुन्हाट हे माझी सेवा ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This is my inheritance: a place at your feet. I will guard this claim with pride and protect it with my life.

I gave my very life to secure this spot. Says Tuka, O God, this service of yours is my ancient, rightful possession.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This is my inheritance: a place at your feet. I will hold this claim with pride and guard it as my own. I gave my very life and so won this place. Tuka says: O God, this service of yours is my old, rightful possession.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks of devotion not as a favor begged but as a right he already holds. He calls the place at God's feet his inheritance, something passed down and his by birthright, and he means to defend it the way a man defends ancestral land. The price was not money but his own life, given over to secure the spot. By calling the service ancient, he claims a bond older than this lifetime. The whole tone is possessive in the best sense: he will not let anything dislodge him from the one place that is truly his.

GATHA 1638

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, ignorance as refuge

मराठी मूळ

नेणे गति काय कवण अधोगति । मानिली निश्चिती तुझ्या पायीं ॥१॥
 कर्म धर्म कोण नेणें हा उपाव । तुझ्या पायीं भाव ठेवियेला ॥२॥
 नेणें निरसं पाप पुण्य नेणें काय । ह्मणऊनि पाय धरिले तुझे ॥३॥
 वेडा मी अविचार न कळे विचार । तुज माझा भार पांडुरंगा ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुज करितां नव्हे काय । माझा तो उपाय कवण तेथें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I do not know the nature of salvation or what downfall means. I have placed my certainty at your feet.

I know neither dharma nor ritual, nor any method or device. I have simply fixed my devotion upon your feet.

I do not know detachment; I do not know sin or merit. That is precisely why I have held your feet, Panduranga.

I am foolish and without discernment; understanding escapes me. My burden is yours.

Says Tuka, is there anything you cannot do? What remedy could I possibly have apart from you?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I do not know the way up or what the way down is. I have set my certainty at your feet. I know no rite, no duty, no method. I have placed my trust on your feet alone. I do not know detachment; I do not know sin or merit. That is why I have held your feet, Panduranga. I am foolish, without judgment; understanding escapes me. My burden is yours. Tuka says: is there anything you cannot do? What remedy of my own could there be?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns his own ignorance into his argument for surrender. He does not know the paths of salvation or downfall, does not know ritual, detachment, sin, or merit; far from hiding this, he makes it the reason he clings to God's feet. If he could manage the way himself, he would not need to. By saying the burden is now God's, he hands over responsibility for an outcome he admits he cannot steer. The final question, is there anything you cannot do, places everything on God's capacity and nothing on his own technique.

GATHA 1639

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, holding God to his honor

मराठी मूळ

तुझा ह्मणऊनि जालों उतराई । त्याचें वर्म काई तें मी नेणें ॥1॥
 हातीं धरोनियां दावीं मज वाट । पुढें कोण नीट तें चि देवा ॥ध्रु॥
 देवभक्तपण करावें जतन । दोहीं पक्षीं जाण तूं चि बळी ॥2॥
 अभिमानें तुज लागली हे लाज । शरणागतां काज करावया ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे बहु नेणता मी फार । ह्मणऊनि विचार जाणविला ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

By calling myself yours, I became free of debt. The secret of how that works, I do not know.

Take me by the hand and show me the path; which way is right, only you know, O God. Protect the bond between God and devotee; on both sides of that bond, you alone are strong.

Your own honor compels you, for you are bound by the shame of caring for those who surrender. Says Tuka, I am utterly ignorant; that is exactly why I have laid these thoughts before you.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Because I called myself yours, I became free of debt. How that works, I do not know. Take me by the hand and show me the way. Which path is right ahead, only you know, O God. Guard the bond between God and devotee; on both sides of it, you alone are the strong one. Your own honor binds you to act for those who surrender. Tuka says: I am deeply ignorant, and that is exactly why I have laid these thoughts before you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses a quiet claim on God's reputation. Simply by naming himself God's own, he says his debts are cleared, though he cannot explain the mechanism. He asks to be led by the hand because he cannot see the right road, and then reminds God that the very bond between the Lord and the one who takes refuge is God's to protect. The pointed line is about honor: a God who is known as the rescuer of those who surrender would be shamed if he failed even one of them. So Tukaram offers his ignorance openly, trusting that God's own good name is now on the line.

GATHA 1640

The Nature of God

The tenderness of God, the mother who follows

मराठी मूळ

मारगीं चालतां पाउलापाउलीं । चिंतावी माउली पांडुरंग ॥१॥
 सर्व सुख लागे घेउनिया पाठी । आवडींचा कंठीं रस ओती ॥२॥
 पीतांबरें छाया करी लोभापर । पाहे तें उत्तर आवडीचें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे हें चि करावें जीवन । वाचे नारायण तान भूक ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Walking along the road, at every step, Panduranga the mother thinks of his devotee. All happiness follows behind, pouring the nectar of love into the throat.

He shades the devotee with his yellow silken cloth, tenderly, looking only for a word of love in return. Says Tuka, make this your sustenance: let the name of Narayana on your tongue be your food and drink.

IN PLAIN WORDS

As you walk along the road, at every step, let mother Panduranga be in your thoughts. All happiness comes following behind you, pouring the nectar of love into your throat. He spreads his yellow silk to shade you, full of tenderness, asking only for a word of love in return. Tuka says: make this your living. Let the name of Narayana on your tongue be your hunger and your thirst.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures God not as a distant lord but as a mother walking beside the devotee, step by step. The image reverses ordinary religion: here happiness chases the devotee rather than the other way around, and God himself pours sweetness into the throat. The yellow silk held up for shade and the longing for one loving word show a God who tends rather than tests. The instruction at the end is practical: let the holy Name be your food and drink, the thing you live on, so that remembrance becomes as constant and as needed as hunger itself.

GATHA 1641

Prayers

Prayer, the heap of sins asks a place

मराठी मूळ

जालों आतां दास । माझे तोडोनियां पाश ॥१॥
 ठाव द्यावा पायांपाशीं । मी तो पातकांची राशी ॥२॥
 सकळ ही गोवा । माझा उगवूनि देवा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे भय । करा जवळी तें नये ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now that my bonds are cut, I have become a true servant. Grant me a place at your feet, though I am a heap of sins.

Untangle all my confusions, O God. Says Tuka, let nothing fearful come near.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now my bonds are cut; I have become your servant. Give me a place at your feet, though I am a heap of sins. Untangle all my confusions, O God. Tuka says: let nothing fearful come near.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a short prayer from one who claims nothing but his own neediness. Tukaram says his bonds are already cut, so he comes asking only for a place at the feet, and in the same breath admits he is a mound of accumulated sins. He does not minimize that; he sets it beside his request so the grace asked for is plainly undeserved. He wants his tangles undone by God's hand, not his own. The last line is the prayer of someone who knows he cannot protect himself: keep all that is fearful away from me.

GATHA 1642

Longing and Separation

Longing, the lover protests

मराठी मूळ

अंतरीचें जाणां । तरि कां येऊं दिलें मना ॥१॥
तुमची करावी म्यां सेवा । आतां अद्वेरितां देवा ॥२॥
नव्हती मोडामोडी । केली मार्गे ते चि घडी ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे दिला वाव । पायीं लागों दिला भाव ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If you knew what was within from the start, why did you let this longing enter my mind? I came to serve you; will you now cast me aside, O God? There is no undoing what was done in that first moment. Says Tuka, you gave me room and allowed devotion to take hold at your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You knew what was in my heart from the start. Then why did you let this longing into my mind? I came to serve you. Will you now turn me away, O God? There is no undoing what was already done in that first moment. Tuka says: you gave me the room, and you let devotion take hold at your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram complains the way a lover complains, holding God responsible for the very longing that now torments him. Since God knew his heart, the desire could not have entered without God's allowance, so rejection now would be unjust. He argues there is no taking back that first moment when love was kindled; the deed is done and cannot be reversed. The closing line nails the logic: it was God who made room and let devotion fasten itself to his feet. Having opened the door, God cannot fairly slam it now.

GATHA 1643

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, a plain plan for the days

मराठी मूळ

पवित्र होईन चरित्रउच्चारें । रूपाच्या आधारें गोजिरिया ॥१॥
 आपुरती बुद्ध पुण्य नाहीं गांठी । पायीं घालीं मिठी पाहें डोळां ॥२॥
 गाईन ओविया शिष्टांच्या आधारें । सारीन विचारें आयुष्या या ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुझें नाम नारायणा । ठेवीन मी मना आपुलिया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I shall become pure by reciting your beautiful story and resting upon the support of your lovely form. I have no wisdom or merit of my own; I simply embrace your feet and gaze at you with my eyes.

I will sing verses in the tradition of the noble ones, and spend this life in thoughtful reflection. Says Tuka, O Narayana, I will place your name within my own mind.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I will become pure by reciting your beautiful story, leaning on the support of your lovely form. I have no wisdom of my own, no store of merit. I simply throw my arms around your feet and gaze at you with my eyes. I will sing verses in the way of the noble ones and spend this life in steady reflection. Tuka says: O Narayana, I will keep your name within my own mind.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays out a simple program for a whole life, built on what he has rather than what he lacks. He owns no wisdom and no bank of merit, so his method is bodily and plain: recite the story, lean on the form, hold the feet, and look. He will sing in the manner handed down by the noble ones, making contemplation his daily occupation. The vow at the end is the quiet center of it all, to keep the Name lodged in his own mind. He turns purity from an achievement into a practice anyone can begin.

GATHA 1644

Prayers

Prayer, let the birth not be wasted

मराठी मूळ

काय ऐसा जन्म जावा वायांविण । कांहीं तरी ऋण असो माथां ॥१॥
 कोणे तरी काळें होईल आठव । नाहीं जरी भाव भार खरा ॥२॥
 शता एकातरी जन्माच्या शेवटीं । कृपाळुवा पोटीं होईल दया ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं फांकों तरी देत । सर्वांचें उचित सांपडलें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Should this birth pass entirely in vain? Let there be at least some debt of grace upon my head. At some point, at some hour, remembrance will come, even if true devotion has not yet taken root.

In one out of a hundred births, at the very end, may the compassionate Lord feel pity in his mind. Says Tuka, if he does not let me drift away, then the proper place for everyone will be found.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Should this birth pass entirely for nothing? Let there be at least some debt of grace on my head. At some hour, in some age, remembrance will come, even if true love has not taken root yet. In one birth out of a hundred, at its very end, may the merciful Lord feel pity inside. Tuka says: if he will not let me drift away, then the right place for everyone will be found.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays against a life amounting to nothing, and his hope is humble to the point of bargaining. He asks only that some claim of grace be marked on him, so that remembrance will surface eventually even if real devotion has not yet grown. He is willing to wait across many births, hoping that at the close of even one of them, mercy will stir in the Lord. The final line widens the prayer past himself: if God simply holds people from drifting off, each one will end up where they belong. It is the prayer of someone who trusts the long patience of grace more than his own progress.

GATHA 1645

Worldly Life

Worldly life, no day is truly empty

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं कोणी दिस जात वांयांविण । साध्य नाहीं सीण लटिका चि ॥१॥
एकाचिये माथां असावें निमित्त । नसो नाहीं हित कपाळीं तें ॥२॥
कांहीं एक तरी बोलायाचा जागा । नेदिती वाउगा उभा ठाकों ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे वर्मे कळों येती कांहीं । ओळखी जे नाहीं होईल ते ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Not a single day passes without purpose; even if nothing is achieved, the toil itself is not in vain. Something must rest upon someone's head as the appointed cause; if there is no good fortune written there, so be it.

At the very least, there is always an occasion for speech; they will not let you stand idle for nothing. Says Tuka, some signs of the pattern become clear; the recognition that has not yet come will surely come in time.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Not one day goes by without some purpose. Even when nothing is achieved, the labor itself is not wasted. Something must fall to someone's lot as the appointed cause. If no good fortune is written there, then let it be. At the very least there is always an occasion to speak. They will not let you stand around for nothing. Tuka says: some signs of the pattern do come clear. The recognition that has not yet come will surely come in time.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks at ordinary days that seem to produce nothing and refuses to call them empty. The toil still counts even when there is no visible result, because each circumstance falls to someone as its appointed cause. He accepts plainly that if fortune is not written for a given day, so be it; he does not force it. Yet life keeps offering openings, an occasion to speak, a reason to be drawn in, so no one is left idle for long. The closing assurance is patient: the underlying pattern reveals itself bit by bit, and the recognition still missing will arrive in its own time.

GATHA 1646

Longing and Separation

Longing, the servant's poverty shames God

मराठी मूळ

काय करील तें नव्हे विश्वंभर । सेवका दारिद्र लाज नाही ॥१॥
 मजपासूनि हें पडिलें अंतर । काय तो अद्वेष्ट करुं जाणे ॥२॥
 नामाच्या चिंतनें नासी गर्भवास । नेदी करुं आस आणिकांची ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नेणों किती वायां गेले । तयां उद्धरिलें पांडुरंगें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What is there that the sustainer of the world cannot do? Is he not ashamed that his own servant suffers in poverty? The distance has come from my side; how could he know how to neglect? By contemplating his name, even the torment of rebirth is destroyed; he never lets one place hope in any other. Says Tuka, I do not know how many were lost in vain, yet Panduranga dissolved them all.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What is there that the sustainer of the world cannot do? Is he not ashamed that his own servant lives in poverty? The distance between us came from my side. How would he know how to cast me off? By thinking on his name, even the torment of rebirth is destroyed; he lets you put your hope in no one else. Tuka says: I do not know how many were lost in vain, yet Panduranga lifted them all.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses God with a loving reproach. The one who sustains the whole world can surely do anything, so the servant's poverty reflects on the master, and Tukaram asks whether God is not ashamed of it. Then he turns honest: the gap was opened from his side, not God's, and a God like this does not even know how to abandon anyone. He points to the cure, dwelling on the Name, which dissolves the misery of rebirth and leaves no room to hope in any other. The closing testimony answers his own worry: countless others seemed lost beyond saving, and Panduranga raised every one of them.

GATHA 1647

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the empty rite

मराठी मूळ

संध्या करितोसी केशवाच्या नांवें । आरंभीं तें ठावें नाहीं कैसें ॥१॥
 किती या सांगावें करुनि फजित । खळ नेणे हित जवळीं तें ॥२॥
 माजल्या न कळे उचित तें काय । नेघावें तें खाय घ्यावें सांडी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने घेती भिंती सवें डोकें । वावसी तें एके अंधारलीं ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You perform your daily prayers in Keshava's name, yet you do not recognize him at the very start. How much must one say to expose the fool? The wicked one does not see the good that stands right before him.

The pampered one cannot discern what is proper; he eats what should not be taken and discards what should be received. Says Tuka, they bang their heads against the wall; their eyes have gone dark pursuing emptiness.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You say your evening prayers in Keshava's name. But at the very start you do not even know him; how can that be? How much must I say to shame the fool? The wicked one cannot see the good that stands right beside him. The puffed-up man does not know what is fitting. He eats what should be left, and he leaves what should be taken. Tuka says: they bang their heads against the wall. Some grope about, blind in the dark.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram attacks a religion done by name only. The man recites prayers in Keshava's name, yet he does not actually know the God those prayers are addressed to, so the whole rite is hollow at its root. The poem names the pattern of a hardened, self-pleased heart: it cannot recognize the good standing right next to it, and it gets every choice backward, keeping what should be dropped and dropping what should be kept. The closing images are blunt: such a life is heads banging a wall and hands groping in the dark. The sting points at the pattern of going through the motions, and it asks the listener to check whether his own worship knows the One it names.

GATHA 1648

The Moral Ideal

Moral counsel, guard the company you keep

मराठी मूळ

दुधाचे घागरी मद्याचा हा बुंद । पडिलिया शुद्ध नव्हे मग ॥१॥
 तैसे खळां मुखें न करावें श्रवण । अहंकारें मन विटाळलें ॥२॥
 काय करावीं तें बत्तीस लक्षणें । नाक नाहीं तेणें वांयां गेलीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने अन्न जिरों नेदी माशी । आपुलिया जैशी सवें श्वगों ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If a single drop of liquor falls into a pot of milk, the whole pot is spoiled beyond recovery. Likewise, do not listen from the mouths of the wicked; their minds are defiled by ego.

Of what use are all thirty-two auspicious marks when the nose is missing? Everything is ruined. Says Tuka, a single fly prevents the digestion of an entire meal, carrying its filth along with it.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One drop of liquor falls into a pot of milk, and the whole pot is no longer pure. In the same way, do not listen to teaching from the mouths of the wicked. Their minds are stained with pride. What use are the thirty-two auspicious marks if the nose is missing? They are all wasted. Tuka says: one fly will not let the food be digested, and it carries its own filth along with it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is warning about contamination through the company you keep and the words you take in. A single drop of liquor spoils a whole pot of milk, and one corrupting voice can spoil a clean mind, so he says do not take instruction from those whose minds are stained with ego. The image of the missing nose says that a single decisive flaw cancels every other virtue, however many. The fly that ruins a meal and carries its own filth names how a small inner corruption spreads and undoes the good. The point is self-examination about what and whom we let into the heart, not contempt for any particular person.

GATHA 1649

The Moral Ideal

Honesty, speak the truth in time

मराठी मूळ

सांगावें तें बरें असतें हें पोटी । दुःख देते खोटी बुद्धि मग ॥1॥
 आपला आपण करावा वेव्हार । जिंकोनि अंतर मन ग्वाही ॥ ध्रु.॥
 नाहीं मार्गे येत बोलिलें वचन । पावावा तो सीण बरा मग ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे बहु भ्यालों खटपटे । आतां देवा खोटे शब्द पुरे ॥3॥
 वाराणसीस यात्रा चालली तेव्हां स्वामींनीं भागीरथीस पत्र धाडिलें - ते अभंग ॥ 4 ॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What should be said must be said while it is still in the belly. A dishonest mind only produces suffering later.

One must deal honestly with oneself, with the inner witness of the mind as the true judge. Spoken words cannot be recalled; it is better to accept the consequences early.

Says Tuka, I have grown deeply wary of scheming. Enough now, O God, of false words.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What needs saying is better said while it is still in the belly. A crooked mind only brings suffering afterward. Deal honestly with your own self; conquer your inner self, with the mind as the witness. A spoken word does not come back. It is better to bear the trouble of it early. Tuka says: I have grown very weary of scheming. Enough now, O God, of false words.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is making the case for speaking the truth plainly and in time. Hold a word back and let a crooked mind work on it, and it only breeds suffering later, so it is better to say the needful thing while it still sits unspoken in you. He sets the inner self as both the one to be conquered and the witness who judges: honest dealing begins inside, with yourself. A word once spoken cannot be recalled, so it is wiser to bear the cost of plain speech early than to live with the rot of false words. The closing prayer is his own vow of weariness with all scheming.

GATHA 1650

Prayers

Prayer, an offering to the river-mother

मराठी मूळ

परिसैं वो माते माझी विनवणी । मस्तक चरणीं ठेवीतसैं ॥१॥
 भागीरथी महादोष निवारणी । सकळां स्वामिणी तीर्थाचिये ॥२॥
 जीतां भुक्ति मोक्ष मरणें तुझ्या तिरिं । अहिक्यपरत्री सुखरूप ॥३॥
 तुका विष्णुदास संतांचें पोसनें । वागपुष्प तेणें पाठविलें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Hear my humble prayer, O Mother. I place my head at your feet.

O Bhagirathi, remover of the greatest sins, queen of all sacred waters. In life you grant both worldly joy and liberation; dying upon your banks brings happiness here and hereafter.

Tuka, servant of Vishnu, nourished by the saints, sends this offering of words as a garland of flowers.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Hear my prayer, O Mother. I lay my head at your feet. O Bhagirathi, you wash away the greatest sins; you are the queen of all holy waters. While I live you give both worldly joy and release; to die on your bank is happiness here and hereafter. Tuka, servant of Vishnu, fed by the saints, sends this; he sends a garland of words.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a prayer to the river Ganga, called Bhagirathi, offered as Tukaram's pilgrimage moved toward Varanasi. He bows his head at her feet and praises her as the destroyer of even the greatest sins and the queen among all sacred waters. He names what she gives: enjoyment and liberation to the living, and to those who die on her bank, peace in this world and the next. He has no flowers to lay before her, so he calls his own poem the offering, a garland made of words, sent by one who lives as a servant of Vishnu and is sustained by the company of saints.

GATHA 1651

Prayers

Petition, the beggar at the feet

मराठी मूळ

तुह्मी विश्वनाथ । दीनरंक मी अनाथ ॥१॥
 कृपा कराल ते थोडी । पायां पडिलों बराडी ॥२॥
 काय उणें तुह्मांपाशीं । मी तों अल्पें चि संतोषी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा । कांहीं भातुकें पाठवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You are the Lord of the universe, and I am a poor, destitute orphan. I have fallen at your feet, crying out for just a little of your grace.

What could possibly be lacking in your treasury? I am content with even the smallest morsel. Says Tuka, O God, please send me some small gift.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You are the Lord of the universe. I am a poor wretch, an orphan. Even a little grace from you is much. I have fallen at your feet, begging. What could be lacking with you? And I am content with very little. Tuka says: O God, send me some small gift.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram stands as a beggar before Vishvanatha, the Lord of the universe, naming the whole distance between them. He has nothing and belongs to no one; the God he addresses owns everything. From such a giver even a small mercy is enormous, so he falls at the feet and asks. He presses the point gently: nothing in the divine treasury could run short, and his own needs are tiny, satisfied by the least crumb. The prayer ends not grasping for greatness but asking only for some small gift, the posture of one who trusts the giver more than he wants the gift.

GATHA 1652

*Surrender and Acceptance**Surrender, the rite fulfilled in self-offering*

मराठी मूळ

पिंड पदावरी । दिला आपुलिये करीं ॥१॥
 माझें जालें गयावर्जन । फिटलें पितरांचें ऋण ॥२॥
 केलें कर्मांतर । बोंब मारिली हरिहर ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझें । भार उतरलें ओझें ॥३॥ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have placed this body at the feet of the Lord with my own hands. My pilgrimage to Gaya is accomplished, and the debt to my ancestors is cleared.

I have performed the final rite by calling out to Hari. Says Tuka, the heavy burden I carried has been lifted from me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have placed this body at his feet with my own hands. My pilgrimage to Gaya is done; the debt to my ancestors is cleared. I have performed the last rite; I cried out the names of Hari and Hara. Tuka says: the load I carried, that heavy weight, has come off me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram takes the language of funeral and ancestral rites and turns it inward. With his own hands he offers his body at the Lord's feet, and he says this self-offering accomplishes everything the pilgrimage to Gaya and the rites for the dead were meant to do, even clearing the debt owed to the ancestors. The final rite he performs is simply crying out the divine names. The radical claim is that surrender to God is itself the complete sacrament, and the weight he names lifting off is the whole burden of obligation a person carries through life.

GATHA 1653

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the longing held in the throat

मराठी मूळ

मथुरेच्या राया । माझें दंडवत पायां ॥१॥
 तुमचे कृपेचें पोसनें । माझा समाचार घेणें ॥२॥
 नाम धरिलें कंठी । असें आर्तभूत पोटी ॥३॥
 जीवींचें ते जाणा । तुका ह्मणे नारायणा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O King of Mathura, I bow at your feet. It is by your grace that you nourish me and look after my welfare.

I hold your name in my throat, and deep longing burns within me. Says Tuka, O Narayana, you alone know what lies in my jiva.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O King of Mathura, my bowing at your feet. I am fed by your grace; look after me. I hold your name in my throat. There is a deep ache inside me. Tuka says: O Narayana, you know what is in my heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram bows to Krishna, the King of Mathura, and frames his whole life as already sustained by that grace, so he asks only to be looked after still. He holds the divine name lodged in his throat, kept close as breath, while a longing burns inside him that he does not fully spell out. He trusts that he does not need to spell it out: Narayana already knows what lies in his heart. The prayer rests on that intimacy, that the One addressed sees the inner state without being told.

GATHA 1654

Longing and Separation

Longing, love that seizes the senses

मराठी मूळ

जाय तिकडे लागे पाठीं । नाहीं तुटी आठवाची ॥1॥
 हरूनियां नेलें चित्त । माझें थीत भांडवल ॥ध्रु॥
 दावूनियां रूप डोळां । मन चाळा लावियेलें ॥2॥
 आणीक तोंडा पडिली मिठी । कान गोठी नाइकती ॥3॥
 बोलिल्याचा आठव न घडे । वाणी ओढे ते सोई ॥4॥
 तुका ह्याने प्रेमधगी । भरली अंगीं अखंड ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Wherever I go, the memory of Him follows me without a break. He has stolen my mind, which was my only capital.

He showed His form to my eyes and set my mind into a restless longing. My mouth is sealed shut; my ears refuse to hear any other talk.

My tongue is drawn only toward Him, and I cannot recall what else was ever spoken. Says Tuka, the fire of love blazes ceaselessly through my whole being.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Wherever I go, the memory follows at my back; it never breaks off. He has stolen my mind away, which was all the capital I had. He showed his form to my eyes and set my mind restless with longing. My mouth is sealed; my ears will not hear other talk. I cannot recall what else was said; my tongue is drawn only that one way. Tuka says: the fire of love has filled my whole body, unbroken.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes love so total that it has taken over every sense. The memory of God follows him wherever he goes and never lets up, and he says his mind, the only capital he owned, has been stolen outright. Once the divine form was shown to his eyes, the mind was set into ceaseless longing, and the senses fell in line behind it: the mouth shut to other speech, the ears deaf to other talk, the tongue pulled only one way. He cannot even remember anything else that was spoken to him. The poem lands on an image of unbroken fire, love burning through the whole body without pause.

GATHA 1655

Renunciation

Renunciation, staking life on Govinda

मराठी मूळ

नको ऐसैं जालें अन्न । भूक तान ते गेली ॥1॥
 गोविंदाची आवडी जीवा । करीन सेवा धणीवरी ॥धु॥
 राहिलें तें राहो काम । सकळ धर्म देहीचे ॥2॥
 देह घरिला त्याचें फळ । आणीक काळ धन्य हा ॥3॥
 जाऊं नेदीं करितां सोस । क्षेमा दोष करवीन ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे या च पाठी । आता साटी जीवाची ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I no longer need food; hunger and thirst have left me. My jiva craves only the love of Govinda, and I will serve Him to my full satisfaction.

Let all bodily duties and obligations fall away as they may. This body was taken up for His sake, and blessed is the time spent so.

I will not let Him go despite all the longing it costs me. Says Tuka, I will stake my very life in pursuit of Him alone.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Food has become something I do not want; hunger and thirst have left me. My soul loves Govinda; I will serve him to my full content. Let whatever bodily work remains stay undone; let all the body's duties go. This body was taken up for his sake, and blessed is the time spent so. I will not let him go, however much longing it costs me; I will make even the parting into a fault to be answered for. Tuka says: now, behind this, I stake my very life.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lets the demands of the body fall away under the single hunger for God. He no longer wants food, and ordinary hunger and thirst have gone, because the soul's one craving is to love Govinda and serve him until it is satisfied. He releases all the body's duties as things that can stay undone; the body was taken up only for God's sake, and time spent that way is the blessed time. Then the resolve hardens into a vow: he will not let God go whatever the longing costs, and he stakes his very life on this pursuit. It is the language of one who has decided that nothing else is worth keeping.

GATHA 1656

Longing and Separation

Longing, the road watched in vain

मराठी मूळ

वाट पाहें हरि कां नये आझूनि । निष्ठ कां मनीं धरियेलें ॥1॥
 काय करूं धीर होत नाहीं जीवा । काय आड ठेवा उभा ठेला ॥धु.॥
 नाहीं माझा धांवा पडियेला कानीं । कोठें चक्रपाणी गुंतलेती ॥2॥
 नाही आलें कळों अंतरा अंतर । कृपावंत फार ऐकतो ॥3॥
 बहुता दिसांचें राहिलें भातुकें । नाहीं कवतुकें कृवाळलें ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे देई एकवेळा भेटी । शीतळ हें पोटीं होइल मग ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I watch the road, but Hari, why have you not come yet? Why have you hardened your resolve against me? My mind finds no patience; what obstacle stands between us? Has my desperate cry not reached your ears? Where are you entangled, O Wielder of the Discus? I cannot fathom the distance that separates us, though they say you are supremely compassionate and that you listen. Our reunion is long overdue, and yet you show no tender eagerness.

Says Tuka, grant me just one meeting, and then my mind will be at peace.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I watch the road. Hari, why have you not come yet? Why have you hardened your heart against me? What can I do; my soul finds no patience. What treasure are you guarding that you stand back? Has my cry not fallen on your ears? Where are you caught up, O Wielder of the Discus? I cannot see why heart has grown distant from heart, though they say you are full of mercy, that you listen. The meeting has been put off for so many days; you have not fondled me even for fun. Tuka says: grant me one meeting, just once, and then this heart will grow cool.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the complaint of a devotee waiting for a God who does not arrive. Tukaram keeps his eyes on the road and asks Hari outright why he has not come and why he seems to have hardened his heart. He turns the silence into questions: what is holding you, has my cry not reached you, why has heart grown distant from heart when everyone says you are merciful and that you listen. He even reproaches God for not showing the smallest playful tenderness over so many days. The whole ache narrows to one request, a single meeting, after which the burning heart would finally be cooled.

GATHA 1657

Longing and Separation

Longing, the mother who consoles

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं दिलें कधीं कठिण उत्तर । तरी कां अंतर पडियेलें ॥१॥
 ह्मणऊनि आतां वियोग न साहे । लांचावले देहे संघष्टणें ॥२॥
 वेळोवेळां वाचे आठवितों नाम । अधिक चि प्रेम चढे घेतां ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे पांडुरंगे जननिये । घेऊनि कडिये बुझाविलें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have never spoken a harsh word to you, so why has this distance fallen between us? This separation is unbearable, for my body has grown addicted to your embrace. Again and again my tongue calls upon your name, and the more I chant, the more my love increases.

Says Tuka, O Panduranga, like a mother you have taken me onto your lap and consoled me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have never given you a harsh word, so why has this distance come between us? Because of it I cannot bear the separation now; my body is starved for your touch. Again and again my tongue remembers your name, and the more I take it, the more my love rises. Tuka says: Panduranga, like a mother, took me up onto her lap and comforted me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pleads against a separation he feels he has not earned, since he has never once spoken harshly to God. The distance is unbearable because his body has grown used to the nearness, hungry for the touch of God like a starved thing. His only recourse is the Name, repeated again and again, and he notices that each repetition does not dull the longing but raises the love higher. The poem ends with the answer to the plea: Panduranga responds not as a distant lord but as a mother, lifting him onto her lap and consoling him, and the divine is named in tender, maternal terms.

GATHA 1658

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the hidden treasure found

मराठी मूळ

आतां न करीं सोस । सेवीन हा ब्रह्मरस ॥१॥
 सुखें सेवीन अमृत । ब्रह्मपदींचें निश्चित ॥२॥
 तुमचा निज ठेवा । आह्मी पाडियेला ठावा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवरांया । आतां लपालेती वांयां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now I shall strive no more, for I will drink the nectar of Brahman. I will joyfully partake of that immortal essence rooted in the supreme state.

I have discovered the hidden treasure that is yours. Says Tuka, O King of Gods, now it is futile for you to hide from me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now I will strive no more; I will drink this nectar of Brahman. Gladly I will taste the deathless drink, the sure nectar of the supreme state. Your own secret treasure, we have found it out. Tuka says: O King of Gods, now it is useless for you to hide.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks from the far side of the search, where striving ends and tasting begins. He says he will struggle no longer, because now he simply drinks the nectar of Brahman, the deathless joy of the supreme state. The tone is triumphant and almost teasing: the hidden treasure that God kept tucked away has been discovered. So he tells the King of Gods, with delight, that there is no point hiding any longer. The poem stands at the moment when the One so long sought is finally found and can no longer keep itself concealed.

GATHA 1659

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, God beside me everywhere

मराठी मूळ

जेथें जेथें जासी । तेथें मज चि तूं पासी ॥१॥
 ऐसा पसरीन भाव । रिता नाहीं कोणी ठाव ॥२॥
 चित्त जडलें पायीं । पाळती हें ठायीं ठायीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने पोटी । देव घालुनि सांगें गोष्टी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Wherever you go, you find me right beside you. I have spread my devotion so wide that no place is left empty of it.

My mind is fixed upon your feet, and this devotion is present everywhere. Says Tuka, I hold God within my chitta, and from there I speak all that I say.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Wherever you go, you are right there beside me. I have spread my love so wide that no place is left empty of it. My mind is fastened to your feet, and this love keeps watch in every place. Tuka says: I hold God inside my heart, and from there I speak everything I say.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a love that has filled every corner of his world, so that there is no place where God is not near him. His attention is fixed on God's feet, and that fixed devotion keeps a kind of watch over every place at once. The closing line is the radical claim: God is not somewhere far off but lodged within his own heart, and that

indwelling is the source of all his words. Speech itself becomes God speaking from within.

GATHA 1660

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the senses at rest

मराठी मूळ

सांपडला हातीं । तरी जाली हे निश्चिती ॥१॥
 नाहीं धांवा घेत मन । इंद्रियांचें समाधान ॥२॥
 सांडियेला हेवा । अवघा संचिताचा ठेवा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे काम । निरसुनियां घेतों नाम ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now that He has been caught in my hands, a deep certainty has settled upon me. The mind no longer races outward, and the senses have found their satisfaction.

I have abandoned the entire hoard of accumulated fortune. Says Tuka, having dissolved all desire, I simply take the name.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He is caught in my hands now, and so a deep certainty has settled in me. My mind no longer races outward. The senses have found their peace. I have thrown away the whole hoard of stored-up fortune. Tuka says: I have dissolved every desire, and I simply take the Name.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks from the moment of having God firmly in hand, and what follows is rest. The mind, which usually runs after things, stops running; the senses, which usually hunger, are satisfied. He then names the cost: he has discarded his sanchita, the whole store of accumulated karmic fortune, because he no longer wants what it could buy. With every desire dissolved, only one act remains, the taking of the Name, and that is enough.

GATHA 1661

The Saints

Saints, their life is God

मराठी मूळ

मुक्तिपांग नाहीं विष्णुचिया दासां । संसार तो कैसा न देखती ॥१॥
 बैसला गोविंद जडोनियां चित्ती । आदि ते चि अंतीं अवसान ॥२॥
 भोग नारायणा देऊनि निराळीं । ओविया मंगळीं तो चि गाती ॥३॥
 बळ बिद्ध त्यांची उपकारासाठीं । अमृत तें पोटी सांटवलें ॥४॥
 दयावंत तरी देवा च सारिखीं । आपुलीं पारखीं नोळखती ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे त्यांचा जीव तो चि देव । वैकुंठ तो ठाव वसती तो ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The devotees of Vishnu are never deprived of liberation; they do not even perceive worldly bondage. Govinda has settled firmly in their chitta, from beginning to end without cessation.

They offer all enjoyments to Narayana and stand apart, singing only auspicious songs of praise. Their strength and intellect are spent entirely in service to others, for they have stored nectar within.

Compassionate as God Himself, they do not distinguish their own from strangers. Says Tuka, their very life is God, and Vaikuntha is the place where they dwell.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The servants of Vishnu are never kept from freedom; they do not even see worldly bondage. Govinda sits settled in their hearts, from the beginning to the very end, without break. They give all their pleasures to Narayana and stand apart, singing only songs of blessing. Their strength and their wit are spent on helping others, for they have stored up nectar within. They are kind like God himself; they do not tell their own people from strangers. Tuka says: their very life is God, and Vaikuntha is the place where they live.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing what the true devotees of Vishnu are like and how high he places them. Liberation is no struggle for them; they do not even perceive the bondage that holds others, because Govinda is fixed in their hearts without interruption. They hand every enjoyment to God and keep none for themselves, spending their whole strength and intelligence in service to others. The final claim is the boldest: their life simply is God, and they already dwell in Vaikuntha, the heaven of Vishnu, while still here. The saint is not on the way to God; the saint is the place where God lives.

GATHA 1662

The Saints

Saints, lowest place at their feet

मराठी मूळ

सेवीन उच्छिष्ट लोळेन अंगणीं । वैष्णवां चरणीं होइन जोडा ॥१॥
 ऐसें जन्म आतां मज देई देवा । आवडी हे जीवा सर्व काळ ॥२॥
 त्यांचे चरणरज येती अंगावरी । वंदीत ते शिरीं जाइन मार्गे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे येथें राहिलासे भाव । सकळ ही वाव जाणोनियां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I will eat the remnants of their meals, roll in the dust of their courtyards, and become sandals at the feet of the Vaishnavas. O God, grant me such a birth, for this is my longing at all times.

May the dust of their feet fall upon me, and I will follow behind, bowing my head to receive it. Says Tuka, this alone is my aspiration, knowing all else to be hollow.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I will eat the leftovers of their meals. I will roll in the dust of their courtyards. I will become the sandals at the feet of the Vaishnavas. O God, give me such a birth as this, for this is my longing at every hour. Let the dust of their feet fall on my body; I will follow behind them, bowing my head to receive it. Tuka says: this alone is what my heart holds, for I know all else is hollow.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks God for the lowest possible place, not the highest. He wants to eat the saints' leftovers, roll in their courtyard dust, and be the sandals beneath their feet, and he begs to be born for this and nothing else. The longing is total: he will walk behind them just to catch the dust off their feet on his head. The reason is in the last line, that he has weighed everything else and found it empty, so the only thing worth wanting is the lowest service to the devotees of God.

GATHA 1663

Longing and Separation

Longing, hurry to embrace

मराठी मूळ

क्षेम देयाला हो । स्फुरताती दंड बाहो ॥१॥
 आतां झडझडां चालें । देई उचलूं पाउलें ॥२॥
 सांडीं हंसगती । बहु उत्कंठा हे चित्तीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आई । श्रीरंगे विठाबाई ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My arms tremble with eagerness to embrace you. Come quickly now, lift your feet and hasten your steps.

Abandon that graceful swan-gait, for the longing in my chitta is too great. Says Tuka, O Shrirang, O dear Vithabai, come to me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My arms shake with eagerness to hold you close. Come quickly now, lift your feet, hasten your steps. Drop that slow swan-walk; the longing in my heart is too great. Tuka says: come to me, O Shrirang, O dear Vithabai.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram writes from the moment just before a longed-for meeting, his arms trembling because he cannot wait to embrace God. He urges God to come fast and abandon the graceful, unhurried swan-gait, since his own heart can bear no delay. The poem turns God into the beloved who is taking too long. He calls out with tender names, Shrirang and Vithabai, the way one calls a dear one to hurry.

GATHA 1664

Longing and Separation

Longing, leave the finery, come now

मराठी मूळ

जेणें वेळ लागे । ऐसैं सांडीं पांडुरंगे ॥1॥
 कंठ कंठा मिळों देई । माझा वोरस तूं घेई ॥घु॥
 नको पीतांबर । सांवरुं हे अळंकार ॥2॥
 टाकीं वो भातुकें । लौकिकाचें कवतुकें ॥3॥
 हातां पायां नको । कांहीं वेगळालें राखों ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे यावरी । मग सुखें अळंकारीं ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*O Panduranga, set aside whatever causes delay. Let throat meet throat, and take my longing into yourself.**Do not bother with the silk garment or arranging your ornaments. Cast off these ceremonial gifts and the formalities of public regard.**Do not keep your hands and feet reserved or hold anything back. Says Tuka, once we have embraced, then you may dress in all your finery at leisure.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

O Panduranga, throw aside whatever causes delay. Let throat meet throat; take my longing into yourself. Do not bother with the silk garment, do not stop to arrange your ornaments. Cast off the ceremonial gifts and the games of public regard. Do not keep your hands and feet held back; do not save anything apart. Tuka says: once we have embraced, then you may dress in all your finery at your ease.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram begs God to drop everything that stands between them and come straight into his embrace, throat against throat. He waves away the silk robe, the ornaments, the ceremonial offerings, and the whole performance that respectability expects, because none of it matters next to the meeting itself. He wants nothing held in reserve, no part of God kept apart from him. The closing line is almost playful: there will be time for finery afterward, but first comes the embrace, and that comes before all the proper dressing-up.

GATHA 1665

Prayers

Prayer, the real thing, not glass

मराठी मूळ

कृपेचा ओलावा । दिसे वेगळा चि देवा ॥१॥
मी हें इच्छीतसें साचें । न लगे फुकटशाई काचें ॥२॥
जेणें जाय कळसा। पाया उत्तम तो तैसा ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे घरीं । तुझ्या अवघिया परी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The moisture of your grace, O God, is visibly something apart. What I desire is the genuine thing; I have no use for a worthless imitation made of glass.

The foundation must be sound if the pinnacle is to hold. Says Tuka, I want everything in your household to be real and whole.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The moisture of your grace, O God, is plainly something apart. What I want is the true thing; I have no use for a worthless fake made of glass. The foundation must be sound if the pinnacle is to hold. Tuka says: I want everything in your house to be real.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is praying for the genuine touch of grace and refusing every counterfeit. He sees that God's grace is unmistakably real, set apart from anything that merely imitates it, and he insists he will not be fobbed off with cheap glass that only looks like the jewel. He reaches for a builder's image: a tower only stands if its foundation is sound, so the inner reality must be true for the outward life to hold. His whole request is that nothing in God's household be false; he wants the real thing all the way through.

GATHA 1666

Prayers

Prayer, refuse the powers that strip you bare

मराठी मूळ

दावूनियां कोणां कांहीं । ते चि वाहीं चाळविलीं ॥१॥
तैसें नको करुं देवा । शुद्धभावा माझिया ॥२॥
रिद्धसिद्धी ऐसे आड । येती नाड नागवूं ॥३॥
उदकाऐसे दावुनि ओढी । उर फोडी झळई ॥४॥
दर्पणींचें दिलें धन । दिसे पण चरफडी ॥५॥
तुका ह्मणे पायांसाठीं । करीं आटी कळों घा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You have shown various things to various people and led them along with those enticements. Do not do the same, O God, with my pure devotion.

Supernatural powers and accomplishments come as obstacles meant to strip us bare. Like water shown to a thirsty man and then withdrawn as a mirage, or wealth displayed in a mirror that cannot be grasped, they only cause torment.

Says Tuka, I labor only for your feet; let me know that you understand this.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You have shown various things to various people and led them off with those lures. Do not do that, O God, to my pure devotion. Powers and accomplishments come in the way as traps meant to strip us bare. Like water shown to a thirsty man and then pulled back as a mirage, like wealth shown in a mirror that cannot be grasped, they only break the heart. Tuka says: I labor only for your feet; let me know that you understand this.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is asking God not to test or distract him with the miraculous powers that lure other seekers off the path. He names them plainly as traps, the riddhi and siddhi that come as obstacles and end up robbing a person of what matters. He gives two sharp images for them: water promised to a thirsty man that turns out to be a mirage, and money seen in a mirror that the hand can never reach, both of which only torment. His one plea is that his labor is for God's feet alone, and he wants the assurance that God knows it and will not divert him with shiny powers.

GATHA 1667

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the mother's tenderness

मराठी मूळ

काय माता विसरे बाळा । कळवळा प्रीतीचा ॥१॥

आवडीनें गळां मिठी । घाली उठी बैसवी ॥२॥

लावूं धांवे मुख स्तना । नये मना निराळें ॥३॥

भावंडाचें भातें दावी । आपुलें लावी त्यास जी ॥४॥

माझें थोडें त्याचें फार । उत्तर हें वाढवी ॥५॥

तुका ह्मणे नारायणा । तुझी जाणां बुझावूं ॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Does a mother ever forget her child? She is stirred by a deep tenderness of love. She embraces the child around the neck with affection, lifts it up and seats it upon her lap.

She runs to press its mouth to her breast; she cannot bear to be separated. She shows the child its sibling's food and then gives it her own.

She makes little of her own share and magnifies the child's portion. Says Tuka, O Narayana, you know just how to console us in the same way.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Does a mother ever forget her child? She is stirred by a deep tenderness of love. She throws her arms around its neck with delight, lifts it up, seats it on her lap. She runs to press its mouth to her breast; she cannot bear to be apart. She points to the other child's plate and gives this one her own share. She makes her own portion small and the child's portion large. Tuka says: O Narayana, you know just how to comfort us in the same way.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram paints the picture of a mother who can never forget her child, and lets every detail carry the weight of God's love. She embraces, lifts, nurses, and cannot bear separation; she even goes hungry, shrinking her own share so the child's plate is full. The whole portrait is an argument by tenderness: this is the kind of love God has. In the last line he turns the picture to address God directly, saying Narayana knows exactly how to soothe and console his devotees the way a mother soothes her child.

GATHA 1668

Prayers

Prayer, why does my time pass in distress

मराठी मूळ

तरीं आह्मी तुझी धरियेली कास । नाहीं कोणी दास वांयां गेला ॥१॥
 आगा पंढरीच्या उभ्या विटेवरी । येई लवकरी धांवें नेटे ॥२॥
 पालवितों तुज उभी करोनि बाहे । कृपावंता पाहे मजकडे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुज बहु कान डोळे । कां हे माझे वेळे ऐसी परी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have held fast to your garment, for no devotee of yours has ever been turned away in vain. O Lord standing upon the brick at Pandhari, come running to me swiftly and with force.

I call to you with arms raised high; O compassionate one, look toward me. Says Tuka, you have so many ears and eyes, so why is my time passing in such distress?

IN PLAIN WORDS

Still, I have held fast to your garment, for no servant of yours was ever turned away in vain. O Lord standing on the brick at Pandhari, come running to me, quickly and with force. I call to you with my arms raised high; O merciful one, look toward me. Tuka says: you have so many ears, so many eyes, so why is my own time passing in this distress?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram clings to God with one piece of confidence: no devotee who held on has ever been sent away empty. So he calls to the Lord who stands on the brick at Pandhari to come running fast and strong. He stretches his arms up and pleads for one merciful glance turned his way. The poem ends with an honest, almost wounded question: if God has countless ears and eyes that hear and see everyone, why is Tukaram's own hour still passing in pain. It is the cry of a faith that trusts God and yet is still kept waiting.

GATHA 1669

Longing and Separation

Longing, you kindled this love yourself

मराठी मूळ

करावा कांटाळा नव्हे हें उचित । आधीं च कां प्रीत लावियेली ॥1॥
जाणतसां तुम्हीं रूपाचें लाघव । आपुलें तें जीव घेतें ऐसा ॥ध्रु॥
काय ह्मणऊनि आलेती आकारा । आह्मां उजगरा करावया ॥2॥
तुका ह्मणे भीड होती आजिवरी । आतां देवा उरी कोण ठेवी ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

It is not right for you to grow weary of me, for it was you who first kindled this love. You know the power of your own beauty, that it takes the very life of those who behold it.

Why then did you take form at all, if only to keep us awake with longing? Says Tuka, until now I maintained some restraint, but henceforth, O God, who can hold back?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

It is not right for you to grow tired of me. You were the one who first lit this love. You know the power of your own beauty, how it takes the very life of those who see it. Why did you take a form at all, if only to keep us awake with longing? Tuka says: until now I kept some restraint, but now, O God, who can hold back?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses a kind of loving complaint: God has no right to weary of him, since God is the one who first kindled this love. He points out that God knows full well how irresistible his beauty is, that it steals the life of anyone who beholds it. Then comes the sharp question, why God took visible form at all if it was only going to leave devotees sleepless with longing. He admits that he held himself in check until now, but says the longing has overflowed and restraint is finished. The blame, lovingly, is laid at God's own door.

GATHA 1670

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, holding fast and not letting go

मराठी मूळ

धरुनि पालव असुडीन करें । मग काय बरें दिसे लोकीं ॥1॥
काय तें विचारा ठायींचें आपणां । जो हा नारायणा अवकाश ॥ध्रु॥
अंतर पायांसी तो वरी या गोष्टी । पडिलिया मिठी हालों नेदीं ॥2॥
रुसलेती तरी होईल बुझावणी । तांतडी करुनि साधावें हें ॥3॥
सांपडलिया आधीं कारणासी ठाव । येथें करुं भाव दृढ आतां ॥4॥
तुका ह्मणे तुझे ठाउके बोभाट । मग खटपट चुकली ते ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I will seize the hem of your garment and pull it with my hands; never mind how it may look to the world. Consider within yourself, O Narayana, what room there is for delay.

Outwardly these are just words, but once I lay hold of your feet, I will not let you stir. If you are displeased, there will be a reconciliation; I will press the matter urgently.

Now that I have found the cause of all causes, I will fix my devotion firmly here. Says Tuka, your protests are well known to me, and once heard, the struggle is over.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I will catch the hem of your garment and pull it with my hands; never mind how it looks to the world. Consider with yourself, O Narayana, what room there is for delay. Outwardly these are only words, but once I lay hold of your feet, I will not let you stir. If you are displeased, there will be a making-up; I will press the matter hard. Now that I have found the cause of all causes, I will fix my love firmly here. Tuka says: I know your protests well, and once they are heard, the struggle is over.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram threatens, with love, to grab God's garment and not care how it looks to onlookers, asking God plainly what justifies any delay. He admits the words are just words until the act follows, but once he takes hold of God's feet he means to keep so firm a grip that God cannot move. If God grows annoyed, he will simply make peace and keep pressing, urgently. He has found the source of everything and will plant his devotion there for good; and he knows God's reluctant protests so well that, once they have been voiced, the whole tug-of-war is already settled in his favor.

GATHA 1671

Devotion to Vitthal

Reclaimed birthright, no distance left

मराठी मूळ

निष्ठा उत्तरीं न धरावा राग । आहे लागभाग ठायींचा चि ॥1॥
 तूं माझा जनिता तूं माझा जनिता । रखुमाईच्या कांता पांडुरंगा ॥२॥
 मुळींच्या ठेवण्यां आहे अधिकार । दुरावोनि दूर गेलों होतों ॥३॥
 पोटीच्या आठवा पडिला विसर । काहीं आला भार माथां तेणें ॥४॥
 राखिला हा होता बहु चौघां चार । साक्षीने वेव्हार निवडिला ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे कांहीं बोलणें न लगे । आतां पांडुरंगे तूं मी ऐसें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Do not take offense at my persistent words; the claim between us is ancient and real. You are my father, you are my father, O Panduranga, husband of Rakhumai.

I have a rightful share in the original inheritance, though I had strayed far away. I had forgotten the stirrings within, burdened as I was by worldly weight.

I kept up appearances before the four quarters, and now the account has been settled before witnesses. Says Tuka, nothing more need be said, O Panduranga; there is no longer any difference between you and me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do not be angry at my stubborn words. The bond between us belongs here, from the very root. You are my father, you are my father, O Panduranga, husband of Rakhumai. I have a rightful share in the first inheritance. I had strayed far, far away. I forgot the stirrings inside me, so a load came to weigh on my head. This was kept hidden a long time, before the four quarters. Now the account has been settled before witnesses. Tuka says: nothing more needs saying. Now, O Panduranga, you and I are one.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is pressing a claim, and he warns God not to bristle at how hard he presses. The bond is not earned, it is original: he calls Panduranga his father, the source from whom he came, so a child's share of the inheritance is his by right even though he wandered off and let the load of the world settle on him. The pretense he had kept up before the world is now over, the books opened and reckoned in plain sight. What is left is not a debt but an identity: there is no longer any gap between the devotee and God.

GATHA 1672

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, joy too full for words

मराठी मूळ

सांगतां गोष्टी लागती गोडा । हा तो रोकडा अनुभव ॥१॥
 सुख जालें सुख जालें । नये बोले बोलतां ॥२॥
 अंतर तें नये दिसों । आतां सोस कासया ॥२॥
 तुका ह्याणे जतन करूं । हें चि धरूं जीवेंसी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When we speak of these things, they taste sweet; this is direct, living experience. Such joy has come, such joy, that words fail in the telling.

No distance remains to be seen, so what cause is there for longing? Says Tuka, I will guard this treasure and hold it close to my very life.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When we speak of these things, they taste sweet. This is plain, living experience, here in the hand. Joy has come, joy has come. It cannot be told in speech. No inner distance is left to be seen. So why any more longing? Tuka says: I will guard this. I will hold it with my very life.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is reporting a joy he has actually tasted, not a doctrine he has been told. Speaking of God is sweet, but the joy itself outruns speech and cannot be set down in words. What makes it complete is that the separation between him and God has closed, so there is nothing left to ache for. The poem ends as a vow: a treasure this real is to be protected and kept pressed close to his own life.

GATHA 1673

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the head needs the feet

मराठी मूळ

मजशीं पुरे न पडे वादें । सुख दोहींच्या संवादें ॥१॥
 तूं चि आगळा काशानें । शिर काय पायांविणे ॥ध्रु॥
 वाहों तुझा भार । दुःख साहोनि अपार ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं भेद । देवा करुं नये वाद ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

No argument can prevail against me, for the joy lies in our mutual exchange. How can you claim to be greater? What is the head without the feet? I bear your burden and endure immeasurable suffering on your behalf.

Says Tuka, there is no difference between us, O God; let there be no quarrel.

IN PLAIN WORDS

No argument can win against me. The joy is in our talking together. How are you the greater one? What is a head without the feet? I carry your burden. I bear suffering beyond measure. Tuka says: there is no difference between us. So, God, let us not quarrel.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns a lover's debate with God into a claim about mutual need. He insists God cannot simply assert superiority, because a head is useless without feet to carry it: the Lord depends on the devotee who bears his weight in the world and endures endless hardship for him. The point of the back and forth is not to win but the sweetness of the exchange itself. And since there is finally no difference between them, the quarrel collapses into oneness.

GATHA 1674

Devotion to Vitthal

Bold devotion, God does nothing alone

मराठी मूळ

तुज नाहीं शक्ति । काम घेसी आह्मां हातीं ॥१॥
 ऐसें अनुभवे पाहीं । उरलें बोलिजेसें नाहीं ॥ध्रु॥
 लपोनियां आड । आह्मां तुझा कैवाड ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुजसाठी । आह्मां संवसारें तुटी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You have no discipline of your own; you make us do the work with our own hands. I have seen this through experience, and nothing remains to be said.

You hide behind us, and we champion your cause. Says Tuka, for your sake we have broken with the entire world.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You have no work of your own. You get the work done through our hands. See this by experience. Nothing is left to say. You hide behind us, out of sight. We fight your cause for you. Tuka says: for your sake we have broken with the whole world.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses a daring complaint into a confession of love. God, he says, acts in the world only through his devotees; he himself stays hidden, while they are the ones who do the work and champion his name. Tukaram knows this not as theory but from his own experience of serving. And he names what that service has cost: for God's sake he has severed himself from the entire world, which is the price and proof of his devotion.

GATHA 1675

The Necessity of Experience

Bold devotion, God beyond merit and sin

मराठी मूळ

तुझाठायीं ओस । दोन्ही पुण्य आणि दोष ॥१॥
झडलें उरलें किती । आह्मी धरियेलें चित्तीं ॥२॥
कळलासी नष्टा । यातिक्रियाकर्मभ्रष्टा ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे बोला । नाहीं ताळा गा विठ्ठला ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In you, both merit and sin are equally void. How much has fallen away, and how much remains? We have grasped this in our chitta.

We have seen through you, O rascal, you who are beyond caste, ritual, and righteous deed. Says Tuka, there is no accounting for your words, O Vitthal.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In you there is emptiness. Both merit and sin are void there. How much has fallen away, how much remains? We have held it fast in our chitta. We have seen through you, O rascal, you who are past caste and rite and righteous deed. Tuka says: there is no measure for your ways, O Vitthal.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks to God with rough affection, as one who has caught on to him. In God both merit and sin lose their weight, voided in his presence; what truly falls away and what stays is something the devotee has grasped inwardly, in the chitta. He calls Vitthal a rascal not in scorn but in delight, because Vitthal stands outside all the categories people live by, caste, ritual, and meritorious works, and so cannot be added up or accounted for. The harshness is the freedom of intimacy, the language of someone close enough to tease the divine.

GATHA 1676

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, quarrel only for truth

मराठी मूळ

भांडावें तों हित । ठायी पडा तें उचित ॥१॥
 नये खंडों देऊं वाद । आह्मां भांडवलभेद ॥२॥
 शब्दासारसें भेटी । नये पडों देऊं तुटी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आळस । तो चि कारणांचा नास ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One should quarrel only for the sake of truth; settle matters where they properly belong. We must not let the debate be interrupted, for our very capital is at stake in this difference.

Let the meeting match the word; do not allow a rupture. Says Tuka, laziness is the destruction of all worthy causes.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Quarrel only when it does good. Settle things where they truly belong. Do not let the debate be cut off. Our very capital is staked on this difference. Let the meeting match the word. Do not let it break apart. Tuka says: laziness itself destroys the cause.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram treats his striving with God as a dispute worth keeping alive on purpose. A quarrel is justified only when it leads to good, and matters should be put to rest on their right ground, not dropped or fudged. He will not let the argument lapse, because everything he has, his whole capital, is wagered on this very point of difference between himself and God. The closing line names the real enemy: not God's resistance but the devotee's own slackness, for laziness is what wrecks any worthy effort.

GATHA 1677

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, contention as true service

मराठी मूळ

नव्हों गांढे आळसी । जो तूं आह्मांपुढें जासी ॥१॥
 अरे दिलें आह्मां हातीं । वर्म वेवादाचें संतीं ॥२॥
 धरोनियां वाट । जालों शिरोमणि थोंट ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा । वाद करीन खरी सेवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I am no fool or idler, not when you stand before me. The saints have placed the secret weapon of disputation into our hands.

Holding firm to the path, I have become a champion, stubborn to the core. Says Tuka, O God, I will carry on this argument as my truest service.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am no coward, no idler, not when you stand before me. The saints have put into our hands the secret of how to contend. Holding firm to the path, I have become a stubborn champion. Tuka says: O God, I will keep up this argument as my truest service.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram refuses to go slack before God; standing in his presence rouses him to fight, not to drowse. He credits the saints, his teachers, with handing him the very art of holy disputation, the weapon by which a devotee contends with the Lord and presses his claim. Gripping that path, he turns himself into an unyielding champion who will not let go. He recasts what looks like quarreling as worship: pressing his case with God is itself the truest form of his service.

GATHA 1678

Prayers

Prayer, no kinsman but God

मराठी मूळ

तुझा विसर नको माझिया जीवा । क्षण एक केशवा मायबापा ॥1॥
जाओ राहो देह आतां ये चि घडी । कायसी आवडी याची मज ॥ध्रु॥
कुश्चीळ इंद्रियें आपुलिया गुणें । यांचिया पाळणें कोण हित ॥2॥
पुत्र पत्नी बंधु सोयरीं खाणोरीं । यांचा कोण धरी संग आतां ॥3॥
पिंड हा उसना आणिला पांचांचा । सेकीं लागे ज्याचा त्यासी देणें ॥4॥
तुका ह्मणे नाहीं आणिक सोडरें । तुजविण दुसरें पांडुरंगा ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O Keshava, my father and mother, do not let me forget you for even a single moment. Let this body live or perish this very instant; I have no attachment to it whatsoever.

The senses are filthy by their very nature; what good comes from indulging them? Sons, wife, brothers, relatives and kin, whose company shall I keep now? This body is borrowed from the five elements, and in the end each portion must be returned to its owner. Says Tuka, O Panduranga, there is no kinsman other than you.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do not let my soul forget you, O Keshava, my mother and father, not for a single moment. Let this body live or die this very instant. What love do I have for it? The senses are filthy by their own nature. What good comes of feeding them? Sons, wife, brothers, relatives, kin: whose company shall I keep now? This body is borrowed from the five elements. In the end each part must be given back to its owner. Tuka says: there is no other kinsman, O Panduranga, none but you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays for one thing, an unbroken memory of God, and lets go of everything that competes with it. He calls Keshava both mother and father, the only true kin, and grows indifferent to whether his body lives or dies, since he feels no real attachment to it. He looks at the senses, the family, the very flesh, and sees each as something that cannot finally hold him: the senses are impure, the relatives temporary company, and the body itself only on loan from the five elements, to be returned piece by piece at death. Against all this borrowed and perishing belonging he sets the one permanent relation, Panduranga, who alone is truly his.

GATHA 1679

Prayers

Prayer, asking to be proven a true servant

मराठी मूळ

ऐसें सत्य माझें येईल अंतरा । तरि मज करा कृपा देवा ॥१॥
 वचनांसारिखें तळमळी चित्त । बाहेरि तो आंत होइल भाव ॥२॥
 तरि मज ठाव द्यावा पायांपाशीं । सत्यत्वे जाणसी दास खरा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे सत्य निकट सेवकें । तरि च भातुकें प्रेम द्यावें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If my sincerity is truly known to your chitta, then grant me your grace, O God. Let my inner feeling match my spoken words, so that what is outside is also what is within.

Then give me a place beside your feet, for you know in truth whether I am a genuine servant. Says Tuka, if I am proven a faithful and intimate devotee, then bestow upon me the gift of your love.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If this sincerity of mine reaches your heart, then show me your grace, O God. My mind churns to make the feeling match the words, so that what is outside is also what is within. Then give me a place at your feet. In truth you know whether I am a real servant. Tuka says: if I am truly your close servant, then grant me the morsel of your love.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks God to test the truth of his devotion and reward it only if it is real. His longing is that his inward feeling and his spoken words become one, with no gap between the outside and the inside, and he leaves the judging to God, who alone can see whether the servant is genuine. The reward he begs is a place at God's feet, nearness rather than status. The closing image is humble and tender: if he is truly counted an intimate servant, let God feed him love the way one hands a child a small morsel.

GATHA 1680

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, leaving it all to God

मराठी मूळ

आदि वर्तमान जाणसी भविष्य । मागें पुढें नीस संचिताचा ॥१॥
 आतां काय देऊं पायांपें परिहार । जाणां तो विचार करा देवा ॥२॥
 आपुलें तें येथें काय चाले केलें । जोडावे ते भले हात पुढें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे फिके बोल माझे वारा । कराल दातारा होईल तें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You know the past, the present, and the future, and the whole reckoning of accumulated deeds lies before you and behind. What offering can I now place at your feet? You alone know the right course, so act as you see fit, O God.

Nothing that I do on my own avails here; the only gain is to fold my hands before you. Says Tuka, my words are feeble as wind, but whatever you will do, O generous Lord, that alone shall come to pass.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You know the beginning, the present, and what is to come. The whole account of past deeds lies behind and before you. What can I now offer at your feet to set things right? You know the true course; do as you see fit, O God. What use here is anything I do on my own? The only good thing is to fold my hands before you. Tuka says: my words are feeble as wind. Whatever you choose to do, O generous Lord, that alone will happen.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays down all bargaining and hands the outcome wholly to God. Since God already knows past, present, and future, and holds the full reckoning of accumulated deeds, there is no offering the devotee could bring to balance the books or earn his way. His own efforts count for nothing here; the single thing that avails is to stand with folded hands in surrender. He measures his own words as weightless as wind against the will of the generous Lord, and rests in the certainty that whatever God decides is what will come to pass.

GATHA 1681

The Moral Ideal

Moral warning, you bear your own fault

मराठी मूळ

सुखें न मनी अवगुण । दुःख भोगी त्याचें कोण ॥१॥
 हें कां ठायींचें न कळे । राती करा झांकुनि डोळे ॥२॥
 चालोनि आड वाटे । पायीं मोडविले कांटे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कोणा । बोल ठेवितो शाहाणा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If one happily ignores wrongdoing, who else will bear the resulting suffering? Why can you not see this plain truth? Close your eyes at night and walk the crooked path, and you will break your feet on thorns. Says Tuka, the one who thinks himself wise, whom does he blame then?

IN PLAIN WORDS

If you happily make light of your faults, who then bears the suffering they bring? Why can you not see this plain thing? Shut your eyes at night and walk the wrong path, and you drive thorns into your own feet. Tuka says: the man who thinks himself clever, whom does he have left to blame?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram warns against the comfortable habit of excusing one's own wrongdoing. The pain that wrong conduct breeds does not vanish because you ignore it; it falls back on the very person who shrugged it off, and no one else carries it for him. He draws a homely picture: choosing to walk a crooked road in the dark, eyes deliberately shut, ends with thorns in your own feet. The closing barb is aimed at self-deception, not at any other person: when the so-called wise man suffers what he set up, he has no one but himself to accuse.

GATHA 1682

The Moral Ideal

Equal vision, poison and nectar alike

मराठी मूळ

आह्मी न देखों अवगुणां । पापी पवित्र शाहाणा ॥१॥
 अवघीं रूपें तुझीं देवा । वंदूं भावें करूं सेवा ॥२॥
 मज मुक्ती सर्वे चाड । नेणें पाषाण धातु वाड ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे घोटीं । विष अमृत तुजसाठीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I do not see faults in anyone, whether wrongdoer, saint, or scholar. All forms are yours, O God, and I bow to them with devotion and serve them all.

I care nothing for liberation; I do not distinguish stone from metal or rank. Says Tuka, I will swallow poison and nectar alike for your sake.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I do not look at anyone's faults, not the sinner, the pure, or the wise. All forms are yours, O God. I bow to them with love and serve them. I have no craving even for liberation. I do not tell stone from metal or rank. Tuka says: I will swallow poison and nectar alike, for your sake.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a vision that has stopped sorting people into better and worse. He refuses to weigh anyone's faults, sinner or saint or scholar, because he sees every form as a form of God and bows to all of them in the same loving service. So complete is this seeing that he no longer even hankers after liberation, and makes no distinction between stone and precious metal or high and low. The final line names the cost he accepts: for God's sake he will take whatever comes, bitter or sweet, swallowing poison and nectar with the same surrendered evenness.

GATHA 1683

*The Power of the Name**The Name, love over knowledge*

मराठी मूळ

मज नाही तुझ्या ज्ञानाची ते चाड । घेतां वाटे गोड नाम तुझे ॥१॥
 नेणतें लेंकरुं आवडीचें तान्हें । बोलतां वचनें आवडीनें ॥२॥
 भक्ती नेणें कांहीं वैराग्य तें नाही । घातला विठाई भार तुज ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाचें निर्लज्ज होऊनि । नाही माझे मनीं दुजा भाव ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have no craving for your esoteric knowledge; simply taking your name tastes sweet to me. I am an innocent child, a nursing infant, and I speak these words out of sheer love.

I know nothing of devotion or dispassion; I have placed the whole burden upon you, O Vithai. Says Tuka, I dance shamelessly, for there is no trace of duality in my mind.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have no craving for your secret knowledge. Taking your name tastes sweet to me. I am an ignorant child, a nursing infant. I speak these words out of love. I know nothing of devotion. I have no dispassion. I have laid the whole burden on you, Vithai. Tuka says: I dance, shameless, and there is no second feeling in my mind.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets the simple sweetness of the Name above any esoteric attainment. He refuses to claim knowledge, devotion, or detachment; he calls himself an infant who only babbles out of love. The point is that he hands the entire burden of his salvation to Vithai and keeps nothing for himself to manage. His shameless dancing names the stakes: when the mind holds no second feeling, no division between self and God, the only honest response left is open, undignified joy.

GATHA 1684

*Surrender and Acceptance**Surrender, the scraps of the saints*

मराठी मूळ

काय माझी संत पाहाती जाणीव । सर्व माझा भावत्यांचे पायीं ॥१॥
 कारण सरतें करा पांडुरंगीं । भूषणाची जर्गीं काय चाड ॥२॥
 बोंबडा उत्तरीं ह्मणें हरिहरि । आणीक भीकरी नेणें दुजें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुझी विठ्ठलाचे दास । करितों मी आस उच्छिष्टाची ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why should the saints scrutinize my learning? My entire devotion is at their feet. Let only that which avails with Panduranga be accomplished; what use is mere ornamental display in this world? With stammering lips I say Hari, Hari; this beggar knows no other word.

Says Tuka, you are all servants of Vitthal, and I long only for the scraps from your plate.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why should the saints examine my learning? All my love is at their feet. Let only what counts with Panduranga be done. What use is show in this world? With stammering lips I say Hari, Hari. This beggar knows no other word. Tuka says: you are all servants of Vitthal. I long only for the scraps from your plate.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks the saints not to weigh him by his learning, because his whole devotion is laid at their feet. He dismisses outward display as worthless; the only thing worth accomplishing is what carries weight with Panduranga. He confesses that he can barely speak, stammering one name, Hari, and knowing no other. Calling himself a beggar after the leftovers from the saints' plates, he names the posture he wants: to take the lowest place among Vitthal's servants and receive grace as a gift, not a wage.

GATHA 1685

The Nature of God

Adoration, the essence of all sweetness

मराठी मूळ

जीवाचें जीवन अमृताची तनु । ब्रह्मांड भूषणु नारायण ॥१॥
 सुखाचा सांगात अंतकासी अंत । निजांचा निवांत नारायण ॥२॥
 गोडाचें ही गोड हर्षाचें ही कोड । प्रीतीचा ही लाड नारायण ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने जें हें साराचें हें सार । माझा अंगीकार तेणें केला ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Narayana is the life of all life, whose body is made of nectar, the ornament of the entire universe. He is the companion of bliss, the end of Death itself, the deep repose of those who rest in the Self.

He is the sweetness within all sweetness, the delight within all delight, the tender affection within all love. Says Tuka, He is the very essence of all that is essential, and He has accepted me as His own.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Narayana is the life of all life. His body is made of nectar. He is the ornament of the whole universe. He is the companion of bliss, the end of Death itself, the quiet rest of those who rest in the Self. He is the sweetness inside all that is sweet, the delight inside all delight, the tenderness inside all love. Tuka says: he is the essence of all that is essential, and he has taken me as his own.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram piles up names for Narayana that all point to the same thing: God is not one good thing among many but the inner core of every good thing. Whatever is alive draws its life from him; whatever is sweet is sweet because of him. He even names God the end of Death and the deep stillness of those who rest in the Self, so the praise reaches past pleasure into liberation. The poem turns at the close: this essence of all essences is not distant but has accepted Tukaram personally, so the cosmic praise lands as intimate belonging.

GATHA 1686

Faith and Trust

Faith, the child of God fears nothing

मराठी मूळ

आतां मी सर्वथा नव्हें गा दुर्बळ । यातिहीनकुळ दैन्यवाणा ॥१॥
 माय रखुमाई पांडुरंग पिता । शुद्ध उभयतां पक्ष दोन्ही ॥२॥
 बापुडा मी नव्हें दुर्बळ ठेंगणा । पांगिला हा कोणा आणिकांसी ॥३॥
 दृष्ट नव्हें आह्मी अभागी अनाथ । आमुचा समर्थ कैवारी हा ॥४॥
 संवसार आह्वां सरला सकळ । लपोनियां काळ ठेला धाकें ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे जालों निर्भर मानसीं । जोडलिया रासी सुखाचिया ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I am no longer in any way weak, of low station, or forlorn. Mother Rakhumai and Father Panduranga stand on both sides, and both lineages are pure.

I am not helpless, feeble, or small; who else could I be pawned off to? I am not wicked, unlucky, or orphaned, for my champion and protector is almighty. The whole of worldly existence has been settled for me, and even Death now hides in fear.

Says Tuka, my mind is completely at ease, for I have amassed a great treasure of joy.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now I am in no way weak, low-born, or wretched. Mother Rakhumai and Father Panduranga stand on both sides of me, and both lineages are pure. I am not helpless, feeble, or small. To whom could I be handed over? I am not wicked, unlucky, or orphaned. My champion and protector is almighty. The whole of worldly life is settled for me now. Even Death hides in fear. Tuka says: my mind is wholly at ease, for I have gathered a great heap of joy.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram throws off every name shame would put on him: weak, low-born, orphaned, unlucky. His ground for this is not his own merit but his parentage; Rakhumai is his mother and Panduranga his father, so both sides of his family are pure and almighty. Because such a protector stands over him, the whole anxious account of worldly existence is closed, and even Death, the last terror, hides from him. The poem ends in settled ease: having such a refuge is itself a treasure of joy, so there is nothing left to fear and nothing left to prove.

GATHA 1687

Renunciation

Renunciation, inward not outward

मराठी मूळ

केलें नाहीं मनीं तया घडे त्याग । उबगें उद्वेग नाहीं चित्तीं ॥1॥
 देव चि हा जाणे अंतरींचा भाव । मिथ्या तो उपाव बाहए रंग ॥ध्रु॥
 त्यागिल्याचें ध्यान राहिलें अंतरीं । अवघी ते परी विटंबना ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे आपआपण्यां विचारा । कोण हा दुसरा सांगे तुझां ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

True renunciation cannot happen until it arises within the mind; it holds no weariness or revulsion of spirit. God alone knows the inner disposition; outward display is a false remedy.

If what has been renounced still occupies one's thoughts, then the whole show is only self-torment. Says Tuka, reflect upon this for yourself; who else is there to tell you?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Renunciation does not happen until it happens in the mind. Then there is no weariness, no disgust in the heart. God alone knows the feeling within. Outward show is a false cure. If what you gave up still lives in your thoughts, the whole thing is only self-torment. Tuka says: think this over for yourself. Who else is there to tell you?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram insists that giving up things is worthless unless the mind itself has let go. Real renunciation leaves no inner restlessness behind; if the heart still aches for what the hands released, the renunciation is a performance and only tortures the person. He points to the one witness who cannot be fooled: God, who sees the inner state, not the outward gesture. The close throws the test back on the listener, since no outside judge can settle whether your detachment is real; only honest self-examination can.

GATHA 1688

The Moral Ideal

Moral counsel, pride and the Name

मराठी मूळ

हित व्हावें तरी दंभ दुरी ठेवा । चित्त शुद्ध सेवा देवाची हे ॥1॥
 आवडी विठ्ठल गाईजे एकांतीं । अलभ्य ते येती लाभ घरा ॥ध्रु॥
 आणीकां अंतरीं निदावी वसति । करावी हे शांती वासनेची ॥2॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If you desire your own welfare, keep pride at a distance and let your service to God be offered with a pure chitta. Sing of Vitthal with love in solitude, and rare blessings will come to your very door.

Let desires find no dwelling within you; make peace with your cravings and still them.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If you want your own good, keep pride far away. Serve God with a pure heart. Sing of Vitthal with love, alone, and rare gains will come to your door. Let desires find no place to live in you. Make peace with your cravings and still them.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram gives a plain prescription for genuine welfare: drop pride, purify the heart, and serve God without display. He promises that loving, solitary remembrance of Vitthal draws blessings that cannot be earned by effort, gifts that arrive at the door unbidden. The other half of the work is inward housekeeping, refusing desires a place to settle and quieting the cravings that keep the mind in motion. The two move together: the heart emptied of pride and craving is the heart that can sing and receive.

GATHA 1689

The Saints

The saints, love of Hari is the measure

मराठी मूळ

हो कां नर अथवा नारी । ज्यांचा आवडता हरि ॥१॥
 ते मज विठोबासमान । नमूं आवडी ते जन ॥२॥
 ज्याचें अंतर निर्मळ । त्याचें सबाहए कोमळ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने भावें । जिद्धें प्रेम वोसंडावें ॥४॥
 हरिची हरिकथा नावडे जया । अधम ह्याणतां तया वेळ लागे ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Whether man or woman, whoever holds Hari as their beloved is equal to Vithoba in my eyes, and I bow to such people with delight. One whose inner being is pure will appear gentle in every outward way.

Says Tuka, let love overflow from the depths of your being. As for those who have no taste for Hari or His stories, it takes no time at all to call them fallen.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whether man or woman, whoever holds Hari dear is equal to Vithoba in my eyes, and I bow to such people with love. One whose inner being is clean is gentle in every outward way. Tuka says: with true feeling, let love overflow from your tongue. As for one who has no taste for Hari and his stories, it takes no time at all to call him fallen.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes love of Hari, not gender or station, the only thing that ranks a person; whoever loves Hari he honors as he would honor God himself. He reads the inside from the outside: a pure heart shows as gentleness in all dealings, so character is the visible sign of devotion. He calls for love to overflow openly through speech, devotion that does not stay hidden. The sharp closing line is aimed at a pattern, not a person: indifference to Hari and his stories is the one thing he will name fallen, a warning to examine where your own taste lies.

GATHA 1690

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, do not waste this birth

मराठी मूळ

मनुष्यदेहीं तया नाट लागलें । अघोर साधिलें कुंभपाक ॥१॥
 कासया जन्मा आला तो पाषाण । जंत कां होऊन पडिला नाही।
 उपजे मरोनि वेळोवेळां भांड । परिलाज लंड न धरी कांहीं ॥२॥
 ऐसियाची माता कासया प्रसवली । वर नाहीं घातली मुखावरी।
 देवधर्माविण तो हा चांडाळ नर । न साहे भूमि भार क्षणभरी ॥३॥
 राम ह्मणतां तुझें काय वेचेल । कां हित आपुलें न विचारिसी ।
 जन्मोजन्मींचा होईल नरकीं । तुका ह्मणे चुकी जरी यासी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One born in a human body who wastes it has only earned the horrors of hell. Why was such a person born at all? Better to have been a worm.

He dies and is born again, again and again like an actor on a stage, shameless and without remorse. Why did his mother give birth to him, only to leave his face uncovered in disgrace? Without devotion to God, such a man is cast out from grace; the earth cannot bear his weight for even a moment.

What will it cost you to say the name of Rama? Why do you not consider your own good? Says Tuka, if one misses this chance, one falls into hell birth after birth.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One who wastes the human body has only earned the horrors of hell. Why was such a stone-hearted one even born? Better that he had been born a worm. He is born and dies, again and again, like an actor on a stage, shameless, holding no shame at all. Why did his mother give birth to him, only to leave his face uncovered in disgrace? Without devotion and dharma this man is an outcaste; the earth cannot bear his weight for a moment. What does it cost you to say Rama? Why do you not think of your own good? Tuka says: if you miss this chance, you fall into hell birth after birth.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram delivers a hard warning against squandering a human birth, which he treats as the one rare opening to turn toward God. The harsh images, the stone, the worm, the shameless actor cycling through births, are pointed at the pattern of a life lived without devotion or dharma, not at any single soul to be despised. He drives the urgency home with a near-free remedy: saying the name of Rama costs nothing, so refusing it is pure self-neglect. The stakes he names are large, repeated births in hell, which is why he ends by begging the listener to consider his own good while the chance is open.

GATHA 1691

Faith and Trust

Faith, God keeps his pledge

मराठी मूळ

उपिक्षला येणें कोणी शरणागत । ऐसी नाहीं मात आईकली ॥१॥
 आतां काय ब्रीद सांडील आपुलें । ठायींचें धरिलें जाणोनियां ॥२॥
 माझ्या दोषासाठीं होइल पाठमोरा । ऐसा कोण पुरा भोग बळी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे रूप आमुच्या कैवारें । धरिलें गोजिरें चतुर्भुज ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have never heard of anyone who sought His refuge being forsaken. Will He now abandon His own ancient pledge, which He holds by nature? Will He turn away from me because of my faults? No sin is strong enough to overpower Him.

Says Tuka, He took on that beautiful four-armed form for our sake alone.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have never heard of anyone who took his refuge being forsaken. Will he now throw away his own ancient vow, which he holds by his very nature? Will he turn his back on me because of my faults? What sin is strong enough to overpower him? Tuka says: for our sake alone he took on that lovely four-armed form.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram steadies himself against the fear that his sins will disqualify him by appealing to God's own character. He has never heard of a single refuge-seeker being abandoned, so the pattern of God's mercy is unbroken. God's vow to protect those who surrender belongs to his nature, not to the worthiness of the one who comes, and no amount of sin is powerful enough to override it. The closing image grounds the whole confidence: God took on his beautiful form for the sake of devotees, which means turning his back on a sinner would betray the very reason he appears.

GATHA 1692

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the mother who feeds

मराठी मूळ

आवडीसारिखें संपादिलें सोंग । अनंत हें मग जालें नाम ॥१॥
 कळे ऐशा वाटा रचिल्या सुलभा । दुर्गम या नभाचा ही साक्षी ॥२॥
 हातें जेवी एक मुखीं मागे घांस । माउली जयास तैसी बाळा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझें ध्यान विटेंवरी । तैसी च गोजिरी दिसे मूर्तिन ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He fashioned His appearance to suit the longing of His devotees, and thus His names became infinite. He laid out paths so simple that even the witness of the boundless sky could find the way.

Like a mother who feeds her child with her own hands, placing each morsel in its mouth, so does He nourish us. Says Tuka, my meditation rests upon the figure standing on the brick, and that beautiful form is exactly as I see it.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He shaped his form to fit the longing of his devotees, and so his names became endless. He laid out paths so easy that even the witness of the boundless sky could find the way. Like a mother who feeds her child by hand, putting each morsel in its mouth, so he feeds us. Tuka says: my meditation rests on the figure on the brick, and that lovely form is just as I see it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a God who bends to the devotee rather than standing aloof, taking whatever form love longs for and gathering countless names in the process. He says God made the way to himself so simple that even the loftiest, the witnessing consciousness behind the vast sky, walks it the same easy path. The mother image carries the heart of it: God does not merely permit nourishment but spoons it into the child's mouth, doing for us what we cannot do for ourselves. For Tukaram this tender accessibility is concrete, fixed on the figure of Vitthal standing on the brick at Pandhari, exactly as he beholds it in meditation.

GATHA 1693

The Power of the Name

The Name, the feast that never sates

मराठी मूळ

धन्य मी मानीन आपुलें संचित । राहिलीसे प्रीत तुझे नामीं ॥१॥
 धन्य जालों आतां यासि संदेह नाही । न पडों या वाहीं काळा हातीं ॥२॥
 ब्रह्मरस करुं भोजन पंगती । संतांचे संगती सर्वकाळ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे पोट धालें चि न धाये । खादलें चि खाये आवडीनें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I consider my destiny blessed, for love of your name has stayed with me. I am truly fortunate now, of this there is no doubt, and I shall not fall into the hands of Death.

In the company of saints I will feast on the nectar of Brahman at all times. Says Tuka, my belly is full and yet never sated; I eat and eat again with undiminished relish.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I count my destiny blessed, for love of your name has stayed with me. I am fortunate now, of this there is no doubt. I will not fall into the hands of Death. In the company of saints I will feast on the nectar of Brahman at all times. Tuka says: my belly is full and yet never full; I eat and eat again with love.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reads his whole life as fortunate for one reason: love of the Name has taken root and stayed. From that he draws sure confidence that he is now beyond the reach of Death, the recurring fear these poems answer. He places the source of this in the company of saints, where remembrance of God is a constant feast on the nectar of Brahman. The closing paradox names the nature of that joy: spiritual delight is not like ordinary food that ends in fullness; the soul is satisfied and still hungry, eating again and again with undiminished relish.

GATHA 1694

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, love that never runs dry

मराठी मूळ

आवडी न पुरे सेवितां न सरे । पडियेली धुरेसवें गांठी ॥१॥
 न पुरे हा जन्म हें सुख सांठितां । पुढती ही आतां हें चि मागों ॥२॥
 मारगाची चिंता पालखी बैसतां । नाहीं उसंतितां कोसपेणी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझी विठ्ठल माउली । जाणे ते लागली भूक तान ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The more I taste this love, the more it grows; it never runs dry, for it is knotted to the very source. This one life is not enough to store all this joy, and in future births I will ask for the same.

When one rides in a palanquin, the worry of the road vanishes; there is no fatigue even over great distances. Says Tuka, my Vitthal is my mother, and she knows my every hunger and thirst.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The more I taste this love, the more it grows. It never runs out, for it is knotted to the very source. This one life is not enough to store this joy; in lives to come I will ask for the same again. When you ride in a palanquin, the worry of the road is gone; there is no weariness even over a long way. Tuka says: my Vitthal is my mother, and she knows the hunger and thirst that have come on me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a love that defies the usual law of pleasure, where tasting diminishes the supply; here tasting only deepens it, because it is tied directly to its inexhaustible source. So fully does this joy possess him that one lifetime cannot contain it, and he will gladly choose the same love in every birth to come. The palanquin image names the ease of the devotee's path: carried by God, he feels none of the strain of the road. The poem closes in the mother bond, where Vitthal as mother already knows his hunger and thirst, so he need not even ask to be fed.

GATHA 1695

Ecstasy and Joy

Stillness, the longing fulfilled

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं त्रिभुवनीं सुख या समान । ह्मणऊनि मन िस्थरावलें ॥१॥
 धरियेलीं जीवीं पाउलें कोमळीं । केली एकावळी नाममाळा ॥२॥
 शीतळ होऊनियां पावलों विश्रांती । न साहे पुढती घाली चित्ता ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे जाले सकळ सोहळे । पुरविले डोहळे पांडुरंगें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is no happiness in all three worlds equal to this, and so my mind has become still. I have clasped those tender feet within my chitta and strung a garland of the holy name.

Having grown cool and peaceful, I have found true rest, and the mind no longer throws itself into agitation. Says Tuka, all celebrations have come to completion, for Panduranga has fulfilled every longing.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In all three worlds there is no happiness like this. So my mind has grown still. I have held those tender feet within me. I have strung the holy name into a garland. I have grown cool. I have come to rest. The mind no longer throws itself into trouble. Tuka says: every celebration is complete. Panduranga has filled every longing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram names what the still mind has found: a happiness no plane of being can match, so it stops searching. The image is concrete. He clasps Panduranga's feet inside himself and strings the divine name as a garland repeated again and again. The result is coolness and rest, an end to the mind hurling itself back into agitation. He closes by saying the festival is over not because it failed but because it is fulfilled; God has answered every craving, so there is nothing left to want.

GATHA 1696

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the prattling child

मराठी मूळ

मायबापापुढें लाटिकें लेकरुं । तैसे बोल करुं कवतुर्के ॥१॥
 कृपावंता घालीं प्रेमपान्हास । वोळली वोरसे पांडुरंग ॥२॥
 नाही धीर खुंटी जवळी हुंबरे । ठायीं च पाखर कविळते ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मज होऊं नेदी सीण । कळों नेदी भिन्न आहे ऐसें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Like a prattling child before its parents, I speak these playful, innocent words. O compassionate one, pour out the milk of your love; Panduranga overflows with tender affection.

The child has no patience and cries when the mother is near, fluttering and nestling close. Says Tuka, He does not let me grow weary, nor does He let me feel that we are ever apart.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Like a small child babbling before its mother and father, I say these playful words. O compassionate one, pour out the milk of your love. Panduranga overflows with tenderness. The child has no patience; it cries with the mother right there, fluttering and nestling close. Tuka says: He does not let me grow weary. He does not let me feel that we are ever apart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram casts the bond with God as the bond of a baby and its parents, and lets his words be that childish. He asks the compassionate one to pour out love like a mother's milk, and says Panduranga is already brimming over with it. The child's impatience is the point: it cries and clings even with the mother present, because closeness is its whole need. The poem ends in reassurance. God will not let the devotee tire out, and will not let him feel any gap between them, so the crying is answered before it is finished.

GATHA 1697

The Nature of God

God's nearness, the driven stake

मराठी मूळ

आठवों नेंदी आवडी आणीक । भरुनियां लोक तिन्ही राहे ॥१॥
मन धांवे तेथें तिचें चि दुभतें । संपूर्ण आइतें सर्वकाळ ॥२॥
न लगे वोळावीं इंद्रियें धांवतां । ठाव नाहीं रिता उरों दिला ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे समपाउलाचा खुंट । केला बळकट हालों नेदी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

His love does not allow any other longing to arise; He fills all three worlds and remains present there. Wherever the mind runs, His nourishment is already waiting, complete and ready at all times.

There is no need to restrain the senses from wandering, for He has left no empty space anywhere. Says Tuka, He has driven the stake of His presence so firmly at my side that nothing can budge it.

IN PLAIN WORDS

His love lets no other longing rise in me. He fills all three worlds and stays. Wherever the mind runs, His nourishment is already there, whole and ready at every hour. I need not rein in the senses as they wander, for He has left no empty place anywhere. Tuka says: He has driven the stake of His level feet firmly at my side. He holds it fast. He lets nothing move it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a presence so total that there is nowhere else to go. God's love crowds out every other desire and fills the three worlds, so wherever the restless mind runs it lands again in Him, where its food is already waiting. Because of this, the usual spiritual labor of restraining the senses becomes unnecessary; there is no vacant spot for them to escape into. The closing image is a tent peg or post driven hard into the ground. God has planted His own feet beside the devotee and fixed them so firmly that nothing can pull them loose.

GATHA 1698

The Nature of God

Surrender, God carries the burden

मराठी मूळ

उत्तम घालावें आमुचिये मुखीं । निवारावें दुःखी होऊनि तें ॥१॥
 न बैसे न वजे जवळूनि दुरी । मागें पुढें वारी घातपात ॥२॥
 नाही शंका असो भलतिये ठायीं । मावळलें पाहीं द्वैताद्वैत ॥३॥
 तुका हाणे भार घेतला विठ्ठलें । अंतरीं भरलें बाह्य रूप ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He places what is best into our mouths and removes suffering by absorbing it Himself. He does not sit idle, nor does He move far away; He guards us from harm on every side.

There is no anxiety wherever we may be, for the distinction of duality and non-duality has dissolved. Says Tuka, Vitthal has taken up my burden; His form fills both the inside and the outside.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He puts what is best into our mouths. He takes our suffering into Himself and removes it. He does not sit apart. He does not go far away. He turns aside the blows that come from front and behind. There is no fear in any place at all. The split of duality and non-duality has set like a sun and gone. Tuka says: Vitthal has taken up my load. His form fills me within and surrounds me without.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures God as one who actively feeds and shields the devotee, even absorbing the suffering rather than merely watching it. God neither idles nor withdraws; He stays close enough to deflect harm coming from every direction. With that nearness, fear dissolves wherever the devotee goes, and even the philosophical quarrel between duality and non-duality fades like a setting sun, because it no longer matters when God is this present. The poem ends with Vitthal shouldering the whole burden, His form so complete that it fills the devotee inside and encloses him outside at once.

GATHA 1699

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, refusing even liberation

मराठी मूळ

आह्मां अळंकार मुद्रांचे शृंगार । तुळसीचे हार वाहों कंठी ॥1॥
 लाडिके डिंगर पंढरिरायाचे । निरंतर वाचे नामघोष ॥ध्रु॥
 आह्मां आणिकांची चाड चि नाहीं । सर्व सुखें पायीं विठोबाच्या ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी नेघों या मुक्ती । एकविण चित्तीं दुजें नाहीं ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Our ornaments are the sacred marks, our adornment is the tulsi garland worn around the neck. We are the beloved children of the Lord of Pandhari, and the name resounds constantly on our lips.

We have no desire for anything else, for all happiness rests at the feet of Vithoba. Says Tuka, we do not even seek liberation, for nothing besides Him exists in our chitta.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Our ornaments are the sacred marks. Our finery is the tulsi garland worn at the throat. We are the petted children of the Lord of Pandhari. The shout of His name is always on our tongues. We have no need of anything else. All happiness rests at Vithoba's feet. Tuka says: we will not take even liberation. In our heart there is nothing second to the One.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lists the devotee's wealth and finds it is all devotion: the marks of a Vaishnava and a tulsi garland are the only jewels, and ceaseless chanting of the name is the only voice. As the cherished children of the Lord of Pandhari, they want nothing more, because every happiness already sits at Vithoba's feet. The sharp claim comes last and is left undimmed. They refuse even mukti, the release that most seekers crave, because for them there is no second thing beside the One. Wanting liberation would still be wanting something other than God.

GATHA 1700

Devotion to Vitthal

Pilgrimage, the call to Pandhari

मराठी मूळ

चला पंढरीसी जाऊं । रखुमादेवीवरा पाहूं ॥1॥
 डोळे निवतील कान । मना तेथें समाधान ॥ध्रु॥
 संतां महंतां होतील भेटी । आनंदें नाचों वाळवंटीं ॥2॥
 तें तीर्थांचे माहेर । सर्वसुखाचें भांडार ॥3॥
 जन्म नाहीं रे आणीक । तुका ह्मणे माझी भाक ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Come, let us go to Pandhari and behold the Lord of Rakhumadevi. Our eyes will be refreshed, our ears will be satisfied, and the mind will find its peace there.

We will meet the saints and great souls and dance with joy on the sands of the river. That place is the home of all pilgrimage, the storehouse of every happiness.

Says Tuka, I give you my word: there will be no further birth after this.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Come, let us go to Pandhari. Let us look on the Lord of Rakhumadevi. The eyes will be cooled, the ears will be filled, and there the mind will find its peace. We will meet the saints and the great souls. We will dance with joy on the river sands. That place is the mother-home of all holy fords. It is the storehouse of every happiness. Tuka says: I give you my word. There is no more birth after this.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram calls his hearers on pilgrimage to Pandharpur to see Vitthal, the Lord of Rakhumai. He promises the senses their satisfaction there, eyes and ears at rest, and the mind brought to peace. The joy is communal: meeting saints and dancing on the sandy riverbank. He raises Pandhari above all other sacred sites, calling it their very source, the home where pilgrimage itself belongs, and the treasury of all happiness. The poem ends with a vow. He stakes his own word that this darshan ends the cycle of rebirth; there will be no birth after this one.

GATHA 1701

Appeals and Exhortations

Warning, the soul robbed in its sleep

मराठी मूळ

पैल घरीं जाली चोरी । देहा करीं बोंब ॥1॥
 हाबा हाबा करिसी काये । फिराऊनि नेटणं वायें ॥ध्रु॥
 सांडुनियां शुद्धी । निजलासी गेली बुद्धी ॥2॥
 चोरीं तुझा काढला बुर । वेगळें भावा घातलें दूर ॥3॥
 भलतियासी देसी वाव । लाहेसि तूं एवढा ठाव ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे अझुनि तरी । उरलें तें जतन करीं ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A robbery has taken place in another man's house, yet it is your own body that raises the alarm. What good is all your shouting when it only exhausts you to no purpose? You fell asleep, abandoned awareness, and lost all good sense.

Thieves have emptied your own treasury and cast your brother far away. You gave free rein to every passerby and thought yourself a man of great stature.

Says Tuka, at least now, guard whatever still remains.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A robbery happened in another man's house, yet your own body raises the alarm. What use is all your crying out? It only wears you down for nothing. You let go of your senses. You fell asleep. Your good sense slipped away. Thieves have emptied your treasury and thrown your brother far off. You gave way to every passerby, and you thought yourself a man of great standing. Tuka says: at least now, guard what is still left.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells a parable of misplaced alarm. A man shouts about a theft next door while his own house is being stripped, an image for the soul that frets over others' affairs while its own inner wealth is stolen. The robbery happens precisely because he slept, abandoning awareness and losing discernment. The thieves are the passions he let walk in freely, even as his self-conceit told him he was someone important. The point turns on self-examination, not contempt: the warning is to wake up to one's own losses. Tukaram's mercy is in the last line, urging him to protect whatever remains before that is gone too.

GATHA 1702

Appeals and Exhortations

Warning, deceived and still asleep

मराठी मूळ

किती वेळा खादला दगा । अझून कां जागसी ना ॥१॥
 लाज नाहीं हिंडतां गांवें । दुःख नवें नित्य नित्य ॥२॥
 सवें चोरा हातीं फांसे । देखतां कैसे न देखसी ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे सांडिती वाट । तळपट करावया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How many times have you been deceived, and yet you still refuse to wake up? Have you no shame as you wander from village to village, meeting fresh misery every single day? The thieves walk right beside you with their snares in hand; how can you see and yet not see? Says Tuka, they are clearing the path only to bring about your ruin.

IN PLAIN WORDS

How many times have you been cheated? And still you will not wake. Have you no shame, wandering from village to village, meeting fresh misery every single day? The thieves walk right beside you with their nooses in hand. How can you see them and still not see? Tuka says: they are clearing the road only to bring you to ruin.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses the same warning harder, addressed to a self that keeps getting fooled and keeps going back to sleep. The wandering from village to village pictures a life of restless seeking that earns nothing but new sorrow each day. The danger walks alongside, snares ready, in plain view; the failure is not lack of sight but refusal to see what is in front of one. The closing line strips the comfort: the smooth path being opened ahead is not help but a trap laid for destruction. The sharpness is aimed at the pattern of self-deception, calling the listener to honest waking.

GATHA 1703

Appeals and Exhortations

Warning, trade that loses the capital

मराठी मूळ

मुदलामध्ये पडे तोटा । ऐसा खोटा उदीम ॥१॥
 आणिकांची कां लाज नाही । आळसा जिहीं तजिलें ॥२॥
 एके सांते सरिखीं वित्तें । हानि हित वेगळालीं ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे हित धरा । नव्हे पुरा गांवढाळ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When the principal itself is being lost, such a trade is surely worthless. Are you not ashamed before those who have given up laziness? At the same fair the goods are alike, yet gain and loss fall to different people.

Says Tuka, choose what is truly beneficial, and do not remain a simpleton.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When you lose the principal itself, that trade is a bad one. Are you not ashamed before those who have thrown off their laziness? At the same fair the goods are the same, yet loss falls to one and gain to another. Tuka says: hold to what truly helps you. Do not stay a country fool.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses the language of the marketplace. A trade that eats into your starting capital, your very life, is plainly a losing one, so the soul that spends its days and gains nothing should be ashamed beside those who have shaken off sloth and made something of the same chance. His sharp observation is that the fair offers everyone identical goods; the same human birth and the same Name are available to all, yet one walks away enriched and another ruined, by their own diligence or neglect. The closing call is practical: choose what genuinely profits the soul, and stop being a simpleton who cannot tell gain from loss.

GATHA 1704

Appeals and Exhortations

Courage, deliver the message plainly

मराठी मूळ

निरोप सांगतां । न धरीं भय न करीं चिंता ॥१॥
 असो ज्याचें त्याचे त्याचे माथां । आपण करावी ते कथा ॥२॥
 उतरावा भार । किंवा न व्हावें सादर ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे धाक । तया इह ना परलोक ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When delivering a message, do not be afraid and do not worry. Let each person's burden rest upon their own head; you simply speak the truth.

Either unload the burden or do not bother showing up at all. Says Tuka, the one who is ruled by fear has neither this world nor the next.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When you carry a message, hold no fear and feel no worry. Let what is each man's lie on his own head. You only tell the truth. Either set the load down, or do not come forward at all. Tuka says: the one ruled by fear has neither this world nor the next.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks to the duty of the one who must deliver God's word, or any hard truth. The messenger is told to drop fear and anxiety, because each person carries their own responsibility on their own head; the speaker's task is only to say what is true. He demands wholeness: either fully unload the burden you were given to carry, or do not step up to the task in the first place; half-measures are useless. The closing line names the stakes. Whoever lets fear govern him loses on both sides, gaining neither this world nor the next, so timidity in speaking the truth is itself a kind of ruin.

GATHA 1705

Faith and Trust

Faith, courage and God's help

मराठी मूळ

शूरत्वासी मोल । नये कामा फिके बोल ॥१॥
केला न संडी कैवाड । जीवेंसाठीं तों हे होड ॥२॥
धीर तो कारण । साहए होतो नारायण ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे हरि । दासां रिक्षतो निर्धारि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Valor has a price that feeble words cannot pay. The true warrior never abandons his cause; he stakes his very life upon it.

Courage is the key, and Narayana Himself stands at the side of the brave. Says Tuka, Hari most surely protects His devotees.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Valor has a price that weak words cannot pay. The true warrior never lets go of his cause. He stakes his very life on it. Courage is the thing that matters. Narayana Himself comes to his side. Tuka says: Hari surely protects His servants.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram likens the devotee's path to a warrior's. Bravery cannot be bought with feeble talk; it costs something real. The true fighter never abandons the cause he has taken up, wagering his own life on it, and that steadiness, not cleverness, is what counts. The promise is that such courage is met from above: Narayana Himself stands beside the one who dares. The poem closes in plain assurance, that Hari most certainly guards those who serve Him, so the risk the devotee takes is never taken alone.

GATHA 1706

Faith and Trust

Faith, God shields His servants

मराठी मूळ

हरिच्या दासां भये । ऐसें बोलों तें ही नये ॥१॥
 राहोनियां आड । उभा देव पुरवी कोड ॥२॥
 हरिच्या दासां चिंता । अघटित हे वार्ता ॥३॥
 खावे ल्यावें घावें । तुका ह्मणे पुरवावें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

To say that the devotees of Hari know fear is simply not proper. God stands hidden behind them and fulfills their every wish.

To say that the devotees of Hari know anxiety is an outlandish tale. Says Tuka, whatever they need to eat, wear, or give away is always provided.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To say the servants of Hari feel fear is wrong even to speak. God stands hidden behind them and grants their every wish. To say the servants of Hari feel anxiety is an absurd tale. Tuka says: whatever they must eat, wear, or give away, He provides it all.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram states the security of God's devotees as something so sure that the opposite should not even be uttered. To suppose that those who serve Hari live in fear is improper, because God Himself stands behind them, unseen, fulfilling their desires. To suppose they carry anxiety is simply an impossible story. The closing line makes the protection concrete and daily: food to eat, clothes to wear, and even the means to give to others are all supplied by Him. The devotee's whole need, material as well as spiritual, is God's own responsibility.

GATHA 1707

The Saints

Praise of the saints, joy where they dwell

मराठी मूळ

दासां सर्व काळ । तेथें सुखाचे कल्लोळ ॥१॥
 जेथें वसती हरिदास । पुण्य पिके पापा नास ॥२॥
 फिरे सुदर्शन । घेऊनियां नारायण ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे घरीं । होय ह्मणियारा कामारी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Wherever devotees dwell, waves of joy are present at all times. In the place where the servants of Hari reside, merit flourishes and sin is destroyed.

Narayana Himself patrols that place, Sudarshana discus in hand. Says Tuka, in that household He becomes a willing servant, saying yes to every need.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Where the servants of God live, there is joy at every hour. Where the servants of Hari stay, merit ripens and sin is destroyed. Narayana himself goes around that place, the Sudarshana discus in his hand. Tuka says: in that house he becomes a willing servant, saying yes to every need.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is telling us what a place is worth by who lives in it. Where God's devotees dwell, the air itself is good fortune: merit grows like a crop and sin falls away. He goes further and says Narayana patrols that house himself, weapon in hand, guarding it. And then the boldest stroke: in the home of his servants, the Lord drops the role of master and becomes the servant, ready to do whatever they need. The greatness of the saints is measured by how close it brings God, and how low God will stoop for them.

GATHA 1708

Ecstasy and Joy

Belonging, the family of God

मराठी मूळ

आमचा स्वदेश । भुवनत्रयामध्ये वास ॥१॥
मायबापाचीं लाडकीं । कळों आलें हें लौकिकीं ॥२॥
नाहीं निपराद । कोणां आह्मांमध्ये भेद ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे मान । अवघें आमचें हें धन ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Our homeland extends through all three worlds. We are the darlings of our divine parents, and this has become known far and wide.

There is no enmity between us and anyone, no division whatsoever. Says Tuka, all honor and all wealth are ours.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Our homeland is a dwelling spread through all three worlds. We are the darlings of our mother and father; this has become known among people. There is no quarrel, no division between any of us. Tuka says: honor and all of it, this is our wealth.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is naming where the devotee truly belongs. His home is not one village but all three worlds, because his parents are God, and the children of God are loved everywhere. From that belonging follows a way of living: no enmity, no division between him and anyone else. He ends by redefining wealth itself: honor and the whole of it is already his, not as property he holds, but as the inheritance of a child who knows whose he is.

GATHA 1709

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the wicked cannot taste

मराठी मूळ

काय ढोरापुढें घालूनि मिष्टान्न । खरा विलेपन चंदनाचें ॥१॥
 नको नको देवा खळाची संगति । रस ज्या पंगती नाहीं कथे ॥२॥
 काय सेज बाज माकडा विलास । अळंकारा नास करुनी टाकी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे काय पाजूनि नवनीत । सर्पा विष थीत अमृताचें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why set fine delicacies before a donkey or smear sandalwood paste on an ass? God, spare me the company of the wicked, for they have no taste for the nectar of sacred stories. What use is a luxurious bed to a monkey? It will only destroy the ornaments.

Says Tuka, even if you feed a serpent butter and cream, its venom remains the same.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What good is it to set fine food before cattle, or to smear sandal paste on a donkey? No, God, do not give me the company of the wicked; they find no relish at the table where holy stories are told. What good is a soft bed and its comforts to a monkey? It only ruins the ornaments. Tuka says: what good is it to feed a snake butter and cream? Even given nectar, its poison stays poison.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is asking to be spared the company of those who cannot receive what is being offered, and he says it in a string of plain images. Delicacies before cattle, sandal paste on a donkey, a fine bed for a monkey, cream for a snake: in each case the good thing is wasted because the receiver has no taste for it. He turns this on the wicked who sit through holy stories and feel nothing, and on the snake that drinks cream yet keeps its venom. The point is not contempt for any person but a warning about a pattern: where the appetite for the sacred is missing, even the highest gift is squandered, so guard your own hunger for it.

GATHA 1710

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the secret treasure of love

मराठी मूळ

आनंदें एकांतीं प्रेमें वोसंडत । घेऊं अगणित प्रेमसुख ॥१॥
 गोप्य धन वारा लागों यास । पाहों नेदूं वास दुर्जनासी ॥२॥
 झणी दृष्ट लागे आवडीच्या रसा । सेवूं जिरे तैसा आपणासी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे हें बहु सकुमार । न साहावे भार वचनाचा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In joyful solitude, overflowing with love, let us drink this boundless nectar of devotion. This secret treasure must be shielded from the wind; we must not let the wicked catch even its scent.

Beware lest the evil eye fall upon this beloved sweetness; let us absorb it quietly within ourselves. Says Tuka, this love is exceedingly delicate and cannot bear even the weight of words.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In joyful solitude, overflowing with love, let us take this measureless sweetness of love. It is a hidden treasure; let no wind touch it. Let us not let the wicked even catch its scent. Beware the evil eye on this beloved sweetness; let us drink it quietly into ourselves, so it sinks in. Tuka says: this is very tender. It cannot bear even the weight of words.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing the love of God as something so delicate it must be hidden to survive. He wants it tasted in solitude, overflowing and without measure, and then guarded like a buried treasure that even a breath of wind could spoil. The wicked must not be allowed near it, not even to smell it, and the evil eye must not fall on it. Most tellingly, he says this love cannot bear even the weight of words: to speak it too freely is to coarsen it. So the devotee drinks it quietly inward, letting it settle, rather than displaying it.

GATHA 1711

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, choosing form over liberation

मराठी मूळ

मोक्षपदें तुच्छ केलीं याकारणें । आह्मां जन्म घेणें युगायुगीं ॥१॥
 विटे ऐसें सुख नव्हे भक्तिरस । पुडतीपुडती आस सेवावें हें ॥२॥
 देवा हातीं रूप धरविला आकार । नेदूं निराकार होऊं त्यासी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे चित्त निवांत राहिलें । ध्याईं तीं पाउलें विटेवरि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We have made liberation itself seem trifling, for we wish to be born age after age. No bliss of formless dissolution can match the sweetness of the brick where He stands; this nectar must be tasted again and again.

We have compelled God to hold a form with shape and features, and we will not let Him become formless. Says Tuka, my mind rests in perfect stillness, meditating on those feet upon the brick.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We have made the stages of liberation seem worthless, and for this reason: we want to be born age after age. No bliss can match the sweetness of the brick where he stands; this nectar must be tasted again and again. We have made God hold a form with shape; we will not let him become formless. Tuka says: my mind has come to rest, still, meditating on those feet upon the brick.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is refusing liberation on purpose, and saying why. Most seekers want release from rebirth; he wants the opposite, to be born again and again, because each birth means more of the sweetness of Vitthal standing on the brick at Pandhari. He calls the formless bliss less than that nectar, and insists on keeping God in form: he will not let the Lord dissolve into the formless. The poem ends in stillness, his mind at rest on those feet, which is the one thing he wants from any birth.

GATHA 1712

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, stop the chatter and listen

मराठी मूळ

नको बोलों भांडा । खीळ घालुन बैस तोंडा ॥१॥
 ऐक विठोबाचे गुण । करीं सादर श्रवण ॥२॥
 प्रेमसुखा आड । काय वाजातें चाभाड ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे हिता । कां रे नागवसी थीता ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Stop your bickering and put a lock on your mouth. Listen to the virtues of Vithoba; lend your ears with reverence.

Why do you beat your chatterbox tongue against the bliss of love? Says Tuka, why do you cheat yourself out of your own certain welfare?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Stop arguing. Put a bolt on your mouth and sit. Listen to the virtues of Vithoba; listen with all your attention. Why beat your useless tongue against the bliss of love? Tuka says: why, then, do you cheat yourself out of the very good that is already yours?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is scolding the restless, arguing mind and telling it to be quiet. He says bolt your mouth and sit, then turn that same attention to hearing Vithoba's praises with reverence. The endless chatter, he says, is being beaten uselessly against a bliss that is right there to be received. The closing line names the loss: the welfare is certain and already yours, and by talking instead of listening you rob yourself of it.

GATHA 1713

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, show is not substance

मराठी मूळ

अति जालें उत्तम वेश्येचें लावण्य । परि ते सवासीण न ह्यणावी ॥1॥
 उचित अनुचित केले ठाया ठाव । गुणां मोल वाव थोरपण ॥ध्रु॥
 शूरत्वावांचूनि शूरांमाजी ठाव । नाहीं आयुर्भाव आणिलिया ॥2॥
 तुका ह्यणे सोंग पोटाचे उपाय । कारण कमाईवण नाहीं ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A courtesan may possess supreme beauty, yet she is never called a virtuous wife. What is proper and what is not, each has its rightful place; greatness is measured by qualities, not by show.

Without true valor, no amount of outward display can earn one a place among warriors. Says Tuka, all pretense is merely a livelihood; without genuine spiritual practice, nothing avails.

IN PLAIN WORDS

However great a courtesan's beauty becomes, she is still never called a faithful wife. What is proper and what is not each has its own place; greatness is worth nothing where the real qualities are absent. Without true courage, no display wins you a place among warriors. Tuka says: pretense is only a way to fill the belly. Without real earning, it counts for nothing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is drawing the line between appearance and the real thing. Beauty, however high, does not make a courtesan a faithful wife; the name belongs to what one actually is, not to what one shows. So too, no display of bravado earns a coward a place among warriors. He calls all such pretense merely a way to feed oneself, a costume worn for a living. The standard he holds up is genuine inward practice and earning: where that is missing, the show is worth nothing, and this is a mirror to hold up to one's own pretending.

GATHA 1714

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, fitness must match the role

मराठी मूळ

शूरां साजती हतियारें । गांढरां हासतील पोरें ॥1॥
 काय केली विटंबण । मोतीं नासिकावांचून ॥ध्रु॥
 पतिव्रते रूप साजे । सिंदळ काजळ लेतां लाजे ॥2॥
 दासी पत्नी सुता । नव्हे सरी एक पिता ॥3॥
 मान बुद्धवंतां । थोर न मनिती पिता ॥4॥
 तुका ह्यणे तरी । आंत शुद्ध दंडे वरी ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Weapons befit the brave; in the hands of a coward, even children laugh. What humiliation it is for pearls to be strung without a proper nose-ring.

Beauty suits a devoted wife; even one who is fallen is ashamed to adorn herself. A maidservant, a wife, and a daughter cannot share equal standing with a father.

Honor belongs to the wise; the thoughtless do not deserve it. Says Tuka, this is so only when one is pure within, even if punished outwardly.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Weapons suit the brave; in a coward's hands, even children laugh. What a disgrace it is to string pearls without the nose for them. Beauty becomes a faithful wife; a loose woman is ashamed even to wear the eye-paint. A maidservant, a wife, a daughter, none of them is equal to the one father. Honor belongs to the wise; the thoughtless do not count the great as great. Tuka says: it holds only when one is pure within, even if punished outside.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram piles up images to make one point: a thing is fitting only when the inner reality matches the outer place. Weapons in a coward's hand draw laughter; ornaments worn without the standing to wear them are a disgrace; eye-paint shames the woman who has no faithfulness behind it. Standing cannot be borrowed: a servant or daughter does not equal the father, and honor falls only to the wise, who alone can recognize greatness. The closing line gives the test: all of this depends on being pure within, and that purity holds even when the world punishes you outwardly.

GATHA 1715

Worldly Life

Worldly life, the wicked torment the saints

मराठी मूळ

काय केलें जळचरीं । ढीवर त्यांच्या घातावरी ॥१॥

हा तों ठायींचा विचार । आहे यातिवैराकार ॥२॥

श्वापदातें वधी । निरपराधें पारधी ॥३॥

तुका ह्मणे खळ । संतां पीडिती चांडाळ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What have the fish ever done wrong? Yet the fisherman preys upon them all the same. This is simply the nature of things, the ancient pattern of hostility between species.

The hunter kills innocent wild animals without cause. Says Tuka, likewise the wicked torment the saints, those wretched ones who torment.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What wrong did the fish do? Yet the fisherman is set on killing them. This is the way of things from the start; there is an inborn enmity by kind. The hunter kills the wild beast, though it has done no wrong. Tuka says: just so, the wicked, the vile ones, torment the saints.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is explaining why the good are persecuted, and he refuses to make it a mystery. The fish did nothing to the fisherman, the beast did nothing to the hunter, yet each is hunted: there is a built-in hostility between certain kinds. He places the saints in this pattern. The wicked torment them not because the saints have wronged anyone, but because tormenting the innocent is simply what such cruelty does. The lesson is not hatred of the cruel but clear sight: do not look for a cause in the victim where there is none.

GATHA 1716

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, good is known by its opposite

मराठी मूळ

वाइटानें भलें । हीनें दाविलें चांगलें ॥1॥
 एकाविण एका । कैचें मोल होतें फुका ॥ध्रु॥
 विषें दाविलें अमृत । कडू गोड घातें हित ॥2॥
 काळमेनें ज्योती । दिवस कळों आला राती ॥3॥
 उंच निंच गारा । हिरा परिस मोहरा ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे भले । ऐसे नष्टांनीं कळले ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

It is through the bad that the good becomes visible; the low reveals the high. Without one, the other would have no value and would go unrecognized.

Poison reveals nectar; bitter makes us know sweet; harm shows us the meaning of well-being. Darkness reveals the flame; night makes us recognize the day.

Pebbles, diamonds, touchstones, and gold coins are each known by contrast. Says Tuka, in this way the wicked have made the virtuous known.

IN PLAIN WORDS

It is by the bad that the good is shown; the low reveals the high. Without the one, the other would have no worth and would go for nothing. Poison shows what nectar is; bitter makes us know sweet; harm shows us what good is. Blackness shows the flame; night makes us recognize the day. Pebble and diamond, touchstone and gold coin, each is known by the other. Tuka says: in this way it is the wicked who have made the good known.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the existence of evil into something almost useful. Every good thing, he says, is recognized only against its opposite: nectar against poison, sweet against bitter, flame against darkness, day against night, a diamond against a common pebble. Without the contrast, value would go unnoticed and unpriced. He applies this to people: the wicked, by their contrast, are what make the virtue of the good visible. It is a way of seeing that disarms resentment, reading even the bad as the dark backdrop that lets the good be seen.

GATHA 1717

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, gratitude to the wicked

मराठी मूळ

असो खळ ऐसे फार । आह्मां त्यांचे उपकार ॥१॥
 करिती पातकांची धुनी । मोल न घेतां साबणीं ॥२॥
 फुकाचे मजुर। ओझें वागविती भार ॥३॥
 पार उतरून ह्मणे तुका । आह्मां आपण जाती नरका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let there be as many wicked people as there are; we owe them a debt of gratitude. They scrub away our sins like washermen who charge no fee for the soap.

They are unpaid laborers who carry our heavy loads upon their own backs. Says Tuka, they ferry us across to the far shore and then proceed to hell themselves.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let there be as many wicked people as there may be; we owe them a debt. They wash our sins away like washermen who take no fee for the soap. They are unpaid laborers; they carry our load on their own backs. Tuka says: they ferry us across to the far shore, and then go to hell themselves.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram takes the persecution of the good and reads it as a strange gift. The wicked who wrong us, he says, scrub our sins clean the way a washerman cleans cloth, and they do it for free. They are unpaid porters, carrying our burden on their own backs. The sharpest turn is the last: by wronging the innocent, they take on the consequence themselves, ferrying the good across to the far shore while sinking to hell on their own account. The teaching is to meet harm with gratitude rather than revenge, and to see how dearly the one who does harm pays.

GATHA 1718

Prayers

Prayer, the servant who asks only to be remembered

मराठी मूळ

संत पंढरीस जाती । निरोप धाडीं तया हातीं ॥1॥
 माझा न पडावा विसर । तुका विनवितो किंकर ॥ध्रु॥
 केरसुणी महाद्वारीं । ते मी असें निरंतरीं ॥2॥
 तुमचे पायीं पाडतन । मोचे माझे तन मन ॥3॥
 तांबुलाची पिकधरणी । ते मी असें मुख पसरुनि ॥4॥
 तुमची इष्टा पंढरीराया । ते सारसुबी माझी काया ॥5॥
 लागती पादुका । ते मी तळील मृत्तका ॥6॥
 तुका ह्मणे पंढरिनाथा । दुजे न धरावे सर्वथा ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Saints are going to Pandhari; I send my message through their hands. Let there be no forgetting of me; this is the humble plea of your servant Tuka.

I am the broom at your great doorway, sweeping there forever. I am the dust beneath your feet; my body and mind are the rags that wipe your shoes.

I am the ground that receives the spit of your betel; I sit with mouth wide open. Your beloved Pandhari, O Lord, is the very field in which my body is sown.

Where your sandals fall, I am the clay beneath. Says Tuka, O Lord of Pandhari, let me never hold anything else within me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The saints are going to Pandhari; through their hands I send my message. Do not let me be forgotten. Tuka, your servant, makes this plea. I am the broom at your great gate; I am there forever. I am the dust on your feet; my body and mind are the cloth that wipes your shoes. I am the spittoon for your betel; I sit there with my mouth wide open. Your beloved Pandhari, O Lord, is the field where my body is sown. Where your sandals fall, I am the clay beneath them. Tuka says: O Lord of Pandhari, hold nothing else but me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram cannot go to Pandhari himself, so he sends his message with the pilgrim saints: one plea, that the Lord not forget him. Then he names exactly how small a place he wants. Not a high seat, but the broom at the gate, the dust on the feet, the rag that wipes the shoes, the bowl that catches the spat-out betel, the clay under the sandals. Each image lowers him further, because nearness matters more to him than dignity. The final line turns the prayer back on God: as I keep nothing in my heart but you, you keep nothing in yours but me.

GATHA 1719

Renunciation

Renunciation, the body betrays you

मराठी मूळ

इच्छेचें पाहिलें । डोळीं अंतीं मोकलिलें ॥१॥
 यांचा विश्वास तो काई । ऐसें विचारुनि पाहीं ॥२॥
 सुगंध अभ्यंगें पिळतां । केश फिरले जाणतां ॥३॥
 पिंड पिळतां ओसरे । अवधी घेऊनि मागें सरे ॥४॥
 करितां उपचार । कोणां नाहीं उपकार ॥५॥
 अल्प जीवन करीं । तुका ह्मणे साधीं हरी ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The eyes behold what they desire, but in the end they must let it go. What trust can be placed in such things? Consider this carefully.

Hair that is pampered with fragrant oils and ointments will in time turn grey and betray you. The body, however well-fed, eventually shrivels and draws back, taking everything with it.

No matter what remedies you apply, nothing yields a lasting return. Says Tuka, life is brief; use it to secure Hari.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The eyes look at what they want. In the end they have to let it go. What trust can you put in such things? Think about it carefully. Hair you pamper with sweet oils turns grey while you watch. However well you feed the body, it shrivels in the end and pulls back, taking everything with it. Whatever remedy you try, none of it pays you back. Life is short. Tuka says: use it to secure Hari.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks straight at the body and counts what it can promise. The eye seizes what it desires, then is forced to release it; the oiled hair greys, the well-fed flesh shrinks back at the end and drags off everything you gathered. He asks why anyone would trust such things or pour their care into them, since no remedy buys a lasting return. The one move that pays is to spend this brief life winning Hari, while there is still time.

GATHA 1720

True Worship

True worship, the Name does it all

मराठी मूळ

यज्ञनिमित्त तें शरिरासी बंधन । कां रे तृष्णा वायांविण वाढविली ॥१॥
 नव्हे ते भक्ति परलोकसाधन । विषयांनीं बंधन केलें तुज ॥२॥
 आशा धरुनि फळाची । तीथाअ व्रतीं मुक्ति कैचि ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने सिणसी वाया । शरण न वजतां पंढरिराया ॥४॥
 संध्या कर्म ध्यान जप तप अनुष्ठान । अवघें घडे नाम उच्चारितां ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Rituals only bind the body further; why have you needlessly nourished craving? Such devotion does not lead to the other shore; the senses have bound you tightly. When you perform pilgrimages and fasts with an eye on the fruit, how can liberation ever come? Says Tuka, you toil in vain if you do not surrender to the Lord of Pandhari. Through the simple utterance of the name, every prayer, ritual, meditation, austerity, and vow is fulfilled.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why do rituals only bind the body more? Why have you grown your craving for nothing? That kind of devotion is no path to the other shore. The senses have tied you up. When you keep an eye on the reward, doing your pilgrimages and your fasts, where will freedom come from? Tuka says: you wear yourself out for nothing if you do not surrender to the King of Pandhari. Evening rites, action, meditation, chanting, austerity, observance: all of it happens when you speak the Name.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns on the machinery of religion when it is run for profit. Rites done to gain a fruit only fasten the body tighter and feed the craving they claim to cure, so they cannot ferry anyone across; the senses still hold the rope. He says the toil is wasted without surrender to the Lord of Pandhari. The release he points to is small and total: speak the Name, and every rite, meditation, and austerity is already fulfilled in it.

GATHA 1721

The Power of the Name

The Name, saved at the last hour

मराठी मूळ

न वेचे मोल कांहीं लागती न सायास । तरी कां आळस करिसी झणी ॥१॥
 ऐसें हे सार कां नेघेसी फुकाचें । काय तुझें वेचे मोल तया ॥२॥
 पुत्रस्नेहें शोक करी अजामेळ । तंव तो कृपाळ जवळी उभा ।
 अनाथांच्या नाथें घातला विमानीं । नेला उचलूनि परलोका ॥३॥
 अंतकाळीं गणिका पिक्षयाच्या छंदें । राम राम उच्चारिलें ।
 तंव त्या दिनानाथा कृपा आली । त्यानें तयेसी वैकुंठा नेलें ॥४॥
 अवचिता नाम आलिया हे गती । चिंतितां चितीं जवळी असे ।
 तुका ह्मणे भावें स्मरा राम राम । कोण जाणे तये दशे ॥५॥
 दुष्टाचें चित्त न भिन्ने अंतरीं । जरी जन्मवरी उपदेशिला ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

It costs nothing and requires no effort, so why do you hesitate even for a moment? Why not seize this precious essence that is offered freely? What expense is it to you? Ajamela, out of love for his son, cried that name at the hour of death, and the compassionate Lord stood right beside him, placed him in a celestial chariot, and carried him to the highest world. The courtesan Pingala, absorbed in her parrot's chanting, uttered the name of Rama, and the Lord of the lowly took pity and brought her to Vaikuntha.

If such is the reward when the name comes even by accident, imagine what comes to one who remembers it with intention. Says Tuka, chant Rama, Rama with feeling, for who knows when that final hour may arrive?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

It costs nothing. It takes no effort. So why are you lazy even for a moment? Why not take this essence when it is free? What does it spend of yours? Ajamela, grieving for his son, cried out that name at his death. At once the merciful Lord stood beside him, set him in a heavenly chariot, and carried him to the other world. The courtesan, caught up in her parrot's chanting, said Rama, Rama at the end. The Lord of the helpless took pity and brought her to Vaikuntha. If even the name spoken by accident leads there, think what comes to one who holds it in mind on purpose. Tuka says: with feeling, remember Rama, Rama. Who knows when that hour will come?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses the cheapest, easiest thing there is: the Name costs nothing and takes no labor, so refusing it is pure sloth. He offers two proofs of how far it reaches. Ajamela called the name only because it was his son's, and the courtesan only echoed her parrot, yet both were carried to the highest world. His point lands hard: if the Name works even when it slips out by accident, it works all the more when you hold it deliberately. So remember Rama now, with feeling, because the final hour gives no warning.

GATHA 1722

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, the closed heart

मराठी मूळ

पालथे घागरी घातलें जीवन । न धरी च जाण तें ही त्याला ॥1॥
 जन्मा येउनि तेणें पतन चि साधिलें । तमोगुणें व्यापिलें जया नरा ।
 जळो जळो हें त्याचें ज्यालेपण । कासया हे आलें संवसारा ॥ध्रु॥
 पाषाण जीवनीं असतां कल्पवरी । पाहातां अंतरीं कोरडा तो ।
 कुचर मुग नये चि पाका । पाहातां सारिखा होता तैसा ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे असे उपाय सकळां । न चले या खळा प्रेत कांहीं ।
 ह्मणऊनि संग न करितां भला । धरितां अबोला सर्व हित ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Pour water into an overturned pot and it will not hold a single drop; the same is true of such a person. Having taken birth, he has accomplished nothing but his own downfall, consumed by darkness and inertia.

Cursed be such a life; why did he come into this world at all? A stone may sit in water for an age and still remain dry within. A hard, green lentil never softens no matter how long it is cooked; it stays exactly as it was.

Says Tuka, there are remedies for everyone, but nothing works on the truly wicked. Therefore it is best not to keep their company; maintaining silence toward them is the highest wisdom.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Pour water into an upturned pot and it holds nothing. Such a person is the same. He took birth and managed only his own fall, covered over by darkness and dullness. Cursed be such a life. Why did he come into the world at all? A stone can sit in water for an age and stay dry inside. A hard lentil never softens however long you cook it; it stays just as it was. Tuka says: there are remedies for everyone, but no effort works on the truly wicked. So it is best not to keep their company. Staying silent toward them is the whole of your good.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a heart sealed against grace and asks what can be done with it. He stacks up images of refusal: the overturned pot that water runs off, the stone dry at its core after an age underwater, the hard lentil that will not soften no matter the cooking. The warning is aimed at the closed pattern, not at writing off a soul; the danger is real because such company drags you down with it. His practical counsel is restraint: where effort cannot reach, keep your distance and keep silent, and that silence guards your own good.

GATHA 1723

True Worship

Adoration, all is already Yours

मराठी मूळ

कासियानें पूजा करुं केशीराजा । हा चि संदेह माझा फेडीं आतां ॥1॥
 उदकें न्हाणूं तरी स्वरूप तुझें । तेथें काय माझें वेचे देवा ॥ध्रु॥
 गंधाचा सुगंध पुष्पाचा परिमळ । तेथें मी दुर्बळ काय करुं ॥2॥
 फळदाता तूंच तांबोल अक्षता । तरी काय आतां वाहों तुज ॥3॥
 वाहूं दिक्षणा जरी धातु नारायण । ब्रह्म तें चि अन्न दुजें काई ॥4॥
 गातां तूं ओंकार टाळी नादेश्वर । नाचावया थार नाहीं कोठें ॥5॥
 तुका ह्मणें मज अवघें तुझें नाम । धूप दीप रामकृष्णहरि ॥6॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

With what shall I worship you, O Lord of Keshi? Resolve this doubt of mine. If I bathe you with water, that water is already your own form; what do I spend of mine, O God? The fragrance of sandalwood and the scent of flowers are already yours.

Fruits, betel, and rice grains all come from you as their giver. If I offer coins, every metal is Narayana; the food offering is nothing but Brahman.

When I sing, you are the primordial syllable Om; the clapping of hands is but the sound of the cosmic drum, and there is no ground apart from you on which to dance. Says Tuka, your name is all I have; the incense and the lamp are Rama, Krishna, Hari.

IN PLAIN WORDS

With what shall I worship you, Lord of Keshi? Clear up this doubt of mine now. If I bathe you in water, the water is your own form. What of mine do I spend, O God? The scent of sandal, the fragrance of the flower, those too are yours; what can I, with nothing, do? You are the giver of the fruit, the betel, the rice. So what is left for me to offer you? If I offer coins, every metal is Narayana; the food is nothing but Brahman, what else could it be? When I sing, you are Om; the clap of my hands is the sound of the cosmic drum; there is no ground to dance on apart from you. Tuka says: your Name is all I have. The incense and the lamp are Rama, Krishna, Hari.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses a worshipper's honest puzzle into a confession of nonduality. If God is everything, then the water for the bath, the scent of the flower, the fruit and rice and coin and food are all already God; the devotee owns nothing separate to give. Even the song is Om, the clapping is the cosmic drum, and there is no separate floor to dance on. Stripped of every external offering, he finds the only thing he can truly bring is the Name, which is itself Rama, Krishna, Hari standing in for incense and lamp.

GATHA 1724

The Power of the Name

The Name, contempt and its wages

मराठी मूळ

गातां आइकतां कांटाळा जो करी । वास त्या अघोरीं कुंभपाकीं ॥1॥
 रागें यमधर्म जाचविती तया । तु दिलें कासया मुख कान ॥धु.॥
 विषयांच्या सुखें अखंड जगासी । न वजे एकादशी जागरणा ॥2॥
 वेचूनियां द्रव्य सेवी मद्यपान । नाहीं दिलें अन्न अतीतासी ॥3॥
 तीर्थाटण नाहीं केले उपकार । पिळलें शरीर पुष्ट लोभें ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे मग केला साहे दंड । नाइकती लंड सांगितलें ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who feels disgust at singing or hearing the Lord's name will find his dwelling in the darkest hell. The lord of death will torment such a person with rage; why were you given a mouth and ears? For the sake of sensory pleasures you stay awake all night, yet you will not keep a single vigil on the holy eleventh day.

You spend your wealth on drink but have never given a morsel of food to a guest. You have made no pilgrimage, done no charitable deed, and have only fattened your body with greed.

Says Tuka, such a person must then endure the punishment; the shameless do not heed what they are told.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The one who feels disgust at singing or hearing the Name lives in the worst hell. The lord of death torments him in rage. Why were you given a mouth and ears? For the pleasures of the senses you stay awake all night, yet you will not keep one vigil on the holy eleventh day. You spend your money on drink and never gave a guest a morsel of food. You made no pilgrimage, did no kindness, and only fattened your body out of greed. Tuka says: then he has to bear the punishment. The shameless do not listen to what they are told.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lines up a life turned entirely inward on appetite and names where it leads. Mouth and ears were given for the Name, yet this person recoils from it while gladly staying up all night for pleasure and refusing a single sacred vigil. Money goes to drink, never to a hungry guest; the body is fattened by greed while charity and pilgrimage are skipped. The harshness is aimed at the pattern of contempt and self-indulgence, the kind that shrugs off every warning, so that the listener checks where his own mouth, ears, and money are spent.

GATHA 1725

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the debt is Yours now

मराठी मूळ

तुझें ह्यणवितां काय नास जाला । ऐकें बा विठ्ठला कीर्ती तुझी ॥१॥
 परी तुज नाहीं आमचे उपकार । नामरूपा थार केलियाचे ॥२॥
 समूळीं संसार केला देशधडी । सांडिली आवडी ममतेची ॥३॥
 लोभ दंभ काम क्रोध अहंकार । यांसी नाहीं थार ऐसें केलें ॥४॥
 मृत्तका पाषाण तैसें केलें धन । आपले ते कोण पर नेणों ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What loss have I suffered by calling myself yours? Listen, O Vitthal, to your own glory. Yet you owe me no small debt for having given your name and form a firm standing in this world.

I have uprooted the entire household of worldly attachment and abandoned the fondness of possessiveness. Greed, pride, lust, anger, and ego have all been driven out with no place left to stand.

I have made gold and wealth no different from clay and stone; I know neither mine nor another's. Says Tuka, I have been generous even with this body; what further consideration can there be?

IN PLAIN WORDS

What have I lost by calling myself yours? Listen, Vitthal, this is your own glory. But you owe me no small debt: I gave your name and form a firm place in this world. I have torn up the whole household of worldly attachment by the root and thrown away the fondness of possessiveness. Greed, pride, lust, anger, ego: I have left them no place to stand. I have made gold and wealth the same as clay and stone; I no longer know mine from another's. Tuka says: I have been generous even with this body. What more is there to weigh?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes a bold, almost teasing claim before Vitthal: in becoming wholly God's, he has lost nothing and has actually done God a service by spreading the Name and form through the world. He lists the price he has paid, uprooting attachment, driving out greed, pride, lust, anger, and ego, treating gold as worthless as clay, dissolving even the line between mine and yours. Having surrendered the body itself, he says there is nothing left to bargain over. The sharpness is devotional intimacy, the lover reminding the beloved how completely he has given himself.

GATHA 1726

True Worship

True worship, the bitter core

मराठी मूळ

जाऊनियां तीर्था काय तुवां केलें । चर्म प्रक्षिळलें वरीं वरीं ॥१॥
 अंतरीचें शुद्ध कासयानें जालें । भूषण तों केलें आपणया ॥२॥
 इंद्रावण फळ घिळलें साकरा । भीतरील थारा मोडे चि ना ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं शांति क्षमा दया । तोंवरी कासया कुंपदां तुह्मी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What have you accomplished by visiting a holy place? You have only washed the skin on the surface. By what means has the inside become pure? You have merely decorated yourself outwardly.

A colocynth fruit coated in sugar still holds its bitter core, which no coating can change. Says Tuka, so long as patience, forgiveness, and compassion are absent, why do you even bother making a show?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What did you gain by going to the holy place? You only washed the skin on the outside. By what means did the inside become clean? You only decorated yourself on the surface. A bitter colocynth fruit rolled in sugar still keeps its bitter core; the inside does not change. Tuka says: as long as there is no peace, no forgiveness, no mercy in you, why do you bother making the show?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures pilgrimage against the state of the heart and finds the outing empty when the inner life is untouched. Bathing at a sacred site only rinses the skin and dresses up the surface; it cannot scrub the inside. His image is exact: a bitter gourd rolled in sugar still hides its bitterness, because no coating reaches the core. The point is self-examination, not scorn for any one pilgrim: without peace, forgiveness, and mercy actually grown inside, the external display is just a costume.

GATHA 1727

The Power of the Name

The Name, sit still and He comes

मराठी मूळ

बैसोनि निवांत शुद्ध करीं चित्त । तया सुखा अंतपार नाहीं ॥१॥
 येऊनि अंतरीं राहील गोपाळ । सायासाचें फळ बैसलिया ॥२॥
 राम कृष्ण हरि मुकुंद मुरारि । मंत्र हा उच्चारिं वेळोवेळां ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसें देईन मी दिव्य । जरी होइल भाव एकविध ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Sit in quietude and purify the mind; the joy of that state is without end. Gopal will come and take His seat within your chitta; this is the fruit of sitting still.

Chant Rama, Krishna, Hari, Mukunda, Murari again and again. Says Tuka, I will grant you this divine gift, if only your devotion becomes single-pointed.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Sit quietly and make the mind clean. The joy of that has no end, no far shore. Gopal will come and take his seat within you; this is the fruit of sitting still. Chant Rama, Krishna, Hari, Mukunda, Murari again and again. Tuka says: I will give you this divine gift, if only your devotion becomes single-pointed.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram offers a quiet, direct method against the noise of striving. Sit still, clear the mind, and a boundless joy opens; the fruit of that stillness is that Gopal himself comes and settles within the heart. The work is simply the Name repeated, Rama, Krishna, Hari, Mukunda, Murari, over and over. He stakes his own promise on it, but with one condition that does all the lifting: the devotion has to become single-pointed, gathered into one.

GATHA 1728

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, Pandhari holds every shrine

मराठी मूळ

धन्य पुंडलिका बहु बरें केलें । निधान आणिलें पंढरिये ॥१॥
 न पवीजे केल्या तपांचिया रासी । तें जनलोकांसी दाखविलें ॥२॥
 सवौत्तम तीर्थ क्षेत्र आणि देव । शास्त्रांनी हा भाव निवडिला ॥३॥
 विष्णुपद गया रामधाम काशी । अवघीं पायांपाशीं विठोबाच्या ॥४॥
 तुका ह्याने मोक्ष देखिल्या कळस । तात्काळ या नास अहंकाराचा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Blessed Pundalik, you did a supremely good thing by bringing this treasure to Pandhari. That which cannot be attained even by heaps of austerities, you made visible for all the people of this world.

The greatest of pilgrimage sites, holy places, and deities have all been confirmed by scripture to reside here. Vishnu's footprint at Gaya, the abode of Rama, the glory of Kashi, all lie at the feet of Vithoba.

Says Tuka, the moment one beholds that pinnacle, the ego is instantly destroyed.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Blessed Pundalik, you did a very good thing. You brought the treasure to Pandhari. What heaps of austerities cannot reach, you showed to all the people. The highest pilgrimage place, the holiest ground, and the very God: scripture has settled this truth here. Vishnu's footprint, Gaya, the home of Rama, Kashi, all of them lie at the feet of Vithoba. Tuka says: the moment you see that pinnacle, the ego is destroyed at once.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram thanks Pundalik for drawing God down into one reachable place, Pandhari, so that what years of austerity cannot win is set in plain view for everyone. He claims that the greatest sites and the supreme deity are gathered there, with the famous shrines of Gaya, Ayodhya, and Kashi all resting at Vithoba's feet. The closing line names the stake: this is not sightseeing but transformation, for the instant the devotee truly beholds that pinnacle, the ego that stood between him and God collapses.

GATHA 1729

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, Pandhari overflowing

मराठी मूळ

धन्य ते पंढरी धन्य भीमातीर । आणियेलें सार पुंडलिकें ॥1॥
 धन्य तो हि लोक अवघा दैवांचा । सुकाळ प्रेमाचा घरोघरीं ॥२॥
 धन्य ते ही भूमी धन्य तरुवर । धन्य ते सुरवर तीर्थरूप ॥३॥
 धन्य त्या नरनारी मुखीं नाम ध्यान । आनंदें भवन गर्जतसे ॥४॥
 धन्य पशु पक्षी कीटक पाषाण । अवघा नारायण अवतरला ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे धन्य संसारातें आलीं । हरिरंगीं रंगलीं सर्वभावें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Blessed is that Pandhari, blessed is the bank of the Bhima river, for Pundalik brought the supreme treasure there. Blessed too are all those fortunate people, for the abundance of love overflows in every household.

Blessed is that earth, blessed are those trees, blessed are those sacred waters that have taken the form of pilgrimage. Blessed are those men and women with the Lord's name and meditation on their lips; their homes resound with joy.

Blessed are the beasts, birds, insects, and very stones, for Narayana Himself has incarnated among them. Says Tuka, blessed are all who have come into this world and have been dyed completely in the color of Hari.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Blessed is that Pandhari, blessed is the bank of the Bhima, for Pundalik brought the essence there. Blessed too are all those lucky people; love overflows in house after house. Blessed is that earth, blessed are those trees, blessed are those gods who have become sacred waters. Blessed are the men and women with the Name and meditation on their lips; their homes ring with joy. Blessed are the beasts, birds, insects, and stones, for Narayana himself has come down among them. Tuka says: blessed are all who have come into this world and been dyed completely in the color of Hari.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a litany of blessing that widens until nothing is left outside it. Tukaram starts with the place Pundalik consecrated, Pandhari on the Bhima, then blesses its people, its soil, its trees and waters, the men and women singing the Name. The circle keeps opening to the animals, the insects, even the stones, because he sees Narayana incarnate in all of them. The poem's quiet claim is that devotion does not narrow life but floods it; the fortunate are simply all who let themselves be dyed through with the color of Hari.

GATHA 1730

Autobiography

Autobiography, the world's warning

मराठी मूळ

मायबाप करिती चिंता । पोर नाइके सांगतां ॥1॥
 नको जाऊं देउळासी । नेतो बागुल लोकांसी ॥ध्रु॥
 कर्णद्वारें पुराणिक। भुलवी शब्दें लावी भीक ॥2॥
 वैष्णवां संगती । हातीं पडलीं नेणां किती ॥3॥
 आह्वां कैचा मग । करिसी उघडियांचा संग ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे जाणें नरका । त्यांचा उपदेश आइका ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The parents worry and try to advise, but the child will not listen to a word they say. Do not go to the temple, they warn; the bogeyman will carry people off.

Through the doorway of the ears the storyteller casts his spell with words and lures you into begging. Who knows how many have fallen into the company of the Vaishnavas? After that, they say, why do you keep the company of these penniless wanderers? Says Tuka, listen well to the counsel of those who would have you go to hell.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The parents fret and try to warn the child, but the child will not listen to a word. Do not go to the temple, they say; the bogeyman carries people off. Through the ears the storyteller casts his spell with words and sets you begging. Who knows how many have already fallen into the company of the Vaishnavas? After that, where are you for us? they say. Why keep company with these bare wanderers? Tuka says: listen well to the counsel of those who would send you to hell.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reports, with a dry edge, how the worldly try to scare a young heart away from God. Parents fuss and warn the child off the temple as if the kirtan were a kidnapper; the storyteller's words are called a spell that lures the listener into beggary; the Vaishnavas are dismissed as penniless drifters who swallow people up. The bitter twist is in the last line: the people handing out this advice are the very ones leading toward hell. By voicing their warning straight, he exposes how upside down worldly counsel really is, and quietly sides with the child who would not listen.

GATHA 1731

Prayers

Prayer, the restless mind

मराठी मूळ

मन माझें चपळ न राहे निश्चळ । घडी एकी पळ िस्थर नाही ॥१॥
 आतां तूं उदास नव्हे नारायणा । धांवें मज दीना गांजियेलें ॥२॥
 धांव घालीं पुढें इंद्रियांचे ओढी । केलें तडातडी चित्त माझें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझा न चले सायास । राहिलों हे आस धरुनी तुझी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My mind is restless and will not stay still; not for a single moment or even half a breath does it hold steady. O Narayana, do not be indifferent to me now; come running to this tormented, helpless soul.

The pull of the senses drags it forward and tears my mind to pieces. Says Tuka, my own efforts are of no avail; I remain here holding only to my hope in you.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My mind is restless. It will not hold still. Not for a moment, not for half a breath, does it stay steady. O Narayana, do not turn away from me now. Come running. I am poor, and I am tormented. The senses drag it forward, and they tear my mind to pieces. Tuka says: my own effort gets me nowhere. I stay here, holding only to my hope in you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is admitting he cannot control his own mind. He describes it honestly: not still for even half a breath, dragged in every direction by the senses until it is torn apart. He has tried to steady it himself and failed, so he stops pretending his effort can do the work. The prayer is a plea to Narayana to come quickly to a soul that is poor and tormented, and the last line names what is left when self-effort runs out: nothing but hope held onto God.

GATHA 1732

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the giver overflows

मराठी मूळ

मागतियाचे दोनि च कर । अमित भांडार दातियाचें ॥१॥
 काय करूं आतां कासयांत भरूं । हा मज विचारु पडियेला ॥२॥
 एकें सांटवणें प्रेमें वोसंडलीं । जिव्हा हे भागली करितां माप ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां आहे तेथें असो । अंखुनियां बैसों पायांपाशीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The beggar has only two hands, but the treasury of the giver is limitless. What shall I do now, into what vessel shall I receive all this? The storerooms of love are overflowing, and the tongue is exhausted from measuring it all out.

Says Tuka, let whatever is, simply be; I will sit down at His feet and gaze upon Him.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The beggar has only two hands. The giver's treasury has no limit. What do I do now? What vessel can hold all this? This is the trouble I am in. The storerooms of love spill over. My tongue is worn out from measuring it all. Tuka says: let whatever is, simply be. I will sit at his feet and gaze.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes being overwhelmed by a love too large to receive. He casts himself as a beggar with only two hands held out, while God's treasury of grace is endless, so the very abundance becomes a sweet problem: there is no vessel big enough to hold it. Even the tongue, trying to measure and name the love, gives out exhausted. So he abandons the effort to contain or account for it and simply sits at the feet and looks, letting the overflow be what it is.

GATHA 1733

The Nature of God

The mother's heart, the saints' compassion

मराठी मूळ

जिचें पीडे बाळ । प्राण तयेचा विकळ ॥१॥
 ऐसा मातेचा स्वभाव । सूत्र दोरी एक जीव ॥२॥
 सुखाची विश्रांती । उमटे मातेचिये चित्तीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे संत । तुह्मी बहु कृपावंत ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When her child suffers, the mother's very life is shaken. Such is a mother's nature; her life is strung on the same thread as the child's.

When the child rests happily, that peace is reflected in the mother's chitta. Says Tuka, O saints, you are just as boundlessly compassionate.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When her child is in pain, the mother's own life trembles. This is a mother's nature. Her life and the child's are strung on one thread. When the child rests in comfort, that peace shows up in the mother's heart. Tuka says: O saints, you are just as full of mercy.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses the bond between mother and child to say what the saints are to him. A mother's life is strung on the same thread as her child's: the child's pain shakes her, the child's ease settles into her heart, all without calculation. He names this as her very nature, not a choice she weighs. Then he turns it on the saints: their

compassion for him runs the same way, feeling his suffering and his peace as their own.

GATHA 1734

Longing and Separation

Longing, home to the mother's house

मराठी मूळ

यावें माहेरास । हे च सर्वकाळ आस ॥१॥
 घ्यावी उच्छष्टाची धणी । तीर्थ इच्छी पायवणी ॥ध्रु॥
 भोग उभा आड । आहे तोंवरी च नाड ॥२॥
 तुका ह्याने देवें । माझें सिद्धी पाववावें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My constant longing is to come home to the mother's house. I wish to eat the leftovers of the saints' meal until my belly is full and to drink the water that has washed their feet.

So long as the body and its obligations stand in the way, the pull of longing persists. Says Tuka, may God bring my aspiration to fulfillment.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To come home to the mother's house: this is what I long for, all the time. Let me eat my fill of the saints' leftovers. Let me drink the water that washed their feet. As long as the body and its claims stand in the way, the ache stays. Tuka says: God, bring what I long for to its fulfillment.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures the soul as a married daughter aching to return to her mother's house, the place of the saints and of God. What he wants there is humble to the point of self-erasure: to eat the saints' leftovers and drink the water from their feet, treating their lowest remnants as the highest food. He names the one obstacle plainly: the body and its obligations stand in the way, and as long as they do, the longing burns unsatisfied. The closing line hands the whole thing to God, asking that the desire itself be carried to completion.

GATHA 1735

The Nature of God

The mother's heart, love without return

मराठी मूळ

लेंकराचें हित । वाहे माउलीचें चित्त ॥१॥
 ऐसी कळवळ्याची जाती । करी लाभेविण प्रीती ॥ध्रु॥
 पोटीं भार वाहे । त्याचें सर्वस्व ही साहे ॥२॥
 तुका ह्याने माझें । तैसे तुह्मां संतां ओझें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A mother's chitta is always occupied with the welfare of her child. Such is the nature of true tenderness: it loves without any expectation of return.

She carries the burden in her womb and endures everything the child brings. Says Tuka, O saints, you bear the same weight on my behalf.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A mother's heart is always set on her child's good. This is the way of true tenderness: it loves and wants nothing back. She carries the weight in her womb. She bears everything the child brings. Tuka says: O saints, you carry the same weight for me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram defines real love by what it does not ask for. A mother's attention rests on her child's welfare, and she loves without any thought of return, carrying the child first in her womb and then bearing whatever the child puts on her. He calls this the very nature of tenderness, not a transaction. Then he lays his own life on the saints, saying they carry his burden in exactly this unrewarded, self-sending way.

GATHA 1736

Longing and Separation

Longing, where has God gone

मराठी मूळ

आह्मां गांजी जन । तरि कां मेला नारायण ॥१॥
 जालों पोरटीं निढळें । नाहीं ठाव बुड आळें ॥२॥
 आह्मीं जना भ्यावें । तरि कां न लाजिजे देवें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देश । जाला देवाविण ओस ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If the world oppresses us, is Narayana then dead? We have been left orphaned and exposed, without a roof or a shelter. If we must fear the people, should God not feel ashamed? Says Tuka, without God this whole land has become a wasteland.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If the world crushes us, is Narayana then dead? We are left orphaned and bare, with no roof, no shelter. If we have to be afraid of people, should God not be ashamed of that? Tuka says: without God, this whole land has gone to waste.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram cries out from a place of feeling abandoned, and he aims the complaint straight at God. If the world is allowed to grind down God's own people, he asks, has God simply died and left them orphaned and exposed. The sharpest line turns the shame back on God: if the devotee is reduced to fearing other people, that reflects on the protector who let it happen. The closing image is bleak and total, a whole land turned to wasteland, because to Tukaram a world without God present is no longer fit to live in.

GATHA 1737

The Saints

The saints, fearlessness

मराठी मूळ

तुह्मी पाय संतीं । माझे ठेवियेले चितीं ॥१॥
 आतां बाधूं न सके काळ । जालीं विषम शीतळ ॥२॥
 भय नाहीं मनीं । देव वसे घरीं रानीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे भये । आतां स्वप्नीं ही नये ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O saints, you have placed your feet upon my chitta. Now even Death cannot harm me, for all that was harsh has become cool.

There is no fear left in my mind; God dwells in the home and in the wilderness alike. Says Tuka, fear does not come now, not even in a dream.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O saints, you have set your feet on my heart. Now Death itself cannot harm me. Everything that was harsh has turned cool. There is no fear left in my mind. God lives in the house and in the wilderness alike. Tuka says: fear does not come now, not even in a dream.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the change that the saints' grace works in him. Once their feet rest on his heart, the thing every person dreads, Death, loses its power to wound, and what was harsh and burning becomes cool and bearable. The reason fear is gone is that God is no longer confined to a temple or a safe place: God dwells equally in the home and in the wild emptiness, so there is nowhere left to be afraid. He pushes the claim to its limit, saying fear cannot reach him even in sleep.

GATHA 1738

Faith and Trust

Faith, the Name as weapon

मराठी मूळ

काळाचे ही काळ । आह्मी विठोबाचे लडिवाळ ॥१॥
 करुं सत्ता सर्वां ठायी । वसों निकटवासें पायीं ॥२॥
 ऐसी कोणाची वैखरी । वदे आमुचे समोरी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे बाण । हातीं हरिनाम तीक्ष्ण ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We are the darlings of Vithoba, the death of Death itself. We exercise authority everywhere, for we dwell intimately close to His feet.

Whose voice could dare to speak against us to our face? Says Tuka, the sharp arrow of Hari's name is in our hands.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We are the death of Death itself. We are the darlings of Vithoba. We hold power everywhere, for we live close beside his feet. Whose voice could dare to speak against us to our face? Tuka says: in our hands is the sharp arrow of Hari's name.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks with bold confidence on behalf of the devotees. Because they are Vithoba's beloved and live pressed close to his feet, they stand above even Death, the very thing that ends everyone else. This is not their own strength but the standing that nearness to God gives them, so they can ask who would dare oppose them. The closing image names the source of the power directly: Hari's name, held like a sharp arrow, is the only weapon they need.

GATHA 1739

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the miser exposed

मराठी मूळ

जन्मा येऊन उदार जाला । उद्धार केला वंशाचा । मेळवून धन मेळवी माती । सदा विपत्ती भोगीतसे ॥1॥
 नाम घेतां न मिळे अन्न । नव्हे कारण देखिलिया । धर्म करितां ऐके कानीं । बांधे निजोनि डोकियासी ॥२॥
 घरा व्याही पाहुणा आला । ह्मणे त्याला बरें नाहीं । तुमचे गावीं वैद्य आहे । बैसोनि काय प्रयोजन ॥३॥
 उजवूं किती होतिल पोरें । मरतां बरें ह्मणे यांसी । ह्मणऊनि देवा नवस करी । दावी घरींहुनि बोनें ॥४॥
 पर्वकाळीं भट घरासी आला । बोंब घाला ह्मणे पोरं । तुमचा उणा होईल वांटा । काळ पिठासी आला ॥५॥
 दाढी करितां अडका गेला । घरांत आला बाइलेपें । ह्मणे आतां उगवीं मोडी । डोई बोडीं आपुली ॥६॥
 तीर्थ स्वर्गीं नेणें गंगा । पूजन लिंगा गांविंचिया । आडकुनि दार बैसे दारीं । आल्या घर ह्मणे ओस ॥७॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसे आहेत गा हरी । या ही तारीं जीवांसी । माझ्या भय वाटे चितीं । नरका जाती ह्मणोनि ॥८॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The man who was born and called himself generous has only upheld his family name in word; in truth he hoards wealth like dirt and suffers endless misfortune. When it is time to chant the name, he says there is no food to be had; he sees no reason in devotion.

When he hears talk of charity, he ties up his head and pretends to be asleep. When a guest or in-law arrives at his door, he says he is unwell and suggests they visit the physician in their own village.

He asks how many more children there will be to feed and prays to God they would simply die, even making vows from his house to that end. When the priest comes at the holy season, he tells the children to scream that the beggar is taking their share.

When a coin is spent on a shave, he runs home to his wife demanding she shave her own head to save the cost. He knows neither pilgrimage in waking nor the Ganga in dream, nor worship of the village shrine; he bolts his door and tells every caller the house is empty.

Says Tuka, such men do exist, O Hari; deliver even them, for it grieves my chitta to think they are headed for hell.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He was born and called himself generous; he says he upheld the family name. But he piles up money like dirt, and lives in endless misery. Tell him to chant the Name, and he says there is no food in the house. He sees no point in devotion. Mention charity, and he wraps his head and pretends to sleep. A guest, an in-law, comes to the door; he says he is unwell, go see the doctor in your own village. He counts his children and wishes they would die, and even makes vows to God for it. When the priest comes at the holy season, he tells the children to scream that the beggar is taking their share. A coin spent on a shave, and he runs home and tells his wife to shave her own head to save the cost. He knows no pilgrimage awake, no Ganga in his dreams, no worship at the village shrine. He bolts the door and tells every caller the house is empty. Tuka says: such men really do exist, O Hari. Save even them. It grieves my heart to think they are headed for hell.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a portrait of the miser, drawn detail by ugly detail, of a man who calls himself generous while hoarding money like so much dirt and suffering for it. Tukaram names the pattern: every call to the Name, to charity, to hospitality, meets a fresh excuse, until even his own children and wife become costs to cut, and a guest at the door is something to wish away. The point is not one named man but the grip of stinginess itself, which closes a person to God and to every other person at once. Yet Tukaram does not end in contempt: he turns to Hari and asks that even such men be saved, because the thought of any soul bound for hell pains him.

GATHA 1740

Social Criticism

Social criticism, knowledge without freedom

मराठी मूळ

जाणे वर्तमान । परि तें न वारे त्याच्याने ॥१॥
तो ही कारणांचा दास । देव ह्मणवितां पावे नास ॥२॥
वेची अनुष्ठान । सिद्धी कराया प्रसन्न ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे त्याचें । मुदल गेलें हाटवेचें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One may know the present state of affairs, yet be unable to change a thing. Such a person is still a slave to causes; calling himself godly, he only hastens his own destruction.

He spends his spiritual practice trying to win favors from lesser powers. Says Tuka, in this way he has lost even his original capital.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He knows how things stand, yet he cannot change a thing himself. He too is a slave to causes. Calling himself godly, he only runs toward his own ruin. He spends his practice trying to win favors from lesser powers. Tuka says: this way he has lost even his original capital.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram warns against using spiritual practice as a tool for gain. The man here can see the present state of things clearly, but his knowing changes nothing, because he is still bound to causes and effects like everyone else. The error is naming himself godly while bending his discipline toward winning favors from lesser powers, which only speeds his undoing. The closing line puts it in a merchant's terms: chasing small returns, he has lost even the principal, the very ground he started from.

GATHA 1741

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, the honest shop of God

मराठी मूळ

घातला दुकान । पढीये तैसा आहे वान ॥१॥
 आह्मी भांडारी देवाचे । द्यावें घ्यावें माप वाचे ॥२॥
 उगवूं जाणों मोडी । जाली नव्हे त्याची जोडी ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे पुडी । मोल तैसी खरी कुडी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have set up shop, and the stock is exactly as advertised. I am the treasurer of God, and my voice is the measure by which I give and receive.

I know how to settle every account; what is gained or lost is never confused. Says Tuka, each parcel is weighed and priced, genuine or false, exactly as it is.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have set up shop, and the goods are exactly as I describe them. I am God's treasurer. My word is the measure I give and take by. I know how to settle every account; nothing gained or lost gets confused. Tuka says: each parcel is weighed and priced, true or false, just as it is.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram casts himself as a shopkeeper trading in God's truth, and the whole point is honesty. The goods match the description exactly, and as God's treasurer his own word is the measure by which everything is given and received. He keeps clean accounts: nothing gained or lost is ever blurred or hidden. The last line states the standard plainly, that every parcel is weighed and named for what it truly is, genuine called genuine and false called false, which is the integrity he claims for his teaching.

GATHA 1742

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the open feast for all

मराठी मूळ

सादाविलें एका । सरें अवधियां लोकां ॥१॥
 आतां आवडीचे हातीं । भेद नाही ये पंगती ॥२॥
 मोकळी च पोतीं । नाही पुसायाची गुंती ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे बरा । आहे ढसाळ वेव्हारा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What has been prepared for one serves the whole world. Now it is in the hands of love; there is no distinction at this feast.

The sacks are open wide, and there is no entangling knot to be untied. Says Tuka, this generous trade runs well in its rough and ready way.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What was made ready for one is enough for everyone. Now it is in the hands of love. At this feast there is no separating people out. The sacks are wide open. There is no knot to untie, no questions to ask. Tuka says: this open-handed trade goes well, rough and ready as it is.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes grace as a feast where the usual divisions collapse. What was prepared for a single person turns out to be enough for the whole world, because it is love, not measure, that is serving now. At this table no one is sorted or held back, the sacks are flung open, and there are no knots or questions standing between a person and the food. He grants that the whole thing looks careless and rough, but says that is exactly why it works: an open-handed giving that stops counting is the right way to trade.

GATHA 1743

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, fill the vessel right

मराठी मूळ

तडामोडी करा । परि उत्तम तें भरा ॥१॥
 जेणें खंडे एके खेपे । जाय तेथें लाभें वोपे ॥२॥
 दाविल्या सारिखें । मागें नसावें पारिखें ॥३॥
 मागें पुढें ऋण । तुका ह्मणे फिटे हीण ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Make whatever compromises you must, but fill your vessel with what is truly excellent. Seek out that which settles the account in a single journey, where the profit exceeds the cost.

What is shown on the surface should not be different from what lies behind. Says Tuka, in this way the debt of past and future lives is wiped clean.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Cut and trade as you must, but fill your vessel with what is truly good. Look for what settles the account in one journey, where the profit is greater than the cost. What you show on the surface should not differ from what lies behind. Tuka says: in this way the debt of past and future is wiped clean.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks like a merchant counting his returns, then turns the figure toward the soul. Make whatever small compromises living requires, he says, but spend your effort on the one thing that pays in full, the Name and the love of God, which clears the whole account in a single venture. He sets one further condition: your inner life and your outer face must be the same, no hidden seam between them. Trade that way and the long debt of birth after birth is settled clean.

GATHA 1744

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, the trustworthy life

मराठी मूळ

नसावे ओशाळ । मग मानिती सकळ ॥१॥
जाय तेथे पावे मान । चाले बोलिले वचन ॥२॥
राहों नेदी बाकी । दान ज्याचें त्यासी टाकी ॥३॥
होवा वाटे जना । तुका ह्मणे साटीं गुणां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One should never have cause for embarrassment; then all will show respect. Wherever such a person goes, he is honored, and his spoken word carries weight.

He leaves nothing outstanding; what belongs to each he returns in full. Says Tuka, one should live so that people wish to emulate one's virtues.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Never give cause for shame; then everyone respects you. Wherever such a person goes, he is honored, and his word holds. He leaves nothing owing; what belongs to each, he returns to them. Tuka says: live so that people want to copy your virtues.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sketches the shape of a life that earns honest respect, not flattery. The root of it is having nothing to be ashamed of, so that a person can stand anywhere and be trusted, and his spoken word carries weight because it is backed by his conduct. He keeps no debts and returns to each what is theirs, owing nothing to anyone. The measure of such a life, Tuka says, is that others see it and wish to become like it.

GATHA 1745

The Moral Ideal

The pure mind, the world turns friendly

मराठी मूळ

अनघडसिद्धाच्या शब्देकरून रामेश्वरभटाच्या शरीरीं दाह जाला तो ज्यानें शमला तो अभंग ॥ १ ॥

चित्त शुद्ध तरी शत्रु मित्र होती । व्याघ्र हे न खाती सर्प तया ॥१॥

विष तें अमृत अघातें हित । अकर्तव्य नीत होय त्यासी ॥२॥

दुःख तें देईल सर्व सुख फळ । होतील शीतळ अग्निज्वाळा ॥३॥

आवडेल जीवां जीवाचे परी । सकळां अंतरीं एक भाव ॥४॥

तुका ह्मणे कृपा केली नारायणें । जाणियेते येणें अनुभवं ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When the mind is pure, enemies become friends, tigers do not devour and serpents do not bite. Poison turns to nectar, harm turns to help, and what was forbidden becomes auspicious.

Suffering will yield the fruit of all happiness, and the flames of fire will become cool. Every being will love such a person as its own life, and one feeling will pervade every heart.

Says Tuka, this I know from experience, for Narayana has shown His grace.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When the mind is pure, enemies turn into friends; tigers do not eat such a one, serpents do not bite. Poison becomes nectar, harm becomes help, what was forbidden becomes right for him. Suffering will give him the fruit of all happiness; the flames of fire will turn cool. Every living thing will love him as its own life, and one feeling will fill every heart. Tuka says: Narayana has shown his grace; I know this from my own experience.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes what happens when the heart is fully cleansed: the whole hostile world reverses its face. Enemies become friends, beasts and serpents lose their menace, poison turns to nectar, fire turns cool. He is not promising magic tricks but naming a single law, that a mind without enmity meets no enmity, and even suffering ripens into the fruit of joy. He grounds the claim in lived testimony, not theory: Narayana gave him this grace, and he speaks of what he has actually known.

GATHA 1746

Confession and Sin

Confession, hollow reputation

मराठी मूळ

लाज वाटे मज मानिती हे लोक । हें तों नाहीं एक माझे अंगी ॥1॥
 मजुनि झिजलों मापाचिया परी । जाळावी हे थोरी लाभाविण ॥धु॥
 कोमळ कंटक तीक्ष्ण अगरीं । पोचट ते वरी अंगकांति ॥2॥
 चित्रींचे लेप शृंगारिलें निकें । जीवेंविण फिकें रूप त्याचें ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे दिसें वांयां गेलों देवा । अनुभव ठावा नाहीं तेणें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I feel ashamed that people honor me, for I possess none of the qualities they suppose. I have been worn thin like a measuring cup, and this reputation without substance should be set ablaze.

A thorn may look soft on the outside but is sharp within; the outward glow of skin is only a thin veneer. A painted figure may be decorated beautifully, but without life its beauty is hollow.

Says Tuka, O God, I appear to have lived in vain, for I possess no real experience.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I feel ashamed that people honor me, for I have none of the things they think I have. I have worn thin like a measuring cup, and this greatness without substance should be burned. A thorn can look soft outside but is sharp within; the glow of skin is only a thin layer. A painted figure can be dressed up beautifully, but without life its beauty is empty. Tuka says: O God, I seem to have lived in vain, for I have no real experience.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the praise he receives into a charge against himself. The honor shames him because he says he lacks the very qualities people assume are his; the reputation is a measuring cup worn smooth from handling, all surface and no contents. He piles up images of hollowness, the soft-looking thorn, the thin gleam of skin, the lifeless painted figure, to insist that decoration without inner life is worthless. Then he lays the fear bare before God: that his life has been wasted because he has no real, lived realization to stand on. This is the saint's self-examination, holding his own emptiness up rather than resting on others' regard.

GATHA 1747

Autobiography

The plain word as bitter medicine

मराठी मूळ

बोलविसी माझें मुख । परी या जना वाटे दुःख ॥1॥
 जया जयाची आवडी । तया लागीं तें चरफडी ॥ध्रु॥
 कठीण देतां काढा । जल्पे रोगी मेळवी दाढा ॥2॥
 खाऊं नये तें चि मागे । निवारितां रडों लागे ॥3॥
 वैद्या भीड काय । अतित्याई जीवें जाय ॥4॥
 नये भिडा सांगों आन । पथ्य औषधाकारण ॥5॥
 धन माया पुत्र दारा । हे तों आवडी नरका थारा ॥6॥
 तुका ह्मणे यांत । आवडे ते करा मात ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You make my mouth speak, but the world finds pain in what it hears. Each person resents the medicine that touches their own attachment.

The sick man clamps his jaw and cries when given a bitter remedy. The child demands only what is harmful to eat and weeps when it is withheld.

Should a physician hesitate? If he does, the patient may die of the courtesy. One cannot, out of delicacy, prescribe something other than the proper diet and medicine.

Wealth, illusion, sons, and wife are the beloved lodgings on the road to hell. Says Tuka, among all these, choose what you will and make it your resolve.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You make my mouth speak, but the world finds pain in what it hears. Whatever a person is attached to, that is what stings when it is touched. Give a bitter remedy and the sick man clamps his jaw and complains. The child demands the very thing that will harm it, and cries when it is refused. Should a physician hold back out of politeness? If he does, the patient may die of the courtesy. One cannot, to spare feelings, prescribe anything but the right diet and medicine. Wealth, illusion, sons, and wife are the favorite lodgings on the road to hell. Tuka says: among all these, choose what you like and make it your resolve.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers those who resent his blunt teaching by setting it inside the work of a doctor. God moves his tongue, but the cure tastes bitter, because people flinch exactly where they are most attached, like a sick man rejecting his medicine or a child screaming for what will hurt it. A physician who softens the truth out of politeness lets the patient die of his own kindness, so Tuka refuses to prescribe anything but the real remedy. He names the sweet poisons plainly, the attachment to wealth, family, and the comfort of illusion, calling them pleasant lodgings on the way to ruin. The closing line is hard irony: he has told you the diagnosis; now choose your attachment and live by it if you dare.

GATHA 1748

The Moral Ideal

Moral ideal, purity tested by fire

मराठी मूळ

पतिव्रते आनंद मनीं । सिंदळ खोंचे व्यभिचारवचनीं ॥1॥
 जळो वर्म लागो आगी । शुद्धपण भलें जगीं ॥धु.॥
 सुख पुराणीं आचारशीळा । दुःख वाटे अनर्गळा ॥2॥
 शूरा उल्हास अंगीं । गांढरा मरण ते प्रसंगीं ॥3॥
 शुद्ध सोनें उजळे अगी । हीन काळें धांवे रंगीं ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे तो चि हिरा । घनघायें निवडे पुरा ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A faithful wife finds joy in her own mind; a faithless woman flinches at a word about devotion. Let falsehood burn and catch fire; purity alone is blessed in this world.

The righteous find delight in scripture and moral conduct; the dissolute find such talk a torment. The warrior thrills at the prospect of battle; the coward sees death in the same occasion.

Pure gold shines brighter in the fire; base metal only darkens and runs in the heat. Says Tuka, only the true diamond emerges whole from the heaviest blows.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A faithful wife is glad at heart; an unfaithful one flinches when devotion is spoken of. Let falsehood burn and catch fire; purity alone is blessed in this world. The disciplined find joy in scripture and right conduct; the loose find such talk a torment. The brave thrill at the chance of battle; the coward sees only death in the same hour. Pure gold shines brighter in the fire; base metal darkens and runs in the heat. Tuka says: only the true diamond comes through the heaviest blows whole.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lines up pairs to show that a trial reveals what a person already is. The same word, the same battle, the same fire draws joy from one and dread from another: the faithful wife, the disciplined soul, the brave warrior welcome the test, while the false, the loose, and the cowardly recoil from it. His point is that purity is not threatened by hardship but proved by it, the way fire brightens true gold and exposes the base. The final image carries the weight: only the real diamond survives the heaviest blows uncracked, so let the testing come, since it only confirms what is genuine.

GATHA 1749

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the false guide

मराठी मूळ

चालिती आड वाटा । आणिकां द्राविती जे नीटा ॥१॥
 न मनीं तयांचे उपकार । नाहीं जोडा तो गंधार ॥२॥
 विष सेवूनि वारी मागें । प्राण जातां जेणें संगें ॥३॥
 बुडतां हाक मारी । ठाव नाहीं आणिकां वारी ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे न करीं हिंका । गुण घेऊन अवगुण टाका ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who lead others astray while pretending to set them on the straight path deserve no gratitude; such a person is truly a fool. One who drinks poison and then asks you to follow, whose company will cost you your life, or one who cries for help while drowning yet pulls others into water where there is no foothold.

Says Tuka, do not quarrel with such people; take whatever good they offer and cast aside the rest.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Those who walk crooked paths themselves while steering others toward the straight road, do not count their help as kindness; such a person is truly a fool. He is one who drinks poison and tells you to follow, whose company would cost you your life, or one who cries for help while drowning and pulls others into water where there is no footing. Tuka says: do not quarrel with such people; take whatever good they offer and throw away the rest.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram warns against the guide who points you straight while walking crooked himself, the teacher whose own life contradicts his counsel. His images are sharp: the man who drinks poison and invites you to join, the drowning man who clutches at others and drags them into bottomless water, ruin offered in the shape of help. Yet his closing advice is not contempt but discernment: do not waste yourself in fighting such people. Keep whatever truth they happen to carry and let the rest fall away, watching the pattern rather than condemning the person.

GATHA 1750

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, lowest place at Pandhari

मराठी मूळ

कुळींचे दैवत ज्याचें पंढरीनाथ । होईन दासीसुत त्याचे घरीं ॥१॥
 शुद्ध यातिकुळवर्णा चाड नाहीं । करीं भलते ठायीं दास तुझा ॥२॥
 पंढरीस कोणी जाती वारेकरी । होईन त्यांचे घरीं पशुयाति ॥३॥
 विठ्ठलचिंतन दिवसरात्रीं ध्यान । होईन पायतन त्याचे पायीं ॥४॥
 तुळसीवृंदावन जयाचे अंगणीं । होईन केरसुणी त्याचे घरीं ॥५॥
 तुका ह्मणे हा चि भाव माझ्या चित्तीं । नाहीं आणिकां गती चाड मज ॥६॥
 अवधिया चाडा कुंटित करुनि । लावीं आपुली च गोडी । आशा मनसा तृष्णा कल्पना ।
 करुनियां देशधडी । मीतूपणापासाव गुंतलों । मिथ्या संकल्प तो माझा तोडीं ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Whoever has the Lord of Pandhari as their family deity, I would be born as a servant in their house. I care nothing for caste, lineage, or social standing; make me your devotee anywhere at all.

Whoever goes to Pandhari as a regular pilgrim, I would be born as an animal in their household. Whoever meditates on Vitthal day and night, I would become the sandals on their feet.

Whoever has a tulsi garden in their courtyard, I would be the broom that sweeps their house. Says Tuka, this alone is the longing of my chitta; I desire no other destiny.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whoever has the Lord of Pandhari as their family deity, I would be born a servant's son in their house. I care nothing for caste, lineage, or rank; make me your servant anywhere at all. Whoever goes to Pandhari as a regular pilgrim, I would be born an animal in their household. Whoever meditates on Vitthal day and night, I would become the sandals on their feet. Whoever has a tulsi garden in their courtyard, I would be the broom that sweeps their house. Tuka says: this alone is the longing of my chitta; I want no other destiny. Bring all my other cravings to a halt and fix me to your own sweetness. Drive out hope, willing, thirst, and imagination; I am tangled in I and mine; cut off this false resolve of mine.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures devotion by how low he is willing to go, and keeps lowering the bar. He would rather be a servant, an animal, the sandals on the feet, the broom in the house of anyone who loves Vitthal than hold any high place of his own. The drive of the poem is a complete refusal of status: caste, lineage, and rank mean nothing against nearness to God's lovers. His only longing is to be fixed to that sweetness, so he asks God to halt every other craving, hope, thirst, and fantasy, and to cut the knot of I and mine that keeps him tangled. The lowest place near the devotees is the highest thing he can imagine wanting.

GATHA 1751

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the net of illusion

मराठी मूळ

तुझिये चरणीं माझे दोन्ही पक्ष । अवघी करुनि दाखवीं पिंडी रे रे ॥१॥
 माझें साच काय केलें मृगजळ । वर्णा याती कुळ अभिमान । कुमारी भातुकें खेळती कवतुकें । काय त्यांचें
 साचपण ॥१॥
 वेगळाल्या भावें चित्ता तडातोडी । केलों देशधडी मायाजाळें । गोत वित्त माय बाप बहिणी सुत ।
 बंधुवर्ग माझीं बाळें । एका एक न धरी संबंध पुरलिया । पातलिया जवळी काळें ।
 जाणोनियां त्याग सर्वस्वें केला । सांभाळीं आपुलें जाळें ॥२॥
 एकां जवळी धरी आणिकां अंतरीं । तीं काय सोयरीं नव्हतीं माझीं । एकांचे पाळण एकांसी भांडण ।
 चाड कवणिये काजीं । अधिक असे उणें कवण कवण्या गुणें । हे माव न कळे चि तुझी ।
 ह्मणोनि चिंतनीं राहिलों श्रीपती । तुका ह्मणे भाक माझी ॥३॥
 आणिकां छळावया जालासी शाहाणा । स्वहिता घातले खानें । आडिके पैके करुनि सायास ।
 कृपणें सांचलें धन । न जिरे क्षीर श्वानासी भिक्षतां । याती तयाचा गुण ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I place both my wings at Your feet; show me the whole creation gathered in one body. What is truly mine? Caste, lineage, family, and pride are all a mirage, like little girls playing house with toy utensils, with no reality in their game.

Through conflicting desires my mind was torn apart, and the net of illusion scattered me far from home. Kin, wealth, mother, father, sister, son, brothers, and children: none of them hold any bond once death draws near.

Knowing this, I have renounced everything; now gather me into Your own net. You nurture some and keep others at a distance; were they not all equally my own? You favor one and quarrel with another, and I cannot fathom Your mysterious play.

Says Tuka, I rest in contemplation of You, O Lord; this is my solemn vow.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I lay both my wings at your feet; gather the whole of me and show me, made one. What is truly mine? Caste, lineage, family, and pride are all a mirage, like little girls playing house with toy pots; there is no truth in their game. Through clashing desires my mind was torn, and the net of illusion scattered me far from home. Kin, wealth, mother, father, sister, son, brothers, my own children: none holds any bond once death draws near. Knowing this, I have given up everything; now gather me into your own net. You hold some close and keep others at a distance; were they not all my own? You nurture one and quarrel with another; I cannot fathom your strange play. Tuka says: so I rest in remembering you, O Lord; this is my vow.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram surrenders by first emptying his hands of everything he once called his own. Caste, family, and pride he names a child's game of toy pots, and even the closest kin, parents, spouse, children, he sees losing all hold the moment death comes near. The net of illusion, maya, had scattered him from his true home by setting his desires

at war with each other, so he asks God to gather him instead into God's own net. He admits he cannot understand why the Lord draws some near and holds others off, calling it a play beyond his grasp, and rather than solve the riddle he simply settles into remembrance of God and makes that his single vow. Surrender here is letting go of all false belonging so the only bond left is to God.

GATHA 1752

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, squandering the wish-gem

मराठी मूळ

तारुण्यदशे अधम मातला । दवडी हात पाय कान ॥१॥
 काय जालें यांस वायां कां ठकले । हातीं सांपडलें टाकीतसे ।
 घेउनि स्फटिकमणी टाकी चिंतामणी । नागवले आपुले इच्छे ॥२॥
 सिद्धीं सेविलें सेविती अधम । पात्रासारिखे फळ । सिंपिला मोतीं जन्मलें स्वाती ।
 वरुषलें सर्वत्र जळ । कापुस पट नये चि कारणा । तयास पातला काळ ।
 तें चि भुजंगें धरिलें कंठीं । मा विष जालें त्याची गरळ ॥३॥
 भक्षूनि मिष्टान्न घृतसाकर । सहित सोलुनि केळें । घालुनियां घसां अंगौळ्या ।
 हाते वांत करु बळें । कुंथावयाची आवडी बोंबा । उन्हवणी रडवी बाळें ।
 तुका ह्मणे जे जैसैं करिती । ते पवती तैसीं च फळें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Intoxicated by youth, the wretched one squanders hands, feet, and ears. What has happened to these fools who throw away what falls into their hands? They cast aside the wish-fulfilling gem and keep a crystal bead, deceived by their own desires.

What the wise have mastered, the base misuse; the fruit matches the vessel. The pearl is born from the rain-cloud's drop in the oyster, though the same water falls everywhere.

Cotton that cannot serve its purpose meets its doom, and the serpent that wears it around its neck turns it to venom. Says Tuka, whatever one does, one reaps exactly that kind of fruit.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Drunk on youth, the wretched one wastes his hands, feet, and ears. What has come over these fools, throwing away what falls into their hands? They keep a crystal bead and cast aside the wish-fulfilling gem, ruined by their own desire. What the wise have mastered, the base misuse; the fruit matches the vessel. The pearl is born when the swati raindrop falls into the oyster, though the same water falls everywhere. Cotton that cannot serve its purpose meets its end; the same thing worn at a serpent's throat turns to venom. Tuka says: whatever a person does, that is exactly the fruit he reaps.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram rebukes the man who, intoxicated by youth and vigor, lets his living body run to waste, his hands, feet, and ears spent on nothing. The cruelest folly is in the trade: handed a wish-fulfilling gem, the human birth itself, he tosses it away to clutch a glass bead. The same gift meets very different ends depending on the one who

receives it, like one rain that becomes a pearl inside the oyster but ordinary water everywhere else, or a single thing that nourishes in one place and turns to poison at a serpent's throat. The teaching lands as a law of consequence: the vessel decides the fruit, and each person reaps exactly the kind of harvest his own conduct sows.

GATHA 1753

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, refuge of the weary

मराठी मूळ

चंदनाचे गांवीं सर्पांच्या वसति । भोगिते ते होती द्वीपांतरीं ॥1॥
 एका ओझें एका लाभ घडे देवा । संचिताचा ठेवा वेगळाला ॥ध्रु॥
 क्षीराची वसति अशुद्ध सेवावें । जवळी तें जावें भोगें दुरी ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसी बुद्ध ज्याची जड । त्याहुनि दगड बरे देवा ॥3॥
 भागलों दातारा सीण जाला भारी । आतां मज तारीं शरणागता ॥ध्रु॥
 नेणतां सोसिली तयाची आटणी । नव्हतां ही कोणी कांहीं माझीं ॥2॥
 वर्म नेणें दिशा हिंडती मोकट । इंद्रियें सुनाट दाही दिशा ॥3॥
 वेरझारीफेरा सिणलों सायासीं । आतां हृषीकेशी अंगिकारीं ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे मन इंद्रियांचे सोई । धांवे यासी काई करुं आतां ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In the land of sandalwood dwell serpents, while those who enjoy its fragrance live in distant lands. One carries the burden while another reaps the gain, O God; each one's stored merit is different.

Milk resides nearby yet one must consume the impure; what is close in possession may be far in enjoyment. Says Tuka, one whose intellect is so dull is worse than a stone, O God. I am exhausted, O generous Lord; the weariness has grown heavy.

Now ferry me across, for I have come to You for refuge. In ignorance I endured all that suffering when nothing and no one was truly mine.

Not knowing the secret, the senses roam wild in all ten directions. Worn out by this endless wandering, O Hrishiksha, please accept me now.

Says Tuka, the mind conspires with the senses; what can I do now about their relentless running?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In the land of sandalwood the serpents live, while those who enjoy its fragrance live in far-off places. One carries the burden, another reaps the gain, O God; each one's stored merit is its own. Milk is near at hand, yet one must drink what is impure; what is close in owning may be far in enjoying. Tuka says: a mind so dull is worse than a stone, O God. I am worn out, generous Lord; the weariness has grown heavy; now ferry me across, for I have come to you for refuge. In my ignorance I bore all that toil when nothing and no one was truly mine. Not knowing the secret, the senses wander loose in all ten directions. Worn out by this endless going to and fro, O Hrishiksha, accept me now. Tuka says: the mind sides with the senses and runs; what can I do with it now?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram begins with the riddle that the one who holds a treasure is often not the one who enjoys it: the serpent guards the sandalwood it cannot smell, milk sits close by while a man drinks what is foul. He reads this as the working of stored karma, each soul carrying its own portion, and calls the mind that cannot grasp this duller than a stone. From the image he turns to plain prayer, exhausted by lifetimes of bearing burdens for things that were never his and chasing after senses that scatter in every direction. He asks Hrishiksha to ferry him across and simply take him in, because the mind keeps siding with the senses and running, and he can no longer manage it alone. The cry is the weary soul handing the whole struggle to God.

GATHA 1754

The Necessity of Experience

Experience, the rare true knower

मराठी मूळ

स्वयें पाक करी । संशय तो चि धरी । संदेहसागरीं । आणीक परी बुडती ॥1॥
जाणे विरळा एक । जालें तेथींचे हें सुख । देखिले बहुतेक । पुसतां वाट चुकले ॥ध्रु॥
तो चि जाणे सोंवळें । शोधी विकल्पाचीं मुळें । नाचती पाल्हाळें । जे विटाळें कोंडिले ॥2॥
तो चि साधी संधी । सावध त्रिकाळ जो बुद्धी । संदेहाचा संधी । वेठी आणि करियेले ॥3॥
अखंड ते ध्यान । समबुद्ध समाधान । सोंग वायांविण । ते झांकून बैसती ॥4॥
करणें जयासाठीं । जो नातुडे कवणे आटी । तुका ह्मणे साटी । चित्तवित्तेंवांचूनि ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The one who cooks the meal himself still harbors doubt; and those who drown in the ocean of suspicion are of yet another kind. Rare is the one who truly knows; that joy belongs only to the one who has been there.

I have seen many who, when asked, have lost their way. Only such a one understands true purity and digs out the roots of delusion; those trapped in defilement merely dance in elaborate display.

Only such a one seizes the right moment, whose intellect remains alert at all three times; he puts doubt itself to forced labor. Their meditation is unbroken, their equanimity steady; without pretense, they simply sit in stillness.

Says Tuka, the purpose for which all this is done cannot be reached by any stratagem without offering one's entire chitta and wealth.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The one who cooks the meal himself still holds doubt; and those who drown in the ocean of suspicion are of yet another kind. Rare is the one who truly knows; that joy belongs only to the one who has been there. I have seen many who, when asked, have lost their way. Only such a one knows real purity and digs out the roots of delusion; those caught in defilement only dance in elaborate display. Only such a one seizes the right moment, whose mind stays alert at all three times; he puts doubt itself to forced labor. Their meditation is unbroken, their balance steady; without any pretense, they simply sit in stillness. Tuka says: the thing all this is done for cannot be reached by any trick, only by giving up one's whole heart and wealth.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram draws a line between those who fuss over the outward forms of practice and the rare soul who has actually arrived. Many cook the ritual meal yet still carry doubt, and many more simply drown in suspicion; the real joy belongs only to one who has been there himself. That knower recognizes true purity, pulls up the roots of delusion, and stays awake through past, present, and future, so that doubt itself is put to work for him, while the rest only dance in showy display. His mark is quiet: unbroken attention, steady balance, no performance, just sitting still. The closing line names the price, that the goal yields to no clever method, only to the surrender of one's entire heart and all one holds.

GATHA 1755

Longing and Separation

Longing, holding on through karma

मराठी मूळ

माझिया संचिता । दृढ देखोनि बिळवंता । पळसी पंढरिनाथा । भेणे आतां तयाच्या ॥1॥
 तरि मज कळलासी । नव्हतां भेटी जाणीवेसी । एक संपादिसी । मान करिसी लोकांत ॥ध्रु॥
 तरि हें प्रारब्ध जी गाढें । कांहीं न चले तयापुढें । काय तुज म्यां कोडें । रें सांकडें घालावें ॥2॥
 भोगधीपति क्रियमाण । तें तुज नांगवे अजून । तरि का वायांविण । तुज म्यां सीण करावा ॥3॥
 तुज नव्हतां माझें कांहीं । परि मी न संडीं भक्तिसोई । हो कां भलत्या ठायीं । कुळीं जन्म भलतैसा ॥4॥
 तूं भितोसि माझिया दोषा । कांहीं मागणें ते आशा । तुका ह्मणे ऐसा । कांहीं न धरीं संकोच ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Seeing the strength of my accumulated karma, O mighty one, You flee, O Lord of Pandhari, afraid of its force.
 Now I see through You; before we ever met, You were busy earning a name among the people.*

*If my destiny is indeed so formidable that nothing prevails against it, why should I press You with my burden?
 The pleasure-lord that is present action still overpowers You even now; then why should I weary You in vain?
 You owe me nothing, yet I will not abandon the path of devotion, no matter what family or birth I may take.
 You fear my faults and I fear my hopes may come to nothing.*

Says Tuka, do not hold back any such hesitation on my account.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You see how strong my heaped-up karma is, O mighty one, and now You run from it, O Lord of Pandhari. You are afraid. So now I have understood You. Even before we met, You were busy earning a name among people. If my destiny is so hard that nothing can move it, why should I press my burden on You? Present action still overpowers You, even now. Then why should I wear You out for nothing? You owe me nothing, yet I will not let go of devotion, whatever family or birth I am given. You fear my faults, and I fear my hopes will fail. Tuka says: do not hold back any such hesitation on my account.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks half in play and half in earnest, accusing Vitthal of dodging him because his accumulated karma looks too heavy to lift. The teasing carries a real plea: if destiny and present action are stronger even than God, why should either of them keep wrestling over the load. Yet he settles the bargain in his own favor. He drops every

claim on God and asks for nothing he is owed, but he refuses to drop his devotion no matter what birth comes next. The mutual fear, God's of Tukaram's sins and Tukaram's of his own unmet hope, is what he asks Vitthal to set aside, so that nothing stands between them.

GATHA 1756

Longing and Separation

Longing, only the sight of the feet

मराठी मूळ

लोकमान देहसुख । संपित्तउपभोग अनेक । विटंबना दुःख । तुझिये भेटीवांचूनि ॥१॥
 तरी मज ये भेट ये भेट । काय ठाकलासी नीट । थोर पुण्यें वीट । तुज दैवें चि लाधली ॥२॥
 काय ब्रह्मज्ञान करुं कोरडें । रितें मावेचें मापाडें । भेटीविण कुडें । तुझिये अवघें मज वाटे ॥३॥
 विचार । काय करुं हा उद्धार । न देखतां धीर । चतुर्भुज मज नाहीं ॥४॥
 रिद्धीसिद्धी काय करुं । अथवा अगम्य विचारुं । भेटीविण भारुं । तुझिये वाटे मज यांचा ॥५॥
 तुजवांचूनि कांहीं व्हावें । ऐसैं नको माझिया जीवें । तुका ह्मणे द्यावें । दुरुषण पायांचें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Worldly honor, bodily comfort, wealth, and countless pleasures are all torment and misery without meeting You. So grant me this meeting, grant me this meeting.

Why do You stand so firmly apart? Only by great merit has the brick of Pandhari been obtained by sheer fortune. What use is dry knowledge of Brahman, an empty measure of mere appearance? Without meeting You, everything feels hollow to me.

What good is pondering the state of the Self as a means of liberation when I have no patience without seeing Your four-armed form? What shall I do with supernatural powers or unfathomable philosophy? Without meeting You, they are all a burden. Says Tuka, let nothing happen to me apart from You; just grant me the sight of Your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Worldly honor, bodily comfort, wealth, the many pleasures: without meeting You they are all torment and grief. So grant me this meeting, grant me this meeting. Why do You stand so firmly apart? Only by great merit, by sheer good fortune, has the brick of Pandhari been won. What use is dry knowledge of Brahman, an empty measure of mere appearance? Without meeting You, all of it feels hollow to me. Why should I ponder the state of the Self as a way to be saved, when I have no patience without seeing Your four-armed form? What shall I do with miraculous powers, or with unfathomable philosophy? Without meeting You they are only a burden. Tuka says: let nothing come to me apart from You; just grant me the sight of Your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays the whole ladder of human goods at God's feet and calls every rung worthless without the meeting itself. Honor, comfort, and wealth are named as torment; even the high paths, dry knowledge of Brahman, inquiry into the Self, occult powers, deep philosophy, are weighed and refused as empty or as dead weight. He is not condemning these things in themselves; he is saying that liberation pursued as a technique is hollow to a heart that wants the person, not the prize. What he asks for is small and total at once: the simple sight of Vitthal's feet on the brick at Pandhari, which he counts as won by pure grace, not by his own merit.

GATHA 1757

Longing and Separation

Longing, faith that has not yet seen

मराठी मूळ

तुझा ह्मणवून तुज नेणें । ऐसें काय माझें जिणें ॥१॥
 तरि मज कवणाचा आधार । करोनियां राहों धीर ॥२॥
 काय शब्दीं चि ऐकिला । भेटी नव्हतां गा विठ्ठला ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां । अभय देई पंढरिनाथा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

To call myself Yours and yet not know You: what kind of life is this? Then on whose support shall I steady my mind? Have I only heard of You in words, O Vitthal, without ever truly meeting You? Says Tuka, now grant me fearlessness, O Lord of Pandhari.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To call myself Yours and still not know You: what kind of life is this? Then on whose support shall I steady my mind? Have I only heard of You in words, O Vitthal, and never truly met You? Tuka says: now grant me fearlessness, O Lord of Pandhari.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram names the ache of a faith that has heard much and seen nothing. He has taken the name of Vitthal's own, yet without direct knowing he feels he has no ground to stand on. The sharp question, have I only heard of You in words, exposes the gap between report and real meeting that secondhand religion leaves open. His closing request is not for proof but for fearlessness, the steadiness that only the meeting itself can give.

GATHA 1758

Prayers

Prayer, show me what You showed the saints

मराठी मूळ

उद्धवअक्रूरासी । आणीक व्यासआंबळऋषी । रुक्मांगदाप्रल्हादासी । दाविलें तें दाखवीं ॥१॥
 तरि मी पाहेन पाहेन । तुझे श्रीमुखचरण । उताविळ मन । तयाकारणें तेथें ॥२॥
 जनकश्रुतदेवा करीं । कैसा शोभलासी हरी । विदुराच्या घरीं । कण्या धरी कवतुकें ॥३॥
 पांडवा अकांतीं । तेथें पावसी स्मरती । घातलें द्रौपदी । यागीं बिरडें चोळीचें ॥४॥
 करी गोपीचें कवतुक । गाईगोपाळांसी सुख । दावीं तें चि मुख । दृष्टी माझ्या आपुलें ॥५॥
 तरि तूं अनाथाचा दाता । मागितियां शरणागतां । तुका ह्मणें आतां । कोड पुरवीं हें माझें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What You showed to Uddhava and Akrura, to Vyasa and Ambarisha, to Rukhmangada and Prahlada: show that same vision to me. Then I shall gaze and gaze upon Your blessed face and feet; my mind is restless with longing to be there.

How splendid You appeared in Janaka's court and at Shrutadeva's home, O Hari. At Vidura's house You playfully picked up vegetable peels with delight.

When the Pandavas were in distress, You rushed at their mere remembrance; You supplied Draupadi with endless cloth at the assembly. You played lovingly with the gopis and gave joy to the cowherds and their cattle; show that very face to my eyes.

You are the benefactor of the helpless and the giver to those who seek refuge. Says Tuka, now fulfill this longing of mine.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What You showed to Uddhava and Akrura, to Vyasa and Ambarisha, to Rukhmangada and Prahlada: show that same vision to me. Then I will gaze and gaze upon Your blessed face and feet; my mind is restless with longing to be there. How splendid You stood in Janaka's court, and at Shrutadeva's home, O Hari. At Vidura's house You picked up vegetable peels with delight. When the Pandavas were in distress, You came at the mere thought of You; You gave Draupadi endless cloth in the assembly. You played with the gopis and gave joy to the cowherds and the cattle: show that very face to my eyes. You are the giver to the helpless, the refuge of those who seek shelter. Tuka says: now fulfill this longing of mine.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram piles up God's past favors to the saints and devotees and asks for nothing less than the same. By naming Uddhava, Prahlada, Vidura, Draupadi, and the gopis, he is reminding Vitthal of a pattern: God has always shown Himself to those who simply loved Him. The point of the list is that the helpless and the lowly, not the great or learned, are the ones He runs to, so Tukaram has standing to ask. His prayer is concrete and physical, the sight of the face and feet, because his restless longing wants presence, not doctrine. The closing claim, You are the giver to the helpless, turns the whole catalogue into a quiet argument: be now to me what You have always been.

GATHA 1759

Prayers

Prayer, the beggar at the door

मराठी मूळ

मागता भिकारी जालों तुझे द्वारीं । देई मज हरी कृपादान ॥1॥
 प्रेम प्रीति नाम उचित करावें । भावें संचरावें हृदयामाजी ॥२॥
 सर्वभावें शरण आलों पांडुरंगा । कृपाळु तूं जगामाजी एक ॥3॥
 तापत्रयें माझी तापविली काया । शीतळ व्हावया पाय तुझे ॥4॥
 संबंधीं जनवाद पीडलों परोपरी । अंतरलों दुरी तुजसी तेणें ॥5॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां तुझा शरणागता । करावें सनाथ मायबापा ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have become a beggar at Your door; grant me the gift of mercy, O Hari. Let love and devotion and Your name fill my heart and dwell within it.

With my whole being I have come to You for shelter, O Panduranga; in all the world, You alone are compassionate. The three afflictions have scorched my body; only Your feet can cool me.

Worldly ties and public opinion have tormented me endlessly and kept me far from You. Says Tuka, I am now Your refugee; make me whole, O mother and father.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have become a beggar at Your door; grant me the gift of mercy, O Hari. Let love and devotion and Your name take their rightful place; with feeling, let them enter and dwell in my heart. With my whole being I have come to You for shelter, O Panduranga; in all the world You alone are merciful. The three afflictions have scorched my body; only Your feet can cool me. Worldly ties and the talk of people have tormented me again and again, and through them I have been kept far from You. Tuka says: now I am one who has taken Your shelter; make me whole, O mother and father.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram comes empty-handed and says so, taking the lowest posture, a beggar at the door, to ask only for mercy. He names what is burning him: the three classical afflictions, and the endless pressure of relationships and public opinion that he says have actually held him away from God. His request is not for relief from circumstances but for love, devotion, and the Name to move in and live in his heart. Calling Vitthal both mother and father, he asks the one he counts as the world's only truly merciful one to make him whole, the work a parent does for a helpless child.

GATHA 1760

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the false meditator

मराठी मूळ

भाव नाहीं काय मुद्रा वाणी । बैसे बगळा निश्चळ ध्यानीं ॥१॥
 नाहीं चाड देवाची कांहीं । छळणें टोंके तस्करघाई ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे त्याचा संग । नको शब्द स्पर्शअंग ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Where is the devotion in one whose gestures, posture, and speech are mere show? A crane sits motionless, feigning meditation, but has no love for God; its aim is to deceive and strike like a thief. Says Tuka, avoid even the words and the touch and the company of such a person.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Where is the devotion in one whose gestures, posture, and speech are all show? A crane stands stock-still as if deep in meditation, but it has no love for God; its aim is to cheat and to strike like a thief. Tuka says: keep away from such a one; do not take his words, do not let him touch you, do not keep his company.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses the image of the crane, perfectly still in the shallows while it waits to spear a fish, to expose the religion that is all posture and no love. The stillness looks like deep meditation, but the motive underneath is to deceive and to take, like a thief. The warning is sharp, avoid his words, his touch, his company, yet it points at a pattern, the use of holy appearance as a tool, rather than asking for contempt of any one person. The honest test it presses on the reader is inward: is my own stillness love of God, or is it a pose that is waiting to catch something.

GATHA 1761

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, forgetting death

मराठी मूळ

दिनदिन शंका वाटे । आयुष्य नेणवतां गाढें ॥१॥

कैसीं भुललीं बापुडीं । दंबविषयांचे सांकडीं ॥२॥

विसरला मरण । त्याची नाहीं आठवण ॥३॥

देखत देखत पाहीं । तुका ह्याने आठव नाहीं ॥३॥

माझें मज आतां न देखें निरसतां । ह्मणऊन आधार केला । संसाराची आस सांडुनि लौकिक ।

जीव भाव तुज दिला । नव्हतीं माझीं कोणी मी कवणांचा । अर्थ मोहो सांडवला ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Day by day doubt grows; one does not know how swiftly life slips away. How deluded are these poor jivas, hemmed in by the snare of pride and sense pleasures.

They have forgotten death; its memory never visits them. Says Tuka, they watch others die right before their eyes and still take no heed. Now I cannot save myself by my own discernment, so I have taken Your support.

Abandoning worldly hopes and social standing, I have given You my very life and love. No one was ever truly mine, nor I theirs; the delusion of attachment has been dispelled.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Day by day the dread grows: we do not know how fast our life is running out. How these poor souls are fooled, hemmed in by the trap of pride and the senses. They have forgotten death; its memory never comes to them. Tuka says: they watch others die before their very eyes, and still it does not occur to them. Now I cannot save myself by my own discernment, so I have made You my support. I have let go of worldly hope and of standing among people, and given my life and heart to You. No one was ever truly mine, and I was no one's; the spell of attachment has been broken.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram opens with the plain fact people work hardest to avoid: life is draining away faster than anyone reckons, and the trap is pride and the pull of the senses. The cruelest sign of the spell is that we watch others die and still cannot believe it of ourselves. He does not exempt himself; the turn is that he admits his own discernment cannot save him either. So the exhortation becomes a confession of surrender, dropping worldly hope and the opinion of others, and giving life and heart to God. The closing line, that no one was ever truly his and the bond of attachment is broken, names the freedom on the far side of facing death squarely.

GATHA 1762

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the child with no worry

मराठी मूळ

तारीं मारीं करीं भलतें दातारा । होऊन तुझा आतां ठेलों रे ॥१॥
 असो माझें कोडें तुज हे सांकडें । मी असेन निवाडें सुखरूप ।
 बाळकासी चिंता काय पोटवेथा । जया शिरीं मायबाप ॥२॥
 पापपुण्यें श्रुति आटिल्या। शास्त्रांस न लगे चि ठाव ।
 विधिनिषिधें गोविलीं पुराणें वेदांसी तो अहंभाव ।
 ओंकाराचें मूळ व्यापिलें माया । तेथें न धरे च भाव ।
 ह्मणऊन काबाड सांडिलें उपसतां । धरिलें तुझें चि नांव ॥३॥
 तनमनइंद्रियें ठेवूनि राहिलों । सर्व आशा तुझे पायीं । तप तीर्थ दान करवूं कवणा ।
 हातीं अधीन तें मज काई । आहिक्यें परत्रें चाड नाहीं सर्वथा । जन्म सदा मज देहीं ।
 मायामोहपाश करीं विष तैसैं । तुका ह्मणे माझ्याठायीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Save me, strike me, do whatever You will, O generous Lord; I have become Yours now. Let my wishes be Your concern; I shall remain at ease.

Does a child worry about the pangs of hunger when it has a mother and father to care for it? Scripture is exhausted sorting sin and merit; the sacred texts find no foothold. Rules and prohibitions have entangled the Puranas, and even the Vedas carry the taint of ego.

Maya has pervaded the very root of Om, and no conviction can hold there. Therefore I have dropped the struggle of hauling water from that well and have simply taken hold of Your name.

I have placed my body, mind, and senses at Your feet, with all my hopes resting there. I have no capacity for austerity, pilgrimage, or charity; nothing is in my own hands.

I care nothing for this world or the next; let me be born again and again in this body. Says Tuka, make the bonds of illusion and attachment into poison at my doorstep, so I never touch them again.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Save me, strike me, do whatever You will, O generous Lord; I have become Yours now. Let my wishes be Your concern; I will stay at ease. Does a child fret over the pangs of hunger when it has a mother and father over it? Scripture wore itself out sorting sin and merit; the sacred texts find no footing. Rules and bans have tangled up the Puranas, and even the Vedas carry the taint of ego. Maya has spread into the very root of Om, and no conviction can hold there. So I have dropped the labor of hauling water from that well and simply taken hold of Your name. I have laid my body, mind, and senses at Your feet, with all my hope resting there. I have no power for austerity, pilgrimage, or charity; nothing is in my own hands. I care nothing for this world or the next; let me be born again and again in this body. Tuka says: turn the bonds of illusion and attachment into poison for me, so I never touch them again.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram hands God the right to do anything to him, rescue or strike, and then explains why he can rest under that: a child with parents over it does not lie awake worried about its own hunger. The radical middle of the poem is his verdict on the texts. He does not deny their authority lightly; he says they exhaust themselves sorting sin and merit, that rules and prohibitions have snarled the Puranas, that even Veda and the root sound Om are reached by Maya and ego. Having found no firm footing there, he stops hauling water from a dry well and grips the one thing he trusts, the Name. The surrender is complete and even fierce: with no power for austerity or pilgrimage of his own, he asks not for heaven but to be reborn here in service, and begs that illusion and attachment be made poison to him so he can never be tempted back.

GATHA 1763

The Power of the Name

The Name, sweeter than every taste

मराठी मूळ

तुझें नाम गोड नाम गोड । पुरे कोड सकळ ही ॥१॥
 रसना येरां रसां विटे । घेतां घोट अधिक हें ॥२॥
 आणिकां रसें मरण गांठी । येणें तुटी संसारें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आहार जाला । हा विठ्ठला आह्मांसी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Your name is sweet, so sweet; it fulfills every longing. The tongue grows tired of all other tastes, yet with every sip of this nectar it wants more.

Other flavors bring death in their wake, but this one severs the bonds of worldly existence. Says Tuka, this name of Vitthal has become our daily sustenance.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Your name is sweet, so sweet; it satisfies every longing. The tongue grows sick of all other tastes, but with each sip of this it wants more. Other flavors carry death at the end of them; this one cuts the bonds of worldly life. Tuka says: this name of Vitthal has become our food, O Vitthal.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets the Name against every other pleasure as a taste that does the opposite of what tastes do. Ordinary flavors cloy and tire the tongue, and each one, he says, leads at last to death; the Name alone deepens with every repetition and never satiates. The single sharp claim is that this one taste cuts the knot of worldly existence instead of binding tighter. Calling it his daily food turns devotion into something as constant and bodily as eating: not an occasional rite but the sustenance he lives on.

GATHA 1764

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, full at the feast

मराठी मूळ

धालों सुखें ढेकर देऊं । उमटे जेवूं तोंवरी ॥१॥
 क्रीडा करुं निरांजनीं । न पुरे धणी हरिसवें ॥२॥
 अवघे खेळों अवघ्यामधीं । डाई न पडों ऐसी बुद्ध ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे वांचवीत । आह्मां सत्ता समर्थ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Filled with bliss, I let out a contented sigh; the belch of satisfaction keeps rising as long as the feast lasts. I play in the pure light of the Absolute; my delight in Hari's company is never enough.

We play freely among all, with the wisdom never to stumble and fall. Says Tuka, the Capable One keeps us alive; His authority sustains us.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am full and content, and I let out a satisfied belch; it keeps rising as long as the feast goes on. I play in the pure light of the Absolute; my fill of Hari's company is never enough. We play freely among everyone, with the sense never to stumble and fall. Tuka says: the Capable One keeps us alive; His power holds us up.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reaches for the homeliest image of satisfaction, a man so full from a meal that he keeps belching with contentment, and uses it for the soul filled with God. The paradox is deliberate: he is utterly satisfied, yet his fill of Hari's company is never enough, a fullness that keeps wanting more. The play happens in the open, among all people, but with a steadiness that does not trip and fall into the world's snares. He credits none of it to himself; the Capable One, God's own power, is what keeps the devotee alive and standing in that bliss.

GATHA 1765

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the game needs two

मराठी मूळ

एकल्या नव्हे खेळ चांग । धरिला संग ह्मणऊनि॥१॥
 उमटे तेव्हां कळे नाद । भेदाभेद निवडेना ॥२॥
 दुसरा परी एक ऐसा । वजे रिसा निकुरें ही ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कळत्यां कळे । येर खेळे खेळ ह्मण ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A game cannot be played alone, and that is why companionship was taken up. The melody reveals itself only when it sounds; the distinction between difference and unity cannot be sorted out.

The other seems separate, yet is one and the same; even in a quarrel the bond remains. Says Tuka, those who understand will understand; the rest simply play on, calling it a game.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A game is no good played alone, and that is why companionship was taken up. The note is heard only when it sounds; difference and oneness cannot be told apart. The other looks separate, yet is one and the same; even in a quarrel the bond holds. Tuka says: those who know will know; the rest just play on and call it a game.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram points at why the one God lets there be a second at all: a game cannot be played alone, so the One takes a companion in order to play. Like a musical note that exists only while it is being sounded, the divine shows itself only in the playing, and in that play difference and unity can no longer be neatly separated. The other player seems separate but is the same, and the bond holds even through quarrel. The closing line draws the line quietly between those who catch the secret of this play and those who keep playing without seeing it for what it is.

GATHA 1766

Autobiography

Autobiography, only the laborer

मराठी मूळ

बोलविले जेणें । तो चि याचें गुह्य जाणे ॥1॥
मी तों काबाडाचा धनी । जेवूं मागावें थिंकोनि ॥ध्रु॥
मजुराच्या हातें । माप जालें गेलें रितें ॥2॥
जाला पुरविता । पांडुरंग माझा पिता॥3॥
मायबापासवें । बाळें कौतुकें खेळावें ॥4॥
जैसा करिती धंदा । तैसा पडोनियां छंदा ॥5॥
त्याच्या साच गाई ह्यैसी । येणें खेळावें मातीशीं ॥6॥
तुका ह्मणे बोल । माझा बोलतो विठ्ठल ॥7॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The one who makes me speak is the only one who knows the secret of these words. I am merely the laborer; I must beg humbly for my meal.

Through the hired hand's measure the grain comes and goes, filling and emptying. Panduranga, my father, has become the provider.

Like a child playing happily with its parents, I play whatever game they set before me. His are the true cows and buffaloes; with these one may play in the mud.

Says Tuka, it is Vitthal who speaks my words.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The one who made me speak is the only one who knows the secret of these words. I am only the laborer; I must beg humbly for my meal. Through the hired hand the measure is filled and emptied again. Panduranga, my father, has become the provider. Like a child playing happily with its mother and father, I play whatever game they set for me. His are the true cows and buffaloes; with these one plays in the mud. Tuka says: it is Vitthal who speaks my words.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram disowns his own poems at the root: he is the day-laborer, not the master, and only the one who made him speak knows what the words really mean. The grain measure filling and emptying through a hired hand's work is his picture of inspiration passing through him without belonging to him. He casts himself as a child playing whatever game the parents set, and even names the cows and buffaloes as God's own, with the herdboy Krishna behind the image, so that the poet is simply a child playing in the mud of this life. The closing line states it plainly: the words are Vitthal's, not Tuka's, a confession of authorship that is really a confession of surrender.

GATHA 1767

Autobiography

Bafflement, the servant who cannot read his own words

मराठी मूळ

कां हो तुम्ही माझी वदविली वाणी । नेदा हे निवडूनि पांडुरंगा ॥१॥
 आणीक म्यां कोणां पुसावा विचार । मुळीं संवसार दुराविला ॥२॥
 स्वामिसेवा ह्युण घेतली पदरीं । सांगितलें करीं कारण तें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याणें नाहीं शिकविलें जेणें । तो याच्या वचनें उगा राहे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why, O Panduranga, have You set my tongue in motion and yet will not let me sort out the meaning? Whom else shall I consult, when You have estranged me from the world at its very root? I took up this service saying it was the master's work; I do whatever task is assigned. Says Tuka, the one who never taught me these things now sits silent at the sound of these very words.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why did you set my tongue going, Panduranga, and then not let me sort out the meaning? Whom else am I to ask? You have cut me off from the world at its very root. I took up this service saying it was the master's work, and I do whatever task you hand me. Tuka says: the one who never taught me these words now sits silent at the sound of them.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks as a servant given speech he does not fully understand. He says Vitthal moved his tongue to sing yet withheld the meaning, and he has no one else to ask because the same God has pulled him away from the world he might once have consulted. He keeps doing the assigned work as the master's own, not his. The closing turn is the strange part: the God who never schooled him in these words now falls silent before them, leaving the singer alone inside speech that came through him but is not his to explain.

GATHA 1768

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the servant's law

मराठी मूळ

सेवकासी आज्ञा स्वामीची प्रमाण । जोंवरी हा प्राण जाय त्याचा ॥१॥
 आणिकांचा धाक न धरावा मनीं । निरोपावचनीं टळों नये ॥२॥
 समय सांभाळूनि आगळें उत्तर । द्यावें भेदी वज्र तपायरी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे तरी ह्मणवावें सेवक । खादलें तें हाक अन्न होय ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The master's command is the servant's law, to be upheld as long as breath remains. One should fear no one else and never deviate from the master's instruction.

Seizing the right moment, one must deliver a reply so piercing it splits even a thunderbolt. Says Tuka, only then may one be called a true servant; only then does the bread one has eaten become worthy.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The master's command is the servant's law, to be kept as long as breath lasts. Fear no one else in your heart; never turn aside from what the master told you. Watch for the right moment, then give an answer so sharp it splits even a thunderbolt. Tuka says: only then may you be called a true servant; only then does the bread you have eaten become honest.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays out what it costs to call yourself a servant of God. One law governs everything: the master's command, held until the last breath, with no rival fear allowed in the heart and no swerving from instruction. But service here is not meekness. At the right moment the servant must speak a reply hard enough to split a thunderbolt, fearless before anyone but the master. Only such a one earns the title, and only then is the bread he has eaten in that house honestly his.

GATHA 1769

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, no second thought

मराठी मूळ

नये पुसों आज्ञा केली एकसरें । आह्वांसी दुसरें आतां नाहीं ॥१॥
 ज्याचें तो बिळवंत सर्व निवारिता । आह्वां काय चिंता करणें लागें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे मज होईल वारिता । तरी काय सत्ता नाहीं हातीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I need not ask; the command was given once for all, and for me there is nothing else now. The one whose command it is, is all-powerful and removes every obstacle; what worry need I carry? Says Tuka, even if someone tries to stop me, is the authority not already in my hands?

IN PLAIN WORDS

I need not ask again; the command was given once for all, and now there is nothing else for me. The one whose command it is, is all-powerful and clears away every obstacle; what worry need I carry? Tuka says: even if someone tries to stop me, is the authority not already in my hands?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram closes the question of doubt. The order has been given once and stands; there is nothing left to deliberate. He hands the whole burden of obstacles to the all-powerful one whose order it is, so anxiety has no place in him. The final line is quietly bold: since the master's command rests in him, the master's authority does too, and no one who tries to stop him can override it. Obedience, in this poem, is its own kind of power.

GATHA 1770

Faith and Trust

Triumph, the servants who noosed Death

मराठी मूळ

बिळवंत आह्मी समर्थाचे दास । घातली या कास किळकाळासी ॥१॥
 तेथें मानसाचा कोण आला पाड । उलंघोनि जड गेलों आधीं ॥२॥
 संसाराचे बळी साधिलें निधान । मारिले दुर्जन षडवर्ग ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे एक उरला धरिता ठाव । येर केले वाव तृणवत ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We are mighty, for we are servants of the Capable One; we have thrown a noose around the neck of Death itself. What can any mortal do before that? We have already crossed beyond the heavy burden.

We have conquered the forces of worldly existence and secured the treasure; the six inner enemies have been slain. Says Tuka, only the One who holds the ground remains; all else has been reduced to straw.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We are mighty, for we are servants of the Capable One; we have thrown a noose around the neck of Death itself. What can any mortal do against that? We crossed beyond the heavy burden long ago. We have conquered the forces of worldly life and seized the treasure; the six inner enemies are slain. Tuka says: only the One who holds the ground remains; everything else we have made worthless as straw.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sings the strength that comes from belonging to God, not from himself. Because they serve the Capable One, the devotees have looped a noose around Death; no mere mortal can touch them, and the heavy load of existence is already behind them. He names the victory plainly: the pull of worldly life is broken, the treasure is won, and the six inner enemies are killed, lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride, and envy. What is left at the end is only the one who holds the ground beneath all things; beside that, every other gain is straw.

GATHA 1771

*The Power of the Name**The Name, then the sting of pride*

मराठी मूळ

एका गावें आह्मीं विठोबाचे नाम । आणिकांपें काम नाहीं आतां ॥१॥
 मोडूनियां वाटा सूक्ष्म सगर । केला राज्यभार चाले ऐसा ॥२॥
 लावूनि मृदांग टाळश्रुतिघोष । सेवूं ब्रह्मरस आवडीनें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे महापातकी पतित । ऐसियांचे हित हेळामात्रें ॥४॥
 ह्मणोनि पंढरिराया दुखी होतें मन । अंतरींचे कोण जाणे माझें ॥५॥
 पूज्य जालों अंगा आला अभिमान । पुढील कारण खोळंबलें ॥६॥
 तुका ह्मणे खूण न कळे चि निरुती । सांपडलों हातीं अहंकाराचे ॥७॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We have taken up the single pursuit of Vitthoba's name; we have no business with anyone else now. Breaking off all the side-paths, we have built a royal highway that runs smooth and straight.

With drums and cymbals and the chorus of sacred chanting, we relish the nectar of Brahman with deep love. Says Tuka, even the greatest wrongdoers and the most fallen find their welfare in a single moment of this. Yet, O King of Pandhari, my heart still grieves; who knows the secret ache inside me? I became honored and pride crept into my limbs, and the onward journey stalled.

Says Tuka, the true sign eludes me still; I have fallen into the grip of ego.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We have taken up one pursuit only, the name of Vithoba; we have no business with anyone else now. We broke off all the side-paths and built a royal highway that runs straight and smooth. With drum and cymbal and the chorus of sacred song, we drink the nectar of Brahman with love. Tuka says: even the worst sinners, the most fallen, find their good in one moment of this. And yet, King of Pandhari, my heart still grieves; who knows the ache inside me? I became honored, pride crept into me, and the road ahead has stalled. Tuka says: the true sign still escapes me; I have fallen into the grip of ego.

WHAT IT MEANS

The poem begins as a victory song of the Name and ends as a confession. Tukaram says they have given themselves to Vithoba's name alone, closing every side-path and building one straight royal road, walking it with drum, cymbal and chant, tasting Brahman as nectar, a path so powerful that even the worst sinner is saved in a single moment of it. Then the song turns inward and dark. Despite all this, his heart grieves over a secret wound: being honored by people has bred pride in him, and that pride has stalled the very journey he was praising. He names the trap exactly, the spiritual progress itself became an occasion for ego, and the true mark of the goal now eludes the man who sang it so confidently.

GATHA 1772

Prayers

Prayer, the boat of stone

मराठी मूळ

आतां काढाकाढी करीं बा पंढरिराया । नाहीं तरी वांयां गेलों दास ॥१॥
जाणतां बैसलों दगडाचे नावे । तिचा धर्म घ्यावे प्राण हा चि ॥२॥
मनाचा स्वभाव इंद्रियांचे ओढी । पतनाचे जोडी वरी हांव ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे जाली अंधळ्याची परी । आतां मज हरी वाट दावीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now pull me out, O King of Pandhari, or else Your servant will have perished in vain. Knowingly I boarded a boat of stone; its nature is to sink and take my life.

The mind's habit drags the senses downward, heaping craving upon the threat of a fall. Says Tuka, darkness has closed in like blindness; now, O Hari, show me the way.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now pull me out, King of Pandhari, or your servant is lost for nothing. Knowing what I did, I climbed into a boat of stone; its nature is to sink and take my life with it. The mind by habit drags the senses downward, piling craving on top of the danger of falling. Tuka says: darkness has closed in like blindness; now, Hari, show me the way.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram cries for rescue and does not spare himself in the asking. He admits the wreck is his own doing: he boarded a boat of stone with open eyes, and stone can only sink. The image of his own nature is harsh, a mind that habitually drags the senses down, heaping fresh craving onto the already present danger of falling. He confesses he is as good as blind, surrounded by darkness, with no power of his own to find the path. So the whole weight falls on the last line: only Vitthal can pull him out and show him the way.

GATHA 1773

*The Moral Ideal**Moral contrast, the same word in two hands*

मराठी मूळ

सज्जन तो शब्द सत्य जो मानी । छळी दुर्जन आणिकांसी ॥१॥
एक गुण तो केला दोठायीं । ज्याचा त्यास पाहीं जैसा तैसा ॥२॥
परउपकार घडे तो भला । नाठणाल त्या दया नाही ॥३॥
जाणीवंत तो पायरी जाणे । अधम तो नेणे खुंट जैसा ॥४॥
हित तें अनहित केलें कैसें । तुका ह्मणे पिसें लागलें यास ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A noble person honors the truth of his word; a wicked one harasses others. The same quality appears in both, yet it returns to each as he deserves.

One who serves others is truly good; the heartless one has no compassion. The wise one recognizes each step of the stairway; the lowly one, like a stump, knows nothing.

Says Tuka, how has what was beneficial been turned into harm? Some madness has seized these people.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A good person honors the truth of his word; a wicked one torments others. The same quality shows in both, and it returns to each as he deserves. The one who helps others is truly good; the heartless one has no mercy. The wise person knows each step of the stair; the base one, like a stump, knows nothing. Tuka says: how has what was good for them been turned into harm? Some madness has seized these people.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures people by what they do with the same human powers. Speech can be kept truthful by the good or used to torment by the wicked; the gift is identical, but it comes back to each according to how it was used. Goodness is concrete here: helping others, having mercy, knowing how to climb step by step, while the base person stands as senseless as a tree stump. The last line is grief, not contempt: he wonders how people have managed to turn what was meant for their own good into harm, as if a madness had taken hold. The poem invites you to ask which hand you put the same powers into.

GATHA 1774

Prayers

The Name, give me only this

मराठी मूळ

तुझें नाम मुखीं न घेतां आवडी । जिह्वा ते चि घडी झडो माझी ॥१॥
 हें मज देई हें मज देई । आणिक दुजें कांहीं न मगें तुज ॥२॥
 बहिर कान तुझी कीर्ती नाइकतां । पाय न देखतां जात डोळे ॥३॥
 मना तुझें ध्यान नाहीं नित्य काळ । धिग तें चांडाळ जळो जळो ॥३॥
 हातपाय तेणें पंथ न चलतां । जावे ते अनंता गळोनियां ॥४॥
 तुजविण जिणें नाहीं मज चाड । तुका ह्मणे गोड नाम तुझें ॥५॥
 ह्मणसी होऊनी निश्चिंता । हरूनियां अवघी चिंता । मग जाऊं एकांता

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

May my tongue fall off the very moment it fails to utter Your name with love. Give me this, give me this alone; I ask nothing else of You.

Let my ears go deaf if they do not hear Your glory; let my eyes perish if they do not see Your feet. If my mind does not hold Your meditation at all times, then curse that wretched thing; let it burn.

Let the hands and feet that do not walk Your path wither and drop away, O Ananta. Without You I have no desire to live.

Says Tuka, Your name alone is sweet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The moment my tongue fails to speak your name with love, let it fall off that very instant. Give me this, give me this; I ask nothing else of you. If my ears do not hear your glory, let them go deaf; if my eyes do not see your feet, let them perish. If my mind does not hold your meditation at every hour, then curse that wretched thing; let it burn, let it burn. Let the hands and feet that do not walk your path wither and drop away, Ananta. Without you I have no wish to live. Tuka says: your name alone is sweet.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a vow shaped as a string of curses turned on himself. Tukaram asks for one thing only, the name on his tongue, and stakes each organ of his body on it: a tongue that stops praising should fall off, ears that miss God's glory should go deaf, eyes that do not see the feet should perish, a mind that drops the meditation should burn, hands and feet that leave the path should wither away. The violence is the point. He is declaring that a body kept for anything but God is worthless to him, that life without Vitthal holds no desire for him, and that the Name alone is sweet enough to live for.

GATHA 1775

Longing and Separation

Longing, wake before regret

मराठी मूळ

भजन करुं । संसारसंग्रमें आशा लागे पाठी । तेणें जीवा साटी होईल तुझ्या ॥१॥
 सेकीं नाडसील नाडसील । विषयसंगें अवघा नाडसील । मागुता पडसील भवडोहीं ॥२॥
 शरीर सकळ मायेचा बांधा । यासी नाहीं कधीं अराणूक । करिती तडातोडी
 आंत बाह्यात्कारीं । ऐसे जाती चारी दिवस वेगीं ॥३॥
 मोलाची घडी जाते वांयांविण । न मिळे मोल धन देतां कोडी ।
 जागा होई करीं हिताचा उपाय । तुका ह्मणे हाय करिसी मग ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You say: become carefree, let all anxiety dissolve, then go into solitude and worship. But worldly ambitions and desires chase after me, endangering my very bond with You.

In the end You will betray Yourself: attachment to sense pleasures will drown You once more in the ocean of birth and death. The body is entirely a construction of illusion and never finds rest; its inner and outer conflicts tear it apart, and so the four brief days pass swiftly.

Each precious moment slips away for nothing; no amount of wealth can buy it back. Wake up and take the path of your own good.

Says Tuka, otherwise you will only cry out in regret later.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You say: become carefree, let every worry dissolve, then go into solitude and worship. But worldly schemes and desires chase after me, and that puts my very bond with you at risk. In the end you betray yourself: clinging to sense pleasures will drown you again in the ocean of birth and death. The body is wholly built of illusion and never finds rest; torn by quarrels within and without, the four short days pass in a rush. Each precious moment slips away for nothing, and no heap of wealth can buy one back. Wake up; take the path of your own good. Tuka says: otherwise you will only cry out in regret later.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers an easy excuse and then turns it into a warning to the soul. The excuse is the promise we keep making, that once we are free of worry we will withdraw and worship, but worldly ambitions keep chasing and that delay endangers the bond with God itself. He says plainly where the delay leads: attachment to pleasures drowns you again in birth and death. He strips the body of glamor, calling it a construction of illusion that never rests and is torn by conflict inside and out, while the brief span of life, the four days, rushes past. The point lands as urgency, not scolding: each moment is priceless and unbuyable, so wake now and choose your own good before the only thing left to do is regret.

GATHA 1776

Prayers

Prayer, the God who runs to his own

मराठी मूळ

कनवाळू कृपाळू भक्तांलागीं मोही । गजेंद्राचा धांवा तुवां केला विठाई ॥1॥
 पांडुरंगे ये वो पांडुरंगे । जीवाचे जिवलगे ये वो पांडुरंगे ॥धु॥
 भक्तांच्या कैवारें कष्टलीस विठ्ठले । आंबऱ्ऋषीकारणें जन्म दाहा घेतले ॥2॥
 प्रल्हादाकारणें स्तंभीं अवतार केला । विदारुनि दैत्य प्रेमपान्हा पाजिला ॥3॥
 उपमन्याकारणें कैसी धांवसी लवलाहीं । पाजी प्रेमपान्हा क्षीरसागराठार्यीं ॥4॥
 कौरवीं पांचाळी सभेमाजी आणिली । वस्त्रहरणीं वस्त्रें कैसी जाली माउली ॥5॥
 दुर्वास पातला धर्मा छळावया वनीं । धांवसी लवलाहीं शाखादेठ घेऊनि ॥6॥
 कृपाळू माउली भुक्तिमुक्तिभांडार । करीं माझा अंगीकार तुका ह्मणे विठ्ठले ॥7॥
 कवणा पाषाणासी धरुनि भाव । कवणावरी पाव ठेवूं आतां ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Compassionate and merciful, loving toward devotees: You rushed to save the elephant Gajendra, O Vitthal. Come, O Panduranga, come; O dear life of my life, come, O Panduranga.

For the sake of Your devotees You endured hardship, O Vitthal; for Ambarisha You took ten incarnations. For Prahlada You burst forth from the pillar and, tearing apart the demon, nursed him with the milk of love.

For Upamanya You ran without delay and fed him the milk of the cosmic ocean. When the Kauravas dragged Draupadi into the assembly to strip her, You became her mother and supplied endless cloth.

When Durvasa came to torment Dharma in the forest, You rushed with a single leaf-stalk in hand. O compassionate mother, treasury of worldly and spiritual gifts, Says Tuka, accept me, O Vitthal.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Compassionate, merciful, drawn with love to your devotees: you rushed to save the elephant Gajendra, Vithai. Come, Panduranga, come; dear life of my life, come, Panduranga. For your devotees' sake you have suffered hardship, Vitthal; for Ambarisha you took ten births. For Prahlada you burst out of the pillar and, tearing the demon apart, fed the child the milk of love. For Upamanya how swiftly you ran, giving him the milk of the ocean of milk. When the Kauravas dragged Draupadi into the hall to strip her, you became her mother and gave cloth without end. When Durvasa came to torment Dharma in the forest, you ran at once with a single leaf-stalk in hand. Compassionate mother, treasury of worldly and spiritual gifts, Tuka says: accept me, Vitthal.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram calls on Vitthal by recalling every time God came running for those who loved him. He stacks the rescues one on another: Gajendra the elephant, Ambarisha for whom God took ten births, Prahlada saved when God split the pillar and destroyed the demon, Upamanya fed from the ocean of milk, Draupadi clothed without end when the Kauravas tried to strip her, and Dharma spared from Durvasa's curse by a single leaf-stalk. The point of the list is the plea that follows it. If God has run for all of these, then the same compassionate mother, the treasury of both worldly and spiritual gifts, can run for Tukaram too, and he asks simply to be accepted.

GATHA 1777

The Nature of God

Nondual surrender, can water wash water

मराठी मूळ

ह्मणऊनि निश्चत राहिलों मनीं । तूं चि सर्वा खाणी देखोनियां ॥१॥
 कवणाचें कारण न लगे कांहीं । सर्वांठायीं तूं एक।
 जळें जळ काय धोविलें एक । कवण तें पातक हरलें तेथें ।
 पापपुण्य हे वासना सकळ । ते तुज समूळ समपिनली ॥२॥
 पितरस्वरूपी तूं चि जनादनन। सव्य तें कवण अपसव्य ।
 तुका ह्मणे जीत पिंड तुह्मां हातीं। देऊनि निश्चती मानियेली ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have settled my mind with certainty, seeing that You are the source of all. No one else's help is needed for anything; You are the One in all places.

Can water wash water? What sin is removed there? All notions of sin and merit, every desire, I have surrendered to You entirely. You Yourself are the ancestor-spirit, O Janardana; what is auspicious and what inauspicious before You? Says Tuka, I have placed the living offering into Your hands and accepted the peace that follows.

IN PLAIN WORDS

And so I have settled my mind in peace, seeing that you are the source of all. No one else's help is needed for anything; in every place you alone are. Can water wash water? What sin is removed there? All notions of sin and merit, every craving, I have surrendered to you, root and all. You yourself are the ancestor-spirit, Janardana; before you, what is auspicious and what is not? Tuka says: I have placed the living offering into your hands and taken the peace that follows.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reaches stillness by seeing that there is only one source, and it is God. Since God is everything and everywhere, no other agency is needed and no other can help; the seeker has nowhere else to turn and no need to. The image of water washing water is his way of dissolving the whole machinery of ritual purification: if all is one substance, one cannot scrub another clean, and the very ideas of sin and merit lose their footing. He surrenders those ideas and all desire at the root. Because God is even the ancestor to whom rites are offered, the distinctions of auspicious and inauspicious vanish, and Tukaram simply hands over the living self as the offering and rests in the peace that follows.

GATHA 1778

Prayers

Prayer, the foreigner before Death

मराठी मूळ

सिणलों दातारा करितां वेरझारा । आतां सोडवीं संसारापासोनियां ॥1॥
 न सुटे चि बाकी नव्हे झाडापाडा । घातलोंसें खोडा हाडांचिया ॥२॥
 मायबापें माझीं जीवाचीं सांगाती । तीं देतील हातीं काळाचिया ॥३॥
 पडताळूनि सुरी बैसली सेजारीं । यमफासा करीं घेऊनिया ॥४॥
 पाठी पोटीं एकें लागलीं सरसीं । नेती नरकापाशीं ओढूनियां ॥५॥
 जन साहेभूत असे या सकळां । मी एक निराळा परदेशी ॥६॥
 कोणा काकुलती नाहीं कोणे परी । तुजविण हरी कृपाळुवा ॥७॥
 तुका ह्मणे मज तुझाची भरवसा । ह्मणऊनि आशा मोकलिली ॥८॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I am weary, O generous Lord, from this endless circling; now free me from this worldly existence. The debt will not clear, the account will not balance; I am shackled in the stocks of these very bones.

My parents, the companions of my life, will hand me over to Death's grip. With knife sharpened and ready, Death sits beside me, noose in hand.

One after another they press upon me from behind and before, dragging me toward hell. The whole world stands united as witness, and I alone am the stranger, the foreigner.

I have no one to plead to, no one at all, except You, O merciful Hari. Says Tuka, my trust is in You alone, and so I have released every other hope.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I am worn out, generous Lord, from this endless circling; now free me from this worldly life. The debt will not clear, the account will not balance; I am locked in the stocks made of these bones. My parents, the companions of my life, will hand me over to Death. With knife sharpened and ready, Death sits beside me, noose in hand. One after another they press on me from behind and before, dragging me toward hell. The whole world stands together as witness, and I alone am the stranger, the foreigner. I have no one to plead with, none at all, except you, merciful Hari. Tuka says: my trust is in you alone, and so I have let go of every other hope.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays from the position of a man with nowhere left to run. He is exhausted by the wheel of birth and death, shackled in the stocks of his own body, with a debt of karma that will never balance. He sees no human ally: even parents, the dearest companions, will finally hand him over to Death, who waits at his side with sharpened knife and noose while forces drag him toward hell. The loneliness is total, he calls himself the one foreigner in a world that stands united against him. That total isolation is the whole force of the prayer: with every other hope deliberately released, his trust falls entirely on the merciful Hari, the only one left to plead with.

GATHA 1779

Renunciation

Renunciation, the holy fool everyone mocks

मराठी मूळ

कवणाचा सोइरा नव्हे च सांगाती । अवघियां हातीं अंतरला ॥1॥
 निष्काम वेडें ह्यणतील बापुडे । अवघियां सांकडें जाला कैसा ।
 माझें ऐसें तया न ह्यणत कोणी । असे रानीं वनीं भलते ठायीं ॥ध्रु॥
 प्रातःस्नान करी विभूतिचर्चन । दखोनिया जन निंदा करी ।
 कंठीं तुळसीमाळा बैसोनि निराळा । ह्यणती या चांडाळा काय जालें ॥2॥
 गातां शंका नाहीं बैसे भलते ठायीं । शिव्या देती आई बाप भाऊ ।
 घरी बाइल ह्यणे कोठें व्याली रांड । बरें होतें शंड मरता तरी ॥3॥
 जन्मोनि जाला अवघियां वेगळा । ह्यणोनि गोपाळा दुर्लभ तो ।
 तुका ह्यणे जो संसारा रुसला । तेणें चि टाकिला सिद्धपंथ ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He is no one's friend or companion; he has slipped away from everyone's grasp. The selfless one is called a fool by all; how has he become a burden to everyone? No one claims him as their own; he wanders in forests and wilderness, anywhere at all.

He bathes at dawn and smears himself with sacred ash, and seeing this, people mock him. With a tulsi rosary at his throat he sits apart, and they say: what has come over this wretch? He sings without shame in any place he pleases; mother, father, and brother hurl abuse.

His wife at home says: where did the wretched woman give birth to him? Better if he had died a eunuch. Born into the world, he has become separate from all.

Says Tuka, such a one is rare and dear to Gopala; he who has turned away from worldly life has found the proven path.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He is no one's relative, no one's companion. He has slipped out of everyone's grasp. They call him a poor fool with no desires. How did he become a burden to all? No one says, this one is mine. He wanders in forests and wild places, anywhere at all. He bathes at dawn. He smears himself with sacred ash. Seeing this, people speak ill of him. A tulsi rosary at his throat, he sits apart, and they say: what has come over this wretch? He sings without fear, sitting wherever he pleases. Mother, father, and brother hurl abuse. His wife at home says: where did the woman give birth to him? It would have been better if he had died. Born into the world, he has become separate from everyone. And so he is dear to Gopala, and hard to find. Tuka says: the one who has turned away from worldly life, that very one has taken the proven path.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the devotee whom the world has cast out and reads that rejection as the very mark of his worth. The bhakta keeps his disciplines, the dawn bath, the ash, the rosary, the open singing of the Name, and for this his own family and neighbors heap scorn and even wish him dead. The poem does not flinch from how total the alienation is: no kin, no companion, no place to belong, only the wilderness. But Tukaram turns the verdict over. The one who has slipped free of all worldly belonging is exactly the one who has become dear to God and rare to find. What the world calls a useless fool is, by the poem's measure, the soul that has actually found the path. The aim of the harshness is not contempt for the scoffers but a question for the listener: which verdict will you trust, the world's or God's.

GATHA 1780

The Saints

The saints, caste does not measure worth

मराठी मूळ

कस्तुरी भिनली जये मृत्तके । तयेसी आणिके कैसी सरी ॥१॥
लोखंडाचे अंगीं लागला परिस । तया आणिकास कैसी सरी ॥२॥
तुका ह्मणे मी न वजें यातीवरी । पूज्यमान करीं वैष्णवांसी ॥ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When musk has soaked into a lump of earth, how can any other clay compare with it? When the philosopher's stone has touched iron, how can any other substance match it? Says Tuka, I do not judge by caste; I hold the Vaishnavas worthy of worship.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When musk has soaked into a lump of earth, what other clay can equal it? When the philosopher's stone has touched iron, what other metal can equal it? Tuka says: I do not go by birth or caste. I hold the Vaishnavas worthy of worship.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram answers the question of who deserves honor with two images of transformation. Plain earth that has absorbed musk is no longer common earth; iron that the touchstone has touched is no longer base metal. What changes their worth is not their origin but what has entered them. He applies this directly: he will not rank a person by the caste they were born into. The devotee in whom the love of God has soaked is the one he treats as worthy of worship, whatever their birth. The claim is deliberately leveling, and he names it openly.

GATHA 1781

The Power of the Name

The Name, knowledge without devotion is not enough

मराठी मूळ

अनुहात ध्वनि वाहे सकळां पिंडीं । राम नाही तोंडीं कैसा तरे ॥१॥
 सकळां जीवांमाजी देव आहे खरा । देखिल्या दुसरा विण न तरे ॥२॥
 ज्ञान सकळांमाजी आहे हें साच । भक्तीविण तें च ब्रह्म नव्हे ॥३॥
 काय मुद्रा कळल्या कराव्या सांगतां । दीप न लगतां उन्मनीचा ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे नका पिंडाचें पाळण । स्थापू नारायण आतुडेना ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The unstruck sound resonates in every body, yet without Rama's name on the tongue, how can one be saved? God truly dwells in every living being, but without seeing Him, the other shore is never reached. Knowledge exists in everyone, this is certain, yet without devotion that very knowledge does not become Brahman.

What use are mystical gestures and spoken instructions when the lamp of transcendence has not been lit? Says Tuka, do not try to establish God through mere bodily nurturing; Narayana cannot be grasped that way.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The unstruck sound flows in every body. But without Rama on the tongue, how does one cross over? God truly dwells in every living being. But without seeing Him, no one crosses. Knowledge is in everyone, this is true. But without devotion, that knowledge is not Brahman. What use are the gestures you have learned, the instructions you can recite, when the inner lamp has not been lit? Tuka says: do not try to keep God by tending the body. Narayana cannot be held that way.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram concedes every claim the yogic and philosophical paths make, then says each is incomplete without the Name and love. Yes, the unstruck inner sound sounds in all, God lives in all, knowledge is latent in all; but a latent truth no one has actually realized saves no one. He names the gap with a sharp image: knowing the gestures and reciting the instructions while the inner lamp stays dark. The corrective is not more technique but devotion, Rama's name on the tongue, the actual seeing of God. The closing warning is against the subtle trap of treating spiritual discipline as the maintenance of a body or a method; Narayana is not gripped by such effort, He is reached through love.

GATHA 1782

Autobiography

Autobiography, not my words but God's

मराठी मूळ

नेणें अर्थ कांहीं नव्हती माझे बोल । विनवितों कोपाल संत झणी ॥1॥
 नव्हती माझे बोल बोले पांडुरंग । असे अंगसंगें व्यापूनिया ॥धु.॥
 मज मूढा शक्ति कैचा हा विचार । निगमादिकां पार बोलावया ॥2॥
 राम कृष्ण हरी मुकुंदा मुरारि । बोबडा उत्तरीं हें चि ध्यान ॥3॥
 तुका ह्याने गुरुकृपेचा आधार । पांडुरंगें भार घेतला माझा ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I know nothing of meaning; these words are not my own. I pray the saints will not be angered.

These are not my words; it is Panduranga who speaks, pervading me through and through. How could a fool like me possess such insight, when even the Vedas struggle to express it? Rama, Krishna, Hari, Mukunda, Murari: this stammering repetition is my only meditation.

Says Tuka, I lean on the grace of the guru; Panduranga has taken on my entire burden.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I know nothing of the meaning. These words are not mine. I beg the saints: do not be angry. These are not my words. It is Panduranga who speaks, filling me through and through. How would a fool like me have such understanding, to speak of what is beyond even the Vedas? Rama, Krishna, Hari, Mukunda, Murari: this stammering is my only meditation. Tuka says: I lean on the grace of the guru. Panduranga has taken up my whole burden.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram disclaims authorship of his own verses and hands the credit to God. He addresses the saints first, asking forgiveness in case his words presume too much, then insists the presumption is not his: it is Panduranga who speaks through him. He measures his own capacity honestly, an unlettered man who could not on his own utter truths the Vedas strain to reach, so the speaking must come from elsewhere. His one practice is the simplest, the broken repetition of God's names, and even that he calls his only meditation. The poem rests the whole thing on grace, the guru's and God's, and on the trust that the Lord has shouldered his burden entirely.

GATHA 1783

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the carefree servant

मराठी मूळ

देवासी लागे सकळांसी पोसावें । आह्मां न लगे खावें काय चिंता ॥1॥
 देवा विचारावें लागे पापपुण्य । आह्मासी हे जन अवघें भलें ॥ध्रु॥
 देवासी उत्पित्त लागला संहार । आह्मां नाहीं फार थोडें काहीं ॥2॥
 देवासी काम लागला धंदा । आह्मासी ते सदा रिकामीक ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी भले देवाहून । विचारितां गुण सर्वभावें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God must feed and sustain everyone; we need not worry about what we shall eat. God must weigh sin and merit; for us, all people are simply good.

God must handle creation and destruction; for us, nothing is too much or too little. God must manage all the business and activity; we are forever free and at leisure.

Says Tuka, when you consider it with full consideration, we are actually better off than God.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God has to feed and keep everyone. We need not worry about what we will eat. God has to weigh sin and merit. For us, all people are simply good. God has to manage creation and destruction. For us, nothing is too much or too little. God has the work and the business to run. We are always free and at leisure. Tuka says: in truth we are better off than God. Consider it with your whole heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the freedom of total surrender as a kind of holy idleness. He lists the labors that belong to God: feeding all creatures, judging sin and merit, running creation and dissolution, carrying the world's business. Because those duties are God's and not his, the devotee is left with nothing to manage and nothing to fear; he need not even sort people into good and bad, for to him all are good. The tone is playful, even cheeky: he claims to be better off than God Himself, since God works while the servant rests. The point underneath the wit is the logic of surrender. When you genuinely hand the whole burden over, what remains for you is leisure and trust.

GATHA 1784

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, asking only to serve

मराठी मूळ

घेईन मी जन्म याजसाठी देवा । तुझी चरणसेवा साधावया ॥१॥
 हरिनामकीर्तन संतांचे पूजन । घालूं लोटांगण महाद्वारीं ॥२॥
 आनंदें निर्भर असों भलते ठायीं । सुखदुःख नाहीं चाड आह्वां ॥३॥
 आणीक सायास न करीं न धरीं आस । होईन उदास सर्व भावें ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I would gladly take birth again for this alone, O God: to practice the service of Your feet. Singing Hari's name, worshipping the saints, bowing prostrate at the great door of the temple.

Let me dwell anywhere in overflowing bliss; I have no concern for pleasure or pain. I will make no other effort and hold no other hope; I will be completely detached in every way.

Says Tuka, liberation waits upon us at home like a maidservant; it does whatever we say.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I would take birth again for this alone, O God: to win the service of Your feet. To sing Hari's name, to worship the saints, to fall full length at the great temple door. Let me live anywhere, full of joy. I have no wish for pleasure or for pain. I will make no other effort and hold no other hope. I will be wholly detached, in every way. Tuka says: liberation waits in our house like a maidservant. It does whatever we tell it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram redefines what a devotee should want from another birth. He does not ask for heaven, comfort, or even release; he asks only for the chance to serve God's feet, to sing the Name, to honor the saints, to prostrate at the temple. With that one desire fixed, every other craving falls away: pleasure and pain become matters of indifference, and he renounces all further striving and hope. The closing line lands the claim. To the one absorbed in such service, the liberation that others chase has become a household servant, near at hand and obedient. By wanting only to serve, he has unknowingly gained the very thing seekers strain after.

GATHA 1785

Devotion to Vitthal

Bold lament, a lawsuit against God

मराठी मूळ

देवा तुज मज पण । पाहों आगळा तो कोण ॥1॥
 तरी साच मी पतित । तूं च खोटा दिनानाथ ।
 ग्वाही साधुसंत जन। करुनि अंगीं लावीन ॥ध्रु॥
 आह्मी धरिले भेदाभेद । तुज नव्हे त्याचा छेद ॥2॥
 न चले तुझे कांहीं त्यास । आह्मी बळकाविले दोष ॥3॥
 दिशा भरल्या माझ्या मनें । लपालासी त्याच्या भेणें ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे चित्त । करी तुझी माझी नीत ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O God, let us have a wager, You and I, and see who proves the greater. I am truly a wrongdoer, and You are a false protector of the downtrodden.

I will call the saints and the people as witnesses and prove it against You. We have clung to duality and division, and You cannot cut through it.

Nothing You do prevails against it; we have seized hold of faults with both hands. My mind has filled every direction, and You hide in fear of it.

Says Tuka, let the chitta itself be judge and settle the case between us.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God, let us make a wager, You and I, and see who is the greater. Then it is true: I am the sinner, and You are the false protector of the helpless. I will call the saints and the people as witnesses and fasten the charge on You. We have held tight to division and difference, and You have not cut it away. Nothing You do reaches it. We have seized our faults with both hands. My mind has spread into every direction, and You hide in fear of it. Tuka says: let the heart itself be judge and settle the case between You and me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram dares to put God on trial, framing the eternal problem of grace as a courtroom wager. He concedes his own guilt freely, then turns the charge around: if You are called the protector of the fallen and the fallen are still not lifted, then the title is false. He summons the saints as witnesses and presses the suit. The complaint underneath the bravado is real. The devotee cannot, by his own effort, cut through the duality and the faults he clings to, and he accuses God of standing back, even hiding, while the restless mind runs wild. The boldness is itself a form of intimacy and surrender: he asks the inner heart to judge the case, which is a way of throwing the whole impossible knot back into God's hands.

GATHA 1786

True Worship

True worship, God meets only the sincere

मराठी मूळ

लापनिकशब्दे नातुडे हा देव । मनिंचे गुहए भाव शुद्ध बोला ॥1॥
 अंतरिंचा भेद जाणे परमानंद । जयासी संवाद करणें लागे ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे जरी आपुलें स्वहित । तरी करीं चित्त शुद्धभावे ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*God cannot be reached through cunning speech. Speak the pure truth of your innermost chitta.**The Supreme Bliss knows the secret hidden within; one must converse with Him honestly. Says Tuka, if you truly seek your own good, then purify your mind with sincere devotion.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

This God is not caught by clever, flattering words. Speak the pure feeling hidden in your heart. The Supreme Bliss knows the secret within; with Him you must speak honestly. Tuka says: if you truly want your own good, then make your heart pure in its intent.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strips worship down to inner honesty. God is not deceived or won by smooth, cunning speech, because He already knows the secret of the heart; addressing such a knower with anything but truth is pointless. The instruction is to speak the pure feeling you actually hold inside, not the performance you want others to hear. The closing line ties sincerity to self-interest in the deepest sense: if you genuinely seek your own good, the work is not external eloquence but the purifying of your own intent. Worship, for Tukaram, is finally a matter of what is true within, not what is said without.

GATHA 1787

The Necessity of Experience

Experience, hypocrisy of the unrealized teacher

मराठी मूळ

नव्हे ब्रह्मज्ञान बोलतां सिद्ध । जंव हा आत्मबोध नाहीं चितीं ॥1॥
 काय करिसी वांयां लटिका चि पाल्हाळ । श्रम तो केवळ जाणिवेचा ॥धु॥
 मी च देव ऐसें सांगसी या लोकां । विषयांच्या सुखा टोंकोनियां ॥2॥
 अमृताची गोडी पुढिलां सांगसी । आपण उपवासी मरोनिया ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे जरि राहील तळमळ । ब्रह्म तें केवळ सदोदित ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Knowledge of Brahman is not attained merely by speaking of it, so long as the Self-awareness has not entered the chitta. Why do you indulge in empty elaboration? All that labor is nothing but the toil of cleverness.

You tell people that you yourself are God while feasting on sense pleasures on the side. You describe the sweetness of nectar to others while you yourself starve and perish.

Says Tuka, only if inner restlessness ceases does pure Brahman reveal itself, ever-present and complete.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Knowledge of Brahman is not perfected by talking about it, so long as Self-awareness has not entered the heart. Why waste yourself in false, empty elaboration? That labor is nothing but the toil of cleverness. You tell people: I myself am God, while on the side you feast on the pleasures of the senses. You describe to others the sweetness of nectar, while you yourself starve and die. Tuka says: only when the inner restlessness ceases is that pure Brahman ever-present and whole.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram attacks the gap between spiritual speech and spiritual experience. Brahman-knowledge spoken from the lips means nothing until Self-realization has actually entered the heart; the elaborate talk of one who lacks it is only the strain of cleverness. He sharpens this with two pictures of hypocrisy: the man who proclaims I am God while quietly indulging every sense pleasure, and the one who praises the taste of nectar to others while himself starving. The aim is not contempt for any particular teacher but a mirror for the listener to check whether his own knowing is lived or merely recited. The test he offers is internal: only when the restlessness of the mind stops does the pure, ever-present Brahman show itself. Words are no substitute for that stillness.

GATHA 1788

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, the unstained nature of saints

मराठी मूळ

गंगाजळा पाहीं पाठी पोट नाही । अवगुण तो कांहीं अमृतासी ॥1॥
 रवि दीप किळमा काय जाणे हिरा । आणिका तिमिरा नासे तेणे ॥ध्रु॥
 कर्पूरकांडणी काय कोंडा कणी । सिंधू मिळवणीं काय चाले ॥2॥
 परिस चिंतामणि आणिकांचा गुणी । पालटे लागोनि नव्हे तैसा ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे तैसे जाणा संतजन । सर्वत्र संपूर्ण गगन जैसें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The water of the Ganga has no front or back; there is no flaw in nectar. Do the sun, a lamp, or darkness know what a diamond is? Yet the diamond destroys darkness for everyone around it.

Does camphor powder contain husks or grit? Does anything hold its own when it merges with the ocean? The philosopher's stone and the wish-fulfilling gem transform others by their quality, yet they themselves remain unchanged. Says Tuka, know that the saints are just like this: complete everywhere, like the sky itself.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Look at the water of the Ganga: it has no front and no back. There is no flaw in nectar. Do the sun, a lamp, or the darkness know what a diamond is? Yet the diamond destroys darkness for all around it. Does pounded camphor hold any husk or grit? Does anything keep its own shape once it merges with the ocean? The philosopher's stone and the wish-granting gem transform others by their nature, yet they themselves do not change. Tuka says: know that the saints are just like this, complete everywhere, like the sky itself.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram piles up images of things that are pure through and through, with no hidden flaw, to say what a saint is. The Ganga has no near side or far side, nectar has no defect, camphor has no grit; each is uniform all the way down. He adds the touchstone and the wish-gem, which transform whatever they touch while staying utterly unchanged themselves. The saints, he concludes, are of this kind. They lift and transform others without being altered or diminished, and they are not partial or local but complete everywhere, like the all-pervading sky. The poem is a portrait of a purity that gives endlessly yet loses nothing.

GATHA 1789

Prayers

Prayer, You lose nothing by saving me

मराठी मूळ

परिस काय धातु । फेडितो निभ्रांतु लोहपांगु ॥१॥
 काय तयाहूनि जालासी बापुडें । फेडितां सांकडें माझे एक ॥२॥
 कल्लपरु कोड पुरवितो रोकडा । चिंतामणि खडा चिंतिलें तें ॥३॥
 चंदनांच्या वासें वसतां चंदन । होती काष्ठ आन वृक्षयाती ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Does the philosopher's stone lose anything? It frees iron from its lowly nature without hesitation. Would You become any poorer, then, by removing this one small difficulty of mine? The wish-fulfilling tree grants desires on the spot; the wish-fulfilling gem yields whatever is thought of.

By living near sandalwood, even ordinary wood becomes fragrant. Does the sandalwood lose anything by giving of itself? Says Tuka, consider this, O Ananta.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Does the philosopher's stone lose its substance? Without hesitation, it strips iron of its lowliness. Are You any poorer than that stone, then, if You remove this one trouble of mine? The wish-granting tree fulfills desires on the spot. The wish-fulfilling gem gives whatever is thought of. By living near sandalwood, even ordinary wood becomes fragrant; other trees too take on its scent. Does the sandalwood lose anything by giving of itself? Tuka says: consider this, O Ananta.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pleads for his own deliverance by arguing that it costs God nothing to grant it. He gathers the familiar transformers, the touchstone that turns iron to gold, the wish-granting tree and gem, the sandalwood that lends its fragrance to plain wood nearby, and notes that none of them is diminished by what it gives. Then he presses the point onto God: if a mere stone freely raises base iron, would You, who are far greater, become poorer by clearing away this one difficulty of mine? The prayer is shrewd as well as humble. It removes every reason God might have to withhold, leaving the request resting entirely on God's generous nature. He closes by asking the Lord, Ananta, simply to think it over.

GATHA 1790

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the false teacher who ruins the path

मराठी मूळ

तोडुनि पुष्पवटिका फळवृक्षयाति । बाभळा राखती करुनि सार ॥1॥
 कोण हित तेणें देखिलें आपुलें । आणीक पाहिलें सुख काई ॥ध्रु॥
 धान्यें बीजें जेणें जाळलीं सकळें । पेरितो काळें जिरें बीज ॥2॥
 मोडोनिया वाटा पुढिलांची सोय । आडरानें जाय घेउनि लोकां ॥3॥
 विषाचें अमृत ठेवूनियां नाम । करितो अधम ब्रह्महत्या ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे त्यास नाइके सांगतां । तया हाल करितां पाप नाहीं ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

He cuts down the flower garden and fruit trees but preserves the thorny acacia as if it were precious. What good has he seen in this for himself, and what joy has he found? He burns all the seeds and grains and sows cumin in their place at the wrong season.

He destroys the road that others follow and leads the people off into trackless wilderness. He labels poison as nectar and commits spiritual murder.

Says Tuka, he will not listen to any counsel; there is no sin in punishing such a one.

IN PLAIN WORDS

He cuts down the flower garden and the fruit trees, and guards the thorn bush as if it were precious. What good has he found in this for himself? What joy has he seen? He burns up all the grain and the seed, and sows cumin at the wrong season. He breaks the road that those ahead have made, and leads the people off into trackless wilderness. He puts the name nectar on poison. The base man commits the killing of a soul. Tuka says: he will not listen when anyone tells him. To trouble such a one is no sin.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram condemns the false teacher who systematically destroys what nourishes and preserves what harms. Every image is an inversion of right guidance: cutting the fruit trees while saving the thorns, burning good seed and planting useless cumin out of season, tearing up the proven road and dragging followers into the wild. The deepest charge is the last: he labels poison as nectar, calling falsehood the truth, and so commits what Tukaram likens to the murder of a soul, since he leads trusting people to ruin. The poem aims at the pattern, the harm done

by one who teaches wrongly and refuses all correction, not at a name. The closing line is severe by design, marking how grave Tukaram holds the offense of leading the trusting astray; the warning is for the listener to recognize and resist such guidance, and to examine whether they are following or becoming it.

GATHA 1791

The Nature of God

Wonder, God who fills all space

मराठी मूळ

संसाराच्या भेणें । पळों न लाहेसं केलें ॥1॥
 जेथें तेथें आपण आहे । आह्मीं करावें तें काये ॥ध्रु॥
 एकांतींसी ठाव । तिहीं लोकीं नाहीं वाव ॥2॥
 गांवा जातों ऐसं । न लगे ह्मणावें तें कैसं ॥3॥
 स्वप्नाचे परी । जागा पाहे तंव घरीं ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे काये । तुझे घेतले म्यां आहे ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You have made it so that I cannot even flee from worldly life. Wherever I turn, You are already there; what then am I to do? In all three worlds there is not a single corner of solitude left.

I cannot even say I am going somewhere else, for that makes no sense. It is like a dream: one wakes up and finds oneself right at home.

Says Tuka, what have I ever taken from You that belongs to You?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You have made it so that I cannot even run from worldly life. Wherever I go, You are already there. So what am I supposed to do? There is no corner of solitude left, not in any of the three worlds. I cannot even say I am going away somewhere; that makes no sense. It is like a dream: you wake and find yourself right at home. Tuka says: what have I ever taken from You that was Yours?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram wanted to escape the world, but he finds there is nowhere to escape to: God already fills every place. He plays with the idea of fleeing and shows it is absurd, because the one he would flee toward is the same one who is everywhere. Even solitude is impossible; in all three worlds there is no private corner where God is not. The waking-from-a-dream image lands the point: any journey away is illusory, since you only ever arrive back where God already is. The closing question quietly admits there was never anything of his own to defend or carry off.

GATHA 1792

Longing and Separation

Loving complaint, give me what you enjoy

मराठी मूळ

आण काय सादर । विशीं आह्मां कां निष्ठ ॥1॥
 केलें भक्त तैसें देई । तुझें प्रेम माझ्याठायीं ॥धु.॥
 काय पंगतीस कोंडा । एकांतासी साकरमांडा ॥2॥
 काय एकपण । पोतां घालूनि गांठी खूण ॥3॥
 काय घ्यावें ऐसें । त्या आपण अनारिसें ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे मधीं । आतां तोडूं भेद बुद्धी ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why do You invite me only to ignore me? Why this cruelty toward us in particular? Give Your devotee what befits devotion; let Your love abide in me. Do You serve husks and chaff at the public feast while saving the sweetmeats for when You are alone? Is this what You call oneness: tying a secret knot in the purse? Why should one accept something from You that is different from what You Yourself enjoy? Says Tuka, let us now cut through this veil of discriminating intellect that stands between us.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why do You invite me and then ignore me? Why are You so hard on us in particular? Give Your devotee what fits devotion; let Your love live in me. Do You serve husks and chaff at the public table and keep the sweets for when You are alone? Is this Your oneness, tying a secret knot in the purse? Why should I take from You something different from what You enjoy Yourself? Tuka says: now let us cut through this dividing mind that stands between us.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram complains to God like a guest who was called to the feast and then served scraps. The image is sharp: chaff at the common table, sweets saved for private favorites, a knot tied secretly in the purse. He is naming a felt distance and refusing to accept it as real love. His demand is bold: he wants exactly what God enjoys, not some lesser portion handed down to a devotee. The closing line points at the cause: the dividing intellect that makes two out of one, and he asks for it to be cut so nothing stands between them.

GATHA 1793

Devotion to Vitthal

Surrender, the fathomless Lord

मराठी मूळ

चित्त तुझ्या पायीं । ठेवुनि जालों उतराई ॥1॥
 परि तूं खोटा केशीराजा । अंतपार न कळे तुझा ॥धु.॥
 आह्मी सर्वस्वें उदार । तुज देऊनियां धीर ॥2॥
 इंद्रियांची होळी । संवसार दिला बळी ॥3॥
 न पडे विसर । तुझा आह्मां निरंतर ॥4॥
 प्रेम एकासाठी । तुका ह्मणे न वेचे गांठी ॥5॥
 आह्मी पतित ह्मणोनि तुज आलों शरण । करितों चिंतन दिवस रात्रीं ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have placed my chitta at Your feet and become free of obligation. But You are the deceitful one, O Keshiraja; I cannot fathom Your limits.

I have been generous with everything, giving You my courage and resolve. I have made a bonfire of the senses and offered worldly life as a sacrifice.

My remembrance of You never lapses, not for a single moment. Says Tuka, my love is for You alone, and that is a treasure the purse never exhausts. Because I am fallen, I have come to You for refuge, meditating on You day and night.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have placed my heart at Your feet and become free of debt. But You are the tricky one, O Keshiraja; I cannot find Your far edge. I have given everything freely, handing You my courage and my resolve. I made a bonfire of the senses and offered worldly life as sacrifice. I never forget You, not for a single moment. Tuka says: my love is for You alone, and that treasure never empties from the purse. Because I am fallen, I have come to You for refuge; I think of You day and night.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a total handover: heart at the feet, courage and resolve given away, the senses burned, worldly life offered up. Having given everything, he says he is now free of debt, his side of the account settled. Yet he calls God deceitful and unfathomable, because God Himself stays beyond reckoning even after the devotee has held nothing back. The one thing that never runs out is his love, a purse that pays endlessly without emptying. He ends where the fallen always end: at the feet, taking refuge, keeping God in mind through day and night.

GATHA 1794

Longing and Separation

Challenge, the Lord who must save

मराठी मूळ

नाही तरी मज काय होती चाड । धरावया भीड तुज चित्तीं ॥1॥
 आह्मां न तारावें तुह्मी काय करावें । सांगीजोजी भावें नारायणा ॥ध्रु॥
 अन्याय एकाचा अंगीकार करणें । तया हातीं देणें लाज ते चि ।
 काय ते शूरत्व मिरवूनि बोलणें । जनामाजी दावणें बळरया ॥2॥
 पोहण अनछत्र घालूनियां घरीं । दंडितो बाहेरी आलियासी ।
 नव्हे कीर्त कांहीं न माने लोकां । काय विटंबणा तैसी ॥3॥
 प्रत्यक्षासी काय द्यावें हें प्रमाण । पाहातां दर्पण साक्ष काई ।
 तुका ह्मणे तरी आह्मां का न कळे । तरलों किंवा आह्मी नाही ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If You will not save me, what reason would I have to hold You in my chitta? If You will not ferry us across, what purpose do You serve? Tell me plainly, O Narayana. To take the side of one and accept his wrongs, and then to hand him the same old shame: what kind of valor is it merely to boast and show off strength before the crowd? One opens a charity kitchen at home and then beats away the very ones who arrive at the door.

This is no glory; the people will not accept it. What more proof can one give when the truth stands in plain sight? A mirror needs no further witness.

Says Tuka, do we not know, then, whether we have been saved or not?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If You will not save me, why would I hold You in my heart at all? If You will not carry us across, what use are You? Tell me plainly, O Narayana. To take someone's side, accept his faults, and then hand him the same old shame: what kind of courage is that, just boasting and showing off strength before the crowd? A man opens a free kitchen at his house and then beats away the very ones who come to the door. That is no glory; people will not accept it. What proof is needed when the truth is in plain sight? A mirror needs no other witness. Tuka says: do we not know, then, whether we have been saved or not?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses God with a blunt argument: a savior who does not save is no savior, and there is no reason to keep him in the heart. He uses two stinging images of false generosity. One who takes your side only to shame you again is merely posturing for the crowd, and one who runs a charity kitchen yet drives away the hungry shames himself, not them. The mirror line says the failure is self-evident; no further testimony is needed than what anyone can see. The closing question turns the demand into something the devotee can already read for himself: whether he has truly been ferried across is plain, and God's refusal to act would show plainly too.

GATHA 1795

Krishna Leela

Praise, the Lord of childhood deeds

मराठी मूळ

काग बग रिठा मारिले बाळपणीं । अवघी दैत्यखाणी बुडविली ॥१॥
 तो मज दावा तो मज दावा । नंदनंदन जीवा आवडे तो ॥१॥
 गोवर्धन गिरी उचलिला करीं । गोकुळ भीतरी राखियेलें ॥२॥
 बघुनि भौमासुरा आणिल्या गोपांगना । राज्य उग्रसेना मथुरेचें ॥३॥
 पांडव जोहरीं राखिले कुसरी । विवराभीतरीं चालविले ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे हा भक्तांचा कृपाळ । दुष्टजना काळ नारायण ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In childhood He killed Kaga, Baka, and the demon Ritha, and drowned the entire race of demons. Show me that one, show me that one: the son of Nanda whom my jiva adores.

He lifted Mount Govardhan on His hand and sheltered all of Gokula within it. He slew Bhaumasura and brought back the captive women; He restored the kingdom of Mathura to Ugrasena.

He guided the Pandavas through every peril and led them safely through hidden passages. Says Tuka, He is merciful to devotees and is Death itself to the wicked. That is Narayana.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In childhood He killed Kaga, Baka, and the demon Ritha, and drowned the whole brood of demons. Show me that one, show me that one: the son of Nanda whom my soul loves. He lifted Mount Govardhan on His hand and kept all of Gokula safe under it. He killed Bhaumasura and brought back the captured women; He gave the kingdom of Mathura back to Ugrasena. He guided the Pandavas through every danger and led them safely through hidden passages. Tuka says: He is merciful to His devotees and is death itself to the wicked. That is Narayana.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a song of Krishna's deeds, sung as longing to see the one the soul loves. Tukaram lists the rescues from the Krishna stories: the demons of childhood killed, Govardhan raised to shelter Gokula, Bhaumasura slain and his captives freed, the throne returned to Ugrasena, the Pandavas led safely through every trap. The repeated cry to be shown the son of Nanda turns the catalogue of power into a lover's plea: the same Krishna who shielded all of these, let me only see Him. The closing line names the rule running through every story: mercy to those who love Him, death to the wicked. That, says Tukaram, is Narayana.

GATHA 1796

*The Power of the Name**The Name, the tongue that calls no other*

मराठी मूळ

तुजविण देवा । कोणा ह्मणे माझी जिह्वा ॥१॥
 तरि हे हो कां शतखंड । पडो झडोनियां रांड ॥२॥
 कांहीं इच्छेसार्ती । करिल वळवळ करंटी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कर । कटीं तयाचा विसर ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If my tongue ever calls upon anyone but You, O God, let it be shattered into a hundred pieces and fall away. If it should wag even slightly for the sake of some petty desire, let it be called wretched and worthless.

Says Tuka, let anyone who forgets You have their hands cut away at the waist.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If my tongue ever calls on anyone but You, O God, let it break into a hundred pieces and fall away. Let such a wretched tongue be cast off. If it so much as wags for some petty desire, let it be called worthless. Tuka says: let anyone who forgets You have his hands struck off at the waist.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram swears a fierce oath of single-pointed loyalty to the Name. The violent images, a tongue shattered, hands struck off, are aimed at himself and at his own faculties, not at any other person; they are the form his vow takes. He will not let his tongue beg from anyone but God, and not even for a small worldly want. The harshness measures the seriousness: the mouth and hands exist to call on God and serve Him, and to turn them elsewhere is to make them worthless. The point is not cruelty but a refusal to let any part of himself drift to a second object.

GATHA 1797

*The Power of the Name**The Name, the one needed work*

मराठी मूळ

आह्मां सर्वभावे हें चि काम । न विसंभावे तुझें नाम ॥१॥
 न लगे करावी हे चिंता । तरणें करणें काय आतां ॥२॥
 आसनीं भोजनीं शयनीं । दुजें नाहीं ध्यानीं मनीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कृपानिधी । माझी तोडिली उपाधी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

With all my being, this alone is my work: never to lose hold of Your name. There is no need for any other worry now about crossing over or achieving anything.

In sitting, in eating, in sleeping, nothing else occupies my thought and my mind. Says Tuka, O treasury of mercy, You have severed all my entanglements.

IN PLAIN WORDS

With all my being, this alone is my work: never to let go of Your name. There is no need to worry now about crossing over or achieving anything. In sitting, in eating, in sleeping, nothing else fills my thought and my mind. Tuka says: O treasury of mercy, You have cut away all my entanglements.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reduces the whole of practice to one thing: holding the Name without a break. Once that grip is constant, the old anxieties fall away, since crossing the world and reaching any goal are no longer separate tasks to fret over. The Name saturates every ordinary moment, sitting, eating, sleeping, until there is simply no room left for a second thing in the mind. He credits the result entirely to God's mercy: it is God who has severed the tangles, not the devotee's own effort. The poem rests in that ease, where remembering is everything and striving has ended.

GATHA 1798

Renunciation

Renunciation, the grace of the saints

मराठी मूळ

नव्हे कांहीं कवणाचा । भाव जाणवला साचा ॥१॥
 ह्मणोनि तुझ्या पायीं । जीव ठेविला निश्चयीं ॥२॥
 शरीर जायाचें कोंपट । याची काय खटपट ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे वांयांविण । देवा कळों आला सीण ॥४॥
 काय सांगू आता संताचे उपकार । मज निरंतर जागविसी ॥५॥
 काय दयावे त्यासी व्हावे उतराई । ठेवीना हापायी जीव थोडा ॥६॥
 सहज बोलणे हीत उपदेश । करुनी सायास शिकवीती ॥७॥
 तुका म्हणे वत्स धेनू वेद चित्ती । तैसे मज येती सांभाळीती ॥८॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Nothing of anyone's proved to be true; the real nature of things has revealed itself. Therefore I have placed my life at Your feet with firm resolve.

The body is a cage that belongs to death; why fuss over it? Says Tuka, the futile weariness of it all has become clear, O God. How can I describe the saints' grace upon me? They keep me awake at every moment.

How can I repay them and become free of obligation? Even if I lay down my small life at their feet, it is not enough. Their simple speech is itself teaching and guidance; they take pains to instruct me.

Says Tuka, like a cow tending her calf with the Vedas in her chitta, so do the saints look after me and protect me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Nothing of anyone's turned out to be true; the real nature of things has shown itself to me. So I have placed my life at Your feet for good. The body is a hut that belongs to death; why fuss over it? Tuka says: the useless weariness of it all has become clear, O God. How can I tell of the saints' kindness to me? They keep me awake at every moment. How can I repay them and be free of debt? Even laying down my small life at their feet is not enough. Their plain speech is itself teaching and guidance; they take pains to instruct me. Tuka says: as a cow tends her calf with the Vedas in her heart, so the saints look after me and protect me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram has seen through the world: nothing that belongs to anyone proved real, and the body is only a hut already promised to death, not worth fussing over. Seeing this, he lays his whole life at God's feet once and for all and lets go of futile striving. The poem then turns to the saints, whose constant grace keeps him awake and watchful. He feels a debt to them he can never repay; even offering his life would not settle it. Their ordinary speech is itself instruction, and they tend him as a cow tends her calf, watchful and protective, with the Vedas held in the heart.

GATHA 1801

The Necessity of Experience

Nondual insight, the rope and the gold

मराठी मूळ

रज्जु धरुनियां हातीं । भेडसाविलीं नेणतीं । कळों येतां चित्तीं । दोरी दोघां सारिखी ॥१॥
 तुझांआझांमध्ये हरी । जाली होती तैसी परी । मृगजळाच्या पुरी । ठाव पाहों तरावया ॥२॥
 सरी चिताक भोंवरी । अळंकाराचिया परी । नामें जालीं दुरी । एक सोनें आटितां ॥३॥
 पिसांचीं पारवीं । करोनि बाजागिरी दावी । तुका ह्मणे तेवीं । मज नको चाळवूं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Holding a rope in hand, the ignorant were frightened; once recognized, the rope appears the same to both. Between You and us, O Hari, the same thing happened: we searched for a place to stand in the flood of a mirage.

A chain, a necklace, a bracelet, a ring: ornaments are many in name, but when melted down, only one gold remains. A juggler makes pigeons dance with strings and calls it a show.

Says Tuka, do not beguile me in that fashion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Holding a rope in hand, the ignorant were frightened; once it is seen for what it is, the rope looks the same to both. Between You and us, O Hari, the same thing happened: we were looking for a place to stand in a flood of mirage water. A chain, a brooch, a bracelet, a ring: ornaments have many names, but melt them down and only one gold is left. A juggler makes pigeons dance on strings and calls it a show. Tuka says: do not fool me like that.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses three classic images of mistaken seeing. The rope feared as a snake stops frightening once it is recognized, and then it looks the same to everyone. The mirage offered no real ground to stand on, yet they kept searching the flood for footing. The ornaments make the deepest point: many names and shapes, but melted down, one single gold, just as the seeming separation between God and devotee dissolves into one. Then he turns sharp. The juggler dangling pigeons on strings is a staged trick, and he tells Hari plainly: do not put on that show for me. He wants the recognition, not the illusion.

GATHA 1802

Devotion to Vitthal

Mock-refusal, I lack nothing

मराठी मूळ

नेघें तुझें नाम । न करीं सांगितलें काम ॥१॥

वाढे वचनें वचन । दोष उच्चारितां गुण ॥२॥

आतां तुझ्या घरा । कोण करी येरझारा ॥३॥

तुका ह्मणे ठायीं । मजपाशीं काय नाहीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I will not take Your name; I will not do the work You assign. Words breed words, and faults multiply when one tries to speak of virtues.

Now who will keep making trips to Your door? Says Tuka, do I not have everything already here with me?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I will not take Your name; I will not do the work You give me. Words only breed more words, and faults multiply when you try to speak of virtues. Now who will keep making trips to Your door? Tuka says: do I not have everything already, right here with me?

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a teasing refusal, a lover's bluff rather than real apostasy. Tukaram pretends to quit the relationship: no more taking the Name, no more errands at God's command, no more wearing a path to God's door. His complaint is that talk leads only to more talk, and that trying to praise God's virtues somehow only stirs up faults. But the closing line gives the game away: he says he already has everything with him. The point is that God is not somewhere else to be visited or served at a distance; the fullness the devotee was running toward is already present where he stands.

GATHA 1803

Devotion to Vitthal

Loving reproach, the hide-and-seek God

मराठी मूळ

व्यवहार तो खोटा । आतां न वजों तुझ्या वाटा ॥१॥
 एका नामा नाहीं ताळ । केली सहजरांची माळ ॥ ध्रु. ॥
 पाहों जातां घाई । खेळसी लपंडाई ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे चार । बहु करितोसी फार ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Your dealings are false; I will no longer walk Your road. There is no consistency even in a single name; You have strung a garland of random beads.

When I look closely, it becomes a battle; You play a game of hide and seek. Says Tuka, You make much ado over nothing.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Your dealings are false; I will not walk Your road any longer. There is no steadiness even in a single name; You have strung a garland of random beads. When I look closely it turns into a fight; You play a game of hide and seek. Tuka says: You make a great fuss over nothing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram scolds God in the voice of an exasperated devotee. He accuses God of crooked dealings and threatens to stop following the path, but the tone is intimacy, not rejection. The complaints are about elusiveness: not even one steady name to hold, a garland of mismatched beads, a search that turns into a struggle, a Lord who hides as soon as you look for Him. The closing line, that God makes much ado over nothing, names the experience of seeking a God who keeps slipping away and dramatizing the chase. Underneath the reproach is the longing of someone who cannot find the one he refuses to stop looking for.

GATHA 1804

Devotion to Vitthal

Loving reproach, the exposed show

मराठी मूळ

लटिका चि केला । सोंग पसारा दाविला ॥१॥
 अवघा बुडालासी ऋणें । बहुतांचे देणें घेणें ॥ ध्रु. ॥
 लावियेलीं चाळा । बहू दावूनि पुतळा ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे हात । आह्मी अवरिली मात ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

It was all a pretense; the whole display was just a show. You are drowned in debts, with borrowings and lendings on every side.

You dangled temptations and showed off Your image to lure people in. Says Tuka, we have caught on; we have put a stop to this game.

IN PLAIN WORDS

It was all a fake; the whole spread was just a show. You are drowning in debts, with borrowing and lending on every side. You dangled temptations and showed off Your image to lure people in. Tuka says: we have caught on; we have put a stop to this game.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram talks to God as if catching out a clever trickster. He calls the visible world a staged display, a show with nothing solid behind it, a business buried in debts of giving and taking on every side. God is pictured as luring people in by dangling temptations and parading His form. But the closing line is the turn: the devotee says he has seen through it and stopped the game. The reproach is really a claim of arrival. Once you recognize the display as display, its pull over you ends, and that recognition is itself the freedom Tukaram is announcing.

GATHA 1805

Devotion to Vitthal

Reproach, the hope that ruined me

मराठी मूळ

दाखवूनि आस । केला बहुतांचा नास ॥१॥
थोंटा झोडा शिरोमणी । भेटलासी नागवणी ॥२॥
सुखाचें उत्तर । नाहीं मुदलासी थार ॥३॥
तुका हाणे काय । तुझे घ्यावें उरे हाय ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

By dangling hope You have ruined many. A stumbling, bumbling impostor, that is what You are: You came only to strip us bare.

There is no comfortable answer; the very principal has no footing. Says Tuka, what should one take from You when only a sigh remains?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You held out hope, and so You ruined many. You are a stumbling, bumbling fraud, a chief among them; You came to me only to strip me bare. There is no comforting answer here. The very capital is gone; nothing is left to stand on. Tuka says: what is there to take from You, when only a sigh remains?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is scolding God in the voice of a man who staked everything on a promise and was left empty. He says the hope God dangled is exactly what undid him and many others: it drew him in, then stripped him of all he had. He even calls God a fraud and a thief, not in real contempt but in the bitter intimacy of a lover who has lost the

principal and not just the profit. The complaint hides its true claim: a person who gives himself wholly to God is left with nothing of his own to bargain with, only a sigh, and that emptying is itself the point.

GATHA 1806

Devotion to Vitthal

Reproach, the shameless thief

मराठी मूळ

लाज ना विचार । बाजारी तूं भांडखोर ॥१॥
 ऐसें ज्याणें व्हावें । त्याची गांठी तुजसवें ॥२॥
 फेडिसी लंगोटी । घेसी सकळांसी तुटी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे चोरा । तुला आप ना दुसरा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You have no shame and no discretion; You are a brawler in the marketplace. Only one who deserves such treatment should tie his fate with Yours.

You strip off even the loincloth and swindle everyone. Says Tuka, You thief, You have neither self nor other.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You have no shame and no sense; You are a brawler in the marketplace. Only someone who wants such treatment should tie his fate to Yours. You strip off even the loincloth; You leave everyone bankrupt. Tuka says: You thief, You have no self and no other.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram keeps up the lover's quarrel, calling God a shameless market brawler who picks fights and robs whoever comes near. The warning is half a joke: only someone ready to lose everything should bind his life to this one, because God takes even the last covering, the loincloth, and leaves the devotee with nothing. The closing line turns the insult into the truth it was hiding: this thief has no self and no other, no inside and no outside, so to be robbed by God is to be emptied of the very line between mine and not-mine. The harshness points at how total surrender feels from inside, not at any flaw in God.

GATHA 1807

The Nature of God

The hidden God, here yet nowhere

मराठी मूळ

ठाव नाहीं बुड । घरें वसविसी कुड ॥१॥
 भलते ठायीं तुझा वास । सदा एरवी उदास ॥२॥
 जागा ना निजेला । धाला ना भुकेला ॥३॥
 न पुसतां भलें । तुका ह्मणे बुझें बोलें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You have no foundation and no bottom; You build houses on pure illusion. Your dwelling is wherever You please; otherwise You are utterly indifferent.

You are neither awake nor asleep, neither full nor hungry. Says Tuka, unless one asks, You speak sweetly and sensibly enough.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You have no ground and no bottom; You build Your houses out of illusion. You live wherever You please, and otherwise You are utterly aloof. You are neither awake nor asleep, neither full nor hungry. Tuka says: unless someone asks, You speak sweetly and sensibly enough.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing the strangeness of God's being. God rests on no foundation and has no bottom to plumb; whatever dwelling He seems to take is built on appearance, and He is at home anywhere yet attached to nowhere. He is past all the pairs we live by: not waking, not sleeping, not satisfied, not in need. The last line catches the catch: God seems reasonable and sweet only as long as you do not press Him with questions, because His real nature has no edges for our questions to grasp.

GATHA 1808

Devotion to Vitthal

Humility, the dog at the master's feet

मराठी मूळ

श्वाना दिली सवे । पायांभोंवतें तें भोंवे ॥१॥
 तैसी जाली मज परी । वसे निकट सेजारीं ॥२॥
 जेवितां जवळी । येऊनियां पुंस घोळी ॥३॥
 कोपेल तो घनी । तुका ह्मणे नेणें मनीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A dog is given companionship and it circles around one's feet. That is exactly my condition: You dwell close beside me, right next door.

When I sit down to eat You come near, wagging and fawning. Says Tuka, whether the master is angry or not, the dog does not take it to mind.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Give a dog a little kindness and it keeps circling your feet. That is just my condition: You live close beside me, right next door. When I sit to eat, You come near, wagging and fawning. Tuka says: whether the master is angry or not, the dog does not hold it in its mind.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes himself the dog and God the close neighbor whose company he cannot leave. A dog that has once been shown affection circles its master's feet and crowds in at mealtime, hoping and fawning; that, he says, is exactly how he hangs about God. The point of the image is the dog's trust: it does not brood over whether the

master is pleased or angry, it simply stays near. Tukaram is naming the kind of devotion that does not keep score of God's moods but clings to nearness itself, free of calculation.

GATHA 1809

Confession and Sin

Confession, the babbling tongue

मराठी मूळ

वटवट केली । न विचारितां मना आली ॥१॥
 मज कराल तें क्षमा । कैसें नेणों पुरुषोत्तमा ॥२॥
 उचित न कळे । जिह्वा भलतें चि बरळे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कांहीं । लौकिकाची चाड नाही ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have blurted out whatever came to mind without thinking. Forgive me for all of it, O Purushottama; I know no better.

I do not know what is proper; my tongue babbles whatever it likes. Says Tuka, I have no concern for public decorum.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have chattered on, saying whatever came to mind without thinking. Forgive me all of it, O Purushottama; I know no better. I do not know what is proper; my tongue blurts whatever it likes. Tuka says: I have no care for what people think is decent.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram owns the looseness of his own speech and asks pardon for it. He admits he says whatever rises in him, with no measuring of what is fitting, and calls himself simply ignorant of the right way to speak before God. Then he names the deeper freedom underneath the confession: he no longer cares about public decorum, the social judgment of what is proper. The apology turns into a kind of release, the babbling of a child who trusts that the one he speaks to will forgive rather than judge.

GATHA 1810

Faith and Trust

Vow, staking the whole life

मराठी मूळ

जीवें व्हावें साटी । पडे संवसारें तुटी ॥१॥
 ऐशीं बोलिलों वचनें । सवें घेउनि नारायण ॥२॥
 नाहीं जन्मा आलों । करील ऐसें नेदीं बोलों ॥३॥
 ठाव पुसी सेणें । तुका ह्मणे खुंटी येणें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One must stake one's very life; that is what breaks the bond with worldly existence. I have spoken such words and taken Narayana along with me.

I did not come into this world to let anyone say otherwise; I will not allow it. Says Tuka, cow dung cleans the ground; by this, the post is firmly planted.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You must stake your very life; that is what breaks the bond with this world. I have spoken such words, taking Narayana along with me as my witness. I did not come into this world to let anyone say otherwise; I will not allow it. Tuka says: as cow dung cleans and seals the ground, by this the post stands firmly fixed.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is declaring a vow and naming its cost: the bond with worldly existence breaks only when you wager your whole life, nothing less. He says he has spoken these words with Narayana himself standing beside him, so they are not loose talk but a pledge made before God. He refuses to let anyone soften or unsay it. The closing image makes it solid: just as a smear of cow dung sets and seals a floor, this vow has been packed down so the post of his resolve stands fixed and cannot be pulled loose.

GATHA 1811

Prayers

Prayer, take away my fear

मराठी मूळ

आता पंढरीराया । माझ्या निरसावे भया ॥१॥
 मनीं राहिली आशंका । स्वामिभयाची सेवका ॥२॥
 ठेवा माथां हात । कांहीं बोला अभयमात ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने लाडे । खेळें ऐसें करा पुढें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now, O King of Pandhari, dispel my fear. A servant's mind always holds the dread of displeasing the master.

Place Your hand upon my head and speak some word of assurance. Says Tuka, play with me lovingly like this going forward.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now, O King of Pandhari, take my fear away. A dread stays in my mind, the servant's fear of the master. Place Your hand on my head; speak some word of assurance. Tuka says: from now on, play with me lovingly, like this.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays for the one thing fear leaves him needing: release from fear itself. He names it precisely as a servant's dread of his master, the worry of having displeased the one he serves. So he asks for the gestures that quiet that dread, a hand laid on his head and a spoken word of safety. The last line shows what he is really after:

not distance and obedience but closeness, a Lord who plays with him affectionately rather than one he must tremble before.

GATHA 1812

Devotion to Vitthal

Intimacy, the child's babbling speech

मराठी मूळ

कवतुकवाणें । बोलों बोबडए वचनें ॥1॥
 हें तों नसावें अंतरीं । आह्वां धरायाचें दुरी ॥ध्रु॥
 स्तुति तैसी निंदा । माना सम चि गोविंदा ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे बोलें । मज तुह्मी शिकविलें॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I speak playful, babbling words like a child. But let this not create any distance between us; do not hold us away because of it.

Praise and blame, O Govinda, consider them equal. Says Tuka, it is You who taught me to speak this way.

IN PLAIN WORDS

For the joy of it, I speak in babbling, childish words. Do not let this come between us in Your heart; do not hold me at a distance for it. Praise and blame, O Govinda, count them the same. Tuka says: it was You who taught me to speak this way.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram offers his rough, playful speech as a child's babble and asks that it not become a wall between him and God. He fears God taking offense and keeping him at arm's length, so he pleads for that not to happen. Then he asks God to hold praise and blame as equal, refusing to weigh his words on a scale of merit. The disarming close puts the responsibility back on God: if Tukaram speaks so freely and even rudely, it is because God himself taught him this childlike, unguarded way of talking.

GATHA 1813

Prayers

Prayer, let the past be past

मराठी मूळ

असो मागें जालें । पुडें गोड तें चांगलें ॥1॥
 आतां माझे मनीं । कांहीं अपराध न मनीं ॥ध्रु॥
 नेदीं अवसान । करितां नामाचें चिंतन ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे बोले । तुज आधीं च गोविलें॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let the past be past; what lies ahead, let it be sweet and good. From now on, hold no offense in Your mind against me.

Do not let me falter in the contemplation of Your name. Says Tuka, I have already bound You by these words from the very start.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let what is gone be gone; let what comes ahead be sweet and good. From now on, hold no offense against me in Your mind. Do not let me lose heart while I dwell on Your name. Tuka says: by these very words I have already bound You, from the very start.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks for a clean slate: let the past stay in the past and let the road ahead be good, with no grudge held against him. His one ongoing request is steadiness, that he never falter or lose strength while keeping God's name in mind. The closing line is the daring turn: he claims his words themselves have already tied God down. By praying this way he holds God to his own nature as the one who forgives, so the prayer is less a plea than a binding already accomplished.

GATHA 1814

Longing and Separation

Longing, my breath cannot remain without You

मराठी मूळ

मातेविण बाळा । आणिक न माने सोहळा ॥१॥
 तैसें जालें माझ्या चित्ता । तुजविण पंढरिनाथा ॥२॥
 वाट पाहेमेघा बिंदु । नेघे चातक सरिता सिंधू ॥३॥
 सारसांसी निशीं । ध्यानरवीच्या प्रकाशीं ॥४॥
 जीवनाविण मत्स्य । जैसें धेनूलागीं वत्स ॥५॥
 पतिव्रते जिणें । भ्रताराच्या वर्तमानें ॥६॥
 कृपणाचें धन । लोभालागीं जैसें मन ॥७॥
 तुका ह्मणे काय । तुजविण प्राण राहे ॥८॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Without its mother, a child finds no joy in any celebration. That is exactly the state of my chitta without You, O Lord of Pandhari.

The chataka bird watches for the rain-cloud and will not drink from river or sea. The chakravaka longs through the night for the light of the dawn-sun.

A fish cannot live without water; a calf cannot rest without its mother cow. A devoted wife's life depends entirely on word of her husband.

A miser's mind clings to its wealth with unshakable greed. Says Tuka, how can my breath remain without You?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Without its mother, a child finds no joy in any festival. So it is with my mind, O Lord of Pandhari, without You. The chataka bird watches only for the raincloud's drop and will not drink from river or sea. The sarasa birds wait through the night for the light of the dawn-sun. A fish cannot live out of water; a calf cannot rest apart from the cow. A devoted wife lives only on word of her husband. A miser's mind clings with greed to his wealth. Tuka says: how then can my breath stay in me without You?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram piles up images of beings that cannot be themselves without the one thing they are bound to. A child is joyless without its mother even amid celebration; the chataka bird refuses all water and waits only for rain from the cloud; the night birds long for dawn, the fish for water, the calf for the cow, the faithful wife for news of her husband, the miser for his hoard. Each is a kind of love that admits no substitute. He sets them all down only to ask the real question: if every one of these cannot live apart from what it loves, how can his own breath remain in his body without God?

GATHA 1815

The Nature of God

Praise, the God who asks no faults

मराठी मूळ

तुजऐसा कोणी न देखें उदार । अभयदानशूर पांडुरंगा ॥१॥
 शरण येती त्यांचे न विचारिसी दोष । न मागतां त्यांस अढळ देसी ॥२॥
 धांवसी आडणी ऐकोनियां धांवा । कड्वारें देवा भक्तांचिया ॥३॥
 दोष त्यांचे जाळी कल्पकोटिवरी । नामासाठीं हरि आपुलिया ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुज वाणूं कैशा परी । एक मुख हरी आयुष्य थोडें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I see no one as generous as You, O Panduranga, champion of fearlessness. You do not examine the faults of those who come to You for refuge; without their asking, You grant them the imperishable.

Hearing a devotee's cry, You rush to their aid, O God, moved by love for Your devotees. For the sake of Your own name, You burn away their sins accumulated over millions of ages.

Says Tuka, how can I praise You adequately with one mouth and a short life, O Hari?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I see no one as generous as You, O Panduranga, hero of fearlessness. You do not weigh the faults of those who come to You for refuge; without their even asking, You give them what never perishes. Hearing a cry of distress, You come running, O God, out of love for Your devotees. For the sake of Your own name, You burn away sins piled up over millions of ages. Tuka says: how can I praise You enough, O Hari, with one mouth and so short a life?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram praises God as generosity itself, the one who gives fearlessness. The heart of the praise is what God does not do: He does not examine the sins of those who take refuge in Him, and He gives the imperishable to people who have not even asked. He comes running at a cry of distress, moved by love for His own, and burns away ages of accumulated sin, doing it for the sake of His own name as the saver of those who turn to Him. The closing line is the helplessness of true praise: with only one mouth and a short life, Tukaram cannot say enough.

GATHA 1816

The Nature of God

Gratitude, the gift I could never repay

मराठी मूळ

काय तुझे उपकार पांडुरंगा । सांगों मी या जगामाजी आतां ॥१॥
 जतन हें माझें करुनि संचित । दिलें अवचित आणूनियां॥२॥
 घडल्या दोषांचें न घली च भरी । आली यास थोरी कृपा देवा ॥३॥
 नव्हतें ठाउकें आइकिलें नाहीं । न मगतां पाहीं दान दिलें ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे याच्या उपकारासाठीं । नाहीं माझें गाठीं कांहीं ऐक ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How shall I describe Your favors to the world, O Panduranga? You carefully preserved my store of merit and then placed it unexpectedly before me. You do not add to the account of sins already committed; great is this mercy, O God.

I had never known of it, had never even heard of it; yet without my asking, the gift was given. Says Tuka, I have nothing in my own possession with which to repay this kindness.

IN PLAIN WORDS

How can I tell the world of Your kindnesses, O Panduranga? You guarded my hidden store of merit and then placed it before me without warning. You do not add to the account of the sins I had already done; great is this mercy, O God. I did not know of it, I had not even heard of it, yet without my asking the gift was given. Tuka says: for all this kindness I have nothing of my own to pay You back with.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tries to count God's favors and finds them past telling. He says God quietly kept safe the merit he had stored up and then, when he least expected it, brought it out and handed it to him. And God refuses to keep adding to the ledger of sins he had already committed, which Tukaram calls a great mercy. The favor was entirely unearned and unsought: he did not know of it, had never heard of it, yet it came. The poem ends in the honest bankruptcy of gratitude: he has nothing of his own with which to repay a gift he never asked for.

GATHA 1817

Longing and Separation

Longing, the dread of being cast off

मराठी मूळ

वाळूनियां जन सांडी मज दुरी । करिसील हरी ऐसें कधीं ॥१॥
 आठवीन पाय धरुनि अनुताप । वाहे जळ झोंप नाहीं डोळां ॥२॥
 नावडती जीवा आणीक प्रकार । आवडी ते फार एकांताची ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसी धरितों वासना । होई नारायणा साहए मज ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Will You ever cast me off, turn the people against me, and push me far away, O Hari? I would cling to Your feet in remorse, tears streaming, with no sleep in my eyes. My jiva cares for no other pursuit; the love of solitude alone appeals to me.

Says Tuka, this is the longing I hold; be my help, O Narayana.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Will you ever do this to me, Hari: dry me up, turn people against me, push me far away? I would hold your feet and think of you in remorse. Tears would stream; no sleep would come to my eyes. My jiva cares for nothing else. I love only solitude, and love it greatly. Tuka says: this is the longing I hold. Be my help, Narayana.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram prays out of a fear that doubles as a wish. He imagines Hari withering him, setting the world against him, driving him away; and instead of shrinking from that picture he leans into it, because stripped of everything he would cling all the harder to those feet. The remorse, the tears, the sleepless eyes are not punishments he dreads but the shape of the love he wants. He has lost his taste for every other pursuit and craves only solitude with God. So he names his one desire and asks Narayana to help him hold it.

GATHA 1818

Confession and Sin

Confession, the mind that will not listen

मराठी मूळ

सांगतों या मना तें माझें नाइके । घातावरी टेंके चांडाळ हें ॥१॥
 ह्मणऊनि पाहे तरतें बुडतें । न ल्हाये पुरतें बळ करुं ॥२॥
 काय तें संचित न कळे पाहातां । मतिमंद चित्ता उपजतें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसें बळ नाहीं अंगी । पाहोनियां वेगीं पार टाकीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I counsel this mind of mine, but it does not listen; the wretch keeps rushing toward ruin. Therefore I watch whether it sinks or floats, for I cannot muster enough strength to prevail over it.

What destiny lies in store I cannot tell; only dull thoughts arise in this chitta. Says Tuka, I do not have the strength in my own body for this; look upon me swiftly and carry me across, O Lord.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I counsel this mind of mine, but it does not listen. The wretch keeps rushing toward its own ruin. So I just watch whether it sinks or floats. I cannot find the strength to master it. What lies stored up for me, I cannot tell; only dull thoughts rise in this chitta. Tuka says: my own body holds no such strength. Look on me quickly and carry me across.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram confesses that he has lost the contest with his own mind. He reasons with it, but it ignores him and runs headlong toward harm, and he admits he has no power to stop it, so he can only watch it struggle. He does not know what his past has stored up for him; his thinking feels dull and clouded. The point is the end of self-reliance: when his own strength runs out, the only move left is to hand the whole thing to God and ask to be carried across the water he cannot cross alone.

GATHA 1819

Prayers

Prayer, claiming God's duty to the fallen

मराठी मूळ

आतां नको चुकों आपुल्या उचिता । उदारा या कांता रखुमाईच्या ॥१॥
 आचरावे दोष हें आह्मां विहित । तारावे पतित तुमचें तें ॥२॥
 आह्मी तों आपुलें केलेसें जतन । घडो तुह्मांकून घडेल ते ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे विठो चतुराच्या राया । आहे ते कासया मोडों देसी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Do not let me now miss what is rightfully due, O generous Lord, husband of Rukmini. It is our nature to commit faults; it is Your duty to purify the fallen.

I have done my part and kept watch; let whatever can come from You now come. Says Tuka, O Vitthal, king of the wise, why would You let what already stands be torn down?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now do not miss what is owed to me, generous Lord, husband of Rukmini. To commit faults is our nature. To save the fallen is your work. I have kept my own part, and watched over it. Now let whatever can come from you come. Tuka says: Vitthal, king of the wise, why would you let what already stands be torn down?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses a claim on God by dividing the labor between them. Sinning is simply what creatures like him do; rescuing sinners is simply what the saving Lord does, so each is only being true to its nature. He says he has held up his end and kept watch, and now leaves the outcome entirely to God. The closing line turns shrewd: he reminds Vitthal that he is already standing, already God's, and asks why the wise Lord would let his own finished work be undone now.

GATHA 1820

Prayers

Prayer, the surrendered body

मराठी मूळ

मुखें बोलावें तें जीविचें जाणसी । विदित पायांपाशीं सर्व आहे ॥१॥
 आतां हें चि भलें भाकावी करुणा । विनियोग तो जाणां तुझी त्याचा ॥२॥
 आपलें तों येथें केलें नव्हे कांहीं । साधनाचा वांहीं पडों नये ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देह दिला पिंडदान । वेळोवेळां कोण चिंता करी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What the mouth speaks, You already know as the truth of my jiva; everything is known at Your feet. So it is good simply to cry out for mercy; You know best how to use it.

Nothing here has been accomplished by my own effort; I must not fall off the path of devotion. Says Tuka, I have offered this body as a funeral oblation; once given, why carry any further worry?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whatever my mouth speaks, you already know as the truth of my jiva. Everything lies open at your feet. So the good thing is simply to cry out for mercy. You know best how to use it. Nothing here was done by my own effort. Let me not fall off the path of devotion. Tuka says: I have given this body as a funeral offering. Once it is given, why should anyone keep worrying?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says that words add nothing, since God already knows the heart behind them; everything is laid bare at his feet. The only fitting act is to cry for mercy and leave its use to God. He insists that nothing he has reached came from his own striving, and prays only not to slip off the path. The last image is the surrender entire: he has offered his body the way one offers a funeral oblation for the dead, so it is no longer his to guard, and worry over it is pointless.

GATHA 1821

Worldly Life

Worldly life, the blindness of craving

मराठी मूळ

कामातुरा भय लाज ना विचार । शरीर असार तृणतुल्य ॥१॥
 नवल हे लीळा करात्याचें लाघव । प्रारब्धें भाव दाखविले ॥२॥
 लोभालोभ एका धनाचिये ठायीं । आणिकांची सोई चाड नाही ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे भूक न विचारी प्रकार । योजे तें चि सार यथाकाळें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The one seized by lust knows no fear, no shame, no reasoning; the body becomes worthless as a blade of grass. Marvelous is this divine play, the cunning of the Creator; destiny reveals its workings through desire.

In the grip of greed, one sees only wealth and cares nothing for anyone else. Says Tuka, hunger does not pause to deliberate; it seizes whatever serves the moment.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The one seized by lust knows no fear, no shame, no reasoning. The body becomes worthless as a blade of grass. Strange is this play, the cunning of the Maker; destiny shows its workings through desire. In the grip of greed, a man sees only wealth and cares nothing for anyone else. Tuka says: hunger does not stop to weigh how. It seizes whatever serves the moment.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes how craving switches off a person's judgment. Lust drives out fear, shame, and reason, and a person will throw away the body itself as if it were a worthless wisp of grass. Greed narrows a man until he sees only money and no one else matters; hunger does not pause to ask what is right, it grabs whatever is at hand. He frames all this as the Maker's strange play, the way destiny works itself out through human desire. The mirror it holds up is one's own appetites: watch how craving, once seized, stops weighing the cost.

GATHA 1822

The Nature of God

Nature of God, deluded by self-effort

मराठी मूळ

बांधे सोडी हें तों धन्याचिये हातीं । हेंकडें गोविती आपणां बळें ॥१॥
 भुललियासी नाही देहाचा आठव । धोतऱ्यानें भाव पालटिला ॥२॥
 घरांत रिघावें दाराचिये सोई । भिंतीसवें डोई घेऊनि फोडी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा गेलीं विसरोन । आतां वर्म कोण दावी यांसी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Binding and loosing are in the master's hands, yet people entangle themselves by their own force. The deluded one has forgotten the body altogether; the washerman has changed the very nature of his cloth.

One should enter the house through the door, but instead one smashes one's head against the wall. Says Tuka, they have forgotten God; now who will show them the secret?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Binding and loosing rest in the master's hands. Yet people tangle themselves up by their own force. The deluded one has forgotten his own body. The washerman has changed the very nature of his cloth. You should go into the house through the door. Instead you smash your head against the wall. Tuka says: they have forgotten God. Now who will show them the secret?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says release is God's to give, the master who binds and loosens, yet people work feverishly to entangle themselves all the more. He stacks up images of getting it backward: a man so deluded he forgets he even has a body, a washerman who ruins the cloth he was meant to clean, and someone who batters his head against the wall when the door stood open beside him. The common error is trusting one's own force instead of the master's hand. Having forgotten God, who is the real door, such people have no one left to point them to the way in.

GATHA 1823

The Nature of God

Nature of God, all is You

मराठी मूळ

कवण जन्मता कवण जन्मविता । न कळे कृपावंता माव तुझी ॥1॥
 कवण हा दाता कवण हा मागता । न कळे कृपावंता माव तुझी ॥ध्रु॥
 कवण भोगिता कवण भोगविता । न कळे कृपावंता माव तुझी ॥2॥
 कवण ते रूप कवण अरूपता । न कळे कृपावंता माव तुझी ॥3॥
 सर्वा ठायीं तूं चि सर्व ही जालासी। तुका ह्मणे यासी दुर्जे नव्हे ॥4॥
 जेथें देखें तेथें तुझी च पाउलें । विश्व अवघें कोंदाटलें।
 रूप गुण नाम अवघा मेघश्याम । वेगळें तें काय उरलें ।
 जातां लोटांगणीं अवघी च मेदिनी । सकळ देव पाट जालें ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Who is born, who causes birth? Your mystery cannot be fathomed, O merciful Lord. Who gives, who begs? Your mystery cannot be fathomed.

Who enjoys, who causes enjoyment? Your mystery cannot be fathomed. What is form, what is formlessness? Your mystery cannot be fathomed.

You have become everything in every place; there is nothing apart from You. Says Tuka, wherever I look I see Your footprints; the whole universe is filled with You. Name, form, and quality are all the dark-hued Lord; what else remains? When I bow down, the entire earth becomes a holy place and all the gods become one altar.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Who is born, and who causes birth? Your maya cannot be fathomed, merciful Lord. Who gives, and who begs? Your maya cannot be fathomed. Who enjoys, and who causes enjoyment? Your maya cannot be fathomed. What is form, and what is formlessness? Your maya cannot be fathomed. In every place you alone have become everything. Tuka says: there is no second to this. Wherever I look, I see only your footprints; the whole universe is packed full of you. Form, quality, and name are all the dark-hued Lord; what else is left over? When I fall down to bow, the whole earth becomes a holy place, and all the gods become one single altar.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram piles up pairs that usually seem opposite, the born and the begetter, giver and beggar, enjoyer and the one who grants enjoyment, form and formlessness, and confesses that he cannot tell them apart, because God's maya hides the seam. The resolution is that there are not really two: God alone has become everything, in every place, so the apparent pairs are one. From there it pours out as vision. Everywhere he looks he sees only God's footprints, the universe crammed with him, every name and form and quality nothing but the dark-hued Lord. When he prostrates, the ground itself turns sacred and all the separate gods collapse into one altar.

GATHA 1824

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, every hour made holy

मराठी मूळ

सदा पर्वकाळ सुदिन सुवेळ । चित्त प्रेमें असे धालें ॥१॥
 अवघा आह्मां तूं च जालासी देवा । संसार हेवा कामधंदा ।
 न लगे जाणें कोठें कांहीं च करणें । मुखीं नाम ध्यान सदा ॥२॥
 भोजन सारुं ठायीं फल तांबोल कांहीं । पूजा नैवेद्य तुज होती ।
 चालतां प्रदक्षणा निद्रा लोटांगण । दंडवत तुजप्रति ।
 देखोन दृष्टी परस्परें गोष्टी । अवघ्या तुझ्या मूर्तिन ॥३॥
 जाल्या तीर्थरूप वावी नदी कूप । अवघें गंगाजळ जालें ।
 महाल मंदिरे माडण तनघरें । झोपडण अवघीं देव देवाइलें ।
 ऐकें कानीं त्या हरिनामध्वनी । नाना शब्द होत जाले ।
 तुका ह्मणे या विठोबाचे दास । सदा प्रेमसुखें धाले ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Every day is a holy day, every hour auspicious, for the chitta is brimming with love. You have become everything to us, O God: our worldly life, our ambitions, our daily work.

We need go nowhere, need do nothing; Your name and Your meditation on our lips is enough. When we finish eating, whatever fruit or betel we take becomes an offering to You; our walking becomes circumambulation, our sleep becomes prostration, our bowing becomes salutation to You.

Whatever our eyes behold, whatever conversation we share, it is all Your form. Every well, river, and pond has become holy water; every mansion, temple, hut, and shed has become a shrine.

Every sound the ear hears has become the chanting of Hari's name. Says Tuka, we who are Vitthoba's servants are always brimming with the joy of love.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Every day is a holy day, every hour the right hour, for the chitta is full and overflowing with love. You alone have become everything to us, God: our worldly life, our wanting, our daily work. We need go nowhere and do nothing; your name and your meditation on the lips is enough. When we finish a meal, whatever fruit or betel we take becomes an offering to you. Walking becomes circling you; sleep becomes prostration; bowing becomes salutation to you. Whatever the eyes see, whatever talk we share, all of it is your form. Every well and river and pond has become Ganga water. Every mansion, temple, upper room, hut, and shed has become a shrine. Every sound the ear catches has become the chanting of Hari's name. Tuka says: we who are Vithoba's servants are always full and overflowing with the joy of love.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a life so soaked in God that the line between worship and ordinary living has dissolved. There is no special festival day, because every hour is already holy and the heart is brimming. God has taken the place of everything once chased after, so there is nowhere to go and nothing extra to do; the Name on the lips is the whole practice. Then he reads every plain act as worship: eating becomes offering, walking becomes circumambulation, sleep and a casual bow become prostration and salute. Sight, speech, every building, every body of water, every sound, all of it turns into shrine and sacred river and the chanting of Hari. This is the ecstasy of God's servants, whose joy never empties.

GATHA 1825

Prayers

Prayer, the plea of the unworthy

मराठी मूळ

जे दोष घडले न फिटे करितां कांहीं । सरते तुझ्या पायीं जाले तैसे ॥१॥
 माझा कां हो करुं नये अंगीकार । जालेती निष्ठ पांडुरंगा ॥२॥
 यातिहीन नये ऐकें ज्यां वेद । तयां दिलें पद वैकुंठीचें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कां रे एकाचा आभार । घेसी माथां भार वाहोनियां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The sins that have been committed cannot be erased by any means, yet at Your feet they are simply dissolved. Why then will You not accept me, O Panduranga? Are You truly so heartless? Even those of humble station who were denied the Vedas: You have granted them a seat in Vaikuntha.

Says Tuka, why do You bear the burden of obligation to only one, carrying it upon Your head?

IN PLAIN WORDS

The sins I have done cannot be wiped out by any effort of mine. Yet at your feet they simply dissolve away. So why will you not accept me, Panduranga? Have you grown so hard? Even the lowborn, who were not allowed to hear the Vedas, you gave a seat in Vaikuntha. Tuka says: why carry the weight of obligation to just one, bearing that load on your head?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram argues from God's own track record. His sins are beyond anything he could erase himself, but at God's feet they melt, so the power to save him plainly exists. He presses the question of why, then, he is left out, and even charges God with hardness. His proof is that God has lifted the lowborn, those barred from the Vedas, straight into Vaikuntha. The closing turn is shrewd and tender at once: he asks why God would shoulder the burden of saving only one or a few when the same mercy could carry him too.

GATHA 1826

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the Lord who serves His own

मराठी मूळ

हरिकथेची आवडी देवा । करितो सेवा दासांची ॥१॥
 ह्यणोनि हिंडे मागें मागें । घरटी जागे घालितसे ॥२॥
 निर्लज्ज भोजें नाचत रंगीं । भरतें अंगीं प्रेमाचें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्यणे विकलें देवें । आपण भावें संवसाटी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God Himself loves the recital of Hari's stories and renders service to His own devotees. That is why He wanders after them, keeping vigil at every doorstep.

Shameless and joyful, He dances in the gathering as waves of love fill His being. Says Tuka, God has sold Himself; devotion has won Him over as a companion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God loves the telling of Hari's stories, and he serves his own servants. So he wanders after them, again and again, keeping watch at every doorstep. Shameless and joyful, he dances in the gathering, his whole body filling with love. Tuka says: God has sold himself. By their devotion he has been bought as their companion.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the usual order upside down: here it is God who serves the devotees, not the other way around. Drawn by the singing of Hari's stories, God trails after his own people and stands guard at their doors. He throws off all dignity, dancing in the assembly with love surging through him. The closing image is the boldest claim: God has let himself be sold, purchased by nothing but devotion, content to become the devotee's own companion. The point is that love, not power, is what God answers to.

GATHA 1827

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the easy road home

मराठी मूळ

साधन संपित हें चि माझें धन । सकळ चरण विठोबाचे ॥1॥
 शीतळ हा पंथ माहेराची वाट । जवळी च नीट सुखरूप ॥२॥
 वैष्णवांचा संग रामगाणें गाणें । मंडित भूषण अळंकार ॥3॥
 भवनदी आड नव्हतीसी जाली । कोरडी च चाली जावें पायी ॥4॥
 मायबाप दोघें पाहातील वाट । ठेवूनिया कटीं कर उभी ॥5॥
 तुका ह्याने केव्हां देखेन कळस । पळाली आळस निद्रा भूक ॥6॥
 यथार्थवादे तुज न वर्णवे कदा । बोलतो ते निंदा करितो तुझी ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My practice, my wealth, my only treasure: all of it is the feet of Vitthoba. This is a cool and pleasant path, the road to my true home, straight and near and full of ease.

The company of the Vaishnavas, the singing of Rama's songs: these are my adornments and ornaments. The river of worldly existence, once an obstacle, has dried up; I simply walk across on foot.

My mother and father, both standing with hands on hips, are watching for me, waiting. Says Tuka, when shall I see the temple spire? All weariness, drowsiness, and hunger have fled.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My practice, my fortune, my only wealth is all of it the feet of Vithoba. This is a cool path, the road to my mother's home, straight and near and full of ease. The company of the Vaishnavas, the singing of Rama's songs: these are my ornaments and finery. The river of worldly life, once a barrier across my way, has dried up; I walk across on dry ground, on foot. My mother and father both stand watching the road for me, hands resting on their waists. Tuka says: when will I see the temple spire? Weariness, sleep, and hunger have all fled.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram gathers up everything he values and says it is one thing: the feet of Vithoba, his practice and treasure together. He paints the devotee's road as easy and welcoming, cool underfoot, short, and leading to his true home like a mother's house. The fellowship of devotees and the singing of Rama's name are the only jewels he wears. Where the world once stood as a river blocking his path, devotion has dried it up so he simply walks across. He pictures God as a parent standing at the door watching for his child, and his own heart so eager for the first sight of the temple spire that fatigue, sleep, and hunger have all vanished.

GATHA 1828

The Nature of God

Nature of God, made small by love

मराठी मूळ

वेदश्रुति तुज नेणती कोणी । चोवीस ठेंगणीं धांडोळतां ॥१॥
 आतां मज क्षमा करावें देवा । सलगी ते केशवा बोलिलेलों ॥२॥
 सगुण कीं साकार निर्गुण कीं निराकार । न कळे हा पार वेदां श्रुतीं ।
 तो आह्मी भावें केलासी लहान । ठेवूनियां नांवें पाचारितों ॥३॥
 सहजरमुखें शेष सीणला स्तवितां । पार न कळतां ब्रह्मा ठेला ।
 तेथें माझी देहबुद्ध तें काई । थोर मी अन्यायी तुका ह्मणे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The Vedas and the scriptures cannot fathom You; even the twenty-four cosmic principles fall short when they try. Now, O God, forgive me, for I have spoken to You, O Keshava, with the familiarity of a child.

Are You with form or formless, with qualities or without? Neither the Vedas nor the scriptures know Your limit. Yet through devotion I have made You small, calling You by name and summoning You.

With his thousand mouths, Shesha grew weary of praising You, and Brahma stood baffled, unable to find Your boundary. Before all that, what is my body-bound understanding worth? Says Tuka, I am the greatest offender of all.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The Vedas and the scriptures do not know you; even the twenty-four principles fall short when they search. Now forgive me, God, for I have spoken to you, Keshava, with a child's familiarity. With form or formless, with qualities or without: the Vedas and the scriptures do not find your limit. Yet through love I have made you small, given you a name, and called you to me. Shesha wore himself out praising you with his thousand mouths, and Brahma stood baffled, never finding your edge. Against all that, what is my body-bound understanding worth? Tuka says: I am the greatest offender of all.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram begs pardon for an intimacy he knows is impossible to justify. He stacks up the witnesses to God's boundlessness: the Vedas and scriptures cannot grasp him, the cosmic principles fall short, the question of form or formlessness has no answer, the serpent Shesha exhausts a thousand mouths in praise, and even Brahma is left baffled. Against that immensity, his own little mind is nothing. And yet love has done a daring thing: it has shrunk this infinite God down small enough to be given a name and called near like a familiar friend. He confesses this as the boldest of offenses, even while it is exactly what devotion lives by.

GATHA 1829

Devotion to Vitthal

The Name, sanctified into God

मराठी मूळ

कृष्ण गातां गीतीं कृष्ण ध्यातां चित्तीं । ते ही कृष्ण होती कृष्णध्यानें ॥1॥
 आसनीं शयनीं भोजनीं जेवितां । ह्मणारे भोगिता नारायण ॥धु.॥
 ओविये दळणीं गावा नारायण । कांडितां कांडण करितां काम ॥2॥
 नर नारी याति हो कोणी भलतीं । भावें एका प्रीती नारायणा ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे एका भावें भजा हरी । कांति ते दुसरी रूप एक ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who sing of Krishna in their songs and hold Krishna in their chitta become Krishna themselves through constant meditation. While sitting, sleeping, or eating, let every act be offered to Narayana.

While grinding grain or pounding rice, sing of Narayana; while doing any work, remember Him. Man or woman, of any caste or station: with single-pointed love, adore Narayana.

Says Tuka, worship Hari with undivided devotion; though the skins may differ, the form within is one.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Those who sing of Krishna and hold Krishna in the mind become Krishna through meditation on Krishna. Sitting, lying down, eating: say that Narayana is the one who enjoys it all. While grinding grain at the millstone, sing of Narayana; while pounding rice, while doing any work, remember Him. Man or woman, of any caste or birth, anyone at all: with one feeling, love Narayana. Tuka says: worship Hari with one undivided love. The skin may be different, but the form within is one.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram opens the path of the Name to everyone and shows how wide it reaches. Whoever keeps Krishna in the mouth and the mind, he says, becomes Krishna; remembrance is not preparation for God but God himself arriving. He then folds devotion into ordinary life: sitting, eating, grinding grain, pounding rice, every act becomes worship if Narayana is the one held in it. The last verse drops the barrier outright. Man or woman, high caste or low, the outer skin differs but the form within is one, and so the love owed to Hari is owed by all alike.

GATHA 1830

Longing and Separation

Longing, watching the road

मराठी मूळ

डोळ्यां पाझर कंठ माझा दाटे । येऊं देई भेटे पांडुरंगे ॥1॥
 बहु दिस टाकिले निरास कां केलें । कोठें वो गुंतलें चित्त तुझें ॥२॥
 बहु धंदा तुज नाहीं वो आठव । राहिलासे जीव माझा कंठी ॥3॥
 पंढरीस जाती वारकरी संतां । निरोप बहुतां हातीं धाडीं ॥4॥
 तुजविण कोण सांवा धांवा करी । ये वो झडकरी पांडुरंगे ॥5॥
 काय तुझी वाट पाहों कोठवरी । कृपाळु कांपरी विसरलासी ॥6॥
 एक वेळ माझा धरुनि आठव । तुका ह्मणे ये वो न्यावयासी ॥6॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Tears stream from my eyes and my throat chokes with emotion; come, O Panduranga, come and meet me. So many days You have abandoned me, left me without hope; where, O Lord, has Your attention wandered? You are so busy with Your affairs that You have forgotten me; my life hangs by a thread.

Saints and pilgrims travel to Pandhari; I send word through many hands. Without You, who will come running to my rescue? Come quickly, O Panduranga.

How long must I keep watching the road for You? O merciful one, have You forgotten me? Says Tuka, remember me just once, and come to take me home.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tears stream from my eyes; my throat chokes. Come, Panduranga, come and meet me. So many days You have left me without hope. Where has Your mind wandered? You are so busy that You do not remember me; my life hangs in my throat. The Warkari saints are going to Pandhari; I send word with many hands. Without You, who will come running to my aid? Come quickly, Panduranga. How long must I keep watching the road for You? Merciful one, have You forgotten me? Tuka says: remember me just once, and come to take me home.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the cry of the soul that feels abandoned by the God it loves. Tukaram is not arguing; he is weeping, throat closed, watching the road to Pandhari for a Panduranga who seems to have wandered off and forgotten him. He does the only thing a helpless lover can: he sends his message with the pilgrims streaming toward Vitthal's town, hoping it reaches the Lord by many hands. The complaint is also faith, because he insists there is no one else who comes running to the rescue. The plea narrows at the end to the smallest possible request: not rescue, not reward, only that God remember him once and come carry him home.

GATHA 1831

Confession and Sin

Confession, the runaway mind

मराठी मूळ

अधिक कोडितां चरफडी । भलतीकडे घाली उडी ॥1॥
 काय करूं या मना आतां । का विसरातें पंढरिनाथा ।
 करी संसाराची चिंता । वेळोवेळां मागुती ॥ध्रु॥
 भजन नावडे श्रवण । धांवे विषय अवलोकून ॥2॥
 बहुत चंचळ चपळ । जातां येतां न लगे वेळ ॥3॥
 किती राखों दोनी काळ । निजलिया जागे वेळे ॥4॥
 मज राखें आतां । तुका ह्मणे पंढरिनाथा ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The more one tries to restrain this mind, the more it thrashes and leaps in every direction. What shall I do with this mind now? Why does it forget You, O Lord of Pandhari? Again and again it turns to worldly worry.

It does not care for worship or listening to scripture; the moment it sees a sense object it runs. Extremely restless and swift, it comes and goes in the blink of an eye.

How long can I guard it morning and evening? Even in sleep it stays awake. Says Tuka, protect me now, O Lord of Pandhari.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The more I press it in, the more it thrashes and leaps every which way. What shall I do with this mind now? Why does it forget You, Lord of Pandhari? Again and again it turns back to worldly worry. It has no taste for worship or for listening; the moment it sees a sense object, it runs. It is restless and quick; it goes and comes in no time at all. How long can I guard it, morning and evening? Even when it sleeps, it stays awake. Tuka says: protect me now, Lord of Pandhari.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram confesses that his own mind is the enemy he cannot subdue. The harder he tries to pen it in, the more violently it bolts, and it keeps forgetting Vitthal to chase worldly worry. He names its nature precisely: it has no appetite for worship, it bolts at the first sight of a sense object, it never rests even in sleep. The honest admission is that watching it himself, morning and night, is a losing battle. So the abhanga ends not in resolve but in surrender, handing the ungovernable mind over to the Lord of Pandhari with the plea: protect me now.

GATHA 1832

Renunciation

Discernment, the inner intention

मराठी मूळ

कंथा प्रावर्ण । नव्हे भिक्षेचें तें अन्न ॥1॥
 करीं यापरी स्वहित । विचारुनि धर्म नीत ॥ध्रु॥
 देऊळ नव्हे घर । प्रपंच परउपकार ॥2॥
 विधिसेवन काम । नव्हे शब्द रामराम ॥3॥
 हत्या क्षत्रधर्म । नव्हे निष्काम तें कर्म ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे संतीं । करुनि ठेविली आइती ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A patched blanket is not merely a garment; the food of alms is not ordinary food. Pursue your own good in this manner, weighing righteousness and duty.

A temple is not a house; selfless action is not mere worldly business. Ritual performed out of desire is not the same as the words Rama, Rama.

Killing in battle by a warrior's code is not the same as selfless action. Says Tuka, the saints have prepared all of this and laid it out ready for us.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A patched cloak is not just a covering; the food of alms is not ordinary food. Pursue your true good this way, weighing what is right and just. A temple is not a house; selfless service to others is not mere worldly business. Ritual done for desire is not the same as the words Rama, Rama. Killing under a warrior's code is not the same as desireless action. Tuka says: the saints have prepared all of this and laid it out ready.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is teaching discernment: the same outward act carries a wholly different weight depending on the spirit behind it. A patched cloak, begged food, a temple, ritual, even killing in righteous battle look like ordinary clothing, eating, building, custom, or violence, but they are not, because the intention transforms them. The line to hold onto is that ritual done from desire is not the same as simply saying the Name. He is sorting the world into what merely resembles holiness and what is actually surrender. And he reassures the seeker that this discernment is not theirs to invent: the saints have already worked it out and laid the way ready to walk.

GATHA 1833

The Saints

Surrender at the saints' feet

मराठी मूळ

पडोनियां राहीं । उगा च संतांचिये पायीं ॥१॥
 न लगे पुसणें सांगावें । चित्त शुद्ध करीं भावें ॥२॥
 सहज ते िस्थिति। उपदेश परयुक्ति ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने भाव । जवळी धरुनि आणी देव॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Simply fall and remain at the feet of the saints. There is no need to ask or to be told; just purify your chitta with sincere devotion.

That natural state arises through teachings and wise counsel. Says Tuka, genuine feeling draws God close and brings Him near.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Just fall and stay at the feet of the saints. There is no need to ask, no need to be told; only purify your mind with sincere feeling. The natural state comes through their teaching and wise counsel. Tuka says: real feeling holds God close and brings Him near.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strips the spiritual path down to one simple act: fall at the feet of the saints and stay there. He waves away questioning and instruction as unnecessary; what matters is a heart cleaned by sincere feeling. Even the natural, effortless state of realization, he says, arises from the saints' teaching and counsel, not from one's own striving. The closing claim is the engine of the whole poem: genuine feeling, bhava, is what draws God near. Surrender at the feet of the realized, held by real love, does the work that argument and effort cannot.

GATHA 1834

The Nature of God

Nondual riddle, God robs God

मराठी मूळ

देवाचे घरीं देवें केले चोरी । देवें देव नागवूनि केला भिकारी ॥१॥
 धांवणियां धांवा धांवणियां धांवा । माग चि नाहीं जावें कवणिया गांवा ॥२॥
 सवें चि होता चोर घरिचिया घरीं । फावल्यावरी केलें अवघें वाटोळें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने येथें कोणी च नाहीं । नागवले कोण गेलें कोणाचें काई ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In God's own house, God committed the theft; God robbed God and made God a beggar. Run, run for help! But there is no trail to follow and no other town to search.

The thief was inside the house all along; when the chance arose, he swept everything clean. Says Tuka, truly no one is here; who was robbed, and what of anyone's has been lost?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In God's own house, God committed the theft; God robbed God and made God a beggar. Run, run for help! But there is no trail to follow and no other town to go to. The thief was inside the house all along; when the chance came, he made a clean sweep of everything. Tuka says: truly no one is here. Who was robbed? Whose is the thing that was lost?

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a deliberate riddle pointing at nonduality, where every role in the story turns out to be the one God. The thief, the victim, the beggar, the house, all are God; God robs God in God's own home, and so the cry for help has nowhere to run and no other town to search, because there is no outside. The robbery is total and intimate: the thief was never an intruder, he lived inside all along. Tukaram lands the paradox in the final line by dissolving the players entirely. If truly no one is here, then the questions collapse: there was no separate one to be robbed, and nothing of anyone's was ever lost.

GATHA 1835

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, guard against the thief

मराठी मूळ

अवघे चि निजों नका अवघिये ठायीं । वेळ अवेळ तरी सांभाळावी कांहीं ॥१॥
जतन करा रे जतन करा । घालूं पाहे घरावरी घाला चोरटें ॥२॥
सीतरिलीं फार खाती भोंवताले फेरे । गेलें नये हातां सेकीं तळमळ उरे ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे आह्मी करूं आपलें जतन । न लगे कांहीं कोणां द्यावें उघडा रे कान ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Do not all fall asleep in every corner; whether the hour be right or wrong, keep some watch. Guard yourselves, guard yourselves; a thief is preparing to raid the house.

Wolves have been prowling all around; once something is lost, only anguish remains. Says Tuka, we will protect what is ours; no one else need be told. Just keep your ears open.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do not all fall asleep in every corner; whether the hour is right or wrong, keep some watch. Guard it, guard it; a thief is looking to raid the house. Wolves are prowling all around, eating their fill; once a thing is gone it does not come back to hand, and only anguish remains at the end. Tuka says: we will guard what is ours. No one else needs to be told. Just keep your ears open.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram raises an alarm in the language of a village under threat of robbery. The sleepers are souls drowsing through their one chance, and the thief and the circling wolves are the forces that strip a life bare while it nods off. His warning is plain and urgent: stay awake, keep watch at every hour, because what is stolen here cannot be

recovered, and what remains is only regret. The point of the metaphor is the inner wealth, the time and the heart turned toward God, which negligence quietly loses. He ends by taking responsibility for his own watch and asking only that others open their ears and do the same.

GATHA 1836

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, follow the brave saints

मराठी मूळ

काळोखी खाऊन कैवाड केला धीर । आपुलिया हितें जाले जनामध्ये शूर ॥१॥
 कां रें तुम्ही नेणां कां रे तुम्ही नेणां। अल्पसुखासाठीं पडशी विपत्तीचे घाणां ॥२॥
 नाहीं ऐसी लाज काय तयांपें आगळें । काय नव्हे केलें आपुलिया बळें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्याणे तरी सुख अवघें चि बरें । जतन करून हे आपुलालीं ढोरें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

They swallowed darkness and made boldness their armor; in pursuit of their own good they became heroes in the eyes of the world. Why do you not understand? For the sake of petty pleasures you fall into the pit of calamity.

Have you no shame, that you cannot do what they did by their own strength? Says Tuka, every happiness is indeed good; just guard your own cattle with care.

IN PLAIN WORDS

They swallowed darkness and made courage their shield; for their own true good they became heroes before the world. Why do you not understand? Why do you not understand? For a little pleasure you fall into the crushing press of misery. Have you no shame? What did they have that is more than you? What did they not accomplish by their own strength? Tuka says: every happiness is good indeed; just guard your own cattle with care.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram holds up the saints as proof that the seeker has no excuse. They faced darkness, made boldness their armor, and became heroes in the eyes of the world by pursuing their own real good. Against that, he shames the listener who trades that good away for petty pleasures and so falls into the grinding mill of misery. The sharp question is leveled at the pattern, not the person: those heroes were not made of finer stuff; they used the same strength you already have. The closing image, guard your own cattle, brings it home to ordinary duty: tend faithfully what is actually yours, and the happiness will be real.

GATHA 1837

Longing and Separation

Longing, the unanswered servant

मराठी मूळ

जाय परतें काय आणिला कांटाळा । बोला एक वेळा ऐसें तरी ॥१॥
 कां हो केलें तुह्मी निष्ठ देवा । मानेना हे सेवा करितों ते ॥धु॥
 भाग्यवंत त्यांसी सांगितल्या गोष्टी । तें नाहीं अदृष्टीं आमुचिया ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुह्मापासूनि अंतर । न पडे नाहीं स्थिर बिद्ध माझी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Go away if You wish, but at least say so once with some reluctance. Why have You become so indifferent, O God? The service I offer does not seem to please You.

To the fortunate ones You told Your stories; such fortune does not appear in our destiny. Says Tuka, I cannot bear any distance from You, yet my own mind will not hold still.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Go away if You like, but at least say so once, with some reluctance. Why have You become so hard, God? The service I do does not seem to please You. To the fortunate ones You told Your stories; that fortune is not written in our fate. Tuka says: I cannot bear any distance from You, yet my own mind will not hold still.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks as a servant who feels his devotion is being met with cold silence. He would almost rather God said go away outright than leave him guessing, and he aches that the service he offers seems to please no one. He looks at the fortunate souls to whom God spoke and told his stories, and admits, without bitterness toward them, that such fortune does not appear in his own destiny. The closing turn is where he stops blaming God and names his own part: he cannot endure any distance from the Lord, and yet his own restless mind refuses to stay still long enough to close the gap.

GATHA 1838

Confession and Sin

Confession, the inward double life

मराठी मूळ

अनुभवे कळों येतें पांडुरंगा । रुसावे तें कां गा तुह्मांवरी ॥१॥
 आवरितां चित्त नावरे दुर्जन । घात करी मन माझें मज ॥धु॥
 अंतरीं संसार भक्ति बाह्यात्कार । ह्मणोनि अंतर तुझ्या पायीं ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे काय करूं नेणें वर्म । आलें तैसें कर्म सोसूं पुढें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Experience teaches me, O Panduranga, that I should not be angry with You. When I try to restrain my mind, it refuses to obey; my own mind plots against me.

Inwardly I am tangled in worldly cares while outwardly I put on a show of devotion; that is why I remain distant from Your feet. Says Tuka, I do not know the secret remedy; I must simply endure whatever karma comes next.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Experience teaches me, Panduranga, that I should not be angry with You. When I try to hold the mind in, it will not be held, the wretch; my own mind plots my ruin. Inside there is worldly entanglement, while outside I make a show of devotion; that is why I stay far from Your feet. Tuka says: what can I do, I do not know the secret. I must endure whatever karma comes next.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the complaint inward and lets himself off no hook. Experience has taught him the anger he feels toward Panduranga is misplaced; the real trouble is closer to home. His mind cannot be reined in and even works against him, plotting his own undoing. He then confesses the precise fault: inside he is tangled in worldly cares while outside he performs devotion, and this split is exactly why he remains distant from the feet he longs for. The honesty refuses easy escape. He does not know the secret remedy, so he resolves simply to bear whatever karma comes, examining his own divided heart rather than accusing God.

GATHA 1839

Prayers

Prayer, claiming the Lord's mercy

मराठी मूळ

तुजकरितां होतें आनाचें आन । तारिले पाषाण उदकीं देवा ॥१॥
 कां नये कैवार करुं अंगीकार । माझा बहु भार चड जाला ॥२॥
 चुकलासीं ह्मणों तरी जीवांचा ही जीव । रिता नाहीं ठाव उरों दिला ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ऐसें काय सत्ताबळ । माझे परी कृपाळ आहां तुम्ही ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

For Your sake the impossible became possible: even stones floated upon the water, O God. Why then can You not take up my cause and accept me? My burden has grown very heavy.

You might say You overlooked me, but You are the very life of all life; You have not left a single space unoccupied. Says Tuka, such is Your sovereign power; surely You can show that same mercy to me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

For Your sake the impossible became possible; even stones floated on the water, God. Why then can You not take up my cause and accept me? My burden has grown very heavy. Should I say You overlooked me? But You are the very life of all life; You have left no place empty. Tuka says: such is Your sovereign power. Surely You are merciful enough to save someone like me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses his case to God by arguing from God's own record. The one who once made stones float on the water can surely take up the cause of a struggling devotee whose load has grown too heavy to carry. He blocks the only excuse in advance: God cannot claim to have missed him, because God is the life within all life and has left no space unoccupied, so there is nowhere Tukaram could be that God is not. The prayer rests on power joined to mercy. If such sovereign power is real, then withholding rescue is not inability but choice, and Tukaram appeals to the mercy that he trusts will not let that choice fall against him.

GATHA 1840

Worldly Metaphors

Resolve, no looking back

मराठी मूळ

फळ देंठींहून झडे । मग मागुतें न जोडे ॥१॥
 ह्मणोनि तांतडी खोटी । कारण उचिताचे पोटी ॥२॥
 पुढें चढे हात । त्याग मागिलां उचित ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे रणीं । नये पाहों परतोनि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Once a fruit falls from its stem, it cannot be joined back again. Therefore haste is folly; the real cause lies in proper ripening.

As the hand reaches forward, the letting go of what is behind becomes natural. Says Tuka, once you have entered the battlefield, do not look back.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Once a fruit falls from its stem, it cannot be joined back on. So haste is false; the cause lies in proper ripening. As the hand reaches forward, letting go of what is behind becomes fitting. Tuka says: on the battlefield, you do not look back.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses three plain images to teach when to wait and when there is no turning back. A fruit torn off before its time cannot be rejoined, so impatience is folly; ripeness, not hurry, is what brings things to their proper end. But once the moment has come and the hand reaches forward, clinging to what is behind is wrong, and releasing it is the only fitting move. The final image seals it: on the battlefield you do not look back. In the spiritual life, when the time to commit has truly arrived, half-heartedness and backward glances are fatal; you go on without retreat.

GATHA 1841

Worldly Metaphors

The leap of love, devotion that needs no teacher

मराठी मूळ

अगी देखोनियां सती । अंगीं रोमांच उठती ॥१॥
 हा तो नव्हे उपदेश । सुख अंतरीं उल्हासे ॥२॥
 वित्तगोतांकडे । चित्त न घाली न रडे ॥३॥
 आठवूनि एका । उडी घाली ह्मणे तुका ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Seeing the funeral fire, every hair on the sati's body rises with joyful anticipation. This is not something taught from outside; the happiness swells from within.

Her mind does not turn toward wealth or family, nor does she weep. Says Tuka, remembering her beloved alone, she leaps into the fire.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The sati sees the funeral fire. Every hair on her body rises with joy. No one taught her this. The happiness rises from inside her. Her mind does not turn to wealth or family. She does not weep. Tuka says: thinking only of her beloved, she leaps into the fire.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses the image of the sati to name what real love does when it meets its hour. She does not weigh her wealth or her family, and she does not weep, because the joy moving through her was never put there from outside; it swelled up on its own. This is the point: true devotion is not a thing learned or argued into a person, it is an answer of the whole being. Remembering her beloved and nothing else, she leaps. The poem holds up that single-minded surrender as the mark of the genuine.

GATHA 1842

Worldly Metaphors

Ripeness, the fruit that falls in its own time

मराठी मूळ

फळ पिके देंठीं । निमित्त वारियाची भेटी ॥१॥
 हा तों अनुभव रोकडा । कळों येतो खरा कुडा ॥२॥
 तोडिलिया बळें । वांयां जाती काचीं फळें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मन । तेथे आपुलें कारण ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A fruit ripens on the stem, and the wind merely provides the occasion for its falling. This is direct experience; from it one can tell the genuine from the false.

If plucked by force before its time, the unripe fruit goes to waste. Says Tuka, the mind must find its own cause and readiness within.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A fruit ripens on the stem. The wind only gives it the moment to fall. This is direct experience. By it you can tell the true from the false. If you pluck the fruit by force before its time, the unripe fruit is wasted. Tuka says: the mind must find its own cause and readiness within.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is speaking about ripeness in the inner life. The fruit lets go when it is ripe, and the wind is only the occasion, not the cause; in the same way real release comes from within and cannot be forced. He calls this direct experience, the test that tells the genuine from the counterfeit. Pluck the fruit early and you waste it: push spiritual change before its time and nothing comes of it. The work is to let the mind ripen by its own inner cause, not to tear at it from outside.

GATHA 1843

Worldly Metaphors

Test the support first, die before you live

मराठी मूळ

हालवूनि खुंट । आधीं करावा बळकट ॥१॥
मग तयाच्या आधारें । करणें अवघें चि बरें ॥२॥
सुख दुःख साहे । हर्षामषाअ भंगा नये ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे जीवें । आधीं मरोनि राहावें ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Shake the post first to test it and make it firm. Then, relying on that support, everything else will go well.

It must bear both joy and sorrow without breaking under elation or anger. Says Tuka, one must first die to oneself, and only then live.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Shake the post first. Make it firm before you lean on it. Then, resting on that support, everything you do will go well. It must bear joy and sorrow without breaking under delight or anger. Tuka says: first die to yourself, and only then live.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram gives a builder's lesson for the inner life: before you trust your weight to anything, test it. Shake the post, make sure the support holds, and only then rely on it; a firm foundation makes the rest go well. The foundation he means is a steadiness that can carry both joy and sorrow without snapping in elation or anger. Then comes the sharp turn: the real firmness is to die to yourself first. Only after that death to the ego can a person truly stand and live.

GATHA 1844

Worldly Metaphors

The child and the mother, trust beyond discernment

मराठी मूळ

धांवे माते सोई । बाळ न विचारितां कांहीं ॥१॥
मग त्याचें जाणें निकें । अंग वोडवी कौतुकें ॥२॥
नेणे सर्प दोरी । अगी भलतें हातीं धरी ॥३॥
तीविन तें नेणें । आणीक कांहीं तुका ह्मणे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

A child runs toward its mother without a second thought. Its going is perfectly right; it stretches its body forward with innocent delight.

It does not distinguish between a snake and a rope; it reaches for fire and grabs whatever is at hand. Says Tuka, without the mother, the child knows nothing else at all.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A child runs to its mother without a second thought. Its running is right. It stretches its body toward her with delight. The child does not know a snake from a rope. It reaches for fire and grabs whatever is near. Tuka says: without the mother, the child knows nothing else at all.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram draws the soul as a small child and God as the mother. The child's run is reckless and yet perfectly right, because its trust is total and unthinking. It cannot tell a snake from a rope or fire from a toy; it has no discernment of its own to protect it. That is precisely the point: the child is safe not through its own knowledge but because it knows nothing except the mother. The poem praises a surrender so complete that the devotee leans on God alone and not on private judgment.

GATHA 1845

Renunciation

Renunciation within enjoyment, stand apart

मराठी मूळ

भोग द्यावे देवा । त्याग भोगीं च बरवा ॥१॥
आपण व्हावें एकीकडे । देव कळेवरी जोडे ॥२॥
योजे यथाकाळें । उत्तम पाला कंदें मूळें ॥३॥
वंचक त्यासी दोष । तुका ह्मणे मिथ्या सोस ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let experiences be offered to God; renunciation is beautiful precisely in the midst of enjoyment. Stand apart on one side, and God joins the body on the other.

In due season one should gather leaves, tubers, and roots as they come. Says Tuka, the deceiver alone bears the fault; false striving is in vain.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let the things you enjoy be offered to God. Renunciation is beautiful right inside enjoyment. Stand apart on one side, and God joins the body on the other. In its season, gather leaves and tubers and roots as they come. Tuka says: only the cheat bears the fault; false craving is in vain.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram redefines renunciation so it does not mean fleeing the world. Offer your enjoyments to God and let go inwardly while still in the midst of them; that inner letting-go is the beautiful thing, not the refusal to live. Stand apart from your own enjoyment, and God takes up the body's part. Take what the season gives, plainly and without grasping. The fault, he says, lies only in the cheat, the one who pretends; hollow craving leads nowhere, while true renunciation is a posture of the heart held inside ordinary life.

GATHA 1846

Confession and Sin

Confession, the words are not mine

मराठी मूळ

पायांच्या प्रसादे । कांहीं बोलिलों विनोदे ॥१॥
मज क्षमा करणें संतीं । नव्हे अंगभूत युक्ति ॥२॥
नव्हे हा उपदेश । तुमचें बडबडिलों शेष ॥३॥
तुमचे कृपेचें पोसणें । जन्मोजन्मीं तुका ह्याने ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

By the grace of Your feet I have spoken a few words in jest. Let the saints forgive me; this skill is not my own.

This is no teaching of mine; I have merely babbled the leftovers of what is Yours. Says Tuka, birth after birth, I am nourished by Your grace.

IN PLAIN WORDS

By the grace of Your feet I have spoken a few words in jest. Saints, forgive me. This skill is not my own. This is no teaching of mine. I have only babbled the leftovers of what is Yours. Tuka says: birth after birth, I am fed by Your grace.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram steps back from his own poems to disown any credit for them. Whatever he has said came by the grace of God's feet, not from a talent he owns, and he asks the saints to forgive whatever was spoken lightly. He insists it is no teaching of his: he has merely repeated the scraps of what already belongs to God. The closing line names what he does claim, that across every birth he is sustained by that grace alone. The poem turns the act of speaking into an act of humility and gratitude.

GATHA 1847

Worldly Metaphors

Social criticism, no capital of your own

मराठी मूळ

जायांचें अंगुलें लेतां नाहीं मान । शोभा नेदी जन हांसविलें ॥1॥
 गुसिळतां ताक कांडितां भूस । साध्य नाहीं क्लेश जाती वायां ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं स्वता भांडवल । भिकेचें तें फोल बीज नव्हे ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Wearing a woman's bracelet brings no honor to a man; the world only laughs at such adornment. Churning buttermilk or pounding chaff yields nothing; the labor is wasted with no result.

Says Tuka, one who has no capital of one's own finds that what is begged or borrowed is fruitless and can never serve as seed.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A man who wears a woman's bracelet gets no honor. The world only laughs at the ornament. Churn buttermilk or pound chaff and you get nothing. The labor is wasted, with no result. Tuka says: one who has no capital of his own finds that what is begged or borrowed is hollow. It can never serve as seed.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram strings together three images of effort that yields nothing: a man decked in a woman's bracelet who only draws laughter, milk already churned, chaff already husked. Each is labor spent on what cannot give a return. The lesson lands in the last line: a person with no inner capital of his own, who lives only on what is begged or borrowed, holds something hollow. Borrowed devotion or secondhand piety is like a dead seed that will never grow. The poem turns the reader inward to ask whether the spiritual wealth is truly one's own.

GATHA 1848

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the lover's bold complaint

मराठी मूळ

न बोलावें परी पडिला प्रसंग । हाकलितें जग तुझ्या नामें ॥1॥
 लटिकें चि सोंग मांडिला पसारा । भिकारी तूं खरा कळों आलें ॥ध्रु॥
 निलाजिरीं आह्मी करोनियां धीर । राहिलों आधार धरुनियां ॥2॥
 कैसा नेणों आतां करिसी शेवट । केली कटकट त्याची पुढें ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे कांहीं न बोलसी देवा । उचित हे सेवा घेसी माझी ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I would rather not speak, but circumstances force my hand; I challenge the world with Your name. All this grand display was a pretense; You turn out to be the real beggar, that much is clear now.

Shamelessly and with firm resolve, we have stayed, clinging to Your support. I do not know how You will bring this to its end; whatever commotion was made, it now lies ahead.

Says Tuka, You say nothing, O God; You simply accept my service as if it were Your rightful due.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I would rather not speak, but the moment forces me. I challenge the whole world with Your name. The grand display was a pretense. You turn out to be the real beggar; that is clear now. Shameless and firm, we have stayed, holding to Your support. I do not know how You will end this. Whatever trouble was made now lies ahead. Tuka says: You say nothing, O God. You simply take my service as Your due.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks to God in the bold, half-accusing voice of a lover who has waited too long. He admits he would rather keep quiet, but the situation forces it out, and he flings God's name at the world as his challenge. Then he turns the tables: the show of God's grandeur is a pretense, and it is God who is the true beggar, dependent on the devotee's love. He confesses to clinging shamelessly, with nowhere else to go, while God stays silent and simply accepts his service as if owed it. The complaint is itself an act of intimacy and trust.

GATHA 1849

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the unsettled reckoning with God

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं जालें मोल कळे देतां काळीं । कोण पाहों बळी दोघांमध्ये ॥1॥
 आह्मी तरी जालों जीवासी उदार । केंचा हा धीर तुजपाशीं ॥ध्रु॥
 बहु चाळविलें मागें आजिवरी । आतां पुढें हरि जाऊं नेदीं ॥2॥
 नव्हती जों भेटी नामाची ओळखी । ह्मणऊनि दुःखी बहु जालें ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे कांहीं राहों नेदीं बाकी । एकवेळा चुकी जाली आतां ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The full price was never settled; let time reveal who is the stronger of the two. I, for my part, have been generous with my very life; where is that same boldness on Your side? You have strung me along for far too long up to this day; from now on, O Hari, I will not let You proceed unchallenged.

Before the meeting came, before the bond of Your name was formed, much suffering was endured. Says Tuka, I will not let any debt remain now; the single error has already been made.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The full price was never settled. Let time show which of the two of us is stronger. I, at least, have been generous with my very life. Where is that boldness on Your side? You have strung me along all this time. From now on, Hari, I will not let You move past me. Before we met, before I knew Your name, I suffered much. Tuka says: I will not let any debt stand now. The one mistake has already been made.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram keeps up the lover's quarrel with God as if over an unpaid account. The price of his devotion was never settled, so let time reveal who is the stronger party; he has staked his very life, and he demands the same boldness back. He charges God with stringing him along for years, and resolves to block the way now and not be put off again. Behind the bravado is real pain: before he knew the Name he suffered greatly. He vows to leave no debt outstanding, treating the single error of his long delay as something now past, with only the reckoning ahead.

GATHA 1850

Longing and Separation

Longing, calling God's bluff with the saints behind

मराठी मूळ

कैसा कृपाळु हें न कळसी देवा । न बोलसी सेवा घेसी माझी ॥1॥
 काय ऐसें बळ आहे तुजपाशीं । पाहों हा रिघेसी कोणा आड ॥ध्रु॥
 पाडियेला ठायीं तुझा थारा मारा । अवघा दातारा लपसी तो ॥2॥
 आतां तुह्मां आह्मां उरी तों चि बरें । काय हें उत्तरें वाढवूनि ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे मज साहए झाले संत । ह्मणऊनि मात फावली हे ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What sort of mercy is this? You reveal nothing, O God; You stay silent and simply accept my service. What power do You actually possess? Let us see whom You hide behind.

Wherever You have been cornered, all Your refuge is exposed. From now on, what remains between us had best be settled fairly; why prolong it with more words? Says Tuka, the saints have come to my aid, and that is why this victory has been won.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What kind of mercy is this? You show me nothing, O God. You stay silent and just take my service. What power do You really have? Let us see whom You hide behind. Wherever You are cornered, all Your shelter is exposed. From now on, what is left between us had better be settled fairly. Why drag it out with more words? Tuka says: the saints have come to my aid, and so this victory is won.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses the quarrel further, demanding that God's silence answer for itself. If this is mercy, why no reply, only the quiet acceptance of his service? He calls God's bluff: show what power You truly hold, reveal whom You take cover behind, for wherever You are cornered Your hiding places are laid bare. He wants the account between them settled fairly instead of dragged out in words. The closing line names his confidence: the company of saints stands behind him, and through their help the contest is already won. Longing here speaks as bold, almost litigious love.

GATHA 1851

Longing and Separation

Longing, I am not that kind of beggar

मराठी मूळ

चुकलिया आह्मां करितसां दंड । हाकासी कां खंड पांडुरंगा ॥१॥
 चाळविलीं एकें रिद्धिसिद्धीवरी । तैसा मी भिकारी नव्हें देवा ॥२॥
 कां मी येथें गुंतों मांडूनि पसारा । मागुता दातारा दंभासाठीं ॥३॥
 केलें म्यां जतन आपुलें वचन । ठायींचें धरून होतों पोटी ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When I err, You punish me; then why do You cut off my cry for help, O Panduranga? Some You have pacified with supernatural powers; I am not that kind of beggar, O God. Why should I stay here, setting up a show, only to play the hypocrite again, O generous one? I have guarded my own word and held fast to what was promised from the start.

Says Tuka, the reckoning was fixed in advance; I knew You would block me at the end.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When I do wrong, You punish me. Then why do You cut off my cry for help, O Panduranga? Some You have quieted with powers and miracles. I am not that kind of beggar, O God. Why would I stay here, setting up a show, only to play the hypocrite again, generous one? I have kept my word. I have held in my heart what I promised from the start. Tuka says: the reckoning was set in advance. I knew that in the end You would block my way.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram protests that God metes out punishment for his faults yet falls silent when he cries for help. He refuses the consolation prize: others have been pacified with miraculous powers and supernatural gifts, but he is not the kind of beggar who can be bought off that way. He has no wish to keep up an empty show that would only make a hypocrite of him. His claim is that he has kept his vow and held his promise in his heart from the beginning. The ending is rueful: the reckoning was fixed from the start, and he half-knew God would block him at the last; his longing is for honest dealing, not display.

GATHA 1852

Confession and Sin

Confession, the formless one made small for love

मराठी मूळ

कृपावंता कोप न धरावा चित्तीं । छळूं वक्रोक्ती स्तुती करूं ॥1॥
 आह्मी तुझा पार काय जाणों देवा । नेणों कैसी सेवा करावी ते ॥धु.॥
 अनंता अरूपा अलक्षा अच्युता । निर्गुणा सचिता सर्वोत्तमा ॥2॥
 चांगलीं हीं नामें घेतलीं ठेवून । जालासी लाहान भक्तिकाजा ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुझ्या पायांवरी सदा । मस्तक गोविंदा असो माझा ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O merciful one, do not hold anger in Your chitta; whether I praise or provoke You, I am only offering worship. I do not truly know Your measure, O God; I do not know how to serve You properly.

O infinite, formless, imperceptible, unfailing one; O attributeless, ever-conscious, supreme being. You have kept all these lofty names, yet for the sake of devotees You have made Yourself small.

Says Tuka, may my head always rest upon Your feet, O Govinda.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Merciful one, do not hold anger in Your heart. Whether I praise You or provoke You, it is all my worship. I do not know Your measure, O God. I do not know how to serve You rightly. Infinite, formless, unseen, unfailing one. Without attributes, ever-conscious, highest of all. You bear all these great names, yet for the sake of Your devotees You have made Yourself small. Tuka says: may my head rest forever on Your feet, O Govinda.

WHAT IT MEANS

After the bold quarrels, Tukaram softens and asks God to keep no anger in His heart, since even his teasing and provocation are only forms of worship from one who does not know how to do it better. He admits he cannot measure God or serve Him as He deserves. Then he piles up the great names, infinite, formless, beyond perception, without attributes, supreme, and against them sets the wonder at the center: this measureless God has made Himself small for the sake of those who love Him. The poem ends in plain surrender, asking only that his head rest forever at Govinda's feet.

GATHA 1853

Devotion to Vitthal

Protest, the conned servant

मराठी मूळ

आतां तुझा भाव कळों आला देवा । ठकूनियां सेवा घेसी माझी ॥1॥
 टाकूनि सांकडें आपुलिये माथां । घातला या संतावरी भार ॥ध्रु॥
 स्तुती करवूनि पिटिला डांगोरा । तें कोण दातारा साच करी ॥2॥
 जातीचें वाणी मी पोटींचे कुडें । नका मजपुढें ठकाठकी ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं आलें अनुभवा । आधीं च मी देवा कैसें नाचों ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now I have come to know Your ways, O God. You trick me into serving You.

You have placed the burden of Your own obligations upon the saints. You had me praised and the drum of my fame beaten, but who, O Generous One, will make good on those promises? I am a merchant by caste, cunning by nature; do not try Your deceptions on me.

Says Tuka, I have not yet tasted the experience. How can I dance for You, O God, without that?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now I have learned Your ways, God. You trick me into serving You. You take Your own troubles and lay them on my head; You load the burden onto the saints. You had me praised, You had the drum of my fame beaten through the town. But who, generous one, will make those promises come true? I am a merchant by caste, crooked at the core. Do not play Your cheating games on me. Tuka says: the real thing has not yet come to my experience. So how can I dance for You, God, before that?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is half complaining, half catching God in the act. He sees that the call to serve was itself a kind of clever trap: God shifts His own obligations onto the saints, has Tukaram celebrated in public, and then leaves the deeper promise unpaid. Tukaram answers in the voice of his own trade, a merchant who knows a bad bargain when he sees one, and refuses to be taken in by mere reputation and noise. The honest stakes are at the end: he has not yet tasted the real experience of God, and without that taste he will not perform a hollow ecstasy. The protest is really a demand to be given the genuine thing, not its publicity.

GATHA 1854

Confession and Sin

Humility, the seal not the paper

मराठी मूळ

जन पूजी याचा मज कां आभार । हा तुझी विचार जाणां देवा ॥1॥
 पत्र कोण मानी वंदितील सिक्का । गौरव सेवका त्या चि मुळें ॥ध्रु॥
 मी मीपणें होतों जनामधीं आधीं । कोणें दिलें कधीं काय तेव्हां ॥2॥
 आतां तूं भोगिता सर्व नारायणा । नको आह्मां दीनां पीडा करूं ॥3॥
 आपुलिया हातें देसील मुशारा । तुका ह्मणे खरा तो चि आह्मां ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

People honor me, but why should I bear the credit? You know this well, O God. No one respects the letter itself; they honor the seal upon it.

The servant is revered only because of the master. Before, when I was just myself among people, nobody gave me anything.

Now You are the one enjoying everything, O Narayana; do not torment us poor ones. Says Tuka, only what You give with Your own hand is real wages for us.

IN PLAIN WORDS

People honor me. Why should I take the credit for it? You know how this works, God. No one respects the paper; they bow to the seal stamped on it. The servant is honored only because of the master. Before, when I was just myself among people, who ever gave me anything, and what? Now You are the one who enjoys it all, Narayana. Do not torment us poor ones. Tuka says: only what You give with Your own hand is real wages for us.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram refuses the praise that has gathered around him and hands it straight back to God. He uses a plain image from daily life: a document is honored only for the official seal pressed on it, not for the blank paper, and a servant is respected only because of his master. The proof is his own past, when he was nobody and received nothing; the change came from God, not from himself. So he asks God to take the honor and the enjoyment as His own and to stop tormenting the poor with empty acclaim. What he wants is not reputation but real provision, the wages God places directly in his hand.

GATHA 1855

Longing and Separation

Complaint, the unanswered cry

मराठी मूळ

आमची कां नये तुझासी करुणा । किती नारायणा आळवावें ॥१॥
 काय जाणां तुझी दुर्बळाचें जिणें । वैभवाच्या गुणें आपुलिया ॥२॥
 देती घेती करिती खटपटा आणिकें । निराळा कौतुकें पाहोनियां ॥३॥
 दिवस बोटीं आह्मीं धरियेलें माप । वाहातों संकल्प स्वहिताचा ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे मग देसी कोण्या काळें । चुकुर दुर्बळें होतों आह्मी ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why does compassion for me not arise in You, O Narayana? How long must I call out to You? You do not know the life of the poor, wrapped as You are in Your own splendor. Others bargain and haggle, while You stand apart watching the spectacle.

Day after day I count on my fingers, carrying the burden of longing for my own good. Says Tuka, when will You finally give? We poor ones keep stumbling.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why does no pity for me rise in You, Narayana? How long must I keep calling out? You do not know what the life of the poor is like; You are wrapped up in Your own splendor. Others bargain and haggle and scramble, while You stand apart and watch the show. Day after day I count the days off on my fingers, carrying the burden of longing for my own good. Tuka says: so when, in what age, will You finally give? We poor ones keep stumbling and falling.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a frank complaint flung at a God who seems comfortable and distant. Tukaram accuses Him of not knowing the grinding life of the poor, of being so wrapped in His own glory that He merely watches the world's struggle like a spectacle. He paints himself counting the days on his fingers, the weight of his own longing pressing on him, asking when relief will ever come. The boldness of the poem is its refusal to pretend patience: he names the silence and the delay as real, and presses God to act. Beneath the reproach is the trust that only God can answer, which is why he keeps calling at all.

GATHA 1856

Longing and Separation

Lament, ruined by His company

मराठी मूळ

तुझां आझां तुटी होईल यावरी । ऐसें मज हरी दिसतसे ॥१॥
 वचनाचा कांहीं न देखों आधार । करावा हा धीर कोठवरी ॥२॥
 सारिलें संचित होतें गांठी कांहीं । पुढें ऋण तें ही नेदी कोणी ॥३॥
 जावें चि न लगे कोणांचिया घरा । उडाला पातेरा तुझ्या संगें ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे आझां हा चि लाभ जाला । मनुष्यधर्म गेला पांडुरंगा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

It seems to me, O Hari, that a rift between You and me is coming. I see no support in Your promises; how long must I keep patience? Whatever savings I had are spent, and now no one will even lend me credit.

Because of my association with You, I need not go to anyone's door; Your company has made me a spendthrift. Says Tuka, the only gain I have had is this: I have lost all worldly standing, O Panduranga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

It seems to me, Hari, that a break between You and me is coming. I see nothing solid to lean on in Your promises. How long am I supposed to hold on? Whatever savings I had stored up are spent now, and ahead of me no one will even lend me credit. I need not go knocking at anyone's door; keeping company with You has made me a spendthrift, my reserves all blown away. Tuka says: this is the only gain I have got, that I have lost every bit of worldly standing, Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks like a man gone broke, and the bankruptcy is spiritual as much as worldly. His old store of merit is used up, the world will extend him no further credit, and God's promises give him nothing firm to hold; so he warns, half in dread, that a rupture is near. The sharp turn comes at the end: keeping company with God has emptied him out, ruined his standing among people, made him a spendthrift of everything the world values. He calls this his one true gain. The lament becomes a confession that losing the world is exactly what closeness to God costs, and he would not undo it.

GATHA 1857

The Nature of God

God as laborer, devotion the greater

मराठी मूळ

देव मजुर देव मजुर । नाहीं उजुर सेवेपुढें ॥१॥
 देव गांढराळ देव गांढराळ । देखोनियां बळ लपतसे ॥२॥
 देव तर काई देव तर काई । तुका ह्मणे राई तरी मोटी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God is a laborer, a laborer indeed; He makes no excuses when it comes to service. God is timid; seeing the strong, He hides Himself away.

Says Tuka, God may be what He is, but the queen of devotion is truly great.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God is a laborer, God is a laborer; before service He makes no excuse. God is a coward, God is a coward; seeing strength, He hides Himself away. Is He really God, is He really God? Tuka says: yet the queen, devotion, is mighty.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the first of a string of short poems that tease God by naming Him in lowly, surprising terms. Here God is called a hired laborer who never shirks the work of serving His devotees, and a coward who shrinks from raw power. The teasing has a point: God lets Himself be small, duty-bound, even timid, when love calls. The closing line turns it around, that the true ruler is bhakti itself, devotion, which is great enough to bend God to such service. Tukaram exalts the path of love by showing how completely God submits to it.

GATHA 1858

The Nature of God

God as merciful and generous

मराठी मूळ

देव दयाळ देव दयाळ । साहे कोल्हाळ बहुतांचा ॥ १ ॥
 देव उदार देव उदार । थोड्यासाठीं फार देऊं जाणे ॥ २ ॥
 देव चांगला देव चांगला । तुका लागला चरणीं ॥ ३ ॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God is merciful, truly merciful; He endures the clamor of many. God is generous, truly generous; for a small offering He gives back abundantly.

God is good, truly good. Says Tuka, I cling to His feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God is merciful, God is merciful; He bears the clamor of the many. God is generous, God is generous; for a little He knows how to give much. God is good, God is good. Tuka has caught hold of His feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

A short praise-poem listing three things about God in turn. He is merciful, patient enough to endure the noisy demands of crowds of people. He is generous, returning far more than the small offering anyone brings Him. He is simply good. The point of the listing is to make the conclusion irresistible: such a one is worth clinging to, so Tukaram seizes His feet and holds on. The plainness of the praise is itself the argument, a God like this needs no further reason for surrender.

GATHA 1859

The Nature of God

God who clings to the devotee

मराठी मूळ

देव बासर देव बासर । असे निरंतर जेथें तेथें ॥1॥
 देव खोळंबा देव खोळंबा । मज झळंबा म्हण कोडी ॥ध्रु॥
 देव लागट देव लागट । लाविलिया चट जीवीं जडे ॥2॥
 देव बावळा देव बावळा । भावें जवळा लुडबुडी ॥3॥
 देव न व्हावा देव न व्हावा । तुका ह्मणे गोवा करी कामीं ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God is ever present, present everywhere at all times. God holds me close, confining me so I do not stray.

God is clinging; once attached, He sticks fast within. God is simple; with love He tumbles close to the devotee.

Says Tuka, one should not wish to be God, for He entangles Himself in the work of His devotees.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God is everywhere, God is everywhere; He is there without break, wherever you look. God is a hold-up, God is a hold-up; He pens me in so I do not stray. God is sticky, God is sticky; once He fixes on, He sets fast inside the heart. God is a simpleton, God is a simpleton; with love He comes tumbling close. One should not become God, one should not become God. Tuka says: He tangles Himself up in His devotees' affairs.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram keeps teasing God with humble, almost comic names, and each one hides a tenderness. God is everywhere at all times; He is the obstacle that hems the devotee in so he cannot wander off; once He attaches to a heart He sticks there and will not be shaken loose. He is a guileless simpleton who comes bumbling close out of sheer love. The closing line is the joke and the truth together: do not wish to be God, because being God means getting hopelessly entangled in the troubles of those who love Him. Tukaram is praising a God who chooses to be bound by love rather than to stay free and aloof.

GATHA 1860

The Nature of God

God without lineage or caste

मराठी मूळ

देव निढळ देव निढळ । मूळ नाहीं डाळ परदेशी ॥1॥
 देव अकुळी देव अकुळी । भलते ठायीं सोयरीक ॥2॥
 देव लिगाडरा देव लिगाडरा । तुका ह्मणे भाडरा दंभें ठकी ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God is without family or lineage; He has no roots and is a stranger everywhere. God is without caste; He makes kinship in any place He pleases.

Says Tuka, God is a vagabond who cheats even the proud through pretense.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God is bare, God is bare; He has no root, no branch, a stranger everywhere. God is without caste, God is without caste; He makes kinship in any place He pleases. God is a clinging tangle, God is a clinging tangle. Tuka says: the rascal cheats even the proud with His pretense.

WHAT IT MEANS

This short poem strips God of the very things people use to rank one another. He has no family tree, no roots or branches, belonging nowhere, a stranger in every place. He keeps no caste, so He freely makes kin of anyone He likes. The closing image calls Him a sticky tangle and a trickster who outwits even the proud through His disguises. The teaching under the teasing is that God will not be bound by birth or social standing; He attaches Himself wherever love is, and the self-important are the ones most easily caught off guard by Him.

GATHA 1861

The Nature of God

God who serves His own servant

मराठी मूळ

देव बराडी देव बराडी । घाली देंठासाठीं उडी ॥१॥
 देव भ्याड देव भ्याड । राखे बळीचें कवाड ॥२॥
 देव भाविक भाविक । होय दासाचें सेवक ॥३॥
 देव होया देव होया । जैसा ह्मणे तैसा तया ॥४॥
 देव लाहान लाहान । तुका ह्मणे अनुरेण ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God is greedy; He leaps for even a scrap. God is timid; He guards the doorway of Bali.

God is devoted; He becomes the servant of His own servant. God becomes whatever His devotee desires Him to be.

Says Tuka, God is small, smaller than the smallest atom.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God is a beggar, God is a beggar; He leaps for even a scrap. God is timid, God is timid; He guards the door of Bali. God is full of faith, full of faith; He becomes the servant of His servant. God becomes it, God becomes it; whatever the devotee says, that He turns into. God is small, small. Tuka says: smaller than the tiniest atom.

WHAT IT MEANS

Each line names God by a humble title and means it as praise. He is a beggar who pounces gratefully on the smallest offering of love. He is timid, recalling how He stood as gatekeeper at the door of the demon-king Bali, the master made a servant. He is so devoted to His devotees that He becomes their servant, and He shapes Himself into whatever they ask Him to be. The closing line shrinks Him below the smallest atom. The whole poem celebrates a God who makes Himself low for the sake of love, refusing grandeur in order to belong to those who are His.

GATHA 1862

The Nature of God

God good, mighty, beloved of all

मराठी मूळ

देव भला देव भला । मिळोनि जाय जैसा त्याला ॥ 1 ॥
 देव उदार उदार । देतां नाहीं थोडें फार ॥ २ ॥
 देव बळी देव बळी । जोडा नाहीं भूमंडळीं ॥ 3 ॥
 देव व्हावा देव व्हावा । आवडे तो सर्वा जीवां ॥ 4 ॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God is good; He mingles and becomes one with whoever approaches Him. God is generous; when giving, He knows no measure of too little or too much.

God is mighty; there is no equal to Him in all the world. Everyone in all creation loves God.

Says Tuka, God is good, and I have fallen at His feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God is good, God is good; He blends in and becomes like whoever comes to Him. God is generous, generous; when He gives, there is no too little or too much. God is mighty, God is mighty; there is no match for Him in all the earth. Let God be had, let God be had; every living being loves Him. God is good, good. Tuka has fallen at His feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Another short litany of God's qualities, each repeated for emphasis. He is good in a particular way: He meets each person where they are and becomes one with them. He gives without measuring, neither stingy nor calculating. He is mighty beyond any rival in the world, and yet every creature loves Him. The point of stacking these together is the closing surrender: a God this good, this generous, this strong, and this universally loved is one to fall before, and Tukaram lays himself at His feet.

GATHA 1863

The Nature of God

God seen, who knows the heart

मराठी मूळ

देव पाहों देव पाहों । उंचे ठायीं उभे राहों ॥1॥
 देव देखिला देखिला । तो नाही कोणां भ्याला ॥ध्रु॥
 देवा कांहीं मार्गों मार्गों । जीव भाव त्यासी सांगों ॥2॥
 देव जाणे देव जाणे । पुरवी मनींचिये खुणे ॥3॥
 देव कातर कातर । तुका ह्मणे अभ्यंतर ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let us look for God; let us stand on high ground to see Him. God has been seen, and He fears no one.

Let us ask God for something; let us tell Him our mind's desire. God knows, He truly knows; He fulfills the deepest signs of the mind.

Says Tuka, God is tender; He dwells within.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let us look for God, let us look for God; let us stand on high ground to see Him. God has been seen, He has been seen; He has never feared anyone. Let us ask God for something, let us ask Him; let us tell Him the truth of our heart. God knows, God knows; He fulfills the hidden signs of the mind. God is tender, tender. Tuka says: He lives within.

WHAT IT MEANS

This poem moves from seeking God to finding Him to confiding in Him. It begins as a call to climb to high ground and look out for Him, then announces that He has been seen, a God who has never been afraid of anyone. Having found Him, the devotee is urged to ask Him plainly and to pour out the heart, because He already knows the unspoken longings of the mind and answers them. The closing turn brings the search home: the God sought on high ground is tender, and He dwells within. Looking outward ends in finding Him inside oneself.

GATHA 1864

The Nature of God

God ours, who guards Tuka

मराठी मूळ

देव आमचा आमचा । जीव सकळ जीवांचा ॥1॥
 देव आहे देव आहे । जवळीं आह्मां अंतरबाहे ॥ध्रु॥
 देव गोड देव गोड । पुरवी कोडाचें ही कोड ॥2॥
 देव आह्मां राखे राखे । घाली किळकाळासी काखे ॥3॥
 देव दयाळ देव दयाळ । करी तुक्याचा सांभाळ ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

God is ours, the life of all lives. God is near, both within and without.

God is sweet; He fulfills even the desires within desires. God protects us; He puts even death under His arm.

Says Tuka, God is merciful; He takes care of Tuka.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God is ours, God is ours; the life of every living thing. God is here, God is here; close to us, inside and out. God is sweet, God is sweet; He fulfills the longing within the longing. God protects us, protects us; He tucks even death under His arm. God is merciful, God is merciful; He takes care of Tuka.

WHAT IT MEANS

The last in the series gathers the comfort of all the rest. God belongs to His devotees and is the life within every living being; He is present here and now, both inside the heart and all around. He is sweet, satisfying not just our wishes but the deepest wish hidden beneath them. He guards His own so completely that He pins even death helpless under His arm. The closing line makes it personal and intimate: this great, near, sweet, protecting God stoops to look after one ordinary man, Tuka. The whole litany lands as assurance that the God of all creation cares for each devotee by name.

GATHA 1865

The Nature of God

Trust, God as home and parent

मराठी मूळ

जाऊं देवाचिया गांवां । देव देईल विसांवा ॥१॥
 देवा सांगों सुखदुःख । देव निवारील भूक ॥२॥
 घालूं देवासी च भार । देव सुखाचा सागर ॥३॥
 राहों जवळी देवापाशीं । आतां जडोनि पायांसी ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी बाळें । या देवाचीं लडिवाळें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let us go to God's village; God will give us rest. Let us tell God our joys and sorrows; God will satisfy our hunger.

Let us place our burden upon God; God is an ocean of bliss. Let us stay close to God, clinging firmly to His feet.

Says Tuka, we are children, the darlings of this God.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let us go to God's village; God will give us rest. Let us tell God our joys and sorrows; God will take away our hunger. Let us lay our whole burden on God; God is an ocean of bliss. Let us stay close beside God now, holding fast to His feet. Tuka says: we are children, the darlings of this God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the soul going to live where God lives, the way a child goes home. Everything a person carries, joy, grief, hunger, the whole weight of the burden, is to be handed over to God, who is named an ocean of bliss. The instruction is simple: do not stand at a distance but stay close and cling to His feet. The image at the close is the heart of it: we are not strangers petitioning a king but children, and God treats us as the ones He dotes on.

GATHA 1866

*The Power of the Name**The Name, love comes uninvited*

मराठी मूळ

प्रेम तेथें वास करी । मुखीं उच्चारितां हरी ॥१॥
 प्रेम यावें तया गांवा । चोजवीत या वैष्णवां ॥२॥
 प्रेमें पाठी लागे बलें । भक्त देखोनियां भोळे ॥३॥
 प्रेम न वजे दवडितां । शिरे बलें जेथें कथा ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे थोर आशा । प्रेमा घरीं विष्णुदासां ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Love dwells wherever the name of Hari is uttered. Love comes to that village and delights the Vaishnavas.

Love forcefully pursues the innocent devotee. Love cannot be driven away; it enters by force wherever the sacred story is told.

Says Tuka, great is the hope of love in the homes of Vishnu's servants.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Love dwells wherever the mouth speaks Hari. Love comes to that village and seeks out the Vaishnavas there. Love runs after the simple devotee and catches him by force. Love cannot be driven off; wherever the holy story is told, it pushes its way in. Tuka says: great is the hope of love in the homes of Vishnu's servants.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says that where the name of Hari is spoken, love takes up residence on its own. He pictures love not as something the devotee must work to produce but as something that hunts the devotee down, pursuing the simple-hearted and forcing its way into any gathering where the sacred story is told. It cannot be turned away. The point is that the practice is not the devotee climbing toward God by effort; it is love arriving wherever the Name is, so the homes of God's servants are full of expectation.

GATHA 1867

Confession and Sin

Confession, ashamed of honor unearned

मराठी मूळ

संत मानितील मज । तेणें वाटतसे लाज ॥१॥
 तुझी कृपा केली नाही । चित्त माझें मज ग्वाही ॥२॥
 गोविलों थोरिवां । दुःख वाटतसे जीवा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे माया । अवरा हे पंढरिराया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When saints honor me, I feel ashamed. You have not truly bestowed Your grace upon me; my own chitta bears witness.

I am troubled by this false greatness thrust upon me. Says Tuka, this is all illusion, O Lord of Pandhari.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When the saints honor me, I feel ashamed. You have not truly shown me Your grace; my own mind is my witness. I am caught in a false greatness, and it grieves my soul. Tuka says: take this illusion away, O Lord of Pandhari.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is being publicly honored by holy people, and instead of pleasure he feels shame. He knows from the inside, his own mind is the only witness he needs, that he has not actually received the grace others credit him with. The honor sits on him as a borrowed greatness that does not belong to him, and that gap between his reputation and his reality is a real grief. He asks Panduranga not for more honor but to strip away the illusion, so that what people see matches what he is.

GATHA 1868

Confession and Sin

Confession, the broken raft of pretense

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं तुझी केला । अंगीकार तो विडला ॥१॥
 सोंगें न पवीजे थडी । माजी फुटकी सांगडी ॥२॥
 प्रेम नाही अंगीं । भले ह्मणविलें जगीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा । मज वांयां कां चाळवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You have not truly accepted me, O Vitthal. One cannot reach the shore on a broken raft of pretense.

There is no real love in me, yet I am called good in the world. Says Tuka, O God, why do You raise my hopes in vain?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You have not truly accepted me, O Vitthal. One cannot reach the far shore by playacting; my raft is cracked and leaking. There is no real love in me, yet the world calls me good. Tuka says: O God, why do You raise my hopes for nothing?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram refuses to take comfort in his own good reputation and turns the charge inward. The crossing to the far shore, liberation, cannot be made on a disguise; a raft that only looks whole but is split will sink, and he names his own as exactly that. He admits the world calls him good while the inner love is missing. The closing line is an honest complaint to Vitthal: if You have not really taken me up, then do not let me go on hoping in vain; the worst thing would be to be deceived about my own standing.

GATHA 1869

Prayers

Prayer, holding God to His name

मराठी मूळ

आतां चक्रधरा । झणी आह्मांस अद्वेरा ॥१॥
 तुमचीं ह्मणविल्यावरी । जैसीं तैसीं तरी हरी ॥ध्रु॥
 काळ आह्मां खाय । तरी तुझें नांव जाय ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा । आतां पण सिद्धी न्यावा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O Wielder of the Discus, do not cast us aside now. Having called us Your own, You must care for us, O Hari, however we may be.

If death devours us, it is Your name that will suffer. Says Tuka, O God, now bring Your promise to fulfillment.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now, O Wielder of the Discus, do not cast us off. Once You have called us Your own, then somehow or other carry us across, O Hari. If death devours us, it is Your name that suffers the loss. Tuka says: O God, now bring Your vow to its fulfillment.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses a claim on God by way of God's own commitment. Since the Lord has already called these devotees His own, the responsibility is now His to ferry them across, whatever their condition. The leverage is bold: if the devotee is swallowed by death and lost, it is God's reputation, His very name, that takes the damage. So the prayer is not only for the soul's sake but for God's honor: complete the promise You made, and bring it through to the end.

GATHA 1870

Longing and Separation

Longing, no evidence of the cure

मराठी मूळ

मज ऐसैं कोण उद्धरिलें सांगा । ब्रीदें पांडुरंगा बोलतसां ॥१॥
 हातींच्या कांकणां कायसा आरिसा । उरलों मी जैसा तैसा आहें ॥२॥
 धनमंत्री हरी रोग्याचिये वेथे । तें तों कांहीं येथें न देखिजे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं अनुभव अंगें । वचन वाउगें कोण मानी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Tell me, O Panduranga, who else like me have You ever truly saved? You speak grand promises, yet a mirror is not needed to see the bangles on one's own wrist; I remain just as I was. You are called the physician of Hari, the healer of the sick, yet I see no evidence of that cure here.

Says Tuka, without personal experience, who will believe empty words?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tell me, who like me have You ever lifted up? You go about reciting Your grand titles, O Panduranga. I need no mirror to see the bangles on my own wrist: I am still exactly what I was. They call You Hari, the rich physician who heals the sick, but I see no sign of that healing here. Tuka says: with no experience in my own body, who believes mere words?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is complaining that God's famous titles have not been proved in his own case. God is celebrated as the one who rescues the lost and as the physician who cures the diseased, yet Tukaram looks at himself and finds no change, as plainly as a person sees the bangles already on their own wrist. The titles stay words while the man stays unhealed. His demand is for living proof: he will not be satisfied by reputation alone, because without an experience in his own being, the grand claims are empty to him.

GATHA 1871

Longing and Separation

Longing, daring God to keep His title

मराठी मूळ

काय तें सामर्थ्य न चले या काळें । काय जालीं बळें शक्तिहीण ॥१॥
 माझिया संचितें आणिलासी हरी । जालें तुजवरी वरिष्ठ तें ॥२॥
 काय गमाविली सुदर्शन गदा । नो बोला गोविंदा लाजतसां ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे काय िब्रदाचें तें काम । सांडा परतें नाम दिनानाथ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Has Your power ceased to work in this age? Have Your forces become feeble? My past karma has brought me to You, O Hari, and it has overwhelmed even You. Have You lost Your Sudarshana discus and mace? You remain silent, O Govinda, out of shame.

Says Tuka, if Your title means nothing, then abandon the name Dinanath, Friend of the Poor.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Has Your power stopped working in this age? Have Your forces gone weak? My own past deeds have brought me to You, O Hari, and they have proved too heavy even for You. Have You lost Your Sudarshana discus and Your mace? You stay silent, O Govinda, as if ashamed. Tuka says: if Your title means no work, then throw away the name Dinanath, Friend of the Poor.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram taunts God to provoke a rescue. He asks whether the divine power has failed in this present age, or whether his own accumulated karma has finally outmatched even the Lord. The weapons that destroy all obstacles, the discus and the mace, seem to have gone missing, and God's silence reads to him like shame. The sharp close is the stake: God is called Dinanath, Friend of the Poor, and if that name brings no action to the poor man standing here, then it is a hollow title and should be discarded. The barb is aimed at moving God to honor His own name.

GATHA 1872

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, you become the seed you sow

मराठी मूळ

बळ बुद्धी वेचुनियां शक्ती । उदक चालवावें युक्ती॥१॥
 नाहीं चळण तया अंगीं । धांवें लवणामागें वेगीं॥२॥
 पाट मोट कळा । भरित पखाळा सागळा ॥२॥
 बीज ज्यासी घ्यावें । तुका ह्याने तैसें व्हावें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One must spend strength, intellect, and skill to channel water cleverly. Water itself does not move on its own but flows swiftly after salt when drawn.

Through channels, buckets, and devices one fills the water bags. Says Tuka, whatever seed you sow, that is what you become.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You must spend strength, intellect, and skill to make water move where you want. By itself it does not stir; but drawn, it runs swiftly after the salt. Through channels, pulleys, and devices the bags and skins are filled. Tuka says: whatever seed you take to sow, that is what you become.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram draws a lesson from irrigation. Water has no movement of its own; it must be led by effort, strength, cleverness, and machinery, and then it flows readily toward where it is drawn. The point lands in the last line: the soul is like that water, shaped by what directs it, and a person becomes whatever seed they choose to plant. Effort and intention are not optional; what you cultivate is exactly what you will grow into, so choose the seed with care.

GATHA 1873

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, water that serves all alike

मराठी मूळ

न ह्मणे साना थोर । दृष्ट पापी अथवा चोर ॥१॥
 सकळा द्यावी एकी चवी । तान हरुनि निववी ॥२॥
 न ह्मणे दिवस राती । सर्व काल सर्वा भूतीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे झारी । घेतां तांब्यानें खापरी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Water does not distinguish between small and great, the sinful or the thief. It gives one taste to all and quenches their thirst, cooling everyone alike.

It knows no day or night; it serves all beings at all times. Says Tuka, whether taken in a jug, a copper vessel, or a broken pot, water serves the same.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Water does not call one small and another great, nor judge the wicked or the thief. It gives a single taste to all, taking away their thirst and cooling them. It does not ask if it is day or night; it serves all beings at every hour. Tuka says: whether you draw it in a jug, a copper pot, or a broken shard, the water is the same.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram holds up water as the model of the saint's even compassion. It makes no distinction between high and low, righteous and criminal; it gives the same quenching taste to everyone and serves at all times without preference. The vessel does not change the gift: a fine copper pot and a broken potsherd both receive the same water. The implied teaching is that grace, and the heart of one who carries it, should be impartial in just this way, meeting every being according to their thirst rather than their worth.

GATHA 1874

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, surrender and the cost of craving

मराठी मूळ

इच्छा चाड नाही । न धरी संकोच ही कांहीं ॥1॥
 उदका नेलें तिकडे जावें । केलें तैसें सहज व्हावें ॥ध्रु॥
 मोहरी कांदा ऊंस । एक वाफा भिन्न रस ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे सुख । पीडा इच्छा पावे दुःख ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Water has no desire or preference; it holds no reluctance. Wherever it is led, it goes; it naturally becomes what is made of it.

Mustard, onion, and sugarcane share the same moisture yet yield different juices. Says Tuka, happiness comes to those free of craving; desire brings only suffering.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Water has no wishes of its own and no demands; it holds back nothing in reluctance. Wherever it is led it goes; it becomes, without resistance, whatever it is made into. Mustard, onion, and sugarcane drink from one watered bed, yet each yields its own juice. Tuka says: happiness comes where there is no craving; desire reaches only suffering.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes water the image of perfect surrender. It claims nothing, refuses nothing, and flows wherever it is directed, taking the shape given to it. The same water feeds mustard, onion, and sugarcane in one bed, yet each plant turns it into its own flavor, so the one undemanding gift becomes many things through those who receive it. The closing line names the stake plainly: peace belongs to the one who, like water, holds no craving, while desire, the insistence on a particular outcome, leads only to suffering.

GATHA 1875

Longing and Separation

Longing, match Your deeds to Your name

मराठी मूळ

तरले ते मार्गे आपुलिया सत्ता । कमाई अनंता करूनियां ॥1॥
 उसनें फेडितां धर्म तेथें कोण । ते तुज अनन्ये तुह्मी त्यांसी ॥ध्रु॥
 मज ऐसा कोण सांगा वांयां गेला । तो तुह्मी तारिला पांडुरंगा ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे नांवासारिखी करणी । न देखें हें मनीं समजावें ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Those who were saved in the past did so by their own merit, having earned the grace of the Infinite. When repaying a debt, what credit is there? They were devoted to You, and You to them.

Tell me, O Panduranga, who as worthless as me have You ever saved? Says Tuka, let Your deeds match Your name; consider this in Your mind.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Those who were saved before were saved by their own earned merit; they had built up credit with the Infinite. When You only repay a debt, where is the generosity in that? They were devoted to You, and You to them. Tell me, who as worthless as me have You ever saved, O Panduranga? Tuka says: let Your deeds match Your name; turn this over in Your mind.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram argues that the famous rescues of the past prove nothing about God's mercy. Those devotees had merit of their own; saving them was merely God settling a debt, an exchange between two who were already devoted to each other, and there is no special grace in paying back what is owed. The real test would be to lift up someone with no merit at all, someone worthless like himself. So he challenges God to act in a way that actually fits His reputation for mercy, and to weigh this honestly rather than rest on past accounts.

GATHA 1876

Longing and Separation

Longing, the ache of God's neglect

मराठी मूळ

कवणांशीं भांडों कोण माझें साहे । कोण मज आहे तुजविण ॥१॥
 धरिलें उदास दुरदुरांतरें । सांडी एकसरें केली माझी ॥२॥
 आइकोन माझे नाइकसी बोल । देखोनियां खोळ बुंथी घेसी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे एके गांवींची वसती । ह्मणऊनि खंती वाटे देवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

With whom shall I quarrel? Who will take my side? Who do I have besides You? You have grown distant, casting me off all at once. You hear my words but refuse to listen; seeing me approach, You pull a veil over Yourself.

Says Tuka, we dwell in the same village, and so this neglect pains me, O God.

IN PLAIN WORDS

With whom shall I quarrel? Who will take my side? Whom do I have but You? You have grown cold and kept Your distance, casting me off all at once. You hear my words but will not listen; when You see me coming, You pull a veil over Your face. Tuka says: we live in the very same village, and that is why this neglect hurts me, O God.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is grieving a felt distance from God, with no one else to turn to. He has no other ally to fight for him; God is his only one, and yet God has turned cold and seems to have dropped him in a single stroke. He pictures God hearing his cries but refusing to attend, even hiding behind a veil when He sees Tukaram approach. The sting in the last line is closeness made painful: they dwell in the same village, so near to each other, and it is precisely that nearness that makes being ignored unbearable.

GATHA 1877

Longing and Separation

Longing, hoarse from calling

मराठी मूळ

आळवितां कंठ शोकला भीतर । आयुष्य वेचे धीर नाही मना ॥1॥
 अझून कां नये हें तुझ्या अंतरा । दिनाच्या माहेरा पांडुरंगा ॥ध्रु॥
 धन दिसे डोळा दगडाचे परी । भोग ते शरीरीं विष जालें ॥2॥
 चुकलों काय तें मज क्षमा करीं । आंळगूनि हरी प्रेम द्यावें ॥3॥
 अवस्था राहिली रुपाची अंतरीं । बाहेर भीतरी सर्व काळ ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे माजे सकळ उपाय । पांडुरंगा पाय तुझे आतां ॥5॥
 ॥ शिवाजी राजे यांनीं स्वामींस अबदागिरी, घोडा,
 कारकून असे न्यावयास पाठविले ते अभंग ॥ 14 ॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

My throat is hoarse from calling out, my throat choked with grief. My life wastes away and my mind finds no peace.

Why does this not yet move You, O Panduranga, refuge of the helpless? Wealth looks like stone to my eyes; bodily pleasures have turned to poison. If I have erred, forgive me; embrace me, O Hari, and give me love.

The vision of Your form dwells within me, day and night, inside and out. Says Tuka, my only recourse now is Your feet, O Panduranga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have called and called until my throat is raw and grief sits deep inside. My life drains away, and my mind cannot hold still. Why does this still not reach your heart, Panduranga, home of the helpless? Wealth looks to my eyes like a heap of stone; the pleasures of the body have turned to poison in my flesh. If I have done wrong, forgive me; hold me close, Hari, and give me your love. The thought of your form stays inside me, outside and within, all the time. Tuka says: every other means is finished for me. Now only your feet remain, Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram has worn his voice out calling on God and his patience with it; the abhanga is what is left when calling has not yet been answered. He tells Panduranga plainly that wealth has gone dead in his sight and bodily pleasure has soured into poison, so there is nowhere else for his hunger to go. He does not claim he is owed an answer; he

asks first for forgiveness, then for the embrace. The whole weight of the poem lands in the last line: he has run out of every other method, and his only remaining recourse is the feet of God.

GATHA 1878

Renunciation

Renunciation, refusing the honors

मराठी मूळ

दिवटणा छत्री घोडे । हें तों बऱ्यांत न पडे ॥१॥
 आतां येथें पंढरिराया । मज गोविसी कासया ॥२॥
 मान दंभ चेष्टा । हे तों शूकराची विष्टा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा । माझे सोडववणे धांवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Torches, umbrellas, and horses hold no appeal for me. Why do You entangle me in these, O Lord of Pandhari?
 Honor, pride, and show are like the filth of swine.*

Says Tuka, O God, rush to my rescue.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Torches, an umbrella of state, fine horses: these do not sit well with me. Why do you tangle me up in such things here, King of Pandhari? Honor, pretense, and display are nothing but a pig's dung to me. Tuka says: O God, come running to set me free.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is refusing the trappings of status that have been pressed on him: the torchbearers, the ceremonial umbrella, the horses that mark an important man. He does not weigh them and find them small; he calls honor, pretense, and show a pig's filth, the harshest measure he can name. The danger he names is real: that God Himself might let these things become a snare around him. So the closing cry is not for honors but against them, asking God to rush in and pull him loose.

GATHA 1879

Longing and Separation

Longing, weaned from the world

मराठी मूळ

नावडे जें चित्ता । तें चि होसी पुरविता ॥1॥
 कां रे पुरविली पाठी । माझी केली जीवेसाटीं ॥ध्रु॥
 न करावा संग । वाटे दुरावावें जग ॥2॥
 सेवावा एकांत । वाटे न बोलावी मात ॥3॥
 जन धन तन । वाटे लेखावें वमन ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे सत्ता । हातीं तुझ्या पंढरिनाथा ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What my chitta does not want, that is precisely what You keep providing. Why have You persisted in this, making my life miserable? I wish for no company; I wish to withdraw from the world.

I want to dwell in solitude and speak no word. Body, wealth, and people all seem repulsive to me.

Says Tuka, the power is in Your hands, O Lord of Pandhari.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whatever my mind does not want, that is the very thing you keep handing me. Why have you stayed on my back like this and made my life a torment? I want no company; the world feels like something to move away from. I want to keep to solitude and speak no word at all. People, wealth, the body itself: all of it I feel I should count as vomit. Tuka says: the power is in your hands, Lord of Pandhari.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing a turn in his own heart that he traces back to God's doing. The things the world calls good, company, wealth, the body, have become repulsive to him, and he is not gentle about it: he would reckon them as vomit, something the body has already thrown out. He half-complains that God keeps supplying exactly what he no longer wants, as if pursuing him to wear him down. The last line surrenders the complaint: if this estrangement from the world is happening, the control over it lies in God's hands, not his own.

GATHA 1880

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the holy quarrel

मराठी मूळ

जाणोनि अंतर । टाळसील करकर ॥1॥
 तुज लागली हे खोडी । पांडुरंगा बहु कुडी ॥ध्रु॥
 उठविसी दारीं । धरणें एखादिया परी ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे पाये । कैसे सोडीन ते पाहें ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Knowing my mind, You dodge the confrontation. This is Your bad habit, O Panduranga, a deeply dishonest one. You rouse me at the door like one staging a protest. Says Tuka, watch how I refuse to let go of Your feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You know what is in my heart, so you slip away from the argument. This is your bad habit, Panduranga, a deeply dishonest one. You rouse me at your door as though you were the one staging a sit-in protest. Tuka says: watch, then, how I will let go of your feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks to God the way you speak to someone you love and will not be put off by. He accuses God of a cunning evasion: knowing exactly what the devotee wants, God ducks the confrontation rather than grant it. The image of being roused at the door belongs to the old custom of a creditor or petitioner who sits at someone's threshold and refuses to leave until the demand is met. Tukaram turns the tables with a defiant promise that is really a vow of refusal: just watch how thoroughly he will not loosen his grip on God's feet.

GATHA 1881

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, grace plays no favorites

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं विचारीत । मेघ हागनदारी सेत ॥१॥
 नये पाहों त्याचा अंत । ठेवीं कारणापें चित्त ॥२॥
 वर्जीत गंगा । नाहीं उत्तम अधम जगा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे मळ । नाहीं अग्नीसी विटाळ ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The rain cloud does not choose where it falls, whether on a field or a wasteland. One should not try to fathom its intent but keep the mind on the purpose at hand.

The Ganga does not refuse anyone, high or low, in all the world. Says Tuka, fire knows no pollution; it purifies everything.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The rain cloud does not stop to consider; it pours on a foul dunghill and on a good field alike. Do not try to measure out its reasons; keep your mind fixed on what it is for. The Ganga turns no one away; in all the world there is no high and no low to her. Tuka says: there is no filth that can defile fire.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram stacks three images of grace that does not sort people into worthy and unworthy. The cloud, the river, the fire all give themselves the same way to clean and unclean, high and low, without weighing who deserves it. The line he plants in the middle is the instruction: do not waste yourself trying to fathom why grace comes where it comes; keep your attention on the purpose it serves. Read against himself and his hearers, it is a warning not to set up our own rankings of who may receive God, because the divine giving recognizes none of them.

GATHA 1882

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, only Vitthal counts as treasure

मराठी मूळ

काय दिला ठेवा । आह्मां विठ्ठल चि व्हावा ॥१॥
 तुह्मी कळलेती उदार । साटीं परिसाची गार ॥२॥
 जीव दिला तरी। वचना माझ्या नये सरी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे धन । आह्मां गोमासासमान ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What kind of treasure have You given us? We must become Vitthal Himself. We have come to know Your so-called generosity: trading a pebble for the philosopher's stone.

Even if I gave my life, it would not match the worth of my devotion. Says Tuka, worldly wealth is to us as foul as forbidden meat.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What treasure is this you have set aside for us? We must become Vitthal Himself, nothing less. We have found out how generous you really are: you trade away a mere pebble and take the touchstone in return. Even if I gave my life, it would not equal the worth of my word to you. Tuka says: worldly wealth is to us as foul as forbidden meat.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is half-teasing God about the terms of the exchange between them. He pretends to complain that God is a sharp bargainer, taking the touchstone, the gem that turns iron to gold, and paying out only a pebble; but the joke runs the other way, since the devotee receives infinitely more than he gives. The real treasure God has set aside is not a thing but a destiny: that the devotee must become one with Vitthal. Against that, the wealth the world prizes is as repulsive to him as meat he is forbidden to touch, and even laying down his life would not match the worth of his vow.

GATHA 1883

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, sow the imperishable wealth

मराठी मूळ

पिकवावें धन । ज्याची आस करी जन ॥१॥
 पुढें उरे खातां देतां । नव्हे खंडण मवितां ॥२॥
 खोलीं पडे ओली बीज। तरीं च हातीं लागे निज ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे धनी । विठ्ठल अक्षरी हीं तिन्ही ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Cultivate that wealth which all people long for, which endures no matter how much is spent or given away, which cannot be diminished by any measure. When the seed falls into moist and deep soil, then the true treasure comes to hand.

Says Tuka, the three syllables of Vitthal's name are the real treasure.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Grow the kind of wealth that all people long for, the wealth that is still there after you have eaten from it and given it away, that no measuring can ever cut down. When the seed falls into deep, moist soil, then the true treasure comes into your hand. Tuka says: the real wealth is the master himself, Vitthal, those three syllables.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram takes the farmer's logic everyone understands and turns it toward the one harvest that does not run out. Ordinary wealth shrinks as you spend and share it; this wealth only grows under spending and giving and cannot be lessened by any reckoning. The seed that must fall into deep, moist ground is the Name planted in a softened, ready heart. He names the crop outright: the three syllables of Vitthal are themselves the treasure and the owner of the field, so to sow that Name is to gain everything.

GATHA 1884

The Necessity of Experience

Experience, all things made equal

मराठी मूळ

मुंगी आणि राव । आह्मां सारखाची जीव ॥१॥
 गेला मोह आणि आशा । किळकाळाचा हा फांसा ॥२॥
 सोनें आणि माती । आह्मां समान हें चितीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे आलें । घरा वैकुंठ सगळें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

An ant and a king are equal in our eyes; the life force in each is the same. Attachment and desire are gone; they were the noose of death.

Gold and clay are the same to our chitta. Says Tuka, all of Vaikuntha has come home to us.

IN PLAIN WORDS

An ant and a king are the same in our sight; the life in each one is one and the same. Attachment is gone, and so is craving; they were the noose of death tightening on us. Gold and clay weigh the same now in our heart. Tuka says: the whole of Vaikuntha has come home to us.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reports a settled condition, not a wish: the differences the world lives by have flattened out in him. An ant and a king carry the same life, gold and clay carry the same value, because the eye that ranked them has changed. He names what made the change: attachment and craving have left, and he calls them the very noose by

which death held him. With that grip released, he says heaven has not been postponed to after death; the whole of Vaikuntha, God's own realm, has already arrived in his house.

GATHA 1885

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, lords of the three worlds

मराठी मूळ

तिहीं त्रिभुवनीं । आह्मी वैभवाचे धनी ॥१॥
 हातां आले घाव डाव । आमचा मायबाप देव ॥२॥
 काय त्रिभुवनीं बळ । अंगीं आमुच्या सकळ ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे सत्ता । अवघी आमुची च आतां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In all three worlds, we are the lords of true wealth. We have won the game; God Himself is our father and mother.

Whatever strength exists in the three worlds is within us entirely. Says Tuka, all power now belongs to us alone.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In all three worlds, we are the owners of the true riches. The game has fallen into our hands; God Himself is our mother and father. Whatever strength there is in the three worlds is all of it within our own body. Tuka says: now every power belongs to us alone.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is in the high, exultant key that belonging wholly to God opens up. He claims lordship over the three worlds, but it is not his own greatness he is boasting of: the ground of the claim is that God is his mother and father, so the child of such a parent inherits everything. The winning move of the game is already in his hand, and the strength scattered through all the worlds he feels gathered into himself. The boast is really a confession of total dependence turned inside out, where having God is having all power.

GATHA 1886

The Power of the Name

The Name, what would make me happy

मराठी मूळ

आह्मी तेणें सुखी । ह्मणा विठ्ठल विठ्ठल मुखीं ॥१॥
 तुमचें येर वित्त धन । तें मज मृत्तकेसमान ॥२॥
 कंटीं मिरवा तुळसी । व्रत करा एकादशी ॥२॥
 ह्मणवा हरिचे दास । तुका ह्मणे मज हे आस ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We are happy when you say Vitthal, Vitthal with your lips. Your other riches and wealth are no better than dust to me.

Wear the tulasi around your neck and observe the Ekadashi vow. Says Tuka, my only desire is that you call yourselves servants of Hari.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We are made happy by just this: say Vitthal, Vitthal with your lips. Your other riches and wealth are no better than dirt to me. Wear the tulasi beads at your neck and keep the Ekadashi fast. Call yourselves the servants of Hari. Tuka says: this is my one desire.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells people what they could give him that he would actually want, and it is nothing they would think to offer. Their money and goods are dust in his eyes; what makes him glad is to hear the Name on their lips and to see them take up the simple marks of the devotee. He asks for the tulasi beads, the Ekadashi fast, and above all the willingness to be called Hari's servant. The whole abhanga redirects the impulse to honor a saint with gifts back onto the only gift he counts, the hearer's own turning toward God.

GATHA 1887

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, love binds God

मराठी मूळ

नाही काष्ठाचा गुमान । गोवी भ्रमरा सुमन ॥१॥
 प्रेम प्रीतीचे बांधलें । तें न सुटे कांहीं केलें ॥२॥
 पदरीं घालीं पिळा । बाप निर्बळ साटी बाळा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने भावें । भेणें देवा आकारावें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The bee cares nothing for dry wood; it is the flower's fragrance that captivates it. What is bound by love and affection cannot be released by any means.

A weak father places his child in the lap of another for its sake. Says Tuka, with devotion, one can summon God Himself to appear.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The bee pays no attention to dry wood; it is the flower's fragrance that holds it fast. What love and affection have bound cannot be loosed by any effort at all. A weak father lays his child in another's lap for the child's own good. Tuka says: with true feeling, you can call God Himself into form.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is showing how God is held, and it is never by force. The bee is not trapped by hard wood but drawn helplessly by the flower's scent, an image of how sweetness, not strength, binds. So too the bond of love between devotee and God cannot be undone by any contrivance, because nothing made it but love. The picture of a

powerless father entrusting his child to stronger arms is the devotee handing himself over for safekeeping; and the close states the law of it, that sincere feeling, bhava, is what summons the formless God to take a form you can hold.

GATHA 1888

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, nothing stronger than feeling

मराठी मूळ

भावापुढें बळ । नाहीं कोणाचे सबळ ॥१॥
 करी देवावरी सत्ता । कोण त्याहूनि परता ॥२॥
 बैसे तेथें येती । न पाचारितां सर्व शक्ति ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे राहे । तयाकडे कोण पाहे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

No force is mightier than devotion. It commands authority over God Himself; who can surpass that? Where devotion sits, all powers come unbidden.

Says Tuka, who even looks at the one who lacks devotion?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

No strength is mightier than devotion. It holds command over God Himself; who is greater than that? Where devotion sits down, every power comes to it unsummoned. Tuka says: but the one who has no devotion, who even bothers to look at him?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes a flat claim about where real power lies, and it is not where the world looks for it. Devotion, bhava, outranks every force, because it can lay a claim even on God and bend Him toward the devotee; no greater authority exists. Where such devotion takes its seat, all other powers arrive on their own, uncalled. The sharp last line is aimed not at any particular person but at the condition itself: a life without this devotion is so empty of value that nothing and no one turns to look at it.

GATHA 1889

Faith and Trust

Faith, the strength of the weak

मराठी मूळ

भावाचिया बळें । आह्मी निर्भर दुर्बळें ॥१॥
 नाहीं आणिकांची सत्ता । सदा समाधान चित्ता ॥२॥
 तकान नाहीं ठाव । येथें रिघावया वाव ॥३॥
 एकछत्रीं राज । तुक्या पांडुरंगीं काज ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

By the strength of devotion, we weak ones have become fearless. No other power holds sway over us; the mind rests always in contentment.

There is no room here for mere logic to enter. Says Tuka, in the sole sovereignty of Panduranga lies all our purpose.

IN PLAIN WORDS

By the strength of faith, we weak ones have become fearless. No other power rules over us. The mind rests always in contentment. There is no room here for cold reasoning to come in. Tuka says: under the one rule of Panduranga lies all our work.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram names where strength comes from for people who have none of their own. It is not in power, cleverness, or argument, but in faith, and faith alone makes the weak fearless. He says no other authority holds sway over him, so the mind stays at peace. Logic cannot enter this place, because the matter is settled by trust, not proof. His whole purpose lives under the single sovereignty of Panduranga, and that is enough.

GATHA 1890

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the mind under command

मराठी मूळ

सत्तावर्ते मन । पाळी विठ्ठलाची आन ॥१॥
 आज्ञा वाहोनियां शिरीं । सांगितलें तें चि करीं ॥२॥
 सरलीसे धांव । न लगे वाढवावी हांव ॥३॥
 आहे नाहीं त्याचें । तुका ह्मणे कळे साचें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The mind now moves under Vitthal's command, honoring His authority. Carrying His orders upon my head, I do only what He directs.

The restless running has ended; there is no need to feed desire any longer. Says Tuka, what truly is and what is not, that alone is now clear.

IN PLAIN WORDS

My mind now moves under Vitthal's rule; it keeps his command. I carry his orders on my head and do only what he tells me. The running has stopped; I need not feed my wanting any longer. Tuka says: what is real and what is not, I now see truly.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a mind that has handed over its own authority. It no longer acts on its own urges but obeys Vitthal, carrying his orders on the head as a servant carries a load. Because the will is given up, the restless chasing ends and there is no more desire to fatten. When wanting stops driving him, he can finally tell what is real from what is not. Surrender, he says, is what clears the sight.

GATHA 1891

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, the accounts in His name

मराठी मूळ

खावें ल्यावें द्यावें । जमाखर्च तुझ्या नांवें ॥१॥
 आतां चुकली खटपट । झाडण पाडणाचा बोभाट ॥२॥
 आहे नाही त्याचें । आह्मां काम सांगायाचें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे चिंता । भार वाहे तुझ्या माथां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Eating, wearing, giving, all accounts are in Your name. Now the turmoil of profit and loss has ceased.

Whether something exists or not, our only task is to report it to You. Says Tuka, the burden of all worry rests upon Your head.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Eating, wearing, giving: every account is in your name. Now the struggle of reckoning is over, the noise of profit and loss. Whether a thing exists or not, our only job is to report it to you. Tuka says: the weight of worry rests on your head.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the whole ledger of his life over to God. Food, clothing, gifts, all of it is entered in Vitthal's name, not his own, so the anxious accounting of gain and loss falls silent. His only remaining task is to report what comes and goes; he no longer has to manage outcomes. The burden of worry he sets squarely on God's head. This is surrender made concrete, in the plain terms of household bookkeeping.

GATHA 1892

Ecstasy and Joy

Relief, the burden lifted

मराठी मूळ

आतां बरें जालें । माझे माथांचें निघालें ॥१॥
 चुकली हे मरमर । भार माथांचे डोंगर ॥२॥
 नसतां कांहीं जोडी । करिती बहुतें तडातोडी ॥२॥
 जाला झाडापाडा । तुका ह्मणे गेली पीडा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now it is well; the weight has been lifted from my head. The ceaseless anxiety is over; the mountains of burden are gone.

Without any real gain, people keep tearing themselves apart. Says Tuka, the clutter has been cleared away and the torment is ended.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now it is well. The weight has come off my head. The ceaseless toil is over; the mountains of burden are gone. With no real gain to show, people tear themselves apart. Tuka says: the clutter is cleared, the torment is over.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks from the ease that follows surrender, when the load he had carried is simply gone. The grinding toil and the mountains of care are lifted off, and he marvels at the relief. He looks back at how people exhaust themselves for gains that turn out to be nothing. Once the accounts are cleared and handed over, the inner clutter goes with them. The poem is the breath you let out after setting down a weight you carried too long.

GATHA 1893

Renunciation

Renunciation, enough of servitude

मराठी मूळ

संचितें चि खावें । पुढें कोणाचें न घ्यावें ॥१॥
 आतां पुरे हे चाकरी । राहों बैसोनियां घरीं ॥२॥
 नाही काम हातीं । आराणूक दिसराती ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे सत्ता । पुरे पराधीन आतां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let me eat only what my past merit provides; I will take nothing from anyone henceforth. Enough of this servitude; let me sit quietly at home.

There is no work on hand; rest fills the day and night. Says Tuka, enough of being subject to another's will.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let me eat only what my past has earned; from now on I will take nothing from anyone. Enough of this service. Let me sit quietly at home. There is no work in my hands; rest fills day and night. Tuka says: enough of being subject to another's will.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram resolves to stop hiring himself out to the world. He will live on whatever his past merit provides and beg nothing further from anyone, ending his dependence on other people's favor. The endless service he calls enough, choosing instead a quiet sitting at home with empty hands and open time. The point is freedom: he refuses to remain at another's command. Renunciation here is not grim but restful, the day and night now his own.

GATHA 1894

The Moral Ideal

Loyalty, never cut ties with your master

मराठी मूळ

ज्याचे गांवीं केला वास । त्यासी नसावें उदास ॥१॥
 तरी च जोडिलें तें भोगे । कांहीं आघात न लगे ॥२॥
 वाढवावी थोरी। मुखें ह्मणे तुझे हरी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे हे गोमटी । दासा न घलावी तुटी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who dwells in another's village should not be indifferent to the host. Only then does one enjoy what has been earned, free from misfortune.

Increase the host's glory; say with your lips, I am Yours, O Hari. Says Tuka, this is the beautiful way: never cut ties with your master.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One who lives in another's village should not be cold toward the one who keeps him. Only then can he enjoy what he has earned, with no harm coming to him. Lift up your host's name; say with your mouth, I am yours, O Hari. Tuka says: this is the good way; a servant must never break with his master.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram uses the plain picture of a guest who lives off a host to teach the soul its proper bearing toward God. Whoever depends on another for shelter must not be indifferent to that giver, or the shelter itself is poisoned. The right response is gratitude that praises the host and openly confesses, I am yours, O Hari. Only this keeps a person safe in what he has been given. The lesson is loyalty: a servant must never sever the bond with his master.

GATHA 1895

Longing and Separation

Longing, has He really accepted me

मराठी मूळ

माझा तुझी देवा केला अंगीकार । हें मज साचार कैसें कळे ॥१॥
 कां हो कांहीं माझ्या नये अनुभवा । विचारितां देवा आहें तैसा ॥२॥
 लौकिकाचा मज लाविसी आभार । शिरोरत्नभार दुःखाचा हा ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं पालट अंतरीं । तेथें दिसे हरी ठकाठकी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How can I truly know whether You have accepted me, O God? Why does nothing come to my experience? When I reflect, I remain just as I was. You burden me with worldly honor, and this crown of fame is a weight of sorrow.

Says Tuka, when there is no transformation within, then all this, O Hari, looks like mere deception.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You have taken me as yours, O God; but how am I to know this is real? Why does nothing come to my own experience? When I look, I am just as I was. You load worldly honor on me; this crown of fame is a weight of sorrow. Tuka says: when nothing has changed inside, then, Hari, all of this looks like a swindle.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is pressing God on the difference between a promise and a felt reality. He has been told he is accepted, yet nothing in his own experience confirms it; he searches inside and finds himself unchanged. The public honor that has come to him is no comfort but a burden, a crown of fame that only weighs him down with grief. His test for the real thing is inward transformation, not reputation. Without that change, he dares to say, even God's acceptance feels like a cheat, and he says so to God's face.

GATHA 1896

Prayers

Prayer, let our words be true

मराठी मूळ

तोंडें बोलावें तें तरी वाटे खरें । जीव येरेयेरें वंचिजे ना ॥१॥
 हें तुह्यां सांगणें काय उगवूनि । जावें समजोनि पांडुरंगा ॥२॥
 जेवित्याची खूण वाढित्या अंतरीं । प्रीतीनें हे धरी चाली तेथें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने बहु परीचे आदर । अत्यंत वेव्हारसंपादणी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What is spoken should at least feel true; let us not deceive each other within. What more can I explain to You? Understand this, O Panduranga.

The one who serves knows the mind of the one who eats; where there is love, the right conduct follows naturally. Says Tuka, there are many forms of hospitality, but the ultimate transaction must be genuine.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What is spoken should at least feel true; let us not cheat each other within. What more can I explain to you? Understand this, O Panduranga. The one who serves knows the mind of the one who eats; where there is love, right conduct follows on its own. Tuka says: there are many forms of welcome, but the real dealing must be genuine.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks for honesty in the relationship between the soul and God. Words spoken between them should ring true, and neither should deceive the other in the heart. He uses the image of host and guest: the server who truly loves the one he feeds reads that person's wishes and acts rightly without being told. So love makes the right conduct natural. Many outward forms of hospitality exist, but Tukaram wants the one transaction that matters to be sincere all the way through.

GATHA 1897

Faith and Trust

Faith, the Name endures

मराठी मूळ

न पालटे एक । भोळा भक्त चि भाविक ॥१॥
 येरां नास आहे पुढें । पुण्य सरतां उघडें ॥२॥
 नेणे गर्भवास । एक विष्णूचा चि दास ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे खरें । नाम विठोबाचे बरें ॥३॥
 ॥ स्वामींनीं पत्र पंढरीनाथास पंढरीस पाठविलें ते अभंग ॥ 66 ॥
 संतांबरोबर पाठविल्या पत्राचे अभंग 36

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

One who never wavers is the innocent, the simple devotee, the truly faithful. For all others, ruin awaits when their merit is exhausted.

The true servant of Vishnu never knows the womb again. Says Tuka, the name of Vithoba is the only real and enduring truth.

IN PLAIN WORDS

One alone never wavers: the innocent, simple, faithful devotee. For all others, ruin waits ahead, laid bare when their merit runs out. The true servant of Vishnu never enters the womb again. Tuka says: the name of Vithoba is the one thing that is real and good.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets the steadfast devotee against everyone who trusts in earned merit. The simple, faithful heart never changes, while those who lean on accumulated good deeds face ruin once that store is spent. The servant of Vishnu, by contrast, is freed from the round of birth, never returning to the womb. What makes the difference is not a balance of merit but devotion to the Name. Tuka declares the name of Vithoba the only thing that truly lasts and truly does good.

GATHA 1898

Longing and Separation

Longing, the call to come home

मराठी मूळ

कोणा मुखें ऐसी ऐकेन मी मात । चाल तुज पंढरिनाथ बोलावितो ॥१॥
 मग मी न धरीं आस मागील बोभाट । वेगीं धरिं वाट माहेराची ॥२॥
 निरांजिरे चित्त करितें तळमळ । केधवां देखती मूळ आलें डोळे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कई भाग्याची उजरी । होईल पंढरी देखावया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

From whose lips shall I hear the words: Come, the Lord of Pandhari calls you? Then I would abandon all past clamoring and swiftly take the road to my true home. My restless heart yearns ceaselessly; when will my eyes behold their source? Says Tuka, when will fortune shine so that I may see Pandhari?

IN PLAIN WORDS

From whose mouth will I hear the words: Come, the Lord of Pandhari is calling you? Then I would drop all my old crying out and quickly take the road to my home. My empty heart burns and burns; when will my eyes see their source arrive? Tuka says: when will my fortune shine, so that I may see Pandhari?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram waits for one message and lives in the ache of not yet hearing it: word that Vitthal at Pandhari is calling him home. The moment that summons came, he would abandon every other complaint and run for the road. He calls Pandhari his maher, the true home a soul longs to return to, and his emptied heart burns for it. He frames it all as a question, not yet a homecoming, asking when his fortune will finally turn bright enough to let him see the place. The poem is pure longing held open, waiting on grace.

GATHA 1899

Longing and Separation

Longing, the silence of God

मराठी मूळ

कां माझा विसर पडिला मायबाप । सांडियेली कृपा कोण्या गुणें ॥१॥
 कैसा कंटूनियां राहों संवसार । काय एक धीर देऊं मना ॥२॥
 नाहीं निरोपाची पावली वारता । करावी ते चिंता ऐसी कांहीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे एक वेचूनि वचन । नाहीं समाधान केलें माझें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why have You forgotten me, O my Father and Mother? For what reason have You withdrawn Your grace? How shall I endure this worldly life? What consolation can I give my mind? No word of message has reached me; what worry should I entertain? Says Tuka, You have not spent even a single word to bring me peace.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why have you forgotten me, my Mother, my Father? For what fault have you set your grace aside? How am I to pass my days in this worldly life? What courage can I give my mind? No word of message has reached me; what worry am I to hold? Tuka says: you have not spent a single word to give me peace.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram cries out from the experience of being abandoned by a God he calls both Mother and Father. He cannot find the reason grace has been withdrawn, and without it he does not know how to bear the daily grind of worldly life or steady his own mind. Worst of all is the silence: no message, no answer, nothing to tell him what he should even worry about. He measures God's neglect by the smallest possible coin, a single word, and notes that even that has not been given. This is the dark night of the devotee, complaint and prayer in one breath.

GATHA 1900

Longing and Separation

Longing, turning the blame inward

मराठी मूळ

कांहीं माझे कळों आले गुणदोष । ह्मणऊनि उदास धरिलें ऐसें ॥१॥
 नाही तरी येथें न घडे अनुचित । नाहीं ऐसी रीत तया घरीं ॥२॥
 कळावें तें मना आपुलिया सवें । ठायींचे हें घ्यावें विचारुनि ॥३॥
 मज अद्देरिलें देवें । माझिया कर्तव्यें बुद्धीचिया ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Perhaps my faults have become apparent to You, and so You have grown indifferent. Otherwise, no wrong has been committed here; such neglect is not the custom of that household.

Let the mind examine itself with honesty; let it weigh and consider the matter truly. Says Tuka, God has rejected me because of the failings of my own intellect.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Perhaps my faults have shown themselves to you, and so you have turned cold like this. Otherwise nothing unfair happens here; such neglect is not the way of that house. Let the mind look into itself honestly; let it weigh the matter and think it through. Tuka says: God has cast me off because of the failings of my own intellect.

WHAT IT MEANS

Still feeling God's coldness, Tukaram stops accusing and turns the question on himself. Maybe his own faults have become visible, and that, not any injustice in God, is why grace seems withdrawn; he insists wrong is never done in that house. So he tells his mind to examine itself honestly rather than blame the Lord. He arrives at the conclusion that if he has been cast off, it is the fault of his own flawed understanding. The longing here matures into self-scrutiny, refusing to let God be the one at fault.

GATHA 1901

Longing and Separation

Longing, sending word at last

मराठी मूळ

नव्हे धीर कांहीं पाठवूं निरोप । आला तरीं कोप येऊ सुखें ॥१॥
 कोपोनियां तरी देईल उत्तर । जैसें तैसें पर फिरावूनि ॥२॥
 नाहीं तया तरी काय एक पोर । मज तों माहेर आणीक नाहीं ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे असे तयामध्ये हित । आपण निवांत असों नये ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I cannot hold back any longer; let me send word. Even if anger comes, let it come gladly.

Even in anger, He will give a reply, returning whatever message He sees fit. If He will not respond, what sort of parent is He? I have no other refuge.

Says Tuka, there is benefit in this; one should not sit idle.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I cannot hold back any longer. Let me send word. Even if anger comes, let it come gladly. Even in anger he will answer; he will turn the message back however he sees fit. And if he will not answer, then what sort of parent is he? I have no other home, no other refuge. Tuka says: there is good in this. One should not sit still and idle.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is done waiting in silence and decides to write to God like a child writing home. He would rather provoke a reply, even an angry one, than be met with nothing, because anger at least proves he is heard. He stakes everything on the parent bond: if God will not answer his own child, the very name of parent is empty, and Tukaram insists he has nowhere else to turn. The closing line names the stakes for the devotee, that crying out is itself the work, and silence is not surrender but neglect of one's own good.

GATHA 1902

Longing and Separation

Longing, watching the road home

मराठी मूळ

आतां पाहों पंथ माहेराची वाट । कामाचा बोभाट पडो सुखें ॥१॥
 काय करूं आतां न गमेसें जालें । बहुत सोसिलें बहु दिस ॥२॥
 घर लागे पाठी चित्ता उभे वारे । आपुलें तें झुरे पाहावया ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे जीव गेला तरी जाव । धरिला तो देव भाव सिद्धी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now let me watch the path that leads home; let the clamor of duties fall away. What can I do? Life has become unbearable; I have endured too much for too long.

The home calls to my chitta; restless winds blow through my mind, yearning to see what is truly mine. Says Tuka, even if life itself departs, let the devotion I have held reach its fulfillment.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now let me watch the path that leads home. Let the clamor of duties fall away. What can I do now? Life has become unbearable. I have borne too much for too many days. The home calls to me; restless winds blow through my mind, aching to see what is truly mine. Tuka says: even if life itself leaves me, let it leave; the devotion I have held will reach its fulfillment.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns his whole attention away from worldly business toward the one road that matters, the road to God, his true home. He admits the waiting has worn him out and that he cannot bear ordinary life any longer; his mind is blown about like a house in a storm, restless to see the One who belongs to him. Then he names the cost he will

pay: even his own life is expendable. What he refuses to lose is the devotion itself, and he trusts that the bhava he has held will be carried through to its end whether or not the body survives the longing.

GATHA 1903

Prayers

Prayer, a bold letter to God

मराठी मूळ

विनवीजे ऐसें भाग्य नाहीं देवा । पायांशीं केशवा सलगी केली ॥१॥
 धीटपणें पत्र लिहिलें आवडी । पार नेणे थोडी मति माझी ॥२॥
 जेथें देवा तुझा न कळे चि पार । तेथें मी पामर काय वाणूं ॥३॥
 जैसे तैसे माझे बोल अंगीकारीं । बोबड्या उत्तरीं गौरवितों ॥४॥
 तुका ह्याने विटेवरि जी पाउलें । तेथें म्यां ठेविलें मस्तक हें ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I do not possess the fortune to make a proper plea, O God; I have dared to be familiar with Your feet, O Keshava. With boldness and love I have written this letter; my small intellect cannot fathom Your depths.

Where even Your own measure is beyond knowing, what can a wretch like me describe? Accept my words as they are; I honor You with stammering speech. Says Tuka, upon that brick where Your feet rest, there I have placed my head.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I do not have the good fortune to make a proper plea, O God. I have dared to come close to your feet, Keshava. With boldness and with love I have written this letter. My small mind cannot reach your far shore. Where even your own measure cannot be known, what can a wretch like me describe? Take my words just as they are. I praise you with stammering speech. Tuka says: on the brick where your feet rest, there I have laid my head.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram confesses he has no standing to address God and no skill to praise him, yet he writes anyway out of pure familiarity and love. He admits his intellect cannot fathom God, who is beyond all measure, so he gives up on eloquence entirely and offers only broken, stammering words. The whole prayer rests on the difference between worth and welcome: he brings nothing fine, only a child's nerve to approach. The closing image is the surrender that makes the bold letter humble, his head laid on the brick at Pandhari where Vitthal's feet stand, all argument abandoned for bowing.

GATHA 1904

Devotion to Vitthal

Adoration, the Name burns sin away

मराठी मूळ

देवांच्या ही देवा गोपिकांच्या पती । उदार हे ख्याती त्रिभुवनीं ॥१॥
 पातकांच्या रासी नासितोसी नामें । जळतील कर्म महा दोष ॥२॥
 सर्व सुखें तुझ्या वोळगती पायीं । रिद्धि सिद्धि ठायीं मुक्तिचारी ॥३॥
 इंद्रासी दुर्लभ पाविजे तें पद । गीत गातां छंद वातां टाळी ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे जड जीव शक्तिहीन । त्यांचें तूं जीवन पांडुरंगा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O God of gods, Lord of the gopis, Your fame as the most generous resounds through the three worlds. By Your name, heaps of sins are destroyed; great transgressions burn away.

All joys attend Your feet; prosperity, accomplishment, and liberation serve You there. That state which is rare even for Indra is attained by those who sing Your songs and clap in rhythm.

Says Tuka, You are the very life of the helpless and powerless, O Panduranga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God of the gods, Lord of the gopis, your fame as the most generous one sounds through the three worlds. By your name, heaps of sins are destroyed; great wrongs burn away. Every joy waits at your feet; wealth, attainment, and release all serve you there. That state which is hard even for Indra to reach is gained by those who sing your songs and clap in rhythm. Tuka says: you are the very life of the helpless and the powerless, O Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram praises Vitthal as the supreme and most open-handed Lord, then makes the central claim of the bhakti path: the Name alone destroys whole mountains of sin. He sets up a deliberate reversal of values. The high state that even Indra struggles to win is handed freely to ordinary people who simply sing and clap before God. The point is that devotion outranks power and merit; what kings of heaven cannot earn, singers gain by love. The closing turn lands it on those who have nothing, the weak and helpless, for whom Panduranga is not a reward but their very breath and life.

GATHA 1905

Longing and Separation

Longing, no reply from God

मराठी मूळ

काय जालें नेणों माझिया कपाळा । न देखीजे डोळां मूळ येतां ॥१॥
 बहु दिस पाहें वचनासी वास । धरिलें उदास पांडुरंगा ॥२॥
 नाही निरोपाचें पावलें उत्तर । ऐसें तों निष्ठ न पाहिजे ॥३॥
 पडिला विसर किंवा कांहीं धंदा । त्याहूनि गोविंदा जरूरसा ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I do not know what is written on my forehead, for my eyes cannot see Your coming. For many days I have awaited Your word, and You have kept Your distance, O Panduranga.

No reply to my message has arrived; such cruelty should not be shown. Perhaps You have forgotten, or perhaps You are occupied; even so, O Govinda, this is urgent.

Says Tuka, perhaps resources are scarce, and the fear of further debts weighs upon You too.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I do not know what is written on my forehead, for my eyes cannot see you coming. For many days I have waited for your word, and you have kept your distance, O Panduranga. No answer to my message has reached me. Such hardness should not be shown. Perhaps you have forgotten me, or perhaps you are busy; even so, Govinda, this is urgent. Tuka says: perhaps your means have run short, and the fear of further debt weighs on you too.

WHAT IT MEANS

This continues the letter to God, now sharpened by silence: Tukaram has waited many days and received no reply, and he names that silence as a hardness God should not show to one who depends on him. He runs through the excuses a child invents for an absent parent, that God forgot, that God is busy, and insists none of them excuse the delay because his need is urgent. The last verse turns gently teasing and self-aware, imagining that maybe God himself is short of resources and afraid of owing more. The satire points not at God but at how the longing soul keeps inventing reasons rather than accept abandonment.

GATHA 1906

Longing and Separation

Longing, the fear of being cast off

मराठी मूळ

एवढा संकोच तरि कां व्यालासी । आह्मी कोणांपाशीं तोंड वासूं ॥१॥
 कोण मज पुसे सिणलें भागलें । जरी मोकलिलें तुह्मीं देवा ॥२॥
 कवणाची वाट पाहों कोणीकडे । कोण मज ओढे जीवलग ॥३॥
 कोण जाणे माझे जीवींचें सांकडें । उगवील कोडें संकटाचें ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुह्मी देखिली निंश्चती । काय माझे चित्तीं पांडुरंगा ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If there is such hesitation, why did You take me on at all? Before whom shall we show our face? Who asks after me when I am weary and worn, if You have abandoned me, O God? Whose path shall I watch? Who will draw me close as a true beloved? Who knows the anguish in my chitta? Who will solve this knotted crisis? Says Tuka, You have seen my resolve; You know what is in my chitta, O Panduranga.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If you were going to hold back this much, why did you take me on at all? Before whom shall I open my mouth? Who will ask after me when I am weary and worn, if you have let me go, O God? Whose road shall I watch, and which way? Who will pull me close as one who is truly mine? Who knows the knot of pain in my heart? Who will untangle this riddle of trouble? Tuka says: you have seen how set my resolve is; you know what is in my heart, O Panduranga.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses God with the unanswerable question a child asks an absent parent: if you meant to neglect me, why did you ever claim me? He runs through everyone who might care for him and finds no one, because once God has taken him there is no second refuge to fall back on. The string of questions is not rhetoric for its own sake; it names the real terror of the devotee, that being chosen by God and then ignored leaves you with nowhere to go. He ends by throwing it back on God's own knowledge: you have seen my steadfastness and you read my heart, so the silence cannot be from ignorance.

GATHA 1907

Prayers

Pleading, the meeting costs you nothing

मराठी मूळ

देई डोळे भेटी न धरीं संकोच । न घलीं कांहीं वेच तुजवरी ॥1॥
 तुज बुडवावें ऐसा कोण धर्म । अहनिनशीं नाम घेतां थोडें ॥धु.॥
 फार थोडें काहीं करुनि पातळ । त्याजमध्ये काळ कडे लावूं ॥2॥
 आहे माझी ते चि सारीन सिदोरी । भार तुजवरी नेदीं माझा ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मां लेकराची जाती । भेटावया खंती वाटतसे ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Grant me the sight of You; do not hold back. I place no burden of expense upon You.**Taking Your name day and night costs so little. Settle accounts however You wish, little or much; let us use this time to cross over.**I carry my own provisions; I will not place my weight on You. Says Tuka, we are like children by nature; we ache for the meeting.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Give me the sight of you, the meeting. Do not hold back. I lay no charge of expense on you. What kind of law is it that would let you sink me? Taking your name day and night costs so little. Settle the account however you like, large or small; let us use this time to cross over. I carry my own provisions; I will not put my weight on you. Tuka says: we are children by nature, and we ache for the meeting.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram argues that there is no reason for God to withhold himself, since meeting him costs God nothing at all. He frames it in the language of debt and accounts: he is not asking God to spend anything, only to show his face, and he even insists he brings his own provisions so he will not be a burden. The bargaining is a way of removing every excuse for the delay, pressing the point that grace is free to give. Underneath the ledger language is the real claim of the closing line: he and the other devotees are simply children, and a child's ache to see the parent needs no further justification.

GATHA 1908

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, peace at the sight of God

मराठी मूळ

सीण भाग हरे तेथींच्या निरोपें । देखिलिया रूप उरी नुरे ॥1॥
 इंद्रियांची धांव होईल कुंटित । पावेल हें चित्त समाधान॥ध्रु॥
 माहेर आहेसं लौकिकीं कळावें । निढळ बरवें शोभा नेदी ॥2॥
 आस नाहीं परी उरी बरी वाटे । आपलें तें भेटे आपणासी ॥3॥
 तुका ह्याने माझी अविट आवडी । खंडण तांतडी होऊं नेदीं ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Weariness and fatigue vanish with just a word from that place; upon seeing that form, nothing remains. The rush of the senses becomes still, and the mind finds true peace.

Let the world know that my true home exists; bare forehead has no glory without it. I claim no need, yet having someone of my own feels good; to meet oneself is the deepest joy.

Says Tuka, my love for Him is inexhaustible; I will not let haste break this connection.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Weariness and fatigue fall away at a single word from that place. When that form is seen, nothing else is left. The rushing of the senses goes still. The mind comes to rest in true peace. Let the world know that my home truly exists; a bare forehead has no grace without it. I claim no need, yet to have someone of my own feels good; to meet one's own is the deepest joy. Tuka says: my love for him does not go stale. I will not let any haste break this bond.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes what the longed-for meeting actually does: one word from God dissolves exhaustion, the sight of his form leaves nothing else standing, the restless senses fall quiet, and the mind finds real rest. He wants the world to know that his maher, his true home with God, genuinely exists, because a life without that belonging is bare and graceless. He admits he claims to need nothing, yet confesses the plain sweetness of having someone who is truly his own, and calls the reunion a meeting with one's own self. The closing vow guards the bond: his love never goes stale, and he refuses to let impatience snap the connection he has waited so long for.

GATHA 1909

Longing and Separation

Longing, the fruit not yet ripe

मराठी मूळ

धरितों वासना परी नये फळ । प्राप्तीचा तो काळ नाही आला ॥1॥
 तळमळी चित्त घातलें खापरीं । फुटतसे परी लाहीचिया ॥ध्रु॥
 प्रकार ते कांहीं नावडती जीवा । नाही पुढें ठावा काळ हातीं ॥2॥
 जातों तळा येतों मागुता लौकरी । वोळशाचे फेरी सांपडलों ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे बहु करितों विचार । उतरें डोंगर एक चढें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I hold the desire, but the fruit does not come; the time of fulfillment has not yet arrived. My chitta, placed upon the griddle, seethes and cracks like parched grain.

The ways of the world do not please my jiva, and the future is not in my hands. I sink down and rise again quickly, caught in these revolving cycles.

Says Tuka, I deliberate endlessly; one mountain descends only for another to rise.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I hold the desire, but the fruit does not come. The time of attainment has not yet arrived. My heart writhes; thrown on the hot griddle, it bursts like a grain of parched corn. The ways of the world do not please my soul, and the time ahead is not in my hands. I go down and climb back up again at once, caught in the turning of the cycle. Tuka says: I think and think it over; one mountain goes down only for another to rise.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram names the special pain of devotion deferred: he has the longing fully formed, but the fruit will not ripen because the appointed time has not come. He gives it a sharp image, his heart cracking and popping like a kernel of corn on a hot pan, unable to rest. The trap is that the world no longer satisfies him and yet God has not yet arrived, so he is suspended between, with the future out of his control and no relief either way. The closing line lands the whole condition: his endless deliberation gets nowhere, because crossing one mountain only reveals another, and the seeker keeps climbing without arriving.

GATHA 1910

Longing and Separation

Longing, why can I not reach Pandhari

मराठी मूळ

कां माझे पंढरी न देखती डोळे । काय हें न कळे पाप यांचें ॥1॥
 पाय पंथें कां हे न चलती वाट । कोण हें अदृष्ट कर्म बळी ॥ध्रु॥
 कां हें पायांवरी न पडे मस्तक । क्षेम कां हस्तक न पवती ॥2॥
 कां या इंद्रियांची न पुरे वासना । पवित्र होईना जिह्वा कीर्ती ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे कई जाऊनि मोटळें । पडेन हा लोळें महाद्वारी ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Why do my eyes not see Pandhari? What sin of mine conceals it? Why do my feet not walk that sacred path?
 What unseen karma overpowers me? Why does my head not fall at those feet? Why do my hands not reach out
 in greeting? Why is the longing of my senses not fulfilled? Why does my tongue not become pure with praise?
 Says Tuka, when will I go and cast myself prostrate at the great gate?*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why do my eyes not see Pandhari? What sin of mine hides it from them? Why do my feet not walk that sacred road? What unseen karma is so strong against me? Why does my head not fall at those feet? Why do my hands not reach out in greeting? Why is the longing of my senses not fulfilled? Why does my tongue not grow pure with his praise? Tuka says: when will I go, and fall down rolling at the great gate?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pours out a litany of questions, each blaming his own hidden sin and karma for the gulf between him and Pandharpur. He inventories every part of himself that is being kept from God: eyes that cannot see the town, feet that cannot walk the road, head that cannot bow at the feet, hands that cannot greet, senses unfulfilled, tongue not yet purified by praise. The repeated why turns the longing into self-examination rather than complaint against God, locating the obstacle in his own unripeness. The final line gathers it into one ache, the day he will throw himself down and roll in the dust at the great gate of the temple.

GATHA 1911

Longing and Separation

Longing, the child makes a scene

मराठी मूळ

काय पोरें जालीं फार । किंवा न साहे करकर ॥1॥
 ह्मणऊनि केली सांडी । घांस घेऊं न ल्हां तोंडीं ॥ध्रु॥
 करुं कलागती । तुज भांडणें भोंवतीं ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे टांचें । घरीं जालेंसे वरोचें ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Have too many children been born, or can You no longer bear the noise? Is that why You have cast me off, refusing even to feed me? I will make a scene and quarrel all around You. Says Tuka, something seems to have gone wrong at home.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Have too many children been born to you? Or can you no longer bear the noise? Is that why you have cast me aside, not letting me take even a mouthful into my mouth? Then I will make a scene; I will quarrel and squabble all around you. Tuka says: something seems to have gone wrong at home.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram plays the neglected child to the hilt, teasing God with the suspicion that he has so many children now, or is so tired of the racket, that he has stopped feeding this one. The complaint is half mock-jealousy, half real hunger for God's attention. His response is not dignified silence but a deliberate tantrum: he will cling and quarrel and create a disturbance until God has to deal with him. The closing line keeps it playful, guessing that some trouble has broken out in God's household, while the real point is the devotee's refusal to be quietly ignored.

GATHA 1912

Longing and Separation

Longing, have I become a burden

मराठी मूळ

कांहीं चिंतेविण । नाहीं उपजत सीण ॥१॥
 तरी हा पडिला विसर । माझा तुझां जाला भार ॥२॥
 आली कांहीं तुटी । गेली सुटोनियां गांठी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे घरीं । बहु बैसले रिणकरी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Anxiety does not arise without some cause for worry. So have You forgotten me? Have I become a burden? Has some rift appeared? Has the knot between us come undone? Says Tuka, perhaps many creditors have gathered in Your house.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Weariness does not rise up without some cause for worry. So have you forgotten me? Have I become a burden to you? Has some break come between us? Has the knot that bound us slipped loose? Tuka says: perhaps many creditors have gathered in your house.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reads his own distress as evidence: this exhaustion would not have arisen unless something were truly wrong, so he probes for the cause. He runs through the possibilities a worried child imagines, that God has forgotten him, that he has become a load too heavy to carry, that the tie between them has snapped. Each guess names the same fear, that the bond he relies on has come undone. The closing line softens it with the old teasing image of God beset by creditors at home, too pressed to attend to him, keeping the complaint affectionate even as it voices the dread of being let go.

GATHA 1913

Longing and Separation

Longing, a message costs nothing

मराठी मूळ

निरोपासी वेचे । काय बोलतां फुकाचें ॥१॥
 परी हें नेघेवे चि यश । भेओं नको सुखी आस ॥२॥
 सुख समाधानें । कोण पाहे देणें घेणें ॥३॥
 न लगे निरोपासी मोल । तुका ह्मणे वेचे बोल ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Does sending a message cost anything? Speaking costs nothing. But do not refuse this satisfaction; do not fear, for the hope of happiness remains.

When one is content, who cares about debts and dues? A message costs nothing; Says Tuka, it spends only words.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What does it cost you to send a message? Speaking takes nothing from you. Do not refuse me this much; do not be afraid, for the hope of happiness is still here. When the heart is content, who keeps count of what is given and what is taken? A message has no price. Tuka says: it spends only words.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is begging God for the smallest sign, and arguing that the giving costs nothing. A word, a message, takes nothing out of God's hand, so there is no reason to withhold it. He tells himself not to be afraid, because the hope of joy has not died. His point is that love is not bookkeeping: where there is real contentment, no one tallies debts and dues. All he asks is a word, and a word is free.

GATHA 1914

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the miser and the hoarding God

मराठी मूळ

जोडीच्या हव्यासें । लागे धनांचें चि पिसें ॥१॥
 मग आणीक दुसरें । लोभ्या नावडती पोरें ॥२॥
 पाहे रुक्याकडे । मग अवघें ओस पडे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा । तुला बहुत चि हेवा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

In the frenzy of accumulating, one becomes mad only for wealth. Then a miser does not even care for his own children.

He stares only at the coins, and everything else becomes barren. Says Tuka, O God, You have great fondness for hoarding too.

IN PLAIN WORDS

In the fever of piling things up, a man goes mad for money alone. Then nothing else matters to him; even his own children mean nothing to a miser. He stares only at his coins, and everything around him turns barren. Tuka says: O God, you too are very fond of hoarding.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the sickness of greed and then turns it, shockingly, on God himself. The miser's hunger to accumulate eats his heart until even his own children stop mattering; he sees only his coins, and his whole world goes dry. This is a warning about what the craving to possess does to a person, hollowing out every bond. Then Tuka aims the same charge upward: you, God, are no less fond of hoarding, keeping your grace stored up while your children wait. The sting is meant to provoke God into giving, and to make us examine our own clutching.

GATHA 1915

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the God who never stops taking

मराठी मूळ

मविलें मविती । नेणों रासी पडिल्या किती ॥१॥
परि तूं धाला चि न धासी । आलें उभाउभीं घेसी ॥२॥
अवघ्यां अवघा काळ । वाटा पाहाती सकळ ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे नाहीं । अराणूक तुज कांहीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You have been counting and measuring endlessly; I do not know how many heaps have piled up. Yet You are never satisfied; You keep taking whatever comes before You.

All people at all times watch and wait for their share. Says Tuka, You never rest even for a moment.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You keep measuring and measuring; I cannot tell how many heaps have piled up. Yet you are never full, never satisfied; whatever comes before you, you take it standing. At every hour, everyone is watching, waiting for their share. Tuka says: you never get a moment's rest.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures God as a tireless merchant at his weighing, taking in heap upon heap and never satisfied. Everything that comes is gathered up, and still the hunger does not end. Meanwhile the crowd of devotees stands at all hours, watching the road, waiting for what they are owed. The complaint is double: God hoards endlessly, and in doing so he never even rests. Behind the scolding is the longing of someone who feels kept waiting at the door of an inexhaustible giver who has not yet given.

GATHA 1916

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the standing God of Pandhari

मराठी मूळ

न बैससी खालीं । सम उभा च पाउलीं ॥१॥
 ऐसे जाले बहुत दिस । जालीं युगें अठ्ठाविस ॥२॥
 नाहीं भाग सीण । अराणूक एक क्षण ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने किती । मापें केलीं देती घेती ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

You never sit down; You stand evenly on that brick. It has been this way for ages, for twenty-eight yugas.

There is no fatigue or weariness, not a moment of rest. Says Tuka, how many measures have You given and received in that time?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You never sit down; you stand level on that brick, both feet even. It has been this way a long time now, for twenty-eight yugas. No tiredness, no weariness, not one moment of rest. Tuka says: how many measures have you given and taken in all that time?

WHAT IT MEANS

This is Vitthal standing on the brick at Pandhari, feet set evenly, never sitting through twenty-eight yugas of waiting. Tukaram marvels that this posture has held across ages with no fatigue and no pause. The standing God is the patient God, endlessly available, endlessly at his post. Then comes the merchant image again: across all those ages, how many measures has he weighed out and taken in? The wonder and the gentle accusation run together, the eternal stander who keeps the books of every soul.

GATHA 1917

Longing and Separation

Longing, the children threaten the hoarding father

मराठी मूळ

जोडी कोणांसाठीं । एवढी करितोसी आटी ॥१॥
 जरी हें आह्मां नाहीं सुख । रडों पोरें पोटीं भूक ॥२॥
 करुनि जतन । कोणा देसील हें धन ॥३॥
 आमचे तळमळे । तुझें होईल वाटोळें ॥४॥
 घेसील हा श्राप । माझा होऊनियां बाप ॥५॥
 तुका ह्याने उरी । आतां न ठेवीं यावरी ॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

For whom do You labor so tirelessly? If we, Your own children, have no share of this happiness, we shall weep with hunger in our bellies. After guarding this wealth so carefully, to whom will You give it? If we suffer while You hoard, it will be Your own ruin.

You will bear this curse, having become our father. Says Tuka, I will hold nothing back now.

IN PLAIN WORDS

For whom do you toil so hard? If we, your own children, get no share of this happiness, we will cry with the hunger in our bellies. After guarding all this wealth so carefully, to whom will you give it? If we waste away while you hoard, it will be your own ruin. You will carry this curse, you who became my father. Tuka says: I will hold nothing back now.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks as a starving child confronting a hoarding father. He asks who all this labor is for, if the children whose right it is are left with nothing but hunger. The threat is sharp: a father who lets his own children waste away brings ruin and a curse upon himself, and that responsibility is God's precisely because he took the place of father. There is real audacity here, love pressed to the point of accusation. Tuka says he will no longer keep anything back, meaning he will say it all to God's face.

GATHA 1918

Longing and Separation

Longing, the threat of total revolt

मराठी मूळ

करुनि चाहाडी । अवधी बुडवीन जोडी ॥१॥
जरि तूं होऊनि उदास । माझी बुडविसी आस ॥२॥
येथें न करी काम । मुखें नेघें तुझें नाम ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे कुळ । तुझें बुडवीन समूळ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If You grow indifferent and drown my hopes, I will lodge complaints and destroy all Your savings. I will refuse to work here and stop taking Your name.

Says Tuka, I will uproot Your entire lineage.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If you grow cold to me and drown my hope, I will lodge complaints and sink your whole fortune. I will not work here; my mouth will not take your name. Tuka says: I will uproot your entire line.

WHAT IT MEANS

Here the devotee's threat goes to its furthest, deliberately outrageous edge. If God turns indifferent and lets his hope die, Tukaram says he will turn informer against him, ruin his accounts, refuse all service, and even stop speaking the holy Name. The final words, that he will uproot God's whole lineage, are the language of a furious

dependent who has nothing left to bargain with but his devotion. The point is not real contempt; it is the lover's gamble, staking everything to force the beloved to respond. The very threat to stop taking the Name shows how much the Name is the only thing he has.

GATHA 1919

Longing and Separation

Longing, shamed in the rich one's house

मराठी मूळ

समर्थाचे पोटीं । आह्मी जन्मलों करंटीं ॥१॥
 ऐसी जाली जगीं कीतिन । तुझ्या नामाची फजिती ॥२॥
 येथें नाहीं खाया । न ये कोणी मूळ न्याया ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे जिणें । आतां खोटें जीवपणें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Born in the house of the Capable One, we turned out wretched. Such is the fame that has spread in the world:
 Your name has been disgraced.*

There is nothing to eat here; no one comes even to inquire. Says Tuka, living itself has become false and shameful.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Born in the house of the Almighty, we turned out wretched. This is the report that has spread through the world: your name has been disgraced. There is nothing here to eat; no one even comes to ask after us. Tuka says: living like this has become a false, shameful thing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses the family quarrel into the open: children of the all-powerful Lord, yet left destitute, a scandal that shames not them but God's own name. If the master's house keeps its dependents starving and unvisited, the disgrace falls on the master. He says there is nothing to eat and no one comes to inquire, the picture of utter neglect. So even being alive has become false and shameful, because such a life dishonors the one who is supposed to provide. The complaint is a way of holding God to his own reputation as the Capable One.

GATHA 1920

Longing and Separation

Longing, waiting for word

मराठी मूळ

पुढें तरी चित्ता । काय येईल तें आतां ॥१॥
 मज सांगोनिया धाडीं । वाट पाहातों वराडी ॥२॥
 कंठीं धरिला प्राण । पायांपाशीं आलें मन ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे चिंता । बहु वाटतसे आतां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What will come to mind next? Send me word. I watch the road eagerly.

My life hangs in my throat; my mind has already reached Your feet. Says Tuka, great worry presses upon me now.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What will come into your mind next? Send me word now. I keep watching the road for the travelers. My life hangs in my throat; my mind has already gone to your feet. Tuka says: a great worry presses on me now.

WHAT IT MEANS

After the threats, the tone softens into pure waiting. Tukaram asks God what he intends and begs for some message, while he stands watching the road for the pilgrims who might bring it. His life is held in his throat, the image of someone barely breathing in suspense, and his mind has already run ahead to God's feet. All that is left is anxious watching. The poem catches the ache of a devotee who has said everything and now waits, sick with worry, for any sign of an answer.

GATHA 1921

Confession and Sin

Confession, the mind out of control

मराठी मूळ

केंचा मज धीर । कोठें बुद्ध माझी िस्थर ॥१॥
जें या मनासी आवरूं । आंत पोटीं वाव धरूं ॥२॥
केंची शुद्ध मति। भांडवल ऐसें हातीं ॥३॥
तुका ह्याणे कोण दशा आली सांगा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Where is my patience? Where is the steadiness of my intellect? I try to restrain this mind, to hold some space within. Where is the pure wisdom, the capital I might rely on? Says Tuka, what condition has befallen me? Tell me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Where will I find patience? Where is my intellect steady? I try to hold this mind in, to keep a little space inside. Where is the clean understanding, the capital I could rely on? Tuka says: tell me, what state have I fallen into?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the searching inward and admits he has nothing of his own to stand on. He cannot find patience or a steady mind; every attempt to restrain his thoughts and keep some inner room fails. He looks for clear wisdom as a merchant looks for capital and finds his hands empty. The last line is a bare cry for help: tell me what has become of me. This is the honest underside of all the bold threats, the confession that the seeker is helpless and disordered without God's grace.

GATHA 1922

Prayers

Prayer, falling at Vithoba's feet

मराठी मूळ

समर्पक वाणी । नाहीं ऐकिजेसी कानीं ॥१॥
 आतां भावें करुनि साचा । पायां पडिलों विठोबाच्या ॥२॥
 न कळे उचित । करुं समाधान चित्त ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे विनंती । विनविली धरा चित्तीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I do not hear words that are fitting or proper. Now, with sincere devotion, I have fallen at the feet of Vithoba.

I cannot discern what is right; I seek only to calm the mind. Says Tuka, I make this humble plea; hold it in Your chitta.

IN PLAIN WORDS

No fitting words reach my ears. Now, with true feeling, I have fallen at Vithoba's feet. I do not know what is right; I only want to quiet my mind. Tuka says: I make this plea; hold it in your heart.

WHAT IT MEANS

Here the abhanga settles into plain surrender. Tukaram says he can find no worthy words and no clear sense of what is right; his only wish is for the mind to grow still. So he lays himself, in sincere feeling, at the feet of Vithoba, the God of Pandhari. The whole posture has shifted from demand to entreaty. He asks God simply to take this plea and keep it in his heart, trusting the appeal where his own wisdom has run out.

GATHA 1923

Longing and Separation

Longing, waiting for the pilgrims

मराठी मूळ

येती वारकरी । वाट पाहातों तोंवरी ॥१॥
 घालूनियां दंडवत । पुसेन निरोपाची मात ॥२॥
 पत्र हातीं दिलें । जया जेथें पाठविलें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे येती । जाइन सामोरा पुढती ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I will wait until the Varkaris come. Bowing before them, I will ask for news and messages.

I gave them a letter to deliver wherever it was sent. Says Tuka, when they return, I will go forward to welcome them.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I will wait until the Varkaris come. I will bow down to them and ask for news and any message. I gave them a letter to carry wherever it was meant to go. Tuka says: when they come back, I will go forward to meet them.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures himself as one left behind, waiting on the road for the Varkaris, the pilgrims who walk to Pandharpur. They are his messengers: he has bowed to them, given them a letter for God, and now he waits for their return with any word back. The longing for God is carried in this very ordinary act of watching for travelers and running out to meet them. It is the patience of someone who has sent his heart ahead and lives for the reply, honoring the pilgrim-saints as the bearers of that exchange.

GATHA 1924

Prayers

Humility, the worn threshold stone

मराठी मूळ

रुळें महाद्वारीं । पायांखालील पायरी ॥१॥
 तैसें माझें दंडवत । सांगा निरोप हा संत ॥२॥
 पडे दंडकाठी । देह भलतीसवा लोटी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे बाळ । लोळे न धरितां सांभाळ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Like a threshold stone that lies worn underfoot at the great gate, such is my prostration. O saints, carry this message of mine.

My body falls like a staff wherever it is flung. Says Tuka, like an infant who rolls about without anyone to hold him.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Like the bottom step worn smooth underfoot at the great gate, such is my prostration. O saints, carry this message of mine. My body falls like a thrown stick, tossed down any which way. Tuka says: like a child who rolls about with no one to hold him.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lowers himself completely and asks the saints to carry his message to God. He compares his prostration to the lowest step at the great temple gate, the stone everyone treads on, worn smooth by feet. His body, he says, drops like a staff flung down carelessly, with no will of its own. The closing image is the most tender: a small child rolling on the ground with no one to pick it up. It is the cry of total dependence, asking the saints to be the arms that carry him to the God who can hold him.

GATHA 1925

Longing and Separation

Longing, pleading through the saints

मराठी मूळ

तुह्मी संतजनीं । माझी करावी विनवणी ॥१॥
 काय तुक्याचा अन्याय । त्यासी अंतरले पाय ॥ध्रु॥
 भाका बहुतां रीती । माझी कीव काकुलती ॥२॥
 न देखे पंढरी । तुका चरण विटेवरी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*O saints, please make my appeal on my behalf. What wrong has Tuka done, that those feet have become distant?
 I beg in every manner, with pity and with pleading.*

Says Tuka, I cannot see Pandhari, nor those feet upon the brick.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You saints, make my appeal for me. What wrong has Tuka done, that those feet have grown distant from him? I beg in every way; I plead, full of pity for myself. Tuka says: I cannot see Pandhari, nor those feet upon the brick.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram feels cut off from Vitthal and turns to the saints to carry his case, as though he no longer trusts his own voice to reach. He cannot name a crime, only the fact of the distance: the feet that should be near have moved away, and he does not know why. So he pleads in every register he can find, openly pitying himself before the very ones he asks for help. The ache at the center is concrete: he cannot see Pandhari, the holy town, nor the feet set level on the brick, and that absence is the whole of his sorrow.

GATHA 1926

Longing and Separation

Longing, the child running home

मराठी मूळ

होइल कृपादान । तरी मी येईन धांवोन ॥१॥
 होती संतांचिया भेटी । आनंदें नाचों वाळवंटीं ॥ध्रु॥
 रिघेन मातेपुढें । स्तनपान करीन कोडें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे ताप । हरती देखोनियां बाप ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

If the gift of grace is bestowed, I will come running. There will be the meeting with the saints; I will dance with joy in the open fields.

I will rush to the Mother and suckle at Her breast with delight. Says Tuka, all suffering vanishes when one sees the Father.

IN PLAIN WORDS

If the gift of grace is given, then I will come running. I will meet the saints, and dance with joy on the open sand by the river. I will rush up to the Mother and gladly drink at Her breast. Tuka says: all the burning vanishes the moment I see the Father.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes his coming conditional on one thing: let grace be given, and the rest follows by itself. He pictures the reward in plain bodily images, not abstractions: the meeting with the saints, the dancing on the sandbank where the pilgrims gather at Pandhari, the child rushing to nurse at the mother. Here God is both Mother and Father, and the saint stays a small child before them. The last line names the stakes simply: every fever and torment of the soul is gone the instant the Father's face is seen, so the whole weight of the poem rests on that one sight.

GATHA 1927

Prayers

Prayer, the sinner asks for power

मराठी मूळ

परिसोनि उत्तर । जाब देईजे सत्वर ॥१॥
जरी तूं होसी कृपावंत । तरि हा बोलावीं पतित ॥२॥
नाणीं कांहीं मना । करुनि पापाचा उगाणा ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे नाही । काय शक्ति तुझे पायीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Hear my case and give a swift reply. If You are truly gracious, then call this wrongdoer to You.

Do not let the memory of sins enter Your mind. Says Tuka, is there no power left at Your feet?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Hear my case and answer me quickly. If You are truly full of mercy, then call this fallen man to You. Do not bring my sins to mind; cancel the whole account of them. Tuka says: is there no power left in Your feet?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presses God for a swift verdict, as a man pleads before a judge who keeps him waiting. His argument turns God's own nature against any delay: if mercy is real, then mercy must reach exactly the fallen man, the one who needs it. He asks not for a fair reckoning but for the ledger of sins to be wiped out, the account closed and forgotten. The sharp final line is a dare dressed as a question: surely the feet that can save have not lost their strength, so let them prove it on me.

GATHA 1928

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the taste of the Name

मराठी मूळ

ऐकोनियां कीर्ती । ऐसी वाटती विश्रांती ॥१॥
 माते सुख डोळां पडे । तेथें कोण लाभ जोडे ॥२॥
 बोलतां ये वाचे । वीट नये जिह्वा नाचे ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे धांवे । वासना ते रस घ्यावे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Hearing of Your glory brings such rest and peace. When the Mother's eyes fall upon her child, what greater gain can there be? Speaking of You, the tongue never tires but dances with joy.

Says Tuka, desire itself runs to drink that nectar.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Just hearing of Your glory brings such rest. When the Mother's gaze falls on me, what greater gain could there be? When I speak of You, my mouth never tires; my tongue dances. Tuka says: desire itself runs to drink this nectar.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes what God's presence does to a person, starting from the smallest contact: merely hearing the divine praise already settles the heart into peace. He uses the mother's loving look as the measure of all gain, since once it falls on the child there is nothing left to want. Speech of God does not wear the tongue down but sets it dancing, the opposite of ordinary talk that tires. The closing turn is the boldest: even craving, usually the restless enemy of peace, is converted, so that desire itself comes running to drink this nectar instead of chasing the world.

GATHA 1929

Longing and Separation

Longing, spent strength and lingering ache

मराठी मूळ

किती करुं शोक । पुढें वाढे दुःखें दुःख ॥१॥
 आतां जाणसी तें करीं । माझें कोण मनीं धरी ॥२॥
 पुण्य होतें गांठी । तरि कां लागती हे आटी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे बळ । माझी राहिली तळमळ ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How much more shall I lament? Sorrow only breeds more sorrow. Now do as You see fit; who else will hold my cause in mind? If there were merit stored in my account, why would such hardship come? Says Tuka, my strength is spent, but the anguish lingers.

IN PLAIN WORDS

How much more should I grieve? Sorrow only breeds more sorrow ahead. Now do what You think right; who else holds my cause in mind? If I had merit stored up, why would such hardship fall on me? Tuka says: my strength is gone, but the anguish stays.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram has reached the end of complaint and sees that grieving only feeds itself, each sorrow giving birth to the next. So he hands the matter over: let God do as God sees fit, since no one else even keeps his case in their thoughts. He reads his suffering as evidence of an empty account, no merit laid by, for otherwise the hardship would not have come. The last line names the cruel state he is left in: his force is used up, yet the burning unrest refuses to leave, so even surrender brings no rest.

GATHA 1930

Worldly Life

Worldly life, calamity upon calamity

मराठी मूळ

करील आबाळी । माझ्या दांताची कसाळी ॥१॥
 जासी एखादा मरोन । पाठी लागेल हें जन ॥२॥
 घरीं लागे कळहे । नाहीं जात तो शीतळ ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे पोरवडे । मज येतील रोकडे ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Troubles will crush me like a sugarcane mill. If someone dies, the world will come chasing after.

Quarrels break out at home; nothing feels cool anymore. Says Tuka, calamities come rushing to me one after another.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Troubles will crush me, the way a mill crushes the cane. Should anyone die, the world comes chasing after me. Quarrels break out at home; nothing stays cool. Tuka says: misfortunes come at me one after another, here and now.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays bare the grinding pressure of ordinary household life, with no consolation added. He sees himself crushed like sugarcane fed into the press, the juice squeezed out under endless weight. Death in the family does not bring peace but a swarm of demands as the world descends on him, and his own home gives no shelter, only fresh quarrels with nothing left cool or settled. The poem is honest about the texture of worldly existence: the calamities do not arrive once but keep coming, cash in hand, one after another, which is itself the case for looking past this life to God.

GATHA 1931

Longing and Separation

Longing, a blessing edged with reproach

मराठी मूळ

आतां आशीर्वाद । माझा असो सुखें नांद ॥१॥
 ह्मणसी कोणा तरी काळें । आहेतसी माझीं बाळें ॥२॥
 दुरी दूरंतर । तरी घेसी समाचार ॥३॥
 नेसी कधीं तरी । तुका ह्मणे लाज हरी ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Here is my blessing: may You dwell in happiness. At least sometime, You might say: these are my children.
 Even at a great distance, You might take notice and inquire. Says Tuka, will You never feel shame, O Hari?.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Here, take my blessing: live in happiness. At least sometime You might say, these are my children. Even from far, far away, You might ask after me. Tuka says: will You never feel shame, O Hari?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the tables and blesses God, the way a hurt child wishes a distant parent well while clearly feeling neglected. His asking is humble to the point of pain: he would settle for God merely acknowledging him now and then as one of His own. Even a word of inquiry sent across the great distance would be enough. Then the blessing sharpens into a reproach in the signature line: he asks Hari whether he will never feel ashamed of leaving his devotee waiting so long, pressing the bond of love as a claim God ought to honor.

GATHA 1932

Prayers

Prayer, the last word and silence after

मराठी मूळ

आतां हे सेवटीं । माझी आइकावी गोष्टी ॥१॥
 आतां द्यावा वचनाचा । जाब कळे तैसा याचा ॥२॥
 आतां करकर । पुढें न करीं उत्तर ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे ठसा । तुझा आहे राखें तैसा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*Now hear this last word of mine. Give whatever reply You can to my plea.
 Henceforth I will make no further complaint. Says Tuka, preserve Your impression upon me just as it is.*

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now, at the end, hear this one thing of mine. Now give the answer to my plea, whatever You can. After this I will nag You no more. Tuka says: keep Your mark on me just as it is.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram presents this as his final petition, the last word before he falls silent. He asks only for some reply, whatever God is able to give, and promises in return to stop his constant pressing and complaint. The poem is the act of a man stepping back after long pleading and resolving to let God be. The closing request is the quiet heart of it: let the impression God has already stamped on him stay unaltered, so that even in his silence the bond is kept intact.

GATHA 1933

Prayers

Prayer, asking forgiveness for words

मराठी मूळ

बोलिलों ते आतां । कांहीं जाणतां नेणतां ॥१॥
 क्षमा करावे अन्याय । पांडुरंगे माझे माय ॥२॥
 स्तुती निंदा केली । लागे पाहिजे साहिली ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे लाड । दिला तैसें पुरवा कोड ॥३॥ ॥३६॥
 या पत्राच्या उत्तराच्या मार्गप्रतीक्षेचे अभंग १९

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Whatever I have said, knowingly or unknowingly, forgive my offenses, O Panduranga, my mother. I have offered both praise and blame; bear it as You must.

Says Tuka, You have indulged me; now fulfill this longing.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whatever I have said until now, knowing or not knowing, forgive the offenses, O Panduranga, my mother. I have given You both praise and blame; You must bear it. Tuka says: You have indulged me, so now fulfill this longing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram closes a long stretch of address by asking pardon for everything he has said, whether spoken in awareness or in ignorance. He calls Panduranga his mother, and that name carries the whole argument: a mother bears with a child who praises and scolds in the same breath. He does not pretend his words were all reverent; he admits to blame mixed with praise and asks that it be endured rather than counted against him. The last line presses the bond of indulgence into a claim: a parent who has already spoiled the child is expected to grant the wish too, so let the longing be fulfilled.

GATHA 1934

Longing and Separation

Longing, watching the road for word from home

मराठी मूळ

माहेरिंचा काय येईल निरोप । ह्मणऊनि झोंप नाहीं डोळां ॥1॥
 वाट पाहें आस धरुनियां जीवीं । निडळा हे ठेवीं वरी बाहे ॥ध्रु॥
 बोटवरी माप लेखितों दिवस । होतों कासावीस धीर नाहीं ॥2॥
 काय नेणों संतां पडेल विसर । कीं नव्हे सादर मायबाप॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे तेथें होईल दाटणी । कोण माझें आणी मना तेथें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What news will come from my true home? With this thought, sleep does not visit my eyes. I watch the road with hope held within me, hand on my brow, gazing into the distance.

I count the days on my fingers, restless and without patience. Perhaps the saints have forgotten, or perhaps the Lord is not inclined.

Says Tuka, there must be a great crowd around Him; who will bring me to His mind?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What news will come from my true home? With that thought, sleep does not touch my eyes. I watch the road, holding hope in my heart, my hand shading my brow as I look into the distance. I count the days on my fingers; I am restless, I have no patience. Maybe the saints have forgotten me, or maybe the Lord is not turned toward me. Tuka says: there must be such a crowd around Him; who there will bring me to His mind?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram waits like someone longing for word from a beloved homeland, and the longing keeps sleep away. He stands at the road with his hand raised to his brow, scanning the distance for any messenger, counting off the days he has waited. He lets himself voice the two fears of the waiting: that the saints who were to carry his case have forgotten him, or that the Lord himself is simply not inclined toward him. The final worry is the most human: God is thronged by so many, so who in that crowd will speak his name and turn the Lord's attention back to him?

GATHA 1935

Faith and Trust

Faith, the ocean of mercy

मराठी मूळ

परि तो आहे कृपेचा सागर । तोंवरी अंतर पडों नेदी ॥1॥
 बहुकानदृष्टी आइके देखणा । पुरोनियां जना उरलासे ॥ध्रु॥
 सांगितल्याविणें जाणे अंतरिचें । पुरवावें ज्याचें तैसें कोड ॥2॥
 बहुमुखें कीर्ती आइकिली कानीं । विश्वास ही मनीं आहे माझा ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाहीं जात वांयांविण । पिळतो वचन बोलिलों तें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Yet He is an ocean of mercy; He will not let the distance last too long. He hears with many ears, sees with many eyes; having filled all beings, He remains still more.

Without being told, He knows the mind's secrets and fulfills each one's longing as it truly is. Through many mouths, His fame has reached my ears, and my faith in Him remains firm.

Says Tuka, He never lets things go to waste; He keeps the word He has spoken.

IN PLAIN WORDS

But He is an ocean of mercy; until I reach Him, He will not let the distance hold. He hears with many ears, sees with many eyes; He has filled all beings, and still more of Him remains. Without being told, He knows what is inside; He fulfills each one's longing just as it is. From many mouths His fame has reached my ears, and that faith is firm in my mind. Tuka says: nothing with Him goes to waste; He keeps the word He has spoken.

WHAT IT MEANS

After the dread of being forgotten, Tukaram answers his own fear with what he knows of God's nature. He calls God a boundless ocean of mercy who will not allow the separation to last forever. The middle verses lean on God's all-pervading reach: He hears and sees through countless ears and eyes, fills every being and yet overflows beyond them, and knows each heart's wish without being told. Tukaram grounds his confidence not in feeling but in testimony and trust, the fame reported through many mouths, and rests on the plain assurance that God wastes nothing and keeps His given word, so the waiting cannot end in abandonment.

GATHA 1936

Longing and Separation

Longing, the senses still only at the reply

मराठी मूळ

यावरि न कळे संचित आपुलें । कैसैं वोडवलें होइल पुढें ॥1॥
 करील विक्षेप धाडितां मुळासी । किंवा धाडा ऐसी तांतडी हे ॥धु॥
 जोंवरी हे डोळां देखें वारकरी । तों हें भरोवरी करी चित्त ॥2॥
 आस वाढविते बुद्धीचे तरंग । मनाचे ही वेग वावडती॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे तेव्हां होतील निश्चळ । इंद्रियें सकळ निरोपानें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Beyond this, I cannot know my own destiny, nor what lies ahead. The message I sent may meet with obstacles, or perhaps it will prompt an urgent reply.

As long as my eyes see the Varkaris returning, my chitta will find its reassurance. Waves of desire and surges of the mind keep rising in hope.

Says Tuka, only when the message arrives will all the senses become still.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Beyond this I cannot know my own store of deeds, nor how it will turn out ahead. The message I sent may meet with obstacles, or it may be so urgent it is sent on at once. As long as my eyes can see the Varkaris returning, my mind keeps reassuring itself. Waves of thought keep raising my hope; the rushes of the mind fly about. Tuka says: only when the reply comes will all my senses grow still.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram admits the limit of what he can know: his own past deeds and his future are hidden from him, so he cannot tell how this will end. He watches his sent plea with two minds, fearing it will be blocked yet hoping it is urgent enough to be passed straight on. He keeps his heart steady by watching the Varkari pilgrims come back along the road, the visible sign that the way to God stays open. But thought rises in waves and the restless mind flies about, and he is honest that hope alone cannot settle it: only the actual reply from God will bring all his senses to rest.

GATHA 1937

Devotion to Vitthal

Pilgrims departing, grief of separation

मराठी मूळ

होईल निरोप घेतला यावरी । राउळाभीतरीं जाऊनियां॥१॥
 करुनियां दधिमंगळभोजन । प्रयाण शकुनसुमुहूर्ते॥२॥
 होतील दाटले सद्गदित कंठी । भरतें या पोटीं वियोगाचें ॥३॥
 येरयेरां भेटी क्षेम आलिंगनें । केलीं समाधान होतीं संतीं ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे चाली न साहे मनास । पाहाती कळस परपरतों ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When the message is received, the saints will go into the temple to take their leave. After the auspicious meal, they will set out at a blessed moment.

Their throats will choke with emotion; the grief of separation wells up within them. They will embrace one another, exchanging greetings and farewells, and the saints will console each other.

Says Tuka, the departure is hard on the chitta; they look back again and again at the temple spire.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When the message comes, the saints will go into the temple to take their leave. They will eat the auspicious meal of curds and set out at a blessed hour. Their throats will choke; the grief of parting wells up inside them. They will embrace one another, give their greetings and farewells, and console each other. Tuka says: the going is hard on the mind. They look back at the temple spire again and again.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is picturing the Varkaris leaving Pandhari at the end of the pilgrimage, and he is naming the cost of every parting from the place where God is met. The ritual is exact: word arrives, leave is taken in the temple, the blessed meal is eaten, the auspicious hour chosen. But under the order is grief; the throats choke and the pilgrims keep turning to look at the spire as long as it stays in sight. He lets the leaving stand for the soul's reluctance to walk away from the presence it has tasted. The mind cannot bear the step that carries it away.

GATHA 1938

Devotion to Vitthal

The road home, joy carried back

मराठी मूळ

ऐसी ते सांडिली होईल पंढरी । येते वारकरी होत वाटे ॥1॥
 देखिले सोहळे होती आठवत । चालती ते मात करूनियां ॥ध्रु॥
 केली आडकिली होईल जे कथा । राहिलें तें चित्ता होइल प्रेम ॥2॥
 गरुडटके टाळ मृदांग पताका । सांगती ते एकां एक सुख ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां येती लवलाहीं । आलिंगूनि बाहीं देइन क्षेम ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Having left Pandhari behind, the Varkaris travel homeward along the road. The celebrations they witnessed come back to memory as they walk and talk of them.

The stories told and heard, and the love that lingered in the chitta. The Garuda-pillars, cymbals, drums, and banners; they share these joys with one another.

Says Tuka, now they come swiftly; I will embrace them and give them greeting.

IN PLAIN WORDS

So they leave Pandhari behind, and the Varkaris come homeward along the road. The celebrations they saw keep coming back to them as they walk and talk of them. The stories told and heard, the love that stayed in the chitta. The Garuda-pillars, the cymbals, the drums, the banners: they tell each other these joys, one to another. Tuka says: now they are coming quickly. I will take them in my arms and give them my greeting.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is the return journey, and Tukaram turns from the grief of leaving to the joy that travels back with the pilgrims. They carry Pandhari home in memory: the celebrations, the stories, the music, the love that lodged in the chitta and would not leave. He stands at the far end of the road, waiting, and his own longing leans toward them as they hurry near. The Varkaris become carriers of news from the place where God lives, and meeting them is itself a way of touching that place again.

GATHA 1939

Devotion to Vitthal

Welcoming the messengers, body offered

मराठी मूळ

क्षेम मायबाप पुसेन हें आधीं । न घलीं हें मधीं सुख दुःख ॥1॥
 न करीं तांतडी आपणांपासूनि । आइकेन कानीं सांगतीं तें ॥ध्रु॥
 अंतरींचें संत जाणतील गूज । निरोप तो मज सांगतील ॥2॥
 पायांवरी डोई ठेवीन आदरें । प्रीतिपडिभरें आंळगून ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे काया करीन कुरवंडी । ओवाळून सांडीं त्यांवरून ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

First I will ask after my Father and Mother; I will not let joy or sorrow come between. I will not hurry on my own account but listen patiently to whatever they tell.

The saints will know the inner secret; they will bring me the true message. I will bow my head at their feet with love and embrace them tenderly.

Says Tuka, I will offer my body as a sacrifice, waving it over them in adoration.

IN PLAIN WORDS

First I will ask after my Father and Mother; I will not let joy or sorrow come between. I will not hurry for my own sake but listen to whatever they tell me. The saints know the secret of the heart; they will bring me the true message. I will lay my head on their feet with respect, and embrace them with the fullness of love. Tuka says: I will make my body an offering, waving it over them and casting it away.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram rehearses how he will receive the returning saints, and he puts the welcome above himself. His first question is not about his own state but after his Father and Mother, the divine parents at the home he longs for, and he refuses to let his own joy or sorrow crowd that in. He bows at the saints' feet because they alone carry the inner message from God. The last line is the strongest: he will treat his own body as a thing to be waved over them and thrown away, the gesture of warding off harm with a worthless object. The messengers from God are worth more to him than his own life.

GATHA 1940

Longing and Separation

Longing, will the Lord send word

मराठी मूळ

होइल माझी संतीं भाकिली करुणा । जे त्या नारायणा मनीं बैसे ॥१॥
 शृंगारुनि माझीं बोबडीं उत्तरें । होतील विस्तारें सांगितलीं ॥२॥
 क्षेम आहे ऐसें होइल सांगितलें । पाहिजे धाडिलें शीघ्र मूळ ॥३॥
 अवस्था जे माझी ठावी आहे संतां । होइल कृपावंता निरोपिली ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे सवें येईल मुंहाळी । किंवा कांहीं उरी राखतील ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The saints will have pleaded my case with compassion, so that it settles in the mind of Narayana. They will have adorned and elaborated my stammering words.

Perhaps they will say: he is well; send word to him quickly. The saints know my condition; they will have reported it to the merciful Lord.

Says Tuka, perhaps they will bring a full account, or perhaps they will hold something back.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The saints will have pleaded my case with compassion, so that it settles in the mind of Narayana. They will have dressed up my stammering words and told them out in full. Perhaps they will say: he is well; send for him quickly. The saints know my condition; they will have laid it before the merciful Lord. Tuka says: perhaps they will bring back a full account with them, or perhaps they will hold something back.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram imagines the saints as advocates who carry his cause to Narayana, and he hangs his hope on what they will bring back. His own words are stammering and clumsy; the saints adorn them and present them whole, so that his plea reaches the Lord's mind. The thing he aches to hear is the call home: send for him quickly. But he does not pretend to know the answer, and he ends on the open question of whether they will return with a full account or keep some of it from him. The longing is real, and so is the uncertainty he refuses to paper over.

GATHA 1941

Faith and Trust

Faith, a mother cannot refuse her child

मराठी मूळ

दोहींमध्ये एक घडेल विश्वासें । भातुकें सरिसें मूळ तरी ॥1॥
 करिती निरास निःशेष न घडे । कांहीं तरी ओढे चित्त माये ॥२॥
 लौकिकाची तरी धरितील लाज । काय माझ्या काज आचरणें ॥3॥
 अथवा कोणाचें घेणें लागे रीण । नाहीं तरी हीनकर्मीं कांहीं ॥4॥
 व्यालीचिये अंगीं असती वेधना । तुका ह्मणे मना मन साक्ष ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

By faith, one of two things must happen; at the very least, some small gift will accompany the reply. A complete refusal is impossible; something in a mother's heart always pulls toward her child.

Even for the sake of appearances, they would maintain some dignity. Perhaps nothing is owed to anyone; perhaps there is no failing on any side.

Says Tuka, a mother who has given birth carries that bond in her body; the chitta knows its own truth.

IN PLAIN WORDS

By faith, one of two things must happen: at the least, some small gift will come along with the reply. A complete refusal cannot happen; something in a mother's heart always pulls toward her child. Even for the look of it, they would keep some dignity. Perhaps nothing is owed to anyone; perhaps there is no fault on any side. Tuka says: a mother who has given birth carries that bond in her body; the chitta knows its own truth.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reasons his way out of despair by leaning on the certainty of a mother's love. He uses the homely image of word sent to a married daughter: a flat refusal is impossible, because a mother's heart cannot help bending toward her own child. So one of two things must come, and even the smallest token along with the reply would be proof of love. He applies this to God as the divine Mother: the bond is carried in the body of the one who gave birth, not earned or owed. The chitta knows this in itself, and on that knowing his faith rests.

GATHA 1942

Longing and Separation

Longing, the mind fixed on home

मराठी मूळ

बैसतां कोणापें नाही समाधान । विवरे हें मन ते चि सोई ॥1॥
 घडी घडी मज आठवे माहेर । न पडे विसर क्षणभरी॥धु.॥
 नो बोलावें ऐसा करितों विचार । प्रसंगीं तों फार आठवतें ॥2॥
 इंद्रियांसी वाहो पडिली ते चाली । होती विसांवली ये चि ठायीं॥3॥
 एकसरें सोस माहेरासी जावें । तुका ह्मणे जीवें घेतलासे ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Sitting with anyone brings no peace; the mind keeps turning toward that one direction. Every moment, I remember my true home; not for an instant does it leave my thoughts.

I resolve not to speak of it, yet at every occasion it comes flooding back. My senses have fallen into a single current; they find rest only in that one place.

Says Tuka, I have staked my very life on this longing to go home.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Sitting with anyone, I find no peace; the mind keeps turning toward that one direction. Again and again I remember my true home; not for a moment does it leave my thoughts. I decide not to speak of it, yet whenever the chance comes it floods back. My senses have all fallen into a single current; they rest only in that one place. Tuka says: I have staked my very life on this longing to go home.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a longing that has taken over the whole mind. No company gives him peace, because the mind only points one way, toward the māhera, the true home where God is. He resolves to keep silent about it, and the resolve fails the moment any opening appears. All the senses have collapsed into a single current and find rest nowhere else. The home he means is union with God, and the closing line names the stakes plainly: this is not a passing wish but his life laid down on it.

GATHA 1943

Longing and Separation

Longing, weary of the waiting

मराठी मूळ

नाहीं हानि परी न राहावे निसुर । न पडे विसर काय करूं ॥१॥
 पुसाविसी वाटे मात कापडियां । पाठविती न्याया मूळ मज ॥२॥
 आणीक या मना नावडे सोहळा । करितें टकळा माहेरींचा ॥३॥
 बहु कामें केलें बहु कासावीस । बहु जाले दिस भेटी नाहीं ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे त्याचें न कळे अंतर । अवस्था तों फार होते मज ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is no real loss in it, yet I cannot remain indifferent; the memory will not leave me alone. I want to ask news from passing travelers, to send for word.

My mind relishes no other happiness; it chatters only of its true home. Much labor has made me weary, many days have passed without a meeting.

Says Tuka, His mind remains unknown to me, but my own condition grows more desperate.

IN PLAIN WORDS

There is no real loss in it, yet I cannot stay calm; the memory will not let me alone, what am I to do. I want to ask news from passing travelers, to send for word to be brought to me. My mind likes no other happiness; it chatters only of its true home. Much work has worn me out, many days have passed without a meeting. Tuka says: I cannot read His mind, but my own state grows more and more desperate.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram admits that nothing has actually been taken from him, and still he cannot rest, because the memory of home keeps gnawing. He wants to flag down travelers for news and send messages, anything to bridge the distance to God. No other pleasure interests his mind; it talks of nothing but the māhera. The labor of living has worn him down, and the days pile up with no meeting. He confesses he cannot see into the Lord's mind, and so his own condition only grows more desperate. He lets the helplessness stand without resolving it.

GATHA 1944

Longing and Separation

Patience, refusing to blame the Lord

मराठी मूळ

तोंवरी म्यां त्यास कैसें निषेधावें । जों नाहीं बरवें कळों आलें ॥1॥
 कोणाचिया मुखें तट नाहीं मागें । वचन वाउगें बोलों नये ॥ध्रु॥
 दिसे हानि परी निरास न घडे । हे तंव रोकडे अनुभव ॥2॥
 आपुलिया भोगें होईल उशीर । तोंवरी कां धीर केला नाहीं ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे गोड करील सेवट । पाहिली ते वाट ठायीं आहे ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

How can I blame Him until something certain is known? Without any direct word from anyone, one should not speak idle accusations. There appears to be loss, yet the hope cannot be given up; this much is clear from experience.

Perhaps the delay is on account of my own karma; until then, why have I not kept patience? Says Tuka, He will make the ending sweet; the path I have been watching is still there.

IN PLAIN WORDS

How can I find fault with Him until I know something for certain? Without a single word from anyone, I should not speak idle accusations. There seems to be loss, yet I cannot give up hope; this much is plain from experience. Perhaps the delay is owing to my own karma; why then have I not kept patience until now. Tuka says: He will make the ending sweet. The path I have been watching is still there.

WHAT IT MEANS

Here Tukaram catches his own complaint and turns it back on himself. He refuses to accuse God of neglect when he has no certain word, and warns against idle accusations spoken out of nothing. Though it looks like loss, experience tells him the hope must not be dropped. Then he names the likely truth: the delay may be the working of his own karma, so his impatience is misplaced and he should have held steady. He ends in trust, that the Lord will make the ending sweet, and that the path he has watched so long is still open before him.

GATHA 1945

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the message from home arrives

मराठी मूळ

माहेरींचें आलें तें मज माहेर । सुखाचें उत्तर करिन त्यासी ॥1॥
 पायांवरी माथा आंळगीन बाहीं । घेईन लवलाहीं पायवणी ॥ध्रु॥
 सुख समाचार पुसेन सकळ । कैसा पर्वकाळ आहे त्यास ॥2॥
 आपुले जीवींचें सुखदुःख भावें । सांगेन अघवें आहे तैसें ॥3॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Whatever has come from my true home, that itself is my home. I will return their happy message with joy.

Placing my head on their feet, I will embrace them and wash their feet with devotion. I will inquire about all the news: how the festive times are passing there.

I will share my own joys and sorrows with honest feeling, telling everything just as it is.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whatever has come from my true home, that itself is my home to me. I will answer it with words of joy. I will lay my head on their feet, embrace them, and quickly wash their feet. I will ask all the news: how the festival times are passing there. With honest feeling I will tell out all the joy and sorrow of my own heart, just as it is.

WHAT IT MEANS

The waiting breaks, and what comes from the māhera is welcomed as the māhera itself; the messenger is the home. Tukaram pours out his joy: he bows his head to their feet, embraces them, hurries to wash their feet in devotion. Then he wants everything, all the news of how the festivals pass there, the whole life of the place where God dwells. And he gives himself in return, holding nothing back, telling his own joys and sorrows exactly as they are. The reunion is a frank, two-way opening of the heart between the soul and the home it loves.

GATHA 1946

Ecstasy and Joy

Union, no separation when the beloved is near

मराठी मूळ

वियोग न घडे सन्निध वसलें । अखंड राहिलें होय चित्तीं ॥१॥

विसरु न पडे विकल्प न घडे । आलें तें आवडे तया पंथें ॥२॥

कामाचा विसर नाठवे शरीर । रसना मधुर नेणे फिकें ॥३॥

निरोपासी काज असो अनामिक । निवडितां एक नये मज ॥४॥

तुका ह्मणे हित चित्ते ओढियेलें । जेथें तें उगलें जावें येणें ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When the beloved dwells ever near, there is no real separation; what remains in the chitta is unbroken presence. There is no forgetting, no doubt; whatever comes along that path is welcomed.

In that state, one forgets worldly duties and the body itself; the tongue knows no difference between sweet and bland. Whether a message comes or not is of no great matter; I cannot distinguish one thing from another.

Says Tuka, the chitta has been drawn to its true good; where that resolution leads, going and coming cease.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When the beloved lives ever near, there is no real separation; what stays in the chitta is unbroken presence. There is no forgetting, no doubt; whatever comes along that path is dear. In that state I forget my work and even my body; the tongue cannot tell sweet from bland. Whether a message comes or not no longer matters; I cannot pick out one thing from another. Tuka says: the chitta has been drawn to its true good; where that leads, going and coming come to an end.

WHAT IT MEANS

This abhanga is the resting point the whole sequence was reaching for. When God is felt as ever near, the longing for messages and meetings dissolves, because there is no longer any distance to bridge; the presence is unbroken in the chitta. Doubt and forgetting fall away, and so does the world: work, body, even the tongue's taste lose their hold. Whether or not word arrives stops mattering, since the soul no longer separates one thing from another. Tuka says the chitta has been pulled into its true good, and there the very motion of going and coming, of seeking and waiting, ceases.

GATHA 1947

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the pilgrims bring the news

मराठी मूळ

आतां माझे सखे येती वारकरी । जीवा आस थोरी लागली ते ॥1॥
 सांगतील माझ्या निरोपाची मात । सकळ वृत्तांत माहेरींचा ॥ध्रु॥
 काय लाभ जाला काय होतें केणें । काय काय कोणे सांटविलें ॥2॥
 मागणें तें काय धाडिलें भातुकें । पुसेन तें सुखें आहेतसीं ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे काय सांगती ते कानीं । ऐकोनियां मनीं धरुनि राहें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now my dear friends, the Varkaris, are returning; my jiva is full of great expectation. They will tell me the news and every detail of my true home.

What gains were made, what was done by whom, and what was stored away. What was asked for, what gifts were sent; I will ask these happily.

Says Tuka, whatever they tell, I will hear it and hold it in my mind.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now my dear ones, the Varkaris, are coming back; my jiva is full of great longing. They will tell me the news of my message and the whole account of my true home. What was gained, what was traded, what each one stored away. What was asked for, what gifts were sent: I will ask all of it happily. Tuka says: whatever they tell into my ear, I will hear it and hold it in my mind.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram returns to the figure of the Varkaris as his beloved messengers, and his jiva strains toward their arrival. They carry the full account of the māhera, the home where God is, and he wants every detail: what was gained, what changed hands, what was stored, what was asked for, what was sent. He will ask it all with joy. The closing turn is a vow of receptivity: whatever they whisper into his ear he will take in and keep in his mind. The longing has become a readiness to hold every word from home as treasure.

GATHA 1948

Worldly Life

Worldly life, surrender to destiny

मराठी मूळ

काय करावें म्यां केले ते विचार । घडेल साचार काय पाहों ॥१॥
 काय मन नाही धरीत आवडी । प्रारब्धीं जोडी ते चि खरी ॥२॥
 काय म्यां तेथींचें रांधिलें चाखोनि । तें हें करीं मनीं विवंचना ॥३॥
 आणीक ही त्यासी बहुत कारण । बहु असे जिणें ओढीचें ही ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What plans I made, let me now see what truly comes to pass. Does the mind not hold its own desire? Only what destiny provides is certain.

Have I cooked and tasted anything from that place? This is what I weigh in my mind. He too has many concerns, and much of life is a matter of strain.

Says Tuka, since we were sent away, we have never been called back.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Whatever plans I made, let me now see what really comes to pass. Does the mind not hold its own desire? Only what destiny gives is sure. Have I cooked and tasted anything from that place? This is what I turn over in my mind. He too has many concerns, and much of life is a matter of strain. Tuka says: since we were sent away, we have never been called back.

WHAT IT MEANS

After the high union, Tukaram comes back down into the plain weariness of waiting in the world. He sets his own plans aside: the mind may keep its wishes, but only what destiny grants is certain, so he will watch and see. He questions himself honestly, asking whether he has any real claim on that home, since he has tasted nothing of it himself. He even allows that the Lord has His own many concerns and that life is mostly strain. The poem ends on a bare, aching fact: since being sent out into the world, he has never been called back. He states the grief without softening it and without losing the trust the sequence has built.

GATHA 1949

Worldly Life

Turning, the waking from worldly sleep

मराठी मूळ

आह्मां अराणूक संवसारा हातीं । पडिली नव्हती आजिवरी ॥१॥
 पुत्रदाराधन होता मनी धंदा । गोवियेलों सदा होतों कामें ॥२॥
 वोडवलें ऐसें दिसतें कपाळ । राहिलें सकळ आवरोनि ॥३॥
 मागें पुढें कांहीं न दिसे पाहातां । तेथूनियां चिंता उपजली ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Until now, worldly life never gave us rest. The mind was always occupied with wife, children, and wealth; we were constantly entangled in affairs.

Fate has unfolded in such a way that everything has come to a halt. Looking ahead and behind, nothing is visible, and from that emptiness, anxiety has been born.

Says Tuka, the reason I keep watching the road is that through worldly misfortune, my true fortune has dawned.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Until now worldly life never let me rest. My mind was always busy with wife, children, and wealth; I was caught in its work day after day. But fate has turned, and everything has come to a halt. I look ahead and behind, and I see nothing. Out of that emptiness, anxiety is born. Tuka says: this is why I keep watching the road. Through this worldly misfortune, my true fortune has dawned.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks back on a whole life swallowed by the household: wife, children, money, an endless press of business that never let the mind stop. Then something breaks the spell. His fortunes collapse, and suddenly the road ahead and the road behind both show nothing to hold on to. That emptiness first arrives as dread; nothing is left to grip. But he reads it the other way: the loss of worldly footing is what frees him to watch the road for God, and so the very misfortune becomes the dawning of his real fortune.

GATHA 1950

Confession and Sin

Confession, the long-broken homeward tie

मराठी मूळ

बहु दिस नाही माहेरिंची भेटी । जाली होती तुटी व्यवसायें ॥१॥
 आपुल्याला होतों गुंतलों व्यासंगें । नाही त्या प्रसंगें आठवलें ॥२॥
 तुटातें तुटतें जडती जडलें । आहे तें आपुलें आपणापें ॥३॥
 बहु निरोपाचें पावलें उत्तर । जवळी च पर एक तें ही ॥४॥
 काय जाणों मोह होईल सांडिला । बहु दिस तुटला तुका झणे ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

For many days I had no meeting with my true home; the connection was broken by worldly occupations. I was absorbed in my own pursuits; those moments of grace were never recalled.

What was broken kept breaking; what was joined kept holding. That which is truly mine remains with me.

Much correspondence has been exchanged, yet the other side remains near. Says Tuka, I do not know whether attachment has finally been abandoned; the separation has lasted long.

IN PLAIN WORDS

For many days I had no meeting with my true home; worldly work broke the connection. I was absorbed in my own pursuits, and in all that I never remembered those moments of grace. What was breaking kept breaking; what held kept holding. What is truly mine stays with me still. Much word has passed back and forth, yet the other side is near, near as one thing. Tuka says: I do not know whether the attachment is finally let go. The separation has lasted long.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram confesses a long silence between himself and his maher, his true home in God. Worldly occupation cut the line, and absorbed in his own affairs he simply stopped remembering grace. He watches two things at once: what is false keeps falling away, while what is genuinely his own holds fast and stays with him. Messages have gone back and forth, yet he senses the other side is not far at all, as close as a single thing. He ends honestly unsure whether his worldly attachment has truly dropped, only certain that the separation has gone on too long.

GATHA 1951

Confession and Sin

Confession, straying from the fathers' path

मराठी मूळ

होतीं नेणों जालीं कठीणें कठीण । जवळी च मन मनं ग्वाही ॥1॥
 आह्मी होतो सोई सांडिला मारग । घडिलें तें मग तिकून ही ॥ध्रु॥
 निश्चितीनें होते पुढिलांची सांडी । न चाले ते कोडी मायबापा ॥2॥
 आह्मां नाहीं त्यांचा घडिला आठव । त्यांचा बहु जीव विखुरला ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे जालें धर्माचें माहेर । पडिलें अंतर आह्मांकूनि ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Something has hardened, grown more rigid; the chitta knows its own truth. We abandoned the path we were on, and from that point everything has been stitched together differently.

Through complacency, the ways of the ancestors were set aside; such force cannot be opposed, O Father and Mother. We failed to remember them, yet their hearts were torn for us.

Says Tuka, the house of dharma, our true home, has become distant from us.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Things have grown hard, harder than hard; the mind is its own witness, close at hand. I let go of the road I was set on, and after that everything was stitched together some other way. Out of carelessness I set aside the ways of the elders; that force cannot be opposed, O Mother and Father. I did not keep them in mind, yet their hearts were torn for us. Tuka says: the house of dharma, my true home, has grown distant from me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram examines a hardening in himself that no one else can testify to; only his own mind stands witness, right beside him. He admits he left the path he was meant to walk, and once he did, his life rearranged itself along other lines. The honest charge is carelessness: through complacency he set aside the practices the ancestors handed down. He forgot them while they grieved for him, and so the house of dharma, his real home, has drifted out of reach. The poem points at the slow drift of neglect, not at any single dramatic fall.

GATHA 1952

Longing and Separation

Longing, the watch before the pilgrims return

मराठी मूळ

आतां करावा कां सोंस वांयांविण । लटिका चि सीण मनासी हा ॥1॥
 असेल तें कळों येईल लौकरी । आतां वारकरी आल्यापाठी ॥ध्रु॥
 बहु विलंबाचें सन्निध पातलें । धीराचें राहिलें फळ पोटी ॥2॥
 चालिलें तें ठाव पावेल सेवटीं । पुरलिया तुटी पाउलांची ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे आसे लागलासे जीव । ह्मणऊनि कींव भाकीतसें ॥4॥ ॥19॥
 व संत परत आले त्यांची भेट झाली ते अभंग 11

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Why labor uselessly now? This mental torment is without purpose. Whatever is to be will soon become clear, once the Varkaris have returned.

What has been long delayed is now close at hand; the fruit of patience remains within. What has been set in motion will reach its destination when the journey of each footstep is complete.

Says Tuka, my jiva clings to this hope, and so I plead for mercy.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Why labor uselessly now? This torment of the mind is for nothing. Whatever is to be will soon be clear, once the Varkaris have returned. The long delay is now close to its end; the fruit of patience is kept within. What has been set going will reach its place at last, when every footstep of the journey is done. Tuka says: my jiva clings to this hope, and so I beg for mercy.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram catches his own mind tormenting itself and calls the worry pointless: the answer is almost here. He is waiting for the Varkaris, the pilgrims, to come back from Pandhari with word of God. The long delay is nearly over, and he tells himself the fruit of patience is already ripening inside. What has been set in motion will surely arrive once the pilgrimage walks out its last step. His whole soul hangs on that hope, and from that hanging he simply pleads for mercy.

GATHA 1953

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, welcoming the weary God

मराठी मूळ

भागलेती देवा । माझा नमस्कार घ्यावा ॥१॥
 तुम्ही क्षेम कीं सकळ । बाळ अवघे गोपाळ ॥२॥
 मारगीं चालतां । श्रमलेती येतां जातां ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे कांहीं । कृपा आहे माझ्या ठायीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

*You must be tired, O God; please accept my salutation. Are all of You well, all the children and the cowherds?
 You have labored on the road, traveling back and forth.*

Says Tuka, is there any grace left for me?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

You must be tired, O God; please accept my bow. Are you all well, all the children and the cowherds? You have labored on the road, coming and going. Tuka says: is there any grace left over for me?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram greets God as a traveler come back from a journey, bowing first and asking after the road-weariness. He widens the welcome to all of God's company, the children and the cowherds of Gokul, asking whether everyone is well after the long walk back and forth. The tenderness is domestic, the way one greets returning family. Then comes his one quiet request underneath the courtesy: amid all that household care, is there a little grace spared for him too?

GATHA 1954

Longing and Separation

Longing, the lamp kept lit for the road

मराठी मूळ

घालूनियां ज्योती । वाट पाहें दिवसराती ॥१॥
 बहु उताविळ मन । तुमचें व्हावें दुरुषण ॥२॥
 आलों बोळवीत । तैसें या चि पंथें चित्त ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे पेणी । येतां जातां दिवस गणीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Keeping the lamp lit, I watch the road day and night. My mind is anxious for Your sight.

When I came to see You off, my chitta followed You along that very path. Says Tuka, coming and going, I count the days.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I keep the lamp lit and watch the road day and night. My mind is restless for the sight of you. When I came out to see you off, my mind went with you down that very path. Tuka says: night after night, coming and going, I count the days.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram waits like one who keeps a lamp burning in the window for a traveler. Day and night he watches the road, his mind too impatient to settle, hungry for darshan. He recalls walking part of the way to send God off, and how his attention simply followed along that road and never came back. Now he marks each passing day and night, counting toward the return. The poem is pure waiting, the ache of separation measured out in nights.

GATHA 1955

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, the blessed day of darshan

मराठी मूळ

आजि दिवस धन्य । तुमचें जालें दुरुषण ॥१॥
 सांगा माहेरींची मात । अवघा विस्तारीं वृत्तांत ॥२॥
 आइकतों मन । करुनि सादर श्रवण ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे नाम । माझा सकळ संभ्रम ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Today is a blessed day; I have had your darshan. Tell me all the news from home; narrate the full account.

I will listen with an attentive mind and eager ears. Says Tuka, the name of God is all my rejoicing.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Today is a blessed day; I have had your darshan. Tell me all the news from home; lay out the whole account. I will listen with an attentive mind and eager ears. Tuka says: the Name is all my rejoicing.

WHAT IT MEANS

The waiting ends and Tukaram calls the day itself blessed, because the longed-for darshan has come. Like family reunited, he asks at once for all the news from the maher, his true home, wanting the whole story spread out before him. He readies himself to drink it in, mind alert and ears eager. And he names the source of his joy plainly: the Name of God is the whole of his rejoicing, the thing every other delight comes back to.

GATHA 1956

Longing and Separation

Longing, pressing the pilgrims for word

मराठी मूळ

बोलिलीं तीं काय । माझा बाप आणि माय ॥१॥
 ऐसें सांगा जी झडकरी । तुम्ही सखे वारकरी ॥२॥
 पत्राचें वचन । काय दिलें फिरावून ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे कांहीं । मना आणिलें कीं नाहीं ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What did my Father and Mother say? Tell me quickly, O my dear Varkari friends. What reply was given to my letter? Says Tuka, did they take me to mind or not?

IN PLAIN WORDS

What did they say, my Father and my Mother? Tell me quickly, you who are my dear Varkari friends. What reply was sent back to my letter? Tuka says: did they take me to mind, or not?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram questions the returning Varkaris like a child desperate for news of absent parents. God and the divine home are his Father and Mother, and the pilgrims are the trusted friends who carried his message there. He cannot wait, pressing them to tell him at once what answer came back to his letter. Underneath the urgency is the one fear that matters to him: was he remembered at all, or forgotten? The poem holds the whole vulnerability of waiting to learn whether the beloved kept you in mind.

GATHA 1957

Longing and Separation

Longing, what gift did Vitthal send

मराठी मूळ

काय पाठविलें । सांगा भातुकें विठ्ठलें ॥१॥
 आसे लागलासे जीव । काय केली माझी कींव ॥२॥
 फेडिलें मुडतर । किंवा कांहीं जरजर ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे सांगा । कैसें आर्त पांडुरंगा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Tell me, what gift has Vitthal sent? My jiva is on edge; did He show any compassion for me? Has the old debt been settled, or is there still some lingering concern? Says Tuka, tell me how Panduranga feels.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tell me, what gift has Vitthal sent? My jiva is on edge. Did he show me any pity? Has the old debt been cleared, or is something still wearing me down? Tuka says: tell me, how does Panduranga feel toward me?

WHAT IT MEANS

Still questioning the pilgrim-messengers, Tukaram asks what token Vitthal sent back, the way one waits for a sign of love from far off. His soul is strung tight, and the real questions are about the heart, not the gift: did God show him compassion? He asks whether the old debt, his account of failings and longing, has finally been settled, or whether some unfinished thing still grinds at him. The plea ends where it began, wanting only to know how Panduranga truly feels toward him.

GATHA 1958

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the saints have arrived

मराठी मूळ

आजिचिया लाभें ब्रह्मांड ठेंगणें । सुखी जालें मन कल्पवेना ॥१॥
 आर्तभूत माझा जीव जयांसाठीं । त्यांच्या जाल्या भेटी पायांसवें ॥२॥
 वाटुली पाहातां सिणले नयन । बहु होतें मन आर्तभूत ॥३॥
 माझ्या निरोपाचें आणिलें उत्तर । होइल समाचार सांगती तो ॥४॥
 तुका ह्याने भेटी निवारला ताप । फळलें संकल्प संत आले ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Today's gain makes the universe seem small; the mind overflows with a joy beyond reckoning. Those for whom my jiva burned with longing, their feet have come to meet me.

My eyes were weary from watching the road, and my chitta was desperate. They have brought the answer to my message; now I will hear the full account.

Says Tuka, the fever of separation is cured by the meeting; the saints have arrived, and my prayers are fulfilled.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Today's gain makes the whole universe seem small; my mind is happy past all imagining. Those for whom my jiva burned with longing, their feet have come to meet me. My eyes were worn out from watching the road; my mind was desperate. They have brought back the answer to my message; now I will hear the whole account. Tuka says: the meeting has cured the fever of separation. The saints have come, and my prayers are fulfilled.

WHAT IT MEANS

The longing breaks into joy: what Tukaram gains today dwarfs the entire universe, a happiness beyond anything the mind could plan. The ones his soul burned for have arrived, and he speaks of meeting their very feet, the saints who carry God's presence. He admits how worn down he was, eyes tired from watching the road, mind at the edge of despair. Now they have brought the answer to his message and he will finally hear everything. He names the cure plainly: the meeting itself heals the fever of separation, and with the saints' coming his every prayer is answered.

GATHA 1959

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the true home come to meet me

मराठी मूळ

आजि बरवें जालें । माझें माहेर भेटलें ॥१॥
 डोळां देखिले सज्जन । निवारला भाग सीण ॥२॥
 धन्य जालों आतां । क्षेम देऊनियां संतां ॥३॥
 इच्छेचें पावलों । तुका ह्याने धन्य जालों ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Today a great thing has happened: my true home has come to me. My eyes have seen the saintly ones, and all fatigue and sorrow have vanished.

I am blessed now, having given greeting to the saints. Says Tuka, I have attained what I desired; I am truly blessed.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Today a good thing has happened: my true home has come to me. My eyes have seen the holy ones, and all my weariness and sorrow are gone. I am blessed now, having greeted the saints. Tuka says: I have reached what I longed for; I am truly blessed.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram marks the day as fulfillment: his maher, his true home, has itself come to him in the form of the arriving saints. The instant his eyes fall on these holy ones, the whole weight of fatigue and sorrow lifts. He counts himself blessed simply for having greeted them, exchanged the embrace of welcome. The poem closes on attainment: the thing he ached for through all the waiting is here, and he names himself, twice over, truly blessed.

GATHA 1960

The Nature of God

Nature of God, the cow running to her calf

मराठी मूळ

वोरसोनि येती । वत्सें धेनुवेच्या चित्तीं ॥१॥
 माझा कराया सांभाळ । वोरसोनियां कृपाळ ॥२॥
 स्नेहें भूक तान । विसरती जाले सीण ॥३॥
 तुका ह्याने कौतुकें । दिलें प्रेमाचें भातुकें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

As calves run back to the cow, ever present in her chitta, so the merciful Lord brings His own back to care for me. In their love, they forget hunger and thirst and all the weariness of the journey.

Says Tuka, with tender delight, He has sent the gift of love.

IN PLAIN WORDS

As calves come rushing, always kept in the cow's heart, so the merciful Lord comes overflowing to take care of me. In their love they forget hunger and thirst and all their weariness. Tuka says: in tender delight, he has sent the gift of love.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reaches for the homeliest image of God's tenderness: a cow whose calf is never out of her heart, the way the merciful Lord keeps His own ones in mind and comes spilling over with care. The love is so strong it makes hunger, thirst, and the weariness of the long road simply fall away, on both sides of the reunion. The point is that God does not wait to be coaxed; He comes overflowing, of His own delight. And the meeting is itself the present: with that same tender delight, the Lord has sent the gift of love.

GATHA 1961

Ecstasy and Joy

Homecoming joy, the pilgrims arrive

मराठी मूळ

आलें तें आधीं खाईन भातुकें । मग कवतुकें गाईन ओव्या ॥१॥
 सांगितला आधीं आडकों निरोप । होइल माझा बाप पुसें तों तें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझे सखे वारकरी । आले हे माहेरीहून आजि ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

First let me eat the gift that has come; then I will sing songs of joy. First let me hear the message; my Father will ask all that needs asking.

Says Tuka, my dear friends, the Varkaris, have arrived today from my true home.

IN PLAIN WORDS

First let me eat the sweet gift that has come; then with delight I will sing my songs. First let me hear the message; my Father will ask all there is to ask. Tuka says: my dear friends, the Varkaris, have arrived today from my true home.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram greets the Varkari pilgrims as messengers from his real homeland, the household of God. He is a child who has been away, and their coming is a child's homecoming: first the gift and the food, then the singing, then the news from home that the Father will want to hear. By calling Pandhari his maher, the home a daughter returns to from her in-laws, he names this world as a place of exile and the company of devotees as the proof that home has not forgotten him. The joy is not in arrival yet, but in the messengers who carry word that home is still there.

GATHA 1962

Ecstasy and Joy

Gratitude, a debt past paying

मराठी मूळ

आमुप जोडल्या सुखाचिया रासी । पार त्या भाग्यासी नाहीं आतां ॥१॥
 काय सांगों सुख जालें आलिंगन । निवाली दर्शनें कांति माझी ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे यांच्या उपकारासाठीं । नाहीं माझे गांठी कांहीं एक ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Heaps of joy have been gathered for us; there is no measure to our fortune now. How can I describe the bliss of the embrace? My being was cooled by their very sight.

Says Tuka, for their kindness, I have nothing in my store to offer in return.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Heaps of joy have been gathered for us; there is no measure now to such good fortune. How can I tell the bliss of that embrace? My whole being was cooled by the sight of them. Tuka says: for their kindness I have nothing in my store to give back.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is overwhelmed by the company of the saints and devotees, and the poem stays inside that overwhelm. Their embrace and their mere presence cool him, the way water cools fever; the fortune is past counting. Then he names the one thing he cannot do: repay it. He has nothing in his store worth setting against what they have given. Gratitude here is the honest discovery that the gift is too large to be answered, and that the only response left is to receive it.

GATHA 1963

The Saints

Self-surrender, rolling at the saints' feet

मराठी मूळ

पवित्र व्हावया घालीन लोळणी । ठेवीन चरणीं मस्तक हें ॥१॥
 जोडोनि हस्तक करीन विनवणी । घेइन पायवणी धोवोनियां ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे माझें भांडवल सुचें । संतां हें ठायींचें ठावें आहे ॥३॥ ॥११॥
 पत्राचे अभंग समाप्त । ३६ । १९ । ११ ॥ ६६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

To become pure, I will roll in the dust at their feet and place my head upon their holy feet. With folded hands I will make my plea and wash their feet with devotion.

Says Tuka, the saints already know my true capital, simple as it is.

IN PLAIN WORDS

To become pure I will roll in the dust at their feet and lay this head of mine upon their feet. With folded hands I will make my plea, and I will wash their feet and drink that water. Tuka says: the saints already know my capital, plain as it is, from the start.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram makes purification a bodily act of lowering, not a private rite. He rolls in the dust where the saints walk, sets his head on their feet, folds his hands, washes their feet and takes that water as something holy. The point of the last line is his poverty: he comes with no wealth to offer, and he says so plainly, because the saints have always known the smallness of his store. He hides nothing, and that nakedness is itself the offering. He trusts that those who already see his emptiness are the safe ones to surrender to.

GATHA 1964

Devotion to Vitthal

Counsel to the mind, resolve on Pandhari

मराठी मूळ

मना एक करीं । ह्मणे जाईन पंढरी । उभा विटेवरी । तो पाहेन सांवळा ॥१॥
 करीन सांगती तें काम । जरी जपसी हें नाम । नित्य वाचे राम । हरि कृष्ण गोविंदा ॥२॥
 लागें संतांचिया पायां । कथे उल्हास गावया । आलों मागावया । शरण देई उचित ॥३॥
 नाचें रंगीं वाहें टाळी । होय सादर ते काळीं । तुका ह्मणे मळी । सांडूनियां अंतरी ॥४॥
 न राहे क्षण एक वैकुंठीं । क्षीरसागरीं त्रिपुटी ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O mind, resolve upon this one thing: I will go to Pandhari and see the dark Lord standing on the brick. I will do whatever He commands, if only you chant this name: Rama, Hari, Krishna, Govinda, always on your tongue.

Fall at the feet of the saints, rejoice in the sacred story; I have come to surrender and seek proper refuge. Says Tuka, dance in the divine color, clap your hands, be attentive, and cast away all inner impurity.

IN PLAIN WORDS

O mind, settle on this one thing: I will go to Pandhari and see the dark Lord standing on the brick. I will do whatever work he commands, if only you chant this name, always on the tongue: Rama, Hari, Krishna, Govinda. Fall at the feet of the saints; rejoice in the holy story and sing it. I have come to surrender and to ask: grant me the refuge that is fitting. Dance in the color of joy, clap your hands, be wholly attentive in that hour. Tuka says: cast out the dirt within.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is instructing his own mind, fixing it on a single resolve so it cannot wander. The bargain is simple: he will obey whatever God asks, on the one condition that the mind keep the Name on the tongue without a break. Around that center he gathers the whole Varkari practice: bowing to the saints, singing the story, surrendering for refuge, dancing and clapping in the kirtan. The closing line names the inner work the rest is for, the scouring out of the impurity in the heart. The Name is not one act among many here; it is the thread that holds every other act in place.

GATHA 1965

The Nature of God

Nature of God, debtor to His devotees

मराठी मूळ

जाय तेथें दाटी । वैष्णवांची धांवोनि ॥१॥
 भाविक गे माये भोळें गुणाचें । आवडे तयाचें नाम घेतां तयासी ॥२॥
 जो नातुडे कवणिये परी । तपें दानें व्रतें थोरी ।
 ह्यणतां वाचे हरि । राम कृष्ण गोविंदा ॥३॥
 चौदा भुवनें जया पोटी । तो राहे भक्तांचिये कंठी ।
 करूनियां साटी । चित्त प्रेम दोहीची ॥४॥
 जया रूप ना आकार । धरी नाना अवतार ।
 घेतलीं हजार । नांवें ठेवूनि आपणां ॥५॥
 ऐसा भक्तांचा ऋणी । पाहातां आगमीं पुराणीं ।
 नाही तुका ह्यणे ध्यानीं । तो कीर्तनीं नाचतसे ॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Wherever the Vaishnavas gather, He rushes to be there. He is innocent, O Mother, simple in His virtues; He loves it when they take His name.

He who cannot be reached by penance, charity, or vows, comes simply when the tongue says Hari, Rama, Krishna, Govinda. He in whose belly the fourteen worlds reside dwells in the throats of His devotees, exchanging love for love.

He who has no form or shape takes countless incarnations and gives Himself a thousand names. Says Tuka, He is thus indebted to His devotees; though He cannot be held in meditation, He dances at the kirtan.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Wherever the Vaishnavas gather, He comes running to be there. He is trusting, O Mother, simple and good; He loves it when they take His name. He who cannot be caught by penance, by charity, by great vows comes when the tongue only says Hari, Rama, Krishna, Govinda. He who holds the fourteen worlds in his belly lives in the throats of his devotees, trading love for love. He who has no form and no shape takes on many incarnations and gives himself a thousand names. Tuka says: so He is in debt to his devotees; he cannot be held in meditation, yet he dances at the kirtan.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns the usual order of religion upside down. The God the great disciplines cannot reach, penance and charity and vows, comes running at the bare sound of his Name on a loving tongue. He makes God almost helpless before love: trusting, simple, drawn to those who call him. The poem holds together God's vastness, the fourteen worlds inside him, the formless one beyond shape, with his smallness, living in a devotee's throat, dancing in the song. The startling claim is the last: this God puts himself in debt to those who love him, and chooses the kirtan over the meditation that cannot grasp him.

GATHA 1966

Devotion to Vitthal

Invitation, the short road to Vaikuntha

मराठी मूळ

स्वल्प वाट चला जाऊं । वाचे गाऊं विठ्ठल ॥१॥
 तुम्ही आम्ही खेळीमेळीं । गदा रोळी आनंदें ॥ध्रु॥
 ध्वजा कुंचे गरुडटके । शृंगार निके करोनि ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे हें चि नीट । जवळी वाट वैकुंठा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The path is short; come, let us go, singing Vitthal as we walk. Let us travel together in fellowship, rolling with joy and delight.

With flags, banners, and Garuda-pillars, let us adorn ourselves beautifully. Says Tuka, this is the true way; the road to Vaikuntha is near.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The path is short; come, let us go, singing Vitthal as we walk. You and I together in fellowship, swaying in joy. With flags and banners and the Garuda-poles, let us adorn it all beautifully. Tuka says: this is the straight way; the road to Vaikuntha is near.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram calls his companions onto the Varkari road, and the poem is the call itself. The walk to Pandhari, with its banners, its Garuda standards, its singing of Vitthal, is not a long preparation for heaven; he says the road to Vaikuntha is short and near. The fellowship, the play, the adornment are the way, not a postponement of it. By keeping it plain and warm, he makes the highest destination feel like a journey friends take together this very day.

GATHA 1967

The Power of the Name

The Name, this world and the next level

मराठी मूळ

आनंदाच्या कोटी । सांटवल्या आम्हां पोटीं ॥१॥
 प्रेम चालिला प्रवाहो । नामओघ लवलाहो ॥ध्रु॥
 अखंड खंडेना जीवन । राम कृष्ण नारायण ॥२॥
 थडी आहिक्य परत्र । तुका ह्मणे सम तीर ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Millions of joys are stored within us. The river of love flows in the rush of the divine name.

This unbroken, unfailing stream of life is Rama, Krishna, Narayana. Says Tuka, both shores, this world and the next, are level banks of that same river.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Millions of joys are stored up inside us. The river of love is flowing, the rush of the stream of the Name. This life never breaks, never runs out: Rama, Krishna, Narayana. Tuka says: both shores, this world and the world beyond, are level banks of the one river.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the inner state the Name opens, and the poem stays inside its imagery. The Name is a river of love already flowing in the devotee, fed from a store of countless joys, and that life never breaks or runs dry. The last line is the quiet claim: the two banks usually set against each other, this world and the next, are simply the level edges of a single stream. For one carried on the Name, here and hereafter stop being a crossing to fear; they are one water.

GATHA 1968

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the slanderer of saints

मराठी मूळ

चाहाडाची माता । व्यभिचारीण तत्त्वता ॥१॥
 पाहे संतांचें उणें । छिद्र छळावया सुनें ॥२॥
 जेणों त्याच्या वाचें । कांहीं सोडिलें गाठीचें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे घात । व्हावा ऐसी जोडी मात ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The mother of a slanderer is an adulteress in truth. Such a one looks for faults in the saints, seeking openings to harass the virtuous.

Whatever his tongue touches, something of his own store is spent. Says Tuka, he gathers his talk only to bring ruin.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The mother of a slanderer is truly an unfaithful wife. Such a man looks for the failings of the saints, hunting for openings to harass the good. Whatever his tongue lets slip, he is spending something out of his own store. Tuka says: he gathers his talk only to bring ruin.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram aims his sharpest contempt at the habit of hunting for faults in holy people, and the harshness is on the pattern, not on any one soul. The man who lives to find cracks in the saints, to find a handle for harassing them, is the target. The warning is that slander is self-spending: every word against the good draws down the speaker's own account. The closing line names the real motive, that such talk is hoarded for the sake of doing harm. The poem invites the listener to examine the fault-finding impulse in himself before it becomes a life.

GATHA 1969

Social Criticism

Social criticism, the harm-doer's own road

मराठी मूळ

सापें ज्यासी खावें । तेणें प्राणासी मुकावें ॥1॥
 काय लाधला दुर्जन । तोंडावरी थुंकी जन ॥ध्रु॥
 विंचु हाणें नांगी। अग्न लावी आणिकां अंगी ॥2॥
 तुका ह्मणे जाती । नरका पाउलीं चालती ॥3॥
 स्वामींनीं स्त्रीस उपदेश केला ते अभंग ॥ 11 ॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The snake must bite, and its victim must lose its life. What does the wicked person gain? People spit on his face.

The scorpion stings with its tail; fire burns whatever body it touches. Says Tuka, such people walk the path to hell on their own feet.

IN PLAIN WORDS

A snake must bite, and the one it bites must lose his life. What does the wicked man gain by it? People spit in his face. The scorpion strikes with its tail; fire burns whatever body it touches. Tuka says: such people walk to hell on their own feet.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram looks at the person who lives to do harm and asks the plain question: what does he actually get? The snake, the scorpion, the fire are images of a nature that injures simply because injuring is what it does, and the only return is being spat upon. The point is directed at the harming pattern, the compulsion to wound, not at hatred of the person caught in it. The closing line is the gravest: no one drives such a man to ruin; he walks the road to hell on his own feet, by his own choosing. It is an invitation to examine where one's own actions are leading.

GATHA 1970

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, God the unyielding landlord

मराठी मूळ

पिकल्या सेताचा आह्मां देतो वांटा । चौधरी गोमटा पांडुरंग ॥1॥
 सत्तर टके बाकी उरली मागे तो हा । मागें झडले दाहा आजिवरी ॥ध्रु॥
 हांडा भांडीं गुरें दाखवी ऐवज । माजघरीं बाजे बैसलासे ॥2॥
 मज यासी भांडतां जाब नेदी बळें । ह्मणे एका वेळे घ्याल वांटा ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे िस्त्रये काय वो करावें । नेदितां लपावें काय कोठें ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Panduranga, our fine landlord, gives us a share of the ripe harvest. Seventy percent of the debt remains from the past; only ten has been settled so far.

He shows us the pots, vessels, and cattle as assets, while He sits like a lord in the inner room. When I try to argue with Him, He overpowers me and says: you will get your share all at once.

Says Tuka, O wife, what can be done? When He will not give, where can it be hidden?

IN PLAIN WORDS

Panduranga, our fine headman, gives us a share of the ripened field. Seventy percent of the debt still stands from before; only ten has been cleared so far. He shows off the pots, the vessels, the cattle as my assets, while he sits like a lord in the inner room. When I try to argue with him, he overpowers me and says: you will get your whole share at once. Tuka says: O wife, what is to be done? When he will not give, where can anything be hidden?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram plays out the relationship with God as a tenant farmer's dealings with a powerful landlord, and the comedy carries the surrender. God gives only a share of the harvest, keeps most of the old debt outstanding, parades the devotee's few possessions as collateral, and rules from the inner room beyond reach. Every argument is overruled with the promise that the full settlement will come all at once, on God's timing, not the tenant's. The closing turn to the wife is the resignation underneath the joke: with such a master there is nothing to be done and nothing can be hidden from him. Even the grumbling is a form of belonging to him completely.

GATHA 1971

The Nature of God

Surrender, no escape from the one kingdom

मराठी मूळ

करितां विचार अवघें एक राज्य । दुजा कोण मज पाठी घाली ॥1॥
 कोण्या रीती जावें आह्मी वो पळोनि । मोकळ अंगणीं मागें पुढें ॥ध्रु॥
 काय तें गव्हाणें हिंडावीं वो किती । दूत ते लागती याच पाठी ॥2॥
 कोठें याची करुं केलों कुळवाडी । आतां हा न सोडी जीवें आह्मां ॥3॥
 होऊनि बेबाख येथें चि राहावें। देईल तें खावें तुका ह्मणे ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

When I consider it carefully, it is all one kingdom; who else stands behind me? In what way can I flee? It is all open ground, before me and behind. How many alleys must I wander? His agents follow me everywhere.

Where can I lodge a complaint against this One who has made me His tenant? He will not let me go alive. Says Tuka, let me become free of debt and stay right here, eating whatever He gives.

IN PLAIN WORDS

When I think it through, it is all one kingdom; who else is there to stand behind me? Which way could I run? It is all open ground, before me and behind. How many alleys can I wander down? His agents are on my trail everywhere. Where would I lodge a complaint against the One who has made me his tenant? Now he will not let me go alive. Tuka says: let me clear my debt and stay right here, eating whatever he gives.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram works out that there is no escape from God because there is nowhere outside God to escape to. It is all one kingdom, open on every side, and wherever he runs the Lord's agents are already on his trail. There is no higher court to appeal to, since the landlord he would complain about owns everything. The honest conclusion is not defeat but rest: stop running, settle the account, stay put, and live on whatever the master hands out. The dread of being trapped resolves into the peace of having no need to flee.

GATHA 1972

Devotion to Vitthal

Surrender, stripped bare and caught

मराठी मूळ

नागवूनि एकें नागवीं च केली । फिरोनियां आलीं नाहीं येथें ॥१॥
 भेणें सुती कोणी न घेती पालवीं । करूनियां गोवी निसंतान ॥२॥
 एकें तीं गोविलीं घेऊनि जमान । हांसतील जन लोक तयां ॥३॥
 सरले तयांसी घाली वैकुंठीं । न सोडी हे साटी जीवें जाली ॥४॥
 तुका ह्याने जालों जाणोनि नेणती । सांपडलों हातीं याचे आह्मी ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Having been stripped bare by one, I was left with nothing; no one returns to this place after that. Out of fear, no one takes me under their wing; He has made me destitute and childless.

Some He trapped by taking surety from them; the world laughs at those jivas. Those who surrendered, He sent to Vaikuntha; this bond was sealed with their very lives.

Says Tuka, we pretended not to know, yet we fell into His hands all the same.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Stripped bare by one, I was left with nothing; no one comes back to this place once that is done. Out of fear no one takes me under their wing; he has made me destitute and childless. Some he trapped by taking a surety from them, and the world laughs at those souls. Those who gave themselves up he sent to Vaikuntha; this bond was sealed with their very lives. Tuka says: we played at not knowing, yet we fell into his hands all the same.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes being ruined by God in the language of a man cleaned out of all he owned, and the ruin is the grace. Once God strips a soul bare of every worldly hold, it cannot go back, and the world keeps its distance from such a one, afraid to be drawn in. The wordplay turns dark and then bright: those caught and made to surrender

are first laughed at, then sent to Vaikuntha, the bond paid for with their lives. The last line is the confession: he pretended not to understand what was happening, but the pretense changed nothing, and he was taken anyway. Being caught by God is named here as the best thing that can happen to a soul.

GATHA 1973

Prayers

Plea to God, do not turn away

मराठी मूळ

आतां तूं तयास होई वो उदास । आरंभला नास माझ्या जीवा ॥१॥
 जरूर हें जालें मज कां नावडे । उपास रोकडे येती आतां ॥२॥
 बरें म्या तुझिया जीवाचें तें काय । व्हावें हें तें पाहें विचारुनि ॥३॥
 तुज मज तुटी नव्हे या विचारें । सहित लेकुरें राहों सुखें ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे तरी तुझा माझा संग । घडेल वियोग कधीं नव्हे ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Now, if you become indifferent to Him, the ruin of my very life will follow. This has become unavoidable, though I do not welcome it; immediate hardship lies ahead.

Consider carefully what should become of your life and mine. This need not mean a separation between us; with our children, let us live in peace together.

Says Tuka, then your companionship with me will never face separation.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Now, if you grow cold toward him, the ruin of my very life begins. This has become unavoidable, though I do not welcome it; hardship is coming straight at me. Think it over: what good is your life to me, and what good is mine? See it clearly. By this reasoning, there need be no break between us. Let us stay in peace, our children with us. Tuka says: then your company with me will hold, and we will never be parted.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is pleading against a separation he dreads, speaking as one bound to God the way a wife is bound to her household. He warns that if God turns indifferent, his life falls to ruin, and the hardship is already on its way. Against that, he reasons for togetherness: there is no need to break apart, so let them live in peace with their children. The closing turn is the point. If they stay joined, the bond between his soul and God will never again face separation, and that unbroken company is what he is begging for.

GATHA 1974

Surrender and Acceptance

Surrender, God strips us bare

मराठी मूळ

काय करुं आतां माझिया संचिता । तेणें जीववित्ता साटी केली ॥१॥
 न ह्मणावें कोणी माझें हें करणें । हुकुम तो येणें देवें केला ॥१॥
 करुनि मोकळा सोडिलों भिकारी । पुरविली तरी पाठी माझी ॥२॥
 पाणिया भोंपळा जेवावया पानें । लाविलीं वो येणें देवें आह्मां ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे यासी नाही वो करुणा । आहे नागवणा ठावा मज ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What can I do about my own destiny? It has traded away my life and livelihood. Let no one say this was my doing; the order was given by God Himself.

Having freed me, He released me as a beggar, yet He has stood behind me all along. A gourd for water, leaves for a plate: this is what God has given us.

Says Tuka, He has no mercy; but His ways of stripping us bare are well known to me.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What can I do now about my own fate? It has traded away my life and all I had. Let no one say this was my doing; the order came from God himself. He set me free and let me go a beggar, yet he has stood behind me all along. A gourd for water, leaves for a plate: this is what God has handed us. Tuka says: he has no pity; but his way of stripping us bare is well known to me.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram surrenders his ruin to God instead of blaming himself or fate. He owns that his life and livelihood are gone, then insists the doing was not his: God gave the order. The poverty is stark, a gourd to drink from and leaves to eat off, the kit of a beggar. He even says God shows no mercy. But the sting is also the teaching: this stripping bare is God's known method, the deliberate emptying of a devotee, and Tukaram names it rather than recoiling from it.

GATHA 1975

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, save yourself first

मराठी मूळ

नको धरुं आस व्हावें या बाळांस । निर्माण तें त्यांस त्यांचें आहे ॥१॥
 आपुला तूं गळा घेई उगवूनि । चुकवीं जाचणी गर्भवास ॥२॥
 अवेज देखोनि बांधितील गळा । ह्मणोनि निराळा पळतुसें ॥३॥
 देखोनियां त्यांचा अवघड मार । कांपे थरथर जीव माझा ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे जरी आहे माझी चाड । तरी करीं वाड चित्त आतां ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Do not cling to hopes for these children; what is destined for them is already theirs. Save yourself first; free yourself from the torment of the cycle of birth.

Seeing the trappings of the world, they will bind your neck; that is why I flee and stay apart. Seeing the terrible blows of the world, my jiva trembles with fear.

Says Tuka, if you truly care for me, then steady your chitta now.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Do not cling to hopes for these children; what is meant for them is already theirs. Untie your own neck first; escape the torment of the womb. Seeing the world's bait, they will bind your neck; that is why I keep apart and flee. Seeing their terrible blows, my jiva trembles and shakes. Tuka says: if you truly care for me, then make your chitta wide now.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram urges the soul to stop pinning its hopes on family, since each child carries its own destiny. The real work is to free your own neck and break the cycle of rebirth, the torment he calls the womb. He is blunt about why he keeps his distance: worldly ties are bait that bind the neck, and the blows of the world make him shake with fear. The close is an appeal turned inward: if you care for him, the proof is not attachment but a chitta made wide enough to let go and seek release.

GATHA 1976

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, harden against worldly loss

मराठी मूळ

भले लोक तुज बहु मानवती । वाढेल या कीतिन जगामाजी ॥1॥
 ह्मणे मेलीं गुरें भांडीं नेलीं चोरें । नाहीत लेंकुरें जालीं मज ॥धु.॥
 आस निरसूनि कठिण हें मन । करीं वो समान वज्र तैसें ॥2॥
 किंचित हें सुख टाकीं वो थुंकोनि । पावसील धनी परमानंद ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे थोर चुकती सायास । भवबंद पाश तुटोनियां ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Good people will honor you greatly; your fame will grow in the world. You will say: the cattle are gone, the vessels were stolen by thieves, and I have no children to show for it.

Cast away desire and harden your resolve like a thunderbolt. Spit out this petty happiness, and you will gain the supreme joy.

Says Tuka, you will be freed from great toil, for the bonds of worldly existence will be cut.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Good people will honor you greatly; your fame will grow in the world. You will say: the cattle died, thieves took the vessels, and I am left without children to show for it. Cast off desire and harden this mind; make it firm like a thunderbolt. Spit out this petty happiness, and you will gain the supreme joy. Tuka says: you will be spared great toil, for the bonds of worldly life will be cut.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pushes the soul to count worldly loss as gain. He lists the things people grieve over, dead cattle, stolen pots, no children, and treats them as no real loss at all. The counsel is to harden the mind like a thunderbolt and spit out the small, petty happiness the world offers. What replaces it is the supreme joy, which is worth more than everything given up. The promise is release: when the bonds of worldly existence are cut, the soul is spared the endless toil of holding on.

GATHA 1977

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the welcome at the end

मराठी मूळ

ऐक हें सुख होईल दोघांसी । सोहळा हे ऋषि करिती देव ॥1॥
 जडितविमानें बैसविती मानें । गंधर्वाचें गाणें नामघोष ॥ध्रु॥
 संत महंत सिद्ध येतील सामोरे । सर्वसुखा पुरे कोड तेथें ॥2॥
 आलिंगूनि लोळों त्यांच्या पायांवरी । जाऊं तेथवरी मायबापें ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे तया सुखा वणूप काय । जेव्हां बापमाय देखें डोळां ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Listen: this bliss will come to both of us. The sages and gods will celebrate our joy.

We will be seated with honor in jeweled celestial chariots, with the gandharvas singing and the divine name resounding. Saints, siddhas, and great ones will come to welcome us.

We will roll at their feet in ecstasy and go to our Father and Mother together. Says Tuka, how can I describe that joy when our eyes behold our divine parents?.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Listen: this bliss will come to us both. The sages and the gods will hold a festival of joy. They will seat us with honor in jeweled celestial chariots, the gandharvas singing, the Name resounding. Saints, great ones, and siddhas will come out to meet us. We will embrace them and roll at their feet, and so go all the way to our Mother and Father. Tuka says: how can I tell that joy, when my eyes behold our Mother and Father?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram paints the homecoming that crowns the path of devotion, sharing the vision with the soul he has been exhorting. The reward is not a private escape but a festival the gods and sages throw, with jeweled chariots, the gandharvas' song, and the Name ringing out. The saints and perfected ones come out to welcome them, and the devotee rolls at their feet in love. The journey ends at the Mother and Father, God as both parents, and Tukaram says the joy of seeing them with his own eyes is past all telling.

GATHA 1978

Appeals and Exhortations

Exhortation, God is already near

मराठी मूळ

देव पाहावया करीं वो सायास । न धरीं हे आस नाशिवंत ॥१॥
 दिन शुद्ध सोम सकाळीं पातला । द्वादशी घडला पर्वकाळ ॥२॥
 द्विजां पाचारुनि शुद्ध करीं मन । देई वो हें दान यथाविध ॥३॥
 नको चिंता करुं वस्त्रा या पोटाची । माउली आमुची पांडुरंग ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे दुरी सांगतों पाल्हाळीं । परी तो जवळी आहे आह्मां ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Make the effort to see God; do not hold on to perishable hopes. A pure and auspicious day has arrived; the twelfth lunar day provides a sacred occasion.

Invite the brahmins, purify the mind, and give the proper offerings. Do not worry about clothes or food for the body; our Mother is Panduranga Himself.

Says Tuka, I speak at length from afar, but He is close to us always.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Make the effort to see God; do not hold on to perishable hopes. A pure and auspicious day has come, a Monday morning; the twelfth lunar day makes it a sacred time. Call the brahmins, make your mind pure, and give this gift as the rite requires. Do not fret about clothing or food for the body; our Mother is Panduranga himself. Tuka says: I speak at length as if from afar, but he is close beside us.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram tells the soul that the time to turn toward God is now, on this very auspicious day, not in some perishable hope held for later. He keeps the outward forms, inviting brahmins, purifying the mind, giving the proper offering, but he points past them to what matters. Do not waste worry on food and clothes for the body, because Panduranga himself is the Mother who provides. The last line undercuts the distance in his own preaching: he speaks at length as though God were far off, yet God is right beside us all along.

GATHA 1979

Renunciation

Renunciation, worldly joy holds nothing

मराठी मूळ

सुख हें नावडे आह्मां कोणा बळें । नेणसी अंधळें जालीशी तूं ॥1॥
 भूक तान कैसी राहिली निश्चळ । खुंटलें चपळ मन ठायीं ॥ ध्रु.॥
 द्रव्य जीवाह्नि आवडे या जना । आह्मांसी पाषाणाह्नि हीन ॥2॥
 सोड्रे सज्जन जन आणि वन । अवघें समान काय गुणें ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मां जवळी च आहे । सुख दुःख साहे पांडुरंग ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

This worldly happiness does not please us; do you not see that, having become blind to it? Hunger and thirst have become still; the restless mind has halted in its place. People love wealth more than life itself, but to us it is lower than stone.

Relations, friends, crowds, and wilderness are all the same to us. Says Tuka, Panduranga is always near us, bearing both our joy and our sorrow.

IN PLAIN WORDS

This worldly happiness does not please us, by anyone's urging. Do you not see you have gone blind to it? Hunger and thirst have grown still; the restless mind has stopped where it stands. People love wealth more than life itself; to us it is lower than a stone. Kin, the good, crowds, and the wilderness are all the same to us. What worth is in them? Tuka says: Panduranga is right beside us, bearing both our joy and our sorrow.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes the state of one who has truly let the world go. No persuasion can make worldly happiness pleasing again; even hunger and thirst fall quiet, and the restless mind comes to rest. He flips the common scale: people prize wealth above life, but to him it ranks below a stone. The marks of indifference go further, since friends, crowds, and empty forest are now all alike to him. What holds it together is the close: Panduranga stays right beside him, carrying both his joy and his sorrow, so nothing else needs to.

GATHA 1980

Autobiography

Counsel, the path of service and the Name

मराठी मूळ

गुरुकृपे मज बोलविलें देवें । होईल हें घ्यावें हित कांहीं ॥1॥
 सत्य देवें माझा केला अंगीकार । आणीक विचार नाही आतां ॥ध्रु॥
 होई बळकट घालूनियां कास । हा चि उपदेश तुज आतां ॥2॥
 सडा संमार्जन तुळसीवृंदावन । अतीतपूजन ब्राह्मणाचें ॥3॥
 वैष्णवांची दासी होई सर्वभावें । मुखीं नाम घ्यावें विठोबाचें ॥4॥
 पूर्णबोध स्त्रीभ्रतारसंवाद । धन्य जिहीं वाद आइकिला ॥5॥
 तुका ह्मणे आहे पांडुरंगकथा । तरेल जो चित्ता धरील कोणी ॥6॥ ॥11॥
 खडा रवाळी साकर । जाला नामाचा चि फेर ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

By the Guru's grace, God has moved me to speak; may some good come of it for you. God has truly accepted me; there is no further deliberation.

Gird yourself with strength; this is my counsel to you now. Sweep and clean the threshold, tend the tulasi garden, and honor the brahmins and guests.

Become a servant of the Vaishnavas with all your chitta, and keep Vithoba's name upon your lips. Blessed are those who have heard this dialogue of full awakening between husband and wife.

Says Tuka, this is the story of Panduranga; whoever holds it in their chitta will be saved.

IN PLAIN WORDS

By the Guru's grace, God has set me speaking; let some good of it be taken up. Truly God has accepted me; there is nothing more to weigh now. Be strong; gird up your loins. This alone is my counsel to you. Sweep and clean the threshold, tend the tulasi garden, honor the brahmins and the guests. Become a servant of the Vaishnavas with your whole being, and keep Vithoba's name on your lips. Blessed are those who have heard this dialogue of full awakening between wife and husband. Tuka says: this is the story of Panduranga; whoever holds it in the chitta will be carried across.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram gives plain marching orders for a life of devotion, crediting the Guru's grace for both his speech and God's acceptance of him. The counsel is concrete and humble: gird yourself with resolve, sweep the threshold, tend the tulasi, honor brahmins and guests. The heart of it is to serve the Vaishnavas wholly and keep Vithoba's name always on the lips. He frames the whole poem as a dialogue of full awakening between husband and wife, and ends with the promise that whoever holds this story of Panduranga in the chitta will be carried safely across the world's flood.

GATHA 1981

The Nature of God

Nonduality, gold and its ornaments

मराठी मूळ

न दिसे अंतर । गोडी ठायीं निवडितां ॥१॥
 तुह्मी आह्मी पांडुरंगा । भिन्न ऐसें काय सांगा ।
 जाळविलें जगा । मी हें माझें यासाठीं॥१॥
 पायीं हातीं नाकीं शिरीं । हेम राहे अळंकारीं ।
 मुसे आल्यावरी । काय निवडे वेगळें ॥२॥
 निजलिया लाभ हानी । तों च खरी ते स्वप्नीं ।
 तुका ह्मणे दोन्ही । निवारलीं जागतां ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is no difference in sweetness when you try to separate it into parts. Tell me, O Panduranga, in what way are You and we truly different? This illusion of mine and yours was created to deceive the world.

Gold remains gold whether in ornaments on hands, feet, nose, or head; when put in the mold, nothing separates out as different. Says Tuka, the gain and loss of a dream seem real only while one sleeps; both vanish upon waking.

IN PLAIN WORDS

No difference shows when you try to sort out the sweetness into parts. You and we, Panduranga: tell me, how are we truly separate? This sense of mine and yours was set up to burn the world in delusion. On feet, on hands, on the nose, on the head, gold stays in the ornament. Once it goes back to the mold, what stands out as different? In sleep, gain and loss seem real, true only inside the dream. Tuka says: both of them are cleared away when you wake.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram denies any real split between the soul and God. He tests it the way you taste sweetness: you cannot divide the sweetness into separate parts, and the same holds for self and Panduranga. The talk of mine and yours, he says, exists only to deceive the world. His image is gold worked into many ornaments for hands, feet, nose, head, all still the one gold, and when melted in the mold nothing distinct remains. The dream seals it: gain and loss feel real while you sleep, but both vanish on waking, and so does duality the moment you wake into truth.

GATHA 1982

The Necessity of Experience

Realization, devotee and God are one

मराठी मूळ

आह्मी जाणों तुझा भाव । कैचा भक्त कैचा देव । बीजा नाहीं ठाव । कैचें फळ शेवटीं ॥१॥
 संपादिलें बहु रूप । कैचें पुण्य कैचें पाप । नव्हतों आह्मी आप । आपणासी देखिलें ॥२॥
 एके ठायीं घरिच्याघरीं । न कळतां जाली चोरी । तेथें तें चि दुरी । जाणें येणें खुंटलें ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे धरुनि हातीं । उर ठेविली मागुती । एकांतीं लोकांतीं । देवभक्तिसोहळा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We know Your secret, O God. Where is the devotee? Where is God? When the seed has no place to stand, how can there be fruit at the end? You have fashioned many appearances.

Where is sin? Where is merit? We were never separate; we only saw ourselves as so. Within this one house, a theft happened unnoticed; from that point, coming and going ceased.

Says Tuka, having caught hold of Your hand, we set aside the distinction once again; in solitude and in the world, the celebration of God and devotee goes on.

IN PLAIN WORDS

We know your secret. Where is the devotee, where is God? When the seed has no place to stand, where is the fruit at the end? Many forms were got up. Where is merit, where is sin? We were never a separate self; we only saw ourselves so. In one house, within our own home, a theft happened unnoticed; from there, the going out and coming in stopped. Tuka says: holding your hand, the distance was set aside again. Alone and among people, the festival of God and devotee goes on.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram says he has seen through the whole arrangement of two. If there is no separate seed, there can be no fruit, so the very categories of devotee and God, merit and sin, fall away. He admits the self never was apart; it only appeared apart by looking at itself wrongly. His image is a quiet theft within one's own house: separateness is stolen away unnoticed, and once it goes, the soul's restless coming and going ceases. Yet duality is not simply erased. Holding God's hand, he sets the distance aside, and in solitude or in a crowd the play of God and devotee still goes on, oneness that keeps the joy of relationship.

GATHA 1983

Confession and Sin

Confession, a child's bold love

मराठी मूळ

कांहीं बोलिलों बोबडें । मायबापा तुझांपुढें । सलगी लाडें कोडें । मज क्षमा करावी ॥१॥
 काय जाणावा महिमा । तुमचा म्यां पुरुषोत्तमा । आवडीनें सीमा । सांडविली मज हातीं ॥२॥
 घडे अवज्ञा सख्यत्वे । बाळें बापासी न भ्यावें । काय म्यां सांगावें । आहे ठावें तुझासी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे देवा । प्रेम लोभ न संडावा । पिळला पाळावा । लळा पुढती आगळा ॥३॥
 बहु भितों जाणपणा । आड न यो नारायणा ।

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I have spoken some stammering words before You, O Mother and Father. Forgive my bold and childish familiarity.

How could I ever know Your greatness, O Supreme Being? In my eagerness, I overstepped all bounds. In the freedom of friendship, a child does not fear its father; what shall I tell You that You do not already know? Says Tuka, O God, do not abandon this love and tenderness; the affection You have nurtured, nurture it ever more.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have spoken some stammering words before you, Mother and Father. Forgive my bold, childish, fond familiarity. How could I ever measure your greatness, Purushottama? In my love I let myself overstep every bound. In the freedom of friendship, a child does not fear its father; what is there for me to tell you that you do not already know? Tuka says: God, do not let go of this love and tenderness; the affection you have nurtured, nurture still more. I am much afraid of knowingness; do not let it come between us, Narayana.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram begs pardon for the brashness of his own devotion, addressing God as Mother and Father. He knows he cannot measure God's greatness, and admits his love made him overstep every bound. But he defends the boldness: a child at ease with its father feels no fear, and what could he hide from one who already knows all. The plea is that God not withdraw the tenderness he has nurtured, but deepen it. The last line names the danger he dreads: knowingness, the self-conscious cleverness that would stand between him and Narayana, and he asks God to keep it from intruding on this simple, childlike love.

GATHA 1984

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the longing for oneness

मराठी मूळ

घेइन प्रेमपान्हा । भक्तिसुख निवाडें ॥१॥
 यासी तुळे ऐसे कांहीं । दुजें त्रिभुवनीं नाहीं ।
 काला भात दहीं । ब्रह्मादिकां दुर्लभ ॥२॥
 निमिशा अर्ध संतसंगति । वास वैकुंठीं कल्पांतीं ।
 मोक्षपदें होती । ते विश्रांति बापुडी ॥३॥
 तुका ह्मणे हें चि देई । मीतूपणा खंड नाहीं ।
 बोलिलों त्या नाहीं । अभेदाची आवडी ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I will drink the milk of divine love, the undivided bliss of devotion. Nothing in the three worlds compares to this; the buttermilk, rice, and curd that even Brahma and the gods cannot obtain.

A half-moment's company of the saints surpasses ages in Vaikuntha; the liberation they speak of is a paltry thing beside it. Says Tuka, grant me this alone: an unbroken union without any trace of You and me. This longing for oneness is my only love.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I will drink the milk of love, the undivided bliss of devotion. Nothing in the three worlds weighs equal to this; the mingled rice and curd that even Brahma and the gods can hardly get. Half a moment in the company of the saints outweighs an age of dwelling in Vaikuntha; the seats of liberation they speak of are a poor thing beside it. Tuka says: grant me only this. There is no break in this You and I. I have said it: there is no relish for me in the loss of all difference.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram chooses the sweetness of loving devotion over every other reward. He calls it the milk of love and the undivided bliss, and ranks it above anything in the three worlds, even the food shared with the gods. A mere half moment among the saints, he says, is worth more than ages in Vaikuntha, and even liberation looks paltry next to it. Then comes the surprising turn that sets his bhakti apart: he asks God to keep the relationship of You and I unbroken. He does not even want oneness if oneness means the loss of all difference, for the love itself lives in the nearness of two.

GATHA 1985

Prayers

Prayer, forget the body

मराठी मूळ

देवा आतां ऐसा करीं उपकार । देहेचा विसर पाडीं मज ॥1॥
 तरीं च हा जीव सुख पावे माझा । बरें केशीराजा कळों आलें ॥२॥
 ठाव देई चित्ता राख पायांपाशीं । सकळ वृत्तींसी अखंडित ॥2॥
 असे भय आतां लाज काम क्रोध । तोडावा संबंध यांचा माझा ॥3॥
 मागणें तें एक हें चि आहे आतां । नाम मुखीं संतसंग देई ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे नको वरपंग देवा । घेई माझी सेवा भावशुद्ध ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

O God, do me this kindness now: make me forget this body. Only then will my jiva find true happiness; this much has become clear, O Lord Keshi.

Give my mind a place at Your feet; keep all my faculties unbroken in Your presence. Fear, shame, desire, anger: sever my connection with them all.

My only prayer now is this: keep Your name on my lips and grant me the company of the saints. Says Tuka, O God, do not accept superficial worship; receive my service in pure devotion.

IN PLAIN WORDS

God, do me this kindness now: make me forget this body. Only then will my jiva find happiness. This much has become clear to me, O Lord Keshi. Give my mind a place at your feet. Keep all my faculties unbroken there. Fear, shame, desire, anger: cut my bond with them all. My only prayer now is this: keep your name on my lips, and grant me the company of the saints. Tuka says: God, do not take my outward show; receive my service in pure devotion.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram asks for one strange gift and names what it frees him from. He begs God to make him forget the body, because only when the body-sense loosens can the jiva rest in real happiness rather than in its appetites. He wants his whole attention parked at Vitthal's feet, every faculty held there unbroken, and the inner enemies of fear, shame, desire, and anger severed from him. His one petition is the Name on his lips and the saints around him. The closing line guards against the danger he knows in himself: outward, performed worship that God should refuse in favor of devotion that is actually pure.

GATHA 1986

Prayers

Surrender, the name as the secret

मराठी मूळ

तुज न करितां काय नव्हे एक । हे तों सकळक संतवाणी ॥1॥
 घेई माझा भार करीं कड्वार । उतरीं हा पार भवसिंधु ॥ध्रु॥
 उचित अनुचित पापपुण्यकाला । हा तों नये मला निवडितां ॥2॥
 कुंटित राहिली बोलतां बोलतां । पार न पवतां वाणी पुढें ॥3॥
 पुसतां ही कोणां न कळे हें गुज । राखें आतां लाज पांडुरंगा ॥4॥
 तुका ह्मणे बहु पाहिलें या जीवें । वर्म जालें जी ठावें नाम तुझें ॥5॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

There is nothing beyond Your power; this is the unanimous testimony of the saints. Take my burden and be my champion; ferry me across this ocean of existence.

Right from wrong, sin from virtue, this and that, I cannot sort them out. My speech falters even as it tries to speak; words cannot reach the far shore.

No one I ask can reveal this secret. Guard my honor now, O Panduranga.

Says Tuka, my jiva has searched long, and the secret it found is this: Your name.

IN PLAIN WORDS

There is nothing you cannot do. This is the one voice of all the saints. Take my burden; be my champion; carry me across this ocean of becoming. Right from wrong, sin from virtue, this from that: I cannot sort them out. My speech falters even as I speak; words cannot reach the far shore. No one I ask can tell me this secret. Guard my honor now, Panduranga. Tuka says: my jiva has searched a long time, and the secret it found is this: your name.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram hands over the whole problem because he has admitted he cannot solve it. He cannot reliably tell right from wrong or sin from virtue, and his own speech breaks down before it can carry him across the ocean of birth and death. Since no person he questions can give him the secret, he asks God to take the burden and be his rescuer and his honor. The long search ends not in a doctrine he masters but in one thing his jiva finally finds: the Name. Surrender here is not laziness; it is the honest end of a seeker who has exhausted his own means.

GATHA 1987

The Saints

Devotion to the saints, shameless joy

मराठी मूळ

मज त्याची भीड नुलंघवे देवा । जो ह्मणे केशवा दास तुझा ॥१॥
 मज आवडती बहु तैसे जन । करिती कीर्तन कथा तुझी ॥२॥
 सांडूनियां लाज नाचेन त्यांपुढें । आइकती कोडें नाम तुझें ॥३॥
 न लगे उपचार होईन भिकारी । वैष्णवांच्या घरीं उष्टावळी ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे जाणों उचित अनुचित । विचारुनि हित तें चि करूं ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

I cannot disregard anyone who calls himself Your servant, O God. I dearly love those who sing Your praise and tell Your story.

Casting away all shame, I will dance before them; they who love to hear Your name. I need no comforts; I will become a beggar and eat the leftovers in the homes of the Vaishnavas.

Says Tuka, I know what is proper and what is not; I will consider and do only what is truly good.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I cannot disregard anyone who calls himself your servant, O God. I dearly love such people, who sing your praise and tell your story. Throwing away my shame, I will dance before them, those who love to hear your name. I need no comforts. I will become a beggar and eat the leftovers in the homes of the Vaishnavas. Tuka says: I know what is proper and what is not; I will weigh it and do only what is truly good.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram measures his loyalties by one thing: love of God. Anyone who calls himself God's servant has a claim on him that he cannot overlook, and the people who sing and tell God's story are the ones he loves. For their sake he will throw off respectability, dance in public, refuse comforts, and gladly take a beggar's place eating leftovers in devotees' homes. The closing line answers anyone who would call this improper: he has weighed propriety against true good, and chosen the good. In his scale, the company of God's lovers outranks dignity.

GATHA 1988

Devotion to Vitthal

Devotion, not by my own strength

मराठी मूळ

तुझे पाय माझे राहिलेले चित्तीं । ते मज दाविती वर्म देवा ॥1॥
 आह्मां अंधां तुझ्या पायांचा आधार । जाणसी विचार चाळवितां ॥ध्रु॥
 मन िस्थर ठेलें इंद्रियें निश्चळ । हें तों माझें बळ नव्हे देवा ॥2॥
 पापपुण्य भेद नासिलें तिमिर । त्रिगुण शरीर सांडिलेलें ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे तुझा प्रताप हा खरा । मी जाणें दातारा शरणागत ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Your feet have settled in my chitta, O God, and they reveal to me the truth. For us who are blind, Your feet are the only support; You know how to guide us even when we stumble.

The mind has become steady, the senses still; this is not my own strength, O God. The darkness of sin and virtue, of distinction itself, has been destroyed; this body of three qualities has been left behind.

Says Tuka, this is Your real power; I know myself only as one who has surrendered, O Generous Lord.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Your feet have settled in my chitta, O God, and they show me the truth. For us who are blind, your feet are the only support; you know how to guide us when we stumble. The mind has grown steady, the senses still. This is not my own strength, O God. The darkness of sin and virtue, of difference itself, has been destroyed; this body of three qualities has been left behind. Tuka says: this is your real power. I know myself only as one who has surrendered, O generous Lord.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram refuses to take credit for his own transformation. His mind has become steady, his senses quiet, the very sense of sin and virtue dissolved, and the body of the three gunas left behind; but he insists none of this is his doing. He is blind, and it is God's feet, settled in his awareness, that both support him and show him the truth. Whatever steadiness he has is God's power working, not his own effort succeeding. So the only thing he claims for himself is the one posture that opened the door: surrender.

GATHA 1989

*The Nature of God**The constant companion, all fear gone*

मराठी मूळ

जेथें जातों तेथें तू माझा सांगाती । चालविसी हातीं धरुनियां ॥१॥
 चालों वाटे आह्मी तुझा चि आधार । चालविसी भार सवें माझा ॥२॥
 बोलों जातां बरळ करिसी तें नीट । नेली लाज धीट केलों देवा ॥३॥
 अवघें जन मज जाले लोकपाळ । सोडरे सकळ प्राणसखे ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां खेळतों कौतुकें । जालें तुझें सुख अंतर्बाहीं ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Wherever I go, You are my companion; You walk with me, holding my hand. We walk this path leaning on You alone; You carry my load alongside me.

When I begin to babble, You set my words right; You have taken away my shame and made me bold, O God. All people have become my guardians, all are kin and soul-friends.

Says Tuka, now I play in delight; Your joy fills me within and without.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Wherever I go, you are my companion. You walk with me, holding my hand. We walk this path leaning on you alone; you carry my load along with me. When I start to babble, you set my words right. You have taken away my shame and made me bold, O God. All people have become my guardians, all are kin and dear as my own breath. Tuka says: now I play in delight. Your joy fills me within and without.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is what life feels like once the fear is gone. Tukaram describes God as a companion who never leaves, who holds his hand, carries his burden, and even corrects his stumbling words. With his shame taken away he has grown bold, and the change spreads outward: no one is a threat anymore, everyone has become kin and protector and friend. The result is not anxious striving but play, joy filling him inside and out. The poem shows surrender turning the whole world friendly, because the one who walks beside him is trusted completely.

GATHA 1990

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the harvest of love

मराठी मूळ

जालें पीक आह्मां अवघा सुकाळ । घेऊं अवघा काळ प्रेमसुख ॥१॥
जाली अराणुक अवघियांपासून । अवघा गेला सीण भाग आतां ॥१॥
अवघा जाला आह्मां एक पांडुरंग । आतां नाहीं जग माझें तुझें ॥२॥
अवघे चि आह्मी ल्यालों अळंकार । शोभलों हि फार अवघ्यांवरी ॥३॥
तुका ह्मणे आह्मी सदेवांचे दास । करणें न लगे आस आणिकांची ॥४॥ ॥६॥
प्रकाशिलें जग आपुल्या प्रकाशें । रवि कर्मरसें अलिप्त त्या ॥१॥
सांगणें तें तें नाहीं करणें आपण । मोलही वचन बाध जालें ॥२॥
तुका ह्मणे आह्मां भांडवल हातीं । येरझारा खाती केवढियें ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The harvest has come; everything is abundance for us. We drink the nectar of love at all times.

Rest has come from all directions; all fatigue and sorrow have departed. Panduranga has become everything to us; there is no more yours and mine in this world.

We are adorned with every ornament and shine more brightly than all others. Says Tuka, we are servants of the true God; we need not look to anyone else.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The harvest has come; everything is abundance for us. At every hour we drink the joy of love. Rest has come from every side; all weariness and sorrow are gone now. Panduranga has become everything to us; now there is no more yours and mine in this world. We are dressed in every ornament and shine more brightly than all. Tuka says: we are servants of the true God; we need not look to anyone else. The world is lit by his own light, while the sun stays untouched by the play of action. What is to be told cannot be done by oneself; even a word of price became a hindrance. Tuka says: the capital is in our hands; how can the comings and goings consume it?

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram speaks from the far side of longing, where the seeking has ripened into a harvest. Every hour now tastes of the joy of love, all fatigue and sorrow are over, and the very line between mine and yours has dissolved because Panduranga has become everything. Belonging to the true God, he needs nothing from anyone else, and he wears that belonging like ornaments that outshine the world. The closing verses point past effort: as the sun lights the world yet stays untouched by what it lights, the real gift is not something the seeker can manufacture, and even bargaining over its worth gets in the way. With this capital in hand, the endless rounds of birth and death have nothing left to feed on.

GATHA 1991

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, beyond good and bad fortune

मराठी मूळ

शुभ जाल्या दिशा अवघा चि काळ । अशुभ मंगळ मंगळाचें ॥१॥
 हातींचिया दीपें दुराविली निशी । न देखिजे कैसी आहे ते ही ॥ध्रु॥
 सुख दुःखाहूनि नाहीं विपरीत । देतील आघात हितफळें ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे आतां आह्मांसी हें भलें । अवघे चि जाले जीव जंत ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

All directions have become auspicious, all time blessed; what was inauspicious has turned to good. The lamp in our hands has banished the night; we cannot even see what darkness looks like.

Beyond both happiness and sorrow, there is nothing adverse; even blows bring the fruit of good. Says Tuka, now everything is well for us; all living beings have become our own.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Every direction has turned auspicious, all time blessed; what was inauspicious has become good. The lamp in our hands has driven off the night; we can no longer even see what darkness was like. Beyond happiness and sorrow there is nothing against us; even blows now bear the fruit of good. Tuka says: now all is well with us; every living creature has become our own.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram describes a state where the old split between lucky and unlucky has collapsed. With God's lamp in hand the darkness is so wholly gone that he can no longer even picture it, and every direction and every moment reads as auspicious. He has moved past the seesaw of pleasure and pain, so that even blows arrive as something good for him. The final turn is the widest: there is no enemy left, because every living being has become his own. This is not denial of hardship but a vantage from which nothing can finally count as harm.

GATHA 1992

Worldly Life

The wheel of becoming, not yet steady

मराठी मूळ

पाप पुण्य दोन्ही वाहाती मारग । स्वर्गनर्कभोग यांचीं पेणीं ॥१॥
 एका आड एक न लगे पुसावें । जेविल्या देखावें मागें भूक ॥ध्रु॥
 राहाटीं पडिलें भरोनियां रितीं । होतील मागुतीं येतीं जातीं ॥२॥
 तुका ह्मणे आह्मी खेळतियांमधीं । नाहीं केली बुद्धी िस्थर पाहों ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Sin and virtue both lead down their respective roads; heaven and hell are the lodgings along the way. One follows the other without pause; after eating, hunger appears once again.

Caught in the water-wheel of existence, vessels fill and empty, coming and going endlessly. Says Tuka, among those at play in this wheel, we have not yet made our minds steady enough to truly observe.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Sin and virtue both run down their own roads; heaven and hell are the lodgings along the way. One follows the other without a gap; after the meal, hunger shows up again. Caught in the water-wheel of existence, the vessels fill and empty, coming and going without end. Tuka says: among those at play on this wheel, we have not yet made our minds steady enough to truly see.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram pictures sin and virtue as two roads that both keep you traveling, with heaven and hell only as inns along the route, never the destination. Reward and lack follow each other with no rest, the way hunger returns after every meal; the whole thing turns like a water-wheel whose buckets fill and empty endlessly. Even merit, then, keeps you spinning rather than setting you free. The honest closing line includes himself among the players still on the wheel: he has not yet steadied his mind enough to stand back and really see it. The poem names the trap and admits he is not yet clear of it.

GATHA 1993

The Power of the Name

The Name, the innermost seed

मराठी मूळ

हित तें हें एक राम कंठीं राहे । नाठविती देहभाव देही ॥१॥
हा चि एक धर्म निज बीजवर्म । हें चि जाळी कर्म केलीं महा ॥२॥
चित्त राहे पायीं रूप बैसे डोळां । जीवें कळवळा आवडीचा ॥३॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The one true good is this: let Rama dwell on your tongue and never recall the body-sense again. This alone is the highest dharma, the innermost seed; it alone burns away all great karmas.

Let the mind rest at His feet, let His form fill the eyes, and let the jiva overflow with loving eagerness.

IN PLAIN WORDS

The one true good is this: let Rama stay on your tongue, and stop dwelling on the body-sense within the body. This alone is the highest dharma, the innermost seed of the Self; this alone burns up even the greatest deeds. Let the mind rest at his feet, let his form fill the eyes, and let the jiva overflow with loving longing.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram reduces the whole of religion to one practice. The single real good, he says, is to keep Rama's name on the tongue and to stop feeding the sense of being only this body. He ranks this above all observances: it is the highest dharma and the secret seed at the core of the Self, and it can burn away even the heaviest accumulated

karma. He then describes what it looks like lived out: the mind settled at God's feet, the eyes filled with his form, the heart brimming with eager love. Everything else is set aside for this.

GATHA 1994

Devotion to Vitthal

Union, the river meets the sea

मराठी मूळ

अखंड न खंडे अभंग न भंगे । तुका ह्मणे गंगे मिळणी सिंधु ॥३॥ ॥१॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Says Tuka, this is unbroken and cannot be severed, like the Ganga meeting the ocean.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Tuka says: this is unbroken and cannot be cut, like the Ganga meeting the ocean.

WHAT IT MEANS

This is a single closing image of union that cannot come apart. Tukaram likens the devotee's joining with God to the Ganga flowing into the sea: once the river reaches the ocean there is no separating them again. The words unbroken and unsevered insist this is permanent, not a passing mood. Where a river loses its name and form in the sea yet loses nothing of itself, so the surrendered jiva is wholly merged and wholly safe.

GATHA 1995

Longing and Separation

Longing for the company of devotees

मराठी मूळ

माझिये जातीचें मज भेटो कोणी । आवडीची धणी फेडावया ॥१॥
 आवडे ज्या हरि अंतरापासूनि । ऐसियाचे मनीं आर्त माझें ॥२॥
 तयालागीं जीव होतो कासावीस । पाहातील वास नयन हे ॥३॥
 सुफळ हा जन्म होईल तेथून । देतां आलिंगन वैष्णवांसी ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे तो चि सुदिन सोहळा । गाऊं या गोपाळा धणीवरि ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Let someone of my own kind meet me, so that the thirst of my love may be quenched. My mind yearns for one who loves Hari from the depths of the jiva.

For such a one, my life grows restless; my eyes watch and wait for their coming. This birth will be fulfilled from the moment I embrace the Vaishnavas.

Says Tuka, that alone is the blessed day of celebration: to sing of the cowherd Lord to our full satisfaction.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Let someone of my own kind meet me, so the thirst of my love can be quenched. My mind yearns for one who loves Hari from the depths of the jiva. For such a one my life grows restless; my eyes keep watch for their coming. This birth will be made fruitful from the moment I embrace the Vaishnavas. Tuka says: that alone is the blessed day of festival, to sing of the cowherd Lord, Gopal, to our heart's content.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is homesick for his own kind. The thirst he names is not for God directly but for another person who loves Hari from the very depths of the soul, because only such company can satisfy a love that has nowhere else to spend itself. His restlessness is physical: his eyes literally watch the road for that meeting. He stakes the worth of his whole birth on the embrace of fellow devotees, the Vaishnavas. And the true festival, he says, is not a rite but the day they can sing of Gopal together until the longing is finally full. The poem honors holy company as the thing that completes a life.

GATHA 1996

The Saints

The saints, a feast without measure

मराठी मूळ

आमुचें जीवन हें कथाअमृत । आणिक ही संतसमागम ॥१॥
 सारुं एके ठायीं भोजन परवडी । स्वादरसें गोडी पदोपदीं ॥२॥
 धालिया ढेंकर येती आनंदाचे । वोसंडलें वाचे प्रेमसुख ॥३॥
 पिकलें स्वरूप आलिया घुमरि । रासी ते अंबरीं न समाये ॥४॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Our sustenance is the nectar of the sacred story, and beyond that, the company of the saints. We spread out the feast in one place; its delicious flavor grows sweeter at every step.

When we are full, the belches of bliss arise, and the joy of love overflows from our lips. The ripened Self has come to fullness; its harvest cannot be contained in all the sky.

Says Tuka, when I try to measure its end, there is no limit; all commerce ceases.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Our food is the nectar of the sacred story, and beyond that, the company of the saints. We spread the feast in one place; its flavor grows sweeter at every step. When we are full, the belches of bliss come up, and the joy of love overflows from our lips. The ripened Self has come to fullness; its harvest cannot fit in all the sky. Tuka says: when I try to measure its end, there is no end; all trade stops.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram turns devotion into a banquet and rides the image as far as it will go. The food is the nectar of God's story, and the company of the saints is the rest of the meal; the more they eat, the sweeter it gets. When they are satisfied, what rises is not an ordinary belch but bliss, and love spills out in their speech. He then breaks the figure

open: the Self has ripened into a harvest too large for the whole sky to hold. Trying to measure where it ends, he finds no end at all, and at that point all calculation and bargaining simply stop. The point is that the joy of holy company is literally beyond accounting.

GATHA 1997

Ecstasy and Joy

Ecstasy, the imperishable gain

मराठी मूळ

जोडिलें तें आतां न सरे सारितां । जीव बळी देतां हाता आलें ॥१॥
 संचित सारुनि बांधिलें धरणें । तुंबिलें जीवन आक्षय हें ॥२॥
 शीत उष्ण तेथें सुखदुःख नाहीं । अंतर सबाही एक जालें ॥३॥
 बीज तो अंकुर पत्र शाखा फळें । प्राप्तबीज मुळें अवघें नासे ॥४॥
 तुका ह्मणे नामीं राहिलीसे गोडी । बीजाच्या परवडी होती जाती ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

What has been earned can never be exhausted no matter how much is spent; it came into our hands when we gave our very life. The accumulated debt has been settled, and an imperishable reservoir has been stored.

There, heat and cold, joy and sorrow do not exist; inner and outer have become one. The seed, the sprout, the leaf, the branch, the fruit: when the original seed is found, all else dissolves.

Says Tuka, the sweetness that remains in the name endures as the generations of seeds come and go.

IN PLAIN WORDS

What I have earned now cannot run out, no matter how much I spend. It came into my hand when I gave my very life. My old account is settled; the dam is built. The water is dammed up, and it never runs dry. There heat and cold are gone, joy and sorrow are gone. Inside and out have become one. The seed becomes sprout, leaf, branch, fruit. But when the first seed is found at the root, all the rest dissolves. Tuka says: the sweetness stays in the Name. Seeds keep coming and going, season after season.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram is describing a gain that does not behave like any other gain: the more you spend it, the more it stays. He paid for it with his whole life, and now it is an undrained reservoir, a settled debt. In that place the opposites cancel: heat and cold, pleasure and pain, the line between inner and outer all fall away into one thing. He uses the seed and its tree to make the point. Ordinary seeds sprout, fruit, and die in endless rounds, but when you find the original seed at the root, the whole growing-and-dying machinery dissolves; only the sweetness held in the Name keeps its taste.

GATHA 1998

The Power of the Name

The Name, free goods at the bazaar

मराठी मूळ

भक्तिभाव आह्मी बांधिलासे गांठी । साधावितों हाटीं घ्या रे कोणी ॥१॥
 सुखाचिया पेंठे घातला दुकान । मांडियेले वान रामनाम ॥२॥
 सुखाचें फुकाचें सकळांचें सार । तरावया पार भवसिंधु ॥३॥
 मार्गे भाग्यवंत जाले थोर थोर । तिहीं केला फार हा चि सांटा ॥४॥
 खोटें कुडें तेथें नाहीं घातपात । तुका ह्मणे चित्त शुद्ध करीं ॥५॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

We have tied devotion in a bundle and bring it to the marketplace; take it, whoever will. At the bazaar of happiness, we have set up shop, displaying the wares of Rama's name.

It is joyful, it is free, it is the essence of everything, and it ferries you across the ocean of existence. In ages past, great and fortunate souls stored up this very treasure.

There is no fraud or deception here. Says Tuka, only purify your chitta.

IN PLAIN WORDS

I have tied up devotion in a bundle. I bring it to the market to sell. Come, anyone, take it. I have opened a shop in the bazaar of happiness. The goods on display are Rama's name. It is full of joy, it costs nothing, it is the essence of everything. It carries you across the ocean of this world. Great and fortunate souls before me stored up this very stock. There is no fraud here, no cheating, no loss. Tuka says: only make your heart pure.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram sets up a shop with the strangest stock imaginable: the Name of Rama, given away free. He calls out like a trader, but the goods cost nothing, and they are the essence of all things and the boat across the ocean of birth and death. He points to the great souls of the past to show this is no novelty; they dealt in the same merchandise. Then he names the catch, which is not a price at all: there is no swindle in this trade, no possible loss, so the only thing asked of the buyer is a clean heart.

GATHA 1999

Worldly Metaphors

Metaphor, love alone ripens God

मराठी मूळ

प्रजन्यें पडावें आपुल्या स्वभावें । आपुलाल्या दैवें पिके भूमि ॥1॥
 बीज तें चि फळ येईल शेवटीं । लाभहानितुटी ज्याची तया ॥ध्रु॥
 दीपाचिये अंगीं नाहीं दुजाभाव । धणी चोर साव सारिखे चि ॥2॥
 काउळें ढोंपरा ककर तित्तरा । राजहंसा चारा मुक्ताफळें ॥3॥
 तुका ह्मणे येथें आवडी कारण । पिकला नारायण जयां तैसा ॥4॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Rain falls according to its own nature; the land yields its crop according to its own destiny. Whatever seed is sown, that fruit will come at the end; profit and loss belong to each alone.

A lamp has no partiality within it; honest person and thief receive its light alike. Crows feed on scraps, partridges on gravel, but the royal swan feeds on pearls.

Says Tuka, here, love is the only cause; as one's love is, so Narayana ripens for each.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Rain falls according to its own nature. Each piece of land yields its crop according to its own fate. Whatever seed is sown, that fruit comes in the end. The profit and the loss belong to each one alone. A lamp holds no partiality. Owner, thief, honest man, it gives its light to all the same. The crow feeds on scraps, the partridge on gravel, the royal swan on pearls. Tuka says: here love is the only cause. As your love is, so Narayana ripens for you.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram lays out a chain of natural images to explain why the same grace lands so differently in different people. The rain and the lamp give themselves impartially, but the harvest depends on the soil, and the fruit depends on the seed that was sown. Crow, partridge, and swan all sit under one sky, yet each takes the food its nature reaches for, scraps, gravel, or pearls. The point is in the last line: God, Narayana, is not partial, but he ripens in each person according to that person's love. What you bring is what you receive.

GATHA 2000

Faith and Trust

Faith, single-minded devotion

मराठी मूळ

धीर तो कारण एकविधभाव । पतिव्रते नाहो सर्वभावें ॥१॥
 चातक हे जळ न पाहाती दृष्टी । वाट पाहे कंठीं प्राण मेघा ॥२॥
 सूर्यविकाशनी नेघे चंद्रामृत । वाट पाहे अस्तउदयाची ॥३॥
 धेनु येऊं नेदी जवळी आणिकां । आपुल्या बाळकाविण वत्सा ॥४॥ ॥६॥
 तुका ह्मणे नेम प्राणांसवेंसाटी । तरी च या गोष्टी विठोबाची ॥५॥ ॥६॥

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Patience is the key, and single-minded devotion. A chaste wife serves with her whole being.

*The chataka bird will not look at any other water; it holds its life in its throat, waiting only for the rain cloud.
 The sun-facing lotus refuses the moonlight and waits solely for dawn.*

A cow will not let any other calf near; she gives milk only for her own. Says Tuka, when devotion is pledged at the cost of one's life, only then do these truths about Vithoba hold.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Patience is the key, and one undivided love. A faithful wife serves with her whole being. The chataka bird will not look at any other water. It holds its life in its throat, waiting only for the rain cloud. The lotus that opens to the sun refuses the moon's nectar. It waits only for dawn. A cow lets no other calf come near. She gives her milk only for her own. Tuka says: when you pledge your devotion at the cost of your life, only then do these things about Vithoba come true.

WHAT IT MEANS

Tukaram gathers four pictures of love that will accept no substitute. The chaste wife, the chataka bird that drinks only rain, the sun-lotus that scorns the moon, the cow that nurses only her own calf: each one is set on a single object and turns away from all others. He is describing what devotion to Vithoba must be like, not a hedged or comparison-shopping love but an exclusive one. The closing line names the cost: these truths only open to the devotee who has staked his very life on that one love.